

## Amavata – Rheumatic Arthritis Conceptual Study to Clinical Comfort

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### ABSTRACT –

Rheumatic Arthritis is a challenging disease for the physicians and medical field. Till today era, there is no effective medicine for this disease. All that medicine used DMARD, steroids and NSAID frequently which have negative impact on immune system and gives only temporary relief. However, till date no satisfactory medical management has been developed for this problem. Hence the management of this disease is merely insufficient in other systems of medicine and patients are continuously looking with a hope towards Ayurveda to overcome this challenge. Hence for Ayurvedic scholar it is a challenging disease, so it becomes duty of scholars to work on various aspect of this disease.

**Key Word-** Amavata, Rheumatoid arthritis, Clinical

deterioration, functional disability and unfavourable disease outcome<sup>[2]</sup>. Even in modern medical science with extreme advancement in diagnostic approach, only symptomatic relief and no permanent cure is given. It is a challenging disease for the physicians and medical field. Till today in modern science, there is no effective medicine for this disease. All that modern medicine used DMARD, steroids and NSAID frequently which have negative impact on immune system and gives only temporary relief<sup>[3]</sup>. However, till date no satisfactory modern medical management has been developed for this problem. Hence the management of this disease is merely insufficient in other systems of medicine and patients are continuously looking with a hope towards Ayurveda to overcome this challenge. Hence for Ayurvedic scholar it is a challenging disease, so it becomes duty of scholars to work on various aspect of this disease.

### INTRODUCTION

In present era cases of Amavata aka Rheumatic arthritis increasing drastically. Due to unhealthy lifestyle and dietary habits added more cases of Amavata day by day. Approximately one percent of the population suffers from rheumatoid arthritis in India. Therefore, as per calculations almost 10 lakh people suffer from this type of arthritis<sup>[1]</sup>. Most people assume that arthritis is a disease that older people suffer from and younger population is safe from it. However, arthritis can affect younger population as well.

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is an autoimmune inflammatory rheumatic disease that affects approximately 0.5–1 % of the population and causes chronic synovial inflammation eventually leading to joint destruction and disability. The “Bermuda triangle” of genetic, environmental factors and autoimmunity triggers the onset and perpetuation of synovitis underlying RA. Early diagnosis and immediate, effective therapy are crucial in order to prevent joint

### ❖ Ayurvedic aspect of Rheumatic arthritis

Amavata is umbrella of diseases but, can be correlated with Rheumatoid Arthritis due to same presentation of disease. It is the disease of Madhyamrogamarg. Asthi and Sandhi are the chief site for the manifestation of cardinal symptoms like Sandhishool, Shandhishoth and Sandhigraha etc<sup>[4]</sup>. All the three Doshas take part in the pathogenesis of disease but Ama and vitiated Vata play the dominant role.

Ayurveda is a science of life and greatest gift to human kind. There are many fundamental principles were described by ancient scholars in ayurvedic scriptures of which, the concept of Agni shows the uniqueness of Ayurvedic ways for understanding of human body. It is to be believed by the ancient scholars that, In Ayurveda, the term “Agni is used in the sense of digestion of food and metabolism. Agni is one of the ten factors which are required to be examined before initiating the

treatment of patients<sup>5</sup>. Agni is responsible for absorbing the nutrients and essential elements the body needs while burning off waste products (Agni is the root of the English word “ignite”). About the importance of Agni Acharya Vagbhatt said in Ashtang Hridaya, “All the diseases started from weaken of Agni.”<sup>[6]</sup>

Whenever Agni become weak, body won't be able to digest the ingested food well; that will make a toxin called Ama.<sup>[7]</sup> This Ama is responsible for creating a variety of diseases<sup>7</sup>. One of the most common disease of joints caused by it is Amavata. It is mentioned in Madhava Nidana (16<sup>th</sup> century AD). Nidanas of Amavata narrated by Madhvakara are Viruddhahara, Viruddhachesta, Mandagni, and Exercise after Snigdhar etc. Amavata comprise of two words Ama and Vata, among them Ama play prime role for producing disease. Due to incompetent dietary and life style Agni become weak that lead to rasa dusti and eventually rasavahasrotas dusti. Ama is produced by improper digested food due to weak Agni. Ama combine with vata dosha and produce Amavata disease. Amavata is one of the challenging diseases for the clinicians due to its chronicity, incurability, complications and morbidity. The treatment procedure described are Langhan, Swedan, Tikta-katudravayas, Deepana, Virechan, Basti etc.<sup>[8]</sup>

➤ **Causative factors for Amavata**(acc. To Madhakar)<sup>[9]</sup>

- ViruddhahaAhar (incompatible diet)
- Exercise after meal
- Irregular dietary habits
- Weak digestion

Modern medicine system said that there no any specific etiological factor for Rheumatic arthritis, simply categorised as idiopathic origin. Ayurveda mentioned well define causes for Amavata thousand years ago. All etiological factors are having direct relationship with gut. Recent study going in western country about relationship of joint pain with gut. They call it microbiome of gut that cause joint pain but yet not clearly define. The scholars of Ayurveda strongly believed that What we are is what we eat. Food is broken down by our digestive system in molecular level and that used by different cells of our body for their growth and development. Presence of above mention etiological factors leads to disturbance in process of digestion and altered final product is formed, it is called Ama. This newly form Ama combine with Vata dosha, due to these cellular functions is

disturbed, changes in cellular and genetic happened. These disturbances could be possible reason for changes on HLA-DRB1 genes. The proteins produced from HLA genes help the immune system distinguish the body's own proteins from proteins made by foreign invaders. Changes in HLA genes resultant into activation of immune response against own body cells.

➤ **Types of Amavata**

1. Acc. To Acharya Sharangdhar- Four types (Dominant of Dosha)<sup>[10]</sup>
  - I. VatajAmavata
  - II. PittajAmavata
  - III. KaphajAmavata
  - IV. SannipatajAmavata
2. Acc. To Madhav Nidana- Three types (Chronicity)<sup>[11]</sup>
  - I. Sadhya (Easily curable)- Vataj, Pittaj, Kaphaj
  - II. Yasya (maintable by medicine)- Vatakapha, Vatapitta, Kaphapitta
  - III. Kruchhasadhya (Difficult to cure)- Sannipataj

➤ **Sign and Symptoms**<sup>[12]</sup>

Criteria for the diagnosis according to Modern medicine:

American College of Rheumatology has given 7 points as criteria. Among them patient should have at least 4 points to diagnose him as the above symptoms, the patient may suffer from RA. patient. Those 7 points are:

1. Morning stiffness.
2. Arthritis of three (or) more joints.
3. Arthritis of hand joints.
4. Symmetric arthritis.
5. Rheumatoid nodules.
6. Serum R.A. factor's positivity.
7. Radiographic Changes.

According to modern medicine pain, swelling, tenderness, morning stiffness, muscle weakness, restriction of joint movement, loss of appetite, subcutaneous nodules, low grade fever, deformities in joints and bones, fatigue etc signs symptoms of the disease have been mentioned.

Coming to Ayurveda almost all these symptoms have been mentioned in a scientific elaborately manners. According to Ayurveda the main symptoms of the disease are:

- Body Ache
- Anorexia

- Excessive thirst
  - Lassitude
  - Heaviness in body
  - Fever
  - Indigestion
  - Oedema
- Symptoms of Chronic Amavata in Ayurveda<sup>[12]</sup>
- Pain and inflammation in the joints of Hands, Legs, Ankles, Sacrum, Knee and thigh, Pain like scorpion sting, Weaken Agni, Excessive Salivation, Anorexia, Heaviness in Body, Lack of interest in surroundings, Bad taste in mouth, Burning, Polyuria, Abdominal pain, Change in Sleeping patterns, Excessive thirst, Vertigo, Fainting, Stiffness in cardiac region, Constipation, Stiffness in body, Gargling sound in Abdomen, Tympanitis in abdomen

#### ➤ Treatment

According to modern point of view main goals of therapy of RA are,

1. Relief of pain
2. Reduction of inflammation.
3. Preservation of Functional capacity.

The drugs of modern medicine are mainly divided into three groups:

1. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.
2. DMARDS- Disease modifying anti rheumatic drugs
3. Glucocorticoid drugs.

According to Ayurveda main goal for therapy are digestion of Ama, improve Agni and detoxification of body by Panchkarma therapy<sup>13</sup>. As we see that the main goal of allopathy treatment is getting relief from symptoms on the other hand Ayurveda focus on removing cause of the disease. According to Madhav nidana treatment of Amavata is,

- i. Langhan<sup>14</sup>- It means the food which gives lightness to the body. If person is fasting or taking laghu food diet, then the Agni will metabolize the Ama and Sam dosha result in Agni dipan and Ama pachan. Aamavat is Strotosawarodhjanyavyadhi. In Aamavat, Ama lodges at Strotasas [channels] According to classics Langhana will remove the clogs present in the Strotasas due to its Laghuguna.
- ii. Swedana<sup>15</sup> - Swedan was done by Valukasweda on the local parts involved. In this, the bolus is prepared of sand. This is a typical RookshaSweda indicated in Amavata,

Vatarakta, and Urastambha, etc. Here, the sand can be fried in Dhanyamla along with SaindhavaLavana. Much care should be taken in testing the heat of the bolus and only moderate heat should be applied.

- iii. Use of Tikta and Katu medicine–
- iv. Virechan karma–Panchakarma is a science for purification of the body, because vitiation of Doshas beyond a particular level produces endotoxins which tend to accumulate in the Srotasa (minute channels) of the body which are to be removed for maintaining disease free health which is done by Panchakarma. Virechanahas direct effect on Agnisthana and hampered Agni is one of the initiating factors in Amavata and was mentioned in AmavataChikitsa by Chakradata<sup>16</sup>.
- v. Basti karma - Basti works in the region of colon, but its impact is far reaching and deep. It is instrumental in bowel regularity, joint support, treating gastric problem, nervous system support and healthy sleep patterns. Basti promotes overall well-being and a healthy glow. Basti is considered as the most useful therapeutic procedures in which medicated oils, decoctions, decoctions with milk, mansa rasa or paste of herbs or oils or ghee are introduced into the large intestines through rectum with the help of basti yantra. Basti is the best treatment for vatadosas, so also for pitta, kapha, rakta in sansarga&sannipatadosas. Basti has the capacity to eradicate most of the diseases occurring in Sakha, kostha&marmasthana, it is referred to as “Half of the whole treatment” and sometimes a “complete treatment” (charaka)<sup>[17]</sup>.

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