

A Critical Review of AGNI and AMA – An Ayurvedic Perspective

Dr. Lalit Kumar Nagar¹, Dr. Maya Chanderia², Dr. Ashok Kumar Sharma³, Dr. Kishori Lal Sharma⁴,

1. PG Scholar of Kriya SharirVibhag, M.M.M. Govt. Ayurved College, Udaipur (Raj.) (Corresponding Author)

2. PG Scholar of Kriya SharirVibhag, M.M.M. Govt. Ayurved College, Udaipur (Raj.)

3. Professor & HOD of Kriya SharirVibhag, M.M.M. Govt. Ayurved College, Udaipur (Raj.)

4. Asso. Professor of Kriya SharirVibhag, M.M.M. Govt. Ayurved College, Udaipur (Raj.)

Submitted: 09-01-2023

Accepted: 19-01-2023

ABSTRACT: -

Ayurveda has its own notions, such as Dosh, Dushay, Mala, and Agni, among others. The metabolic process occurs continuously inside of us. The human body's agni, according to Ayurveda, plays a key role in digestion and metabolism. Aahar is converted into aahar rasa and kitta after being digested by jatharagni. Dhatvagni is used for the creation and destruction of tissue, whereas bhutagni aids in metamorphosis. Therefore, the agni controls all these physiological processes. Fundamentally speaking, it is crucial to our general health. The body naturally produces free radicals during such metabolic shifts, which are bad for our bodies over the long term. Ama is unripe, undigested food that develops as a result of Agnimandhy. Agnimandhy and Ama production are related. One of the ideas that plays a significant part in the development of numerous diseases is ama. One idea that plays a big part in the development of many diseases is ama. As is well known, Agnimandhy is the fundamental cause of every ailment, and only Amacan eradicate it. When it comes to comprehending the physiopathology of ailments, the concept of Ama is the most crucial foundational tenet of Ayurveda. The creation of amacan lead to a number of illnesses, including Amvata (rheumatoid arthritis), Alasaka, Visuchika, Sandhigata-vata (osteoarthritis), Katigata-vata (low back pain), Taamksvasa (asthma), and Pakvasjayagata.

Keywords: -Agni, Aahar, Digestion, Metabolism, Ama, Agnimandhy.

I. INTRODUCTION: -

The major goals of Ayurveda are to maintain a person's healthy condition and to treat their illnesses. There are eight primary branches of Ayurveda. The most important AshtaAnga in Ayurveda is Kayachikitsa. Since Kayachikitsa is nothing more than the Chikitsa of Agni, Agni is of

utmost importance in Kayachikitsa. The word "Agni" in Ayurveda refers to a force that can change the form of material consumed. Food is agniconverted into substances that the body can digest. According to Ayurveda, Dehagni is the primary cause of life, appearance, strength, health, sustenance, lustre, Oja, Teja, and Prana (The very life energy).¹ Acharya Susruta describes the characteristics of a healthy individual, or swasthapurusha, outlining what constitutes that person's physical and mental well-being.

**समदोषः समाग्निश्चसमघातुमलक्रियः।
प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमनाः स्वस्थइत्यभिधीयते॥**

He, in whom, the dosha, agni (digestive power), dhatu (tissue). Malas (waste products) and their activities are normal; his soul, sense organs and mind are calm/ clear, is called swasthapurusha (Healthy person).² The fundamental cause of the majority of diseases is a weakened force of Agni (Agnimandya), according to Acharya, who also discussed the process disease creation.³ As a result, the idea of Agni is linked to both a person's health and the emergence of diseases. Agni Dushti, which is brought on by a poor diet or unhealthy lifestyle, leads to abnormalities in the Dhatus, which in turn produce a variety of illnesses. Along with the scientific and technological revolution that has occurred over the past few decades, a social revolution has also occurred that has ultimately had a significant impact. This shift in eating habits has finally led to the emergence of numerous gastrointestinal ailments. Therefore, fully comprehending Agnimandya becomes our first priority. This research work makes a sincere effort to comprehend Agnimandya in terms of modern nutritional practices, which are advantageous for both disease preventive and treatment purposes.

Aims and objectives: -

1. To find out the relationship between ayurvedic idea of agni and ama.
2. To study about the fact that imbalance of agni is the cause of origin of ama.
3. To explain the factors responsible for the origin of ama.

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS: -

A review of Ayurvedic writings served as the foundation for this article. Materials on Agni, and other pertinent subjects have been compiled. The CharakaSamhitha, SusrutaSamhitha, AstangaHridaya, and extant commentaries on these works were the primary Ayurvedic texts used in this study. We have also referred to the various websites and scientific journals to collect information regarding current researches on the relevant topics.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**Functions of Agni: -**

*आयुर्वर्णाबलस्वास्थ्यमुत्साहोपचयौप्रभा ।
ओजस्तेजोऽन्नयःप्राणाश्चोक्तादेहाग्निहेतुकाः ॥
शान्तेऽन्नोभ्रियते, युक्तेचिरजीवत्यनामयः ।
रोगीस्याद्विकृते, मूलमग्निस्तस्मान्निरुच्यते ॥*

Dehagni or jatharagni (enzymes located in the gastrointestinal tract) is the *raison de etre* of life, colour (whiteness of the skin, etc.), strength (physical ability to perform strenuous physical exercise), health, enthusiasm (to perform even otherwise impossible tasks), plumpness, complexion, ojas (energy), tejas (heat of the body or semen), (other varieties of) agnis and prāna (elan vitae). Extinction of this jatharagni leads to death; its proper maintenance helps a person to live a long life, and its impairment gives rise to diseases. Therefore, jatharagni is considered to be the root or the most important sustaining factor (mula) of living beings.⁴

Importance of Agni: -

*यदनंदेहघात्वोजोबलवर्णादिषोषकम् ।
तत्राग्निर्हेतुराहारान्नहृत्पक्वाद्रसादयः ॥*

Food provides nourishment to deha-dhatus (tissue elements of the body) and it is the *raisendetre* of ojas (vital essence), strength and complexion, but, in effect, it is the agni (enzymes) that plays a vital role in this connection because tissue elements like, rasa, etc., cannot even originate from undigested food particles.⁵

Concept of Jatharagni: -

To maintain the appropriate functioning of jatharagni, it is necessary to digest varieties of food and drinks, because the life and the strength of an individual are dependent upon it (Jatharagni).⁶

Process of Digestion: -

Prana, with its power of attraction, draws the (ingested) food into the *kostha* (alimentary tract). This food gets softened by the unctuous substance after which it gets split into small particles by the liquid (saliva). Thereafter, the agni (enzymes) located in the *udara* (stomach), gets stimulated by *samanavayu*. This agni (enzymes) stimulated by *vayu*, helps in the digestion of food of appropriate quality taken in required quantity and in right time for the promotion of longevity.

As the fire, placed below, helps in the cooking of food, namely, rice and water kept in a vessel placed thereon, so does the agni (enzyme) helps in the digestion of food located in the *asaya* (*amaśaya*), i.e. stomach for the production of *rasa* (chyle) and *mala* (waste products).⁷

The Relationship of Agni and Ama: -

Jatharagni or Koshagni, Panchbhutagni, and Dhatvagni are the main three Agni present inside the body. Jatharagni is the digestive fire that controls the various digestive processes within the body. When there is hypofunctioning of agni proper digestion is hampered resulting in the formation of Ama. Then Bhutagni have been enumerated, bhuta means the physicomaterial classification of food and body elements. Thereafter Dhatvagni have been expounded, dhatu here means the basic elements of the body. The functions of Dhatvagni refer to tissue metabolism. In sum, Jatharagni (gastrointestinal metabolism secretion, enzyme), Bhutagni (five intermediary metabolism factors) and Dhatvagni (tissue metabolism) constitute the thirteen types of Agni or metabolic factors of Ayurveda. By the Ayurvedic literature, the food material is first digested and absorbed by the Jatharagni in Amashaya and Grahani. Then it is transported to the liver for Bhutagnipaka and from there, the product of nutrition is processed in the tissues by the Dhatvagni. Normally digestion at all levels proper functioning of these agni is absolutely necessary. But, whenever Agnivyapara took the shape of mandagni, the resultant material will be unripened, undigested formation of what in Ayurvedic terms is

known as Ama. In terms of metabolism, it is defective metabolism.⁸

Nirukti of Ama

The word “Ama” is, the combination of “Am”dhatu with “Nich”Pratyaya forms the word Ama, which is subjected to digestion i.e. undigested or unprocessed matter.⁹

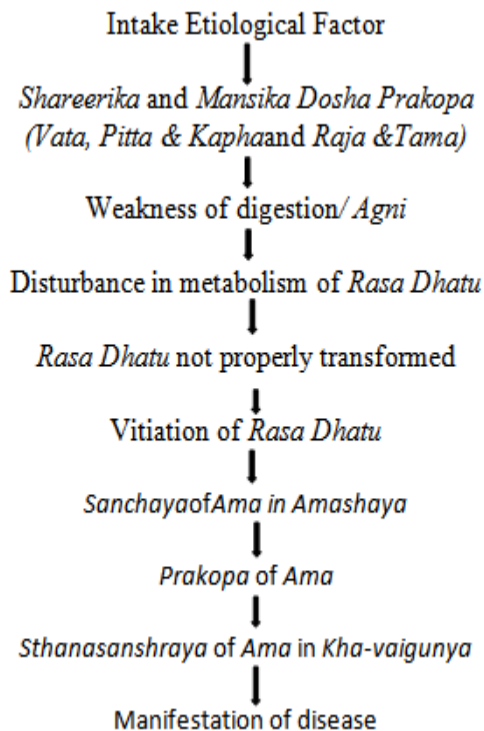
Definition of Ama: -

These are the various definition of Ama available in different classics. Some of them are given below.

**कृष्णोऽल्पबलत्वेनघातुमाद्यमपाचितम् ।
दुष्टमामाशमगतंरसमामंप्रचक्षते ॥**

Due to weakness of digestion /Ushma (Agni) the initial body tissue (end product of digestion in the G.I. tract; i.e. rasadhātu – asthaya) being not properly transformed undergoes vitiation and return (retrograde) to stomach – this is known as ama.¹⁰

Formation of Ama: -



Concept of Ama: -

The Agnimandya procedure produces Ama. Furthermore, it has been emphasised that all

varieties of Ajirnas play a crucial role in the creation of ama.

Factors responsible for the origin of Ama: -

Intake of food in excess, the following factors also affect the body by vitiating the undigested food product:

1. Untimely intake of food and drinks which are heavy, ununctuous, cold, dry, despicable, constipative, irritant, unclean and mutually contradictory:
2. Intake of food and drinks when the individual is afflicted with passion, anger, greed, confusion, envy, bashfulness, grief, indigestion, anxiety and fear.

Wholesome food taken even in proper quantity do not get properly digested when the individual is afflicted with grief, fear, anger, sorrow, excessive sleep and excessive vigil.¹¹

IV. DISCUSSION: -

Ama is created when harmful substances that shouldn't be digested, clog the human body's channels (Srotas). Intestines, the lymphatic system, arteries and veins, capillaries, the genitourinary tract, and other physical organs are examples of some of these channels. Other channels, known as nadis, are non-physical pathways via which your energy travels. Ama toxicity builds up whenever the body is weak (Khavaigunya), eventually leading to a variety of illnesses. When Agnimandya is present, it causes the development of some hazardous compounds because when Agni converts food into energy, it does so through the metabolic process. They are referred to as Kleda. To keep up one's health, extra Kleda must be expelled from the body. When the elimination mechanism is impaired, harmful waste elements accumulate and lead to the development of Ama. Through dietary and lifestyle changes combined with Panchkarma and Ayurveda, it can be avoided more effectively.

Agni's dysfunctional functions are the primary cause of Ama's creation. It becomes more like Amarasa (Visha), which is known as Amavisha, if it stays in Amashaya for a longer period of time. The degree of Amavisha that is attained determines the disease's prognosis or course of action, and hence the dangerous effect of Ama. Ama Produces Ama can develop inside the body as a result of dietary transgressions and emotional stress that prevent the neurohumoral mechanisms from working well. Hypocreations of digestive juice and delayed gastrointestinal motility cause the fermentation of dietary substances, which

produces a thick, slimy product with a bad odour and excessive stickiness.

V. CONCLUSION: -

The impact of a person's diet and way of life on their health has been well explained by one of the oldest medical systems, Ayurveda. The core medical approach in Ayurveda is called Chikitsa of Agni. Since Agni is responsible for a healthy body and a healthy life, it is important to comprehend the notion of Agni and to take care that it is properly operating. Ama is produced as a result of poor eating practices, a sedentary lifestyle, and a vitiated Agni (digestive fire). Ama is extremely horrible, and is not to be attended, since it is as lethal as poison, critical and invites treatment procedures that are contradictory to one another.

REFERENCE

- [1]. Charaka S, Sashtri Kashinath, Pt, Chaturvedi Gorakhnath., Chaukhamba Bharti Academy; 2004. Chikitsanthana, 15/3; p. 452.
- [2]. Sushruta Samhita, Text English translation, Volume 1 translator by Prof. K.R. Srikantha Murthy Chaukhamba Orientalia, Varanasi, Sushruta sutra sthan 15/41; page no. 110
- [3]. Charaka Samhita Part I Vaidyamanorama Hindi Commentary by Ravi Dutta Tr
- [4]. Agnivesa's Charak Samhita, text with English translation & critical exposition based on (Chakrapani Datta's Ayurveda Dipika) by Dr. Ram Karan Sharma & Vaidya Bhagwan Dash Volume IV Chowkhambasanskrit series office, Varanasi, Chikitsa Sthan 15/3-4 Page No. 1.
- [5]. Agnivesa's Charak Samhita, text with English translation & critical exposition based on (Chakrapani Datta's Ayurveda Dipika) by Dr. Ram Karan Sharma & Vaidya Bhagwan Dash Volume IV Chowkhambasanskrit series office, Varanasi, Chikitsa Sthan 15/5 Page No. 3.
- [6]. Agnivesa's Charak Samhita, text with English translation & critical exposition based on (Chakrapani Datta's Ayurveda Dipika) by Dr. Ram Karan Sharma & Vaidya Bhagwan Dash Volume IV Chowkhambasanskrit series office, Varanasi, Chikitsa Sthan 15/40, Page No. 23.
- [7]. Agnivesa's Charak Samhita, text with English translation & critical exposition based on (Chakrapani Datta's Ayurveda Dipika) by Dr. Ram Karan Sharma & Vaidya Bhagwan Dash Volume IV Chowkhambasanskrit series office, Varanasi, Chikitsa Sthan 15/6-8, Page No. 3.
- [8]. Bhojraj Arun Chaudhari Critical Evaluation of Ama; International Ayurvedic Medical Journal. Issn:2320 5091.
- [9]. Amarkosha, Shri Pandit Hargovinda Shastri, Chaukhamba Sanskrit series, VII edition 2005, II and, 4 verga, shlok 16, page no. 519.
- [10]. Astangahridya English translation and commentary by Dr. T. Sreekumar, M.D.(Ayu), PhD Sutra Sthan 13/25, Page no. 296.
- [11]. Agnivesa's Charak Samhita, text with English translation & critical exposition based on (Chakrapani Datta's Ayurveda Dipika) by Dr Ram Karan Sharma & Vaidya Bhagwan Dash Volume II Chowkhambasanskrit series office, Varanasi, Vimana Sthan 2/8-9 Page No. 135.