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Review on Agni w.s.r. to Jatharagni and its role in Amotpatti

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ABSTRACT

Agni have been told as process of Paka (digestion) etc. Hence in Shareera, the metabolic process from rasa to Shukra and the development of the fertilized egg all these refer that the ancient Rushis had a full-fledged knowledge about Agni, and have presented it in a very well form. The knowledge about Agni was well developed during ancient time. Agni has been expressed in mantras clearly. There is an elaborated description regarding qualities and functions of Agni in classics. There are elaborated references regarding Agni in Kriya Shaarira and Vikruti Vijnyana. The treatment principle in Ayurveda depends on Agni; hence acharya Bhoja has opined that Kayachikitsa is nothing but Kayagni Chikitsa. Hence the present review highlights the importance of Agni w.s.r. to Jatharagni and its role in Amotpatti.

Key words: Agni, Jatharagni, Ama, Amotpatti.

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurvedic literature it has been explained that Agni is present in every Paramanu and every Kosha, as every process takes place with the help of Agni. There will be a continuous destruction and production takes place in every Kosha (cell) every time, and this process is due to Agni only. The process of Panchabhautika Ahara and production of Dosha, Dushya and their Bhavas will be taking place by Agni only without which, it is not possible.

The ancient Acharyas identified the importance of Agni and gave important place in their respective

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Granthas, just like Acharya Sushruta, while explaining Paribhasha of Swasta to Samadosha Samaagnisha.....| mentioned Agni, then importance. Different Acharyas have considered Chikitsa of Agni itself is Kayachikitsa.

The word Kaya denotes to Kayagni. Due to inhibition of Kayagni the state of Ama is produced. 'Ama' (intermediate product) which has hazardous effect on body. Hence, Ama can be considered as an undigested or partially digested or partially metabolized substance which requires further transformation and if retained as such, it may produce obstruction in the micro and macro channels of the body, which ultimately creates the condition of Srotovāigunyā. The seat for the accumulation of the provoked Dosas, converting it in the form of many diseases.

Ama has been considered as an impartial causative factor for most of the disease. Its importance is reflected by the word Amaya which is a synonym given to the Vyādhi. It is essential to see the presence or absence of Ama in the diseased condition before starting the treatment, because the line of treatment is totally different in case of Amavastha (Apakvata), Sāmavasthā (presence of Ama) and Nirāmavastha (Absence of Ama). Thus, understanding Ama is a

fundamental approach and has very important place in the research field of Ayurveda, clinical science-the branch which deals with both diagnosis and treatment.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study the Jatharagni.
- 2) To study the concept of Ama
- 3) To study the role of *Jatharagnimandya* in *Amotpatti*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

All available Ayurvedic classical texts, journals and research papers were referred and the collected references were critically studied to fulfil the objectives.

Concept of *Agni*

"Yadya Angati Urdvam Gacchati Iti Agni Gatou Tejo Padartah Vishesha"

The one which is having *Urdwagati* and predominace of *Teja Mahabhuta* is called as *Agni*.

Agni is present in every *Paramanu* and every *Kosha*, as every process takes place with the help of *Agni*.

According to fundamental principal of Ayurveda, *Agni* has an important role to play in the physiological, functioning of body. *Jatharagni* has been considered to be prime among all *Agnies*. The functioning of other *Agnies*, *Dhatvagni* and *Bhuthagni* are dependent upon the strength of *Jatharagni*.

Types of Agni

Jatharagni -1, Bhutagni - 5, Dhatwagni - 7^[1,2]

Properties of *Agni*

Agni and Pitta are not different as a material. [3] So, Agni can be discussed in the term of its properties, of its visual form Pitta. [So the properties of Pitta are considered as properties of Agni] properties of Pitta are Sasneha, Usanta, Tikshnata, Dravata, Amlata, Katuta and Sarata. [4] In Charaka Vimana-Sthana, [5] one more property is stated i.e., Visrata. It is well known that these properties are found in the secretion of the Mahasrotas.

Functions of *Agni*

When the substances enter in the body, they have to face several chemical changes in the presence of *Jatharagni*, *Bhutagni* and *Dhatwagni*. So that they will be changed into suitable form for absorption. This process is known as *Ahara Paripaka*. It can be explained on 3 levels

1) Jatharāgni Paka

As mentioned by *Charaka* that the life span, complexion, vitality, good health, enthusiasm, plumpness, vital essence luster is derived from the Thermogenetic process in the body i.e., *Jatharagni*.^[6]

The *Prana Vata* whose function is to ingest the food draws it in to the stomach. Therefore, the food which is getting mixed with the digestive fluid, broken up and on being mixed with unctuous substance becomes softened. Then the *Jatharagni* being agitated and carried by the *Sāmana Vata*, digest the food eaten in proper dose and at the proper time, which leads to increase of life.^[7]

The factors like *Usma*, *Vayu*, *Kleda Sneha*, *Kala* and their appropriate combination (*Sāmyoga*) promote the transformation of intake food into the body element.^[8]

2) Bhutagni Paka

The digestion of food by *Jatharagni* results in the breakdown of food into five distinct *Bhautic* or Physico-chemical groups *Parthiva, Apya Agneya, Vayavya*, and *Akasiya*. This process activates *Bhutagni* which digests the substance of that group. [9]

Vagbhata has stated that each one of the five kinds of Dravyas, the outcome of Bhutagni Paka proceeds to augment the corresponding Bhautic elements that compose the human body.^[10]

Bhautik elements (Products of Bhutagni Paka of food)	Bhautik elements of the body
Parthiva	Parthiva
Аруа	Аруа
Agneya	Agneya

Vayavya	Vayavya
Akasiya	Akasiya

Source only for the maintenance of the integrity of its functional and structural constituents of all of which are composed of *Pancāmahabutas* at the fundamental site of *Pancāmahabhautikagni*.^[11]

According to *Vagbhata* the separation of the *Sarabhaga* or nutrient fraction of the food from *Annakitta* i.e., undigested residue of the food takes place after the completion of the *Bhutagnipaka*.

3) Dhatvāgnipaka

It was noted earlier that according to Charaka the *Sarabhaga* or *Anna Rasa* of the food ingested, an outcome of *Jatharagni* and *Bhutagni Paka*, is absorbed from *Adhoamasaya* and distributed throughout the body by *Dhāmanis*.

In the term *Dhatvagni Paka*, two terms are important i.e., *Agni* and *Paka*. It was seen that the term '*Agni*' stands for *Pitta*. *Pitta* performs actions very much like *Agni* and *Agni* is implied in *Pitta*. *Paka* was seen to stand for chemical transformation. [12]

Charaka has used this term in the context of the description of *Srotamsi* or the internal transport system of nutrition. He has stated that *Srotamsi* transport the *Dhatus* which are undergoing metabolic transformations.^[13]

He also has used this term to comprehend metabolically processed nutrients as well as waste products similarly produced the *Prasadakhya* and *Malakhya Dhatus*.^[14,15]

Concept of Jatharagni

Pachaka Pitta: Pachatiti = Pach + Khalu

"Pitta rasena bhukta dravya pachanadrasya tathatvam"

Synonyms of Jatharagni

Kayagni, Dehagni, Antaragni, Kosthagni and Pachaka Pitta.

Jatharagni

Āchārya says that to understand the *Vikṛti*, to knowledge of *Prakṛti* is essential.^[16] That is why before going pathogenic process involved in the manifestation of the *Jaṭharāgnimāńdya* it is essential to go through the physiological process of the *Jaṭharāgni*.

It is a well-known fact that there is no real fire in the body as seen in the external world, but whatever the functions performed by the external fire are the same as performed by Pitta in the body, hence the term Pitta and Agni have been used as similar entities. Acharva Caraka has stated the normal and abnormal functions of Pitta, according to which the normal or Akupitta Pitta is responsible for Pakti [digestion], Darshana [vision], Ushnata [normal temperature], Varna [colour of skin], Shaurya [valiance], Harsha Prasada [pleasure] etc., on the other hand when *Pitta* is vitiated it performs abnormal functions i.e., Apakti Adarshana, Vivarnata, Bhaya and Krodha etc.[17]

As described by Charaka, *Grahani* is the seat of *Agni*,^[18] which is responsible for digestion and absorption of ingested food. It is also described as the strength of *Agni* and vice versa.^[19]

Ancient *Acharyas* have emphasized the role of *Jatharagni* to be more important than any of the other types of *Agnis*. Its functions are *Pachana* [digestion] of ingested food and *Poshana* [nourishment] for all types of *Agnis*.

Functional states of Jatharagni

Prakruti is determined by the state of *Tridosas* in the parents at the time of union of *Shukra* and *Shonita* in the *Garbhashaya*. Accordingly, the *Prakriti* of child born.

According to *Vagbhata*, the functioning of *Agni* is normal when *Sāmana Vayu* is functioning normally in its own place. On other hand, if this *Vayu* moves to places other than its own, *Agni* will be disturbed and is said to be *Vishāma*, if same *Vayu* affected with *Pitta* then *Jatharagni* become *Teekshna*; on other hand, if it is affected by *Kapha* the *Agni* becomes *Manda*.^[20]

Samagni

It is a state of *Agni*, which is capable of digesting the normal diet properly. *Tridoshas* remain in equal proportion i.e., in a state of metabolic equilibrium. In other words, *Sāmagni* ensures digestion of ingested food at the proper time, without any irregularities.

Vishamagni

Vishāmagni is caused by influence of predominance of Vata Dosa. Here Agni is irregular; sometimes i.e., digests slowly, sometimes normally, sometimes irregularly and sometimes produce Adhmana [distension of abdomen], Sula [colicky pain], Hrut Pida, Anaha, Mukha Swadu becomes Kasaya, Gaurva [heaviness] Antrakujana.

Teeksnagni

The action of *Jatharagni*, in this state is predominantly influenced by *Pitta* of three *Dosas*. The *Agni* in the condition is excessively exited and hence known as *Teekshna Agni*. It easily digests even a very heavy meal in a very short of time. It causes voracious hunger, also known as *Atyagni* [or *Bhasmaka* by some authorities]. After digestion it produces *Gala Shosa* & *Daha*, *Ostha - Shosa* & *Daha*, *Talu-Shosa* & *Daha* and *Santapa*.^[21]

Mandagni

Kayagni [digestive fire / digestive activity] present in its own place has portions of itself present in the *Dhatus* & *Dosha*. Their decrease [in quantity, qualities or function] and increase [in quantity, qualities or functions] give rise to increase and decrease of the *Dhatus*, *Bhutas* respectively. It is unable to digest *Laqhu Ahara*. [22]

Seat of Jatharagni

Both *Susruta* and *Vagbhata* have stated that *Pachaka Pitta* obtains in an area between the *Pakwashaya* and *Amashaya*^[23,24] where as Charaka has stated in very clear terms that *Acchapitta* is secreted as the food which has acquired *Amlabhava* traverses from the *Amashaya* to the next lower portion of the *Kosta*. ^[25]

Likewise, both Sushruta and Vagbhata have indicated that the organ known as *Grahani* is located between *Pakwashaya* and *Amashaya* and that

a) The relation that exists between Agni and Grahani is Reciprocal i.e., Agni supports the function of Grahani and Grahani supports the function of Agni. [26]

b) Grahani is also spoken of as Pittadhara Kala. It holds the ingested food reside in for the duration of its digestion before the Kitta or undigested food residue is proposed into all Pakwashaya.^[27] Grahani Grahat.^[28,29]

Physiology of Jatharagni

The *Mahāsrotasa* has been divided into three parts. The upper part which receives the *Apakva Anna* (*Ama-Anna*) is called the *Āmāśaya*. The middle part in which a comparatively greater degree of *Pācana Kriyā* takes place is called the *Pacyamānāśaya*. The third and the lower most part which contains the full formed *Mala* of *Anna* is called as *Pakvāśaya*. Further the *Āmāśaya* and *Pacyamānāśaya* in which *Anna* remain in a state of *Ama*. They are also called as *Urdhvāmāśaya* and *Adho-Āmāśaya* respectively. [30]

Since the later with a wider range of digestive enzymes or *Achchha-Pitta* show comparatively a greater *Pācana Kriyā* it is understood as the *Agni-Adhiṣṭhāna* or *Grahaṇi,*^[31] which retains the *Anna* till it is fully digested and then performs the function of assimilation. Ācārya Suśruta has mentioned a specialized structure in the *Mahāsrotasa* and calls it the *Pittadharākalā*; a membrane responsible for the production of *Pitta.*^[32,33]

This *Pitta* in its normal state augments the *Dhātvāgni*. The *Urdhvamāśaya* softens and disintegrates the larger molecules of food and renders it to have a greater area of contact with *Pācaka Pitta*. The movement of the partially digested and *Amla-Bhāva-Prāpta Urdhvamāśaya* contents into the *Adhomāśaya*, stimulates the flow of Accha *Pitta*. [34]

Ama and Agni

According to fundamental principle of Ayurveda, *Agni* has important role to play in physiological functioning of the body. The effects of *Agni* in the body are to breakdown or disintegrate the food into their simplest possible components to make it fit for absorption and

utilization by body. Thus, life of human being depends on the proper functioning of *Agni*. The concept of *Agni* is fundamental to the concept of Ayurveda and biological fire or *Agni* has been made to bring *Ayu* (Long life), *Varna* (complexion), *Bala* (strength and immunity) and *Ojas* etc. to the body. [35]

The disturbance in function of *Agni* in body leads to various ailing states through the formation of *Ama*. The processes through which this takes place are *Srotosanga* and *Srotoupalepa*. Due to this, the micronutrients are unable to reach the *Dhatu* level leading to emaciation and disease state. Thus, it can be said that *Agni* is the base of life and wellbeing of living creatures. [36]

Different states of Ama

It is very important to know the different states of *Ama*, before comprehending the origin of disease and *Ama*.

Classification

- Ama produced as a cosequence of the hypofunctioning of Agni
 - a) Ama produced by Jatharagnimandya.
 - b) Ama produced by Bhutagnimadya.
 - c) Ama produced by Dhatvagnimadya.
- 2) Malasancayarupa Ama
- 3) Ama the first stage of Dosic vitiation
- 4) Amavisa.

1. Ama produced by Jatharagnimandya

Jatharagni is the Agni present in Mahakostha and its function is to digest ingested food. Jatharagni is considered as (Pradhanagni) superior most Agni and it supports rest of Agnis in the body. Also, other Agnis of the body are directly affected by its Mandata or Samyakta.

2. Ama produced by Bhutagnimandya

Both Acaryas Charaka and Vagbhatta have quoted direct references to *Bhutagnipaka* while Susruta has made an indirect mention of it. According the Caraka - The digestion of food by *Jatharagni* results in the

breakdown of food into five distinct physico-chemical groups i.e., *Panca Mahabhuta. Parthiva, Apya, Taijasa, Vayavya* and *Nabhasa. Jatharagni* ignites the *Agni* fraction present in each of the five groups. This *Bhutagni* then converts the respective portion into assimilable form. If the function of *Bhutagni* is not proper, at this stage the *Ama* will be produced. Again, different types of *Ama* will be produced according to the different aetiologias. [37]

3. Ama produced by Dhatvagnimandya

The formation of *Dhatu* depends upon function of *Dhatvagni* present in the *Dhatu*, which is part of *Pachakagni* or *Jatharagni*.^[38] *Jatharagni Mandyata* results in *Dhatvagnimandya* giving rise to its impaired function which ultimately leads to the production of *Ama*. The *Dhatu* mixed with *Ama* are called *Sama Dhatu*.^[39]

4. Mala Sanchaya Rupa Ama

Mala means in which substances can do Malinikarana of the body. The formation of Mala occurs as a result of Jatharagni Paka and Dhatvagni Paka. The Dosha Dhatu and Malas have their own significance in the body physiology. This is responsible for holding some of important function in the body, but after some particular time their elimination is required. Otherwise, these Malas may lead to cause various systemic morbidities. [40]

1) Prathama Dosa Dusti

Due to the combination of *Dosa Prakopaka* causes the *Dosa Sancaya* or *Prakopa* takes place. If this vitiated *Dosa* first contacts with the *Dusya* then this *Sammurcana* process generates a new substance called *Ama*. Therefore, all the diseases have been said to be caused by *Ama* and the *Ama Pacana* is accepted as the first principle of management of diseases.

Ācārya Vagbhata accepts the existence of Dosa Rupa Ama according to him. Ama gets formed from intimate mixing from one another greatly vitiated Dosas just as poison (gets formed) from mixing of Kodrava and Jala. This Ama (intimate mixture of vitiated Dosas) first vitiated leads to origin of the diseases.^[41]

2) Ama Visha

According to Charaka, diminished *Agni* is not even able to digest *Laghu Anna* also. This incompletely digested *Anna* becomes fermented as *Visha Rupa*.

Due to the vitiated Agni, which cannot digest Laghu Anna properly the undigested food gets $Suktat\bar{a}$ and $Asuk\bar{a}rita$, the generated material produce severe types of diseases termed as $\bar{A}m\bar{a}visa$. [42]

Vagbhatta also said vitiated Doshas produce Visha Rupa Ama. A person if intakes a Viruddha Bhojana, Adhyasana or Ajirnasana it may lead to the harmful condition of Ama Dosha which display eight symptomatology comparable of Visha. Ámavisha may endanger life as the line of treatment of Ama Dosha and Visha are just opposite.

Symptoms of Ama

Various symptoms produced due to presence of *Ama* in body, are described in texts. These symptoms help in diagnosis of *Ama* clinically. *Sama* and *Nirama* stage of disease can also be identified with presence or absence of these symptoms. Symptoms described by Vagbhatta in Astang Hrudaya are:^[43]

Here Srotorodha, Balabhransa, Gaurava, Anilamudhta Alaysa, Apakti, Nisthiva, Malsanga, Aruci, Klama are described as the symptoms produced due to Ama. Also, many symptoms are described by Acharya Madhava in chapter of Amavata which can be summed as - Angmarda, Trsna, Jwara, Suntanganam, Praseka, Utsahahani, Vairasyata, Daha, Bahumutrata, Kukshikathinta, Nidraviparyaya, Chardi, Srama, Murcha, Hrdgraha, Vidavibandham, Jadyata etc. Let us consider these symptoms separately.

Ama resultant of Jatharagnimandya is more relevant as the symptomatology of the disease expounded in classics mainly refer to the Ama caused due to Jatharagnimandya

Following are the symptoms of Ama mentioned in

Srotorodha	-	Obstruction in the channels
Balabhransha	-	Loss of strength
Gaurava	-	Heaviness

Anilamoodhata	-	Impaired activity of Vata dosha
Aalasya	-	Laziness
Apakti	-	Indigestion
Nishthiva	-	Excessive salivation
Malasanga	-	Constipation
Aruchi	-	Anorexia
Klama	-	Lethargy

Various symptoms produced due to presence of *Ama* in body, are described in texts. These symptoms help in diagnosis of *Ama* clinically. *Sama* and *Nirama* stage of disease can also be identified with presence or absence of these symptoms.

Samprapti of Ama

Since *Ama* represents vitiated or deficiently formed *Ahararasa/Rasadhatu*. It will be circulating in the body while in circulation, where ever the *Ama* is blocked, there is the development of *Dosha Dushya Sammurcchana*. Here the *Dosha* gets vitiated by *Ama*. In that place, the disease with specific signs and symptoms is produced. The cause for the blockage is *Srotorodhama*.^[44]

Ama with the above stated properties and action while circulating through the body, in association with the vitiated *Doshas*, is capable of initiating the pathogenesis of many diseases of diversified symptoms. If the *Ama* encounters on its way any *Dosha* which is in equilibrated state it vitiates that *Dosha*.^[45]

Since *Ama* represented the vitiated or deficiently formed *Ahararasa / Rasadhatu* with poor nutritional capacity, there is a disturbance in *Dhatuparinama* and *Dhatu Poshana* and so poor nourishment of *Dhatus* and defective formation of *Ojas* and consequent defective *Vyadhikshamatwa* (immunity).

The *Ama* mixed with *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, and *Mala* produces *Samadosha*, *Samadhatu* and *Samamala* respectively.

Treatment principle of Amadosha

1. Langhana Upakrama

Langhana means fasting. The Jatharagni first digest the food. After digestion of the food, it digests the Dosas. [46] i.e. After food gets digested, the Agni digests the Doshas.

By *Langhana*, the covered *Dosas* are depleted and the *Agni* is *Pradeepta*. Due to the *Samprapti Vighatana* of the *Vyadhi* the *Vyadhi* is pacified.

The Langhana destroys the vitiated Dosas does Agni Deeptikarana and produces Laghuta in the body. Arogya, Ksudha, Trsa, Ruci, Bala, Oja, Amapacana are also the important functions of the Langhana. [47]

2. Ruksana Upakrama^[48]

That which produces *Ruksata*, *Kharata* and *Visadata* is the *Ruksana Upakrama*. The disease due to *Abhisyanda* and *Mahadosa* are cured by *Ruksana Karma*.^[49]

Ama produces a lot of sliminess due to which the sliminess occurs in the Kostha and Sakha adherent in nature and accumulates there slowly manifesting the disease.

By Ruksana this sliminess Abhisyandatva and Kledakaritva is removed due to which the Dosha accumulated in large quantity are eradicated leading to Vyadhi Upasamana.

3. Swedana Upakrama

Swedana associated with Tiksna and Ushna Gunas destroy the Sheeta.

- a) Sansamanartha Swedana Swedana does the Agnidipti, Mardavata and Ruci and also performs Srotosodhana.
- b) Sansodhanartha Swedana By Swedana melt and come to the Kostha and through Sodhana totally expelled out.^[50]

In this way, Swedana because of its Ushna and Tiksna Gunas does the Ama Pacana drugs the accumulated Dosas Sakha to Kostha does the Srotosodhana and Vyadhi is cured.

Apatarpana^[51]

1. Langhana

When the *Dosas* are of *Alpa Bala* nature then *Langhana* is advised. The *Langhana* increases the *Vayu* and *Agni* which leads to the depletion of the less *Dosas* (i.e., low strength) in the same way as the small quantity of water is dry easily by air and sunlight.

2. Langhana Pacana

When the *Dosas* are of *Madhyama Bala* the *Langhana Pacana* is advocated for their *Shamana*. The *Langhana Pachana* deplete the *Madhya Bala Dosas* in the same way as the heat of the sun and the dust or ash brought by air dry the lake with less water.

3. Dosavasecana

When *Dosas* are of *Pravara* (*Uttam*) *Bala* the *Dosavasecana* termed *Apatarpana* should be followed because the water accumulated in the field cannot be drained sans breaking the dam or boundary of the field. Similarly, the *Dosas* should expel out by *Dosavasecana* i.e., *Vamana* and *Virecana*.

If on performing *Apatarpana* also the *Vyadhi* associated to *Ama* still remains then the *Vyadhi Viparita Ausadha* is advised for that *Nirama Rogi* leaving aside the *Hetu Viparita Ausadha*.

Here, *Vyadhi Viparita Ausadha* means administration of *Vyadhi Pratyanika Ausadha* as indicated in treatment principle of that *Vyadhi*.

After *Vyadhi* is pacified the *Prakrti Sthapana Ausadha* need to be used to maintain the *Swasthya* (health) for a long time.

CONCLUSION

To maintain the health of a healthy individual *Agni* plays a vital role. The *Ama-Pakvashaya* is the chief site of *Agni Vyapara*. Due to *Durbala Jatharagni* the food is not completely/properly digested, is known as *Ama*, which is chief pathogenic factor of the many diseases. *Ama* is a chief pathogenic factor for manifestation of many diseases.

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