

CONCEPTUAL AND CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF AMA W.S.R.TO AGNI AND ITS EFFECT ON BODY

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a holistic science based on basic principles. According to *Ayurveda* balanced diet and its digestion are most important part of life. Food, sleep and celibacy are three sub pillars of body described in *ayurveda* classical texts. Among these 3 sub pillars food is most important. Whatever we take through the mouth is known as *aahar* (food), this *aahar* converted into *annarasa* by the action of *Jatharangi* and then it is processed by different type of *bhutagni* and *dhatvagni* (seven tissue agni). According to *ayurveda* when *agni* is in balanced state, it maintains the healthy condition of the body and the *Balanced*

agni (samagni) is responsible for strength, health, longevity and vitality. According to our *acharyas agni* works on the food and it produces *Dosha, Dhatu* and *Mala*. If there are any dearangement in the function of “*Agni*” in the body, it will affect the transformations take place in the body or if any alteration in these *agni* then immature and improper formation of *annarasa* occurs. This undigested, uncooked and unripe *annarasa* is called as *ama*, which are the intermediate stages of a complete process, because here *agni* does not transform *aahar* completely into end products. This *ama* obstruct the channels that is called *srotorodha*. The *srotorodha* is commonest factor in the body for the manifestation of any disease. *Ama* obstruct the channel and causing various gastrointestinal disorder like *hrillasa, chardi, amlapitta, atisarra, visuchika, alsaka* etc. *Ama* is considered as root cause of all

diseases in the body. It has tremendous capacity to vitiate the all *Doshas* and disturbing the homeostasis (*Samyavastha*).

KEYWORD: *Agni, Ama, Physiology of digestion, Formation of ama.*

INTRODUCTION

In *ayurveda* there are three sub pillars that is food, sleep, celibacy, in these pillars the first and most important pillar is “food”. In the *ayurveda* there are different type of description about food and how to take it. In *ayurveda* food is called as “*Bahyaprana*”. In present era every person is living busy and has stressful life. Change in lifestyle of modern human being has created several disharmonies in their biological system. In *ayurveda*, there are 3 type of *agni* which are responsible for the proper digestion of food in the body. In these *agni jatharagni* is more important than other *agni*. According to *acharyas agni* works on the food and it produces *Dosha, Dhatu* and *Mala*. Whatever food we take as a discipline/proper way, this food first digested due to digestive fire (*Jatharagni*). Due to this digestive fire food particle are converted in to *Annarasa* (“chyle”). *Samagni* is responsible for strength health, longevity and vital breath. In *ayurveda* when these 3 type of *agni* is in normal or balanced state. It maintain healthy condition of the body. If any alteration in these *agni* the immature and improper formation of *annarasa*. This unripe uncooked, undigested *annarasa* is called as *ama*. This *ama* manifests in *amashaya* (stomach). *Ama* which is manifested due to dearagment of *agni* gets lodged in *kapha sthanas*. This *ama* on further stasis attains toxic qualities and it vitiates the *doshas* and leads to increased impermeability and sluggishness of *srotas* (channels). This *ama* obstructs the channels that is called *srotorodha*. The *srotorodha* is commonest factor in the body manifestation of any disease. This whole pathological event inhibits further process of digestion and absorption thereby causing various gastrointestinal disorder like *hrillasa* (nausea), *chardi* (vomiting), *amlapitta* (acid peptic disorder), *atisara* (diarrhoea), *visuchika* (gastroenteritis), *alsaka* (intestinal obstruction due to acute indigestion) etc.

The science of *Ayurveda* not only depend upon the symptomatology of the patient, rather it believes in a thorough examination to find out the root cause of the ailment in the patient. That’s why it should be protected by proper intake of food and drinks because these diet act as fuel. After taking proper food on proper time it developes strength, complexion, and happiness as well as growth of tissue and body.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Material related to this topic have been collected from various *ayurveda* classical texts as *Charaka samhita*, *Astang hridayam* and available commentaries on those texts and research articles of concerned subject published in various national and international journals.

AIM

- To understand the importance of *ama* and how it causes any disease.

OBJECTIVE

- To show the importance of *agni* and its physiology in body.
- Study the different type of *agni* and how we can maintain it in normal condition to live a long life.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

In *ayurveda* *agni* participate and regulate the process of digestion and metabolize those substance which are intake through the mouth or any transformation in the tissue of an organism. The term metabolism is used to refer to all the chemical as well as physiological transformation that occurs in the body, Which is not possible without a balanced *agni*. The site of *agni* considered as between *amashaya* and *pakvashaya*. This anatomical location is known as *Grahni*. The *grahni* nourishes and supports the *agni*.

Important of agni

- All the body entities such as strength, color, health, enthusiasm, plumpness, complexion, *ojas*, heat of the body (*tejas*), increasing physical ability all are the functions of *agni*.^[1]
- *Acharya charaka* described that when the *agni* of a person is in *samavastha* the person will be absolutely healthy and live long life. After mitigation of *agni* the individual has been died. *Agni* is responsible for the digestion and metabolism of ingested food and converted into energy for vital activity.^[2]
- If one intakes proper food, his strength, health etc entities, including the metabolism will be protected as well as they are dependent upon the *agni* or else it deprives.^[3]

In *Ayurveda* there are mainly 13 types of *agni* these are basically divided in to three categories.

1. *Jatharagni*- refers to the whole digestion process in GIT
2. *Bhootagni* – Refers to the final digestion in GIT
3. *Dhatavagni* – Refers to the tissue metabolism.

Jathargni is also named as *kayagni*, *kosthagni* and *pachakagni*. In these three type of *agni* *jatharagni* is most important and powerful *agni* in the body. *Agni* plays an important role in the process of food digestion. The well digested food further provides Nourishment (vital essence), strength and complexion to the body. If *agni* vitiated by the *doshas*, the digestion process is hampered. So that *aahararasa* or *annarasa* and seven *dhatu* are not formed in proper manner.

Procees of digestion

Jatharagni paka

Whatever we take through the mouth is known as *aahar* (food), after taking the food with the help of *pranavayu* *aahar* goes downwards in *amashaya* (stomach). In stomach unctuous substance (*kledaka kapha*) are present, which are responsible for the softening of food and food gets split into small particles. Then *agni* (enzymes) located in the *udara* (stomach) gets stimulated by *samana vayu* after that the *agni* (*pachkagni*) digest and metabolized the *aahar* and produce *annarasa* (chyle) and *mala* (waste products).^[4]

The *agni* responsible for the digestion and the absorption of nutrition substance during digestion. The process of digestion is divided in 3 stages that is known as *avastha paka*.^[5]

S.no.	Avastha paka	Site of paka	Result of paka
1.	Madhuravastha paka	Amashaya (stomach)	Kapha aggravation
2.	Amlavastha paka	Pachmanashaya (grahni)	Vata aggravation
3.	Katuavastha paka	Pakvashaya (small and large intestine)	Pitta aggravation

As from the above description, the *annarasa* changes in different phase of digestion these phase of digestion are called *avsthapaka*. *Annarasa* is the end product of the digestion. The digested food has their original *rasa* which is in accordance with the *rasa* of the ingested food. This is called as *Nistha paka* as well as *Vipaka*.

Bhutagni paka

Bhutagni is one of that which is present in a basic element (*Mahabhutas*). There are five *agnis* (groups of enzymes) which is present in each of the five basic element, that is *Parthivagni* (earth), *i*(water), *taijasagni* (*agni*), *vayavagni* (*vayu*) and *akasagni* (*akash*). According to *ayurveda* "*Sarvam Dravyam Panchbhautikam*"^[6] according to this theory each and every cell of this universe is made-up of the five *mahabhutas* (*panchabhoutika*) and each cell consists of these five *bhutagni* respectively. All the nutrients which are found in the

world that we eat also made up of above five basic elements. Thus they are completely similar with respect to the five basic elements with their *bhutagni* in our body cells as well as *aahar* we take through mouth for the nutrition of our body from outside the world. The *panchabhoutika sharira* is to be maintained and nourished with the outside *panchaboutika dravya*. The five *Bhutagnis* digest their own part of the element that is present in the *aahar* (food). After the *bhutagni paka*, the digested materials nourish their own specific *bhoutika* elements of the body. Thus cause appropriate nourishment of tissues.^[7]

Dhatavagni paka

The final digestion is done by *dhatavagni*. *Dhatu* promotes the growth of the *sharir* (body). They are responsible for the *Dharana* and *Poshana* of the body. They are seven in number i'e *Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Asthi, Majja* and *shukra*. *Sapta dhatus* get nourishment from *annarasa* or chyle. chyle is the end product of digestion. Seven categories of *dhatuagni* undergo metabolic transformation in two different ways for sustainers of the body, one is *prasada bhaga* and second is *kitta bhaga*. Absorption of *prasadabhaga* (nutrients) through intestinal villi and mucosa to enter into lymph or blood, and elimination of *kitta bhaga* (*mutra, purisha/urine, stool*) to be done in this process of *dhatvagni paka*. It comprehends various digestive chemicals and enzymes produced in or poured in the gastrointestinal tract which participate in the course of digestion and absorption. The nutrient fraction of *rasa* (plasma) provides nourishment to *rakta* (blood), that of *rakta* (blood) to *mamsa* (muscle tissue), that of *mamsa* to *medas* (fat), that of *medas* to *asthi* (bone), that of *asthi* to *majja* (bone-marrow), and the nutrient fraction of *majja* provides nourishment to *sukra*(semen). The foetus (*garbha*) is the product of nutrient fraction of *sukra* or semen (sperm).^[8]

According to its performance of digestion as per influence of *Tridosha*, four functional states of *Agni* have been envisaged. On the basis of function *agni* are of 4 types.

1. *Vishamagni* – Irregular secretion of digestive enzyme.
2. *Tikshnagni* – Hypersecretion of digestive enzyme.
3. *Samagni* – Normal secretion of digestive enzyme. It is healthy state of life.
4. *Mandagni* – Hyposecretion of digestive enzyme

1. Vishamagni

When action of *Agni* is erratic and irregular due to predominance of *vata dosha*, Then this type of *agni* (enzymes responsible for digestion and metabolism) causes irregularity in the digestion of food, it is referred as *Vishmagni*.^[9]

2. *Tikshnagni*

The state of Agni influenced by *pitta dosha* is *Tikshnagni*. Here, even a very heavy diet is digested in a short span of time again leading to hunger. It is sharp type of *agni* with meagre fuel (in the form of food) causes depletion (absorption) of the tissue elements.^[9]

3. *Samagni*

State of *Agni* due to equilibrium of three *dosha* can be taken as *Samagni*. If the *agni* is in its normal state and if the individual takes appropriate quantity of food, then there will be proper digestion of food, which leads to the maintenance of the equilibrium of tissue elements.^[10]

4. *Mandagni*

- Due to dominance of *kapha*, when Agni is unable to digest even a small quantity of food easily digestible food can be called as *Mmandagni*. Only *Samagni* is the physiological state while remaining three are the abnormal states of *Agni* leading to various disorders.^[10]
- According to the *accharyas charaka mandangi* is cause of all disease.^[11]
- Which etiological factors cause *Mandagni* are responsible for the production of *Ama* and *Agnimandya* are interdependent to each other. Following are the chief causative factors of *Ama* mentioned by *Acharya Vagbhata*.^[12]

Agnimandya mainly leads to three things

- ***Jatharagni Mandya*** i.e. low digestive fire – Low digestive power hampers proper digestion and toxic products are formed. This toxic product remains unabsorbed in the intestine for longer time or even putrefied. It is root cause of all disease. like *alaska*, *visuchika*, *atisaar*, *vilambika*, *amlapitta*.
- ***Bhutagni Mandya*** i.e. the five *mahabhutas* as well as their attributes in the tissue elements in the body are nourished by the five *mahabhutas* and their attributes in the food respectively. Due to the *bhutagnimandya dhatuprdosaja vikar (madhumeha, sthaulya, aamavata, jwar)* will be arises.
- ***Dhatavagni Mandya*** i.e. low tissue fire- tissue fire plays important role in the process of formation of tissues from nutrient substances of the particular *dhatu* hence when *agnimandya* is developed it leads to *dhatvagni mandya* so utilization of tissue becomes incomplete and more production of *amavisha* takes place leading to various disorder like liver disease, and metabolic disorder.

Concept of “*ama*”

- The term “*Ama*” ordinarily means unripe, uncooked, undigested substance of food. It is produced from the impaired function of *agni*. It is toxic substance of gastro enteric origin. As per *Ayurveda*, disease state is due to disturbance or deviation in the equilibrium of *Dosha-Dhatu-Mala*. *Ama* is an important factor in pathology of any disease.^[13]
- Due to *alpa bala* of *agni*, *adhya dhatu* (*rasa dhatu*) is not formed properly which is retained in *amashaya* is called *ama*.^[14]
- As a result of weakness of *Jatharagni* which is located in *amashaya* there is formation of *avipakva ahararasa*, which is said to be *ama*.^[15]

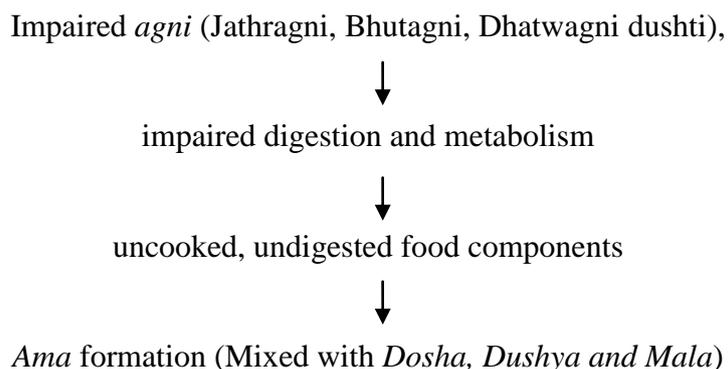
Ama (as per the different classics) can be understood as.

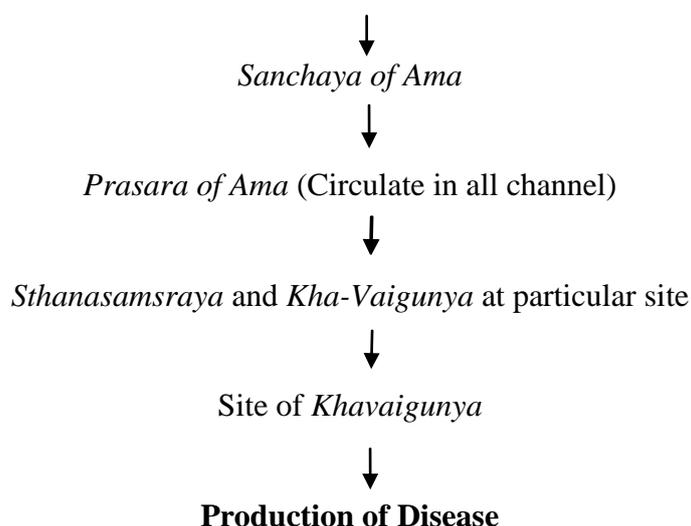
- Partially digested,
- Food which is undergoing the process of digestion,
- Incompletely digested food,
- Un-processed food,
- Matter which requires further *Parinama*.

Hetu of *ama*^[16]

1. **Ahara hetu** : - *Abhojana* - *Atibhojana* - *Ajir nabhojana* - *Asatmyabhojana* - *Guru, Ruksha, Sushka, Vistambhi and Vidahibhojana* etc. - *Vismasana* - *Viruddhabhojna*
2. **Vihara hetu**: - *Vegaavidharana* - *Divashayan* - *Aalasya*
3. **Apcharaj hetu**:- *Vibhram of Virechan, Vibhram of vaman, Vibhram of snehapaan*
4. **Manasika hetu**: - *Food consumption while afflicted with mental instability due to Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Shoka, etc.*
5. **Miscellaneous**: - *Adverse Desha, Kala, Ritu(Vaismya)*

Diseases production by *ama*





Symptoms produced due to *ama*

Sr.no.	According to <i>Astang hridayam</i> ^[17]	According to <i>Charaka samhita</i> ^[18]
1.	<i>Srotorodha</i> (Obstruction in Channels)	<i>Malavishtambhan</i> (Stasis of faecal matter)
2.	<i>Balabransha</i> (Lowering of immunity)	Stiffness in body
3.	<i>Gaurava</i> (Feeling of heaviness)	Fatigue
4.	<i>Alasya</i> (Unwillingness to perform of duties in spite of capability)	<i>Shirahshool</i> (Headache)
5.	<i>Apakti</i> (Indigestion)	<i>Murcha</i> (Fainting)
6.	<i>Nishthivan</i> (Accumulation of excessive saliva in mouth)	<i>Bhram</i> (Vertigo)
7.	<i>Mala Sanga</i> (Constipation)	<i>Prishtha evam katigrah</i> (Backache)
8.	<i>Aruchi</i> (non perception of taste)	<i>Jrimbha</i> (Yawning)
9.	<i>Klama</i>	<i>Angamarda</i> (Malaise)
10.	<i>VitMutra, Nakha, Dhatu, Chakshupitata/ Raktata/ Krishnata</i>	<i>Trishna</i> (Thirst)
11.	<i>Shiroruk</i> (Headache)	<i>Jvara</i> (Fever)
12.	<i>Mukhavairasya</i>	<i>Chardi</i> (Nausea & Vomiting)
13.	<i>Jvara</i> (fever)	<i>Pravahan</i> (Tenesmus)
14.	<i>Atisara</i> (Loose motions)	<i>Arochaka</i> (Anorexia)
15.	<i>Romharsa</i>	<i>Avipaka</i> (Indigestion)

Diseases due to *Ama*

<i>Abhyantra rogamarga</i>	<i>Madhyama rogamarga</i>	<i>Bahya rogamarga</i>
<i>Amajirna</i>	<i>Hrudroga</i>	<i>Medoroga</i>
<i>Vishtabdhajirna</i>	<i>Pakshaghata</i>	<i>Prameha</i>
<i>Vidagdhajirna</i>	<i>Ardita</i>	<i>Urustambha</i>
<i>Visuchika</i>	<i>Amavata</i>	<i>Shopha</i>
<i>Vimlambika</i>		
<i>Alasaka</i>		
<i>Grahani</i>		
<i>Chhardi</i>		
<i>Atisara</i>		

CONCLUSION

Summing up all above the explanation it can be concluded that *Agni* digests the food at various levels and nourishes the body systems, but hypofunction or impaired function of these *Agnis* at various levels the undigested food material is formed i.e. improper metabolism produces *Ama*. Further accumulation of undigested food material as well as metabolic waste that are not properly eliminated or utilized in the body can be considered as *Ama*. It is toxic substance of gastro enteric origin. *Ama* is an important factor in pathology of any disease. Each and every individuals in the world are individually, totally different in *prakriti*, *dosha*, '*agni*', *koshta* and such other factors. So before administering any therapeutic procedure, it is must to assess the *agni* of a person. So the *agni* is most important factor of our body.

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