

CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF LANGHANA UPAKRAMA IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an ancient science of life, i.e. the word “Ayurveda” itself says “*Ayusho vedaha*” that means veda of life is Ayurveda. This life science has two main purposes first is to maintain the health of healthy people and another is to cure the diseased one. Along with the administration of medicine, *langhana* is also told by Granthakaras. The word *langhana* is derived from the word *laghu* means light. The treatment which provide lightness in body and relieves the heaviness of body is called as *langhana* treatment. Increase in *kapha dosha* causes heaviness in body, it causes the blocking of channels. When this *kapha* is associated with *Pitta dosha*, then *langhana* treatment is advisable. The principle avers that *Langhana* kindles metabolic/digestive fire which, in absence of food, brings about *paachana* of vitiated doshas,

thereby riposting health. Ayurveda advocates *langhana* depending upon the *dosha*, *agni*, *vaya*, *kala*, and *bala* of the individual, as a preventive as well as therapeutic modality. The *Langhana* achieved will have *Amapachaka* effects at the *Koshta* level as well as *Sarvadaihika* level. Here special efforts are taken to study *Langhanaopkrama* with special context to its definition, types, indications, contraindications and its importance.

KEYWORDS: *Langahana*, *Upakrama*, *Apatarpana*, *Jatharagni*, *laghu*.

INTRODUCTION

Taking into consideration today's lifestyle and various disorders arising due to it, langhana is the best remedy for them. Disturbed daily schedule like late night sleeping, getting up late in the morning, excessive consumption of junk food, excessive stress all are responsible for these disorders. Globalization has changed the way people do their jobs and business across the world. All the working sectors need skillful and dedicated workforce willing to put extra efforts to achieve business objectives. Most of these professionals are habituated to shortcuts in their daily routine. Eating habits are disturbed in these people which creates indigestion and ultimately to *ama*. *Aamadosha*, the root cause of all diseases according to Ayurveda, is generated and thus one becomes a diseased person. Granthakaras said that in every disease there is *agnimaandya* due to which *ama* formed at the initial stage of *vyadhi* where langhana is done as treatment. So it is a very important concept in Ayurveda.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data of this literature is collected from different Ayurvedic Samhitas and their respective commentaries, research papers and journals.

NIRUKTI

“*laghi gatau, laghi shoshanea*” (Amarakoṣa 1/1/64)

„Langhana” word derived from *langha dhaatu* and *lyuḥ pratyaya*. *Langha dhaatu* indicates *gati* or *shoṣhaṇa* (to soak).

DEFINITION

“*Yat kinchit laghavkaram dehe tat langhanam smrutam*”^[1]

“*Langhanam laghavay tat*”^[2]

In gross meaning, it indicates the whole procedure of producing lightness in the body.

SYNONYMS

Anashana, *Apatarpaṇa*, *Laghubhojana* and *Upavaasa* are the synonyms of langhana. Langhana as *upavaasa* found in *samhita*.^[3]

TYPES OF THE LANGHANA

A) Acharya Charaka

Apatarpaṇa (3 types) = langhana, Langhana- pachana, Doṣavasechana.

Langhana (10 types)^[4] = Shodhana – 4, Pipaasa, Maruta, Atapa, Pachana, Upavaasa,

Vyayama.

B) Acharya Vagbha

Langhana (2 types)^[5] – Shodhana, Shamana

Langhana (12 types)^[6]

a) **Shamana** = Pachana, Deepana, Kshut, Tui, Vyayama, Atapa, Maruta

b) **Shodhana** = Niruha, Vamana, Kayavireka, Shirovireka, Asravisruti.

The whole langhana karma can be implemented as *Shodhanaroopi* and *Shamanaroopi* langhana.

Shodhanaroopi Langhana

1. Vamana

“*tatra doshaharanam urdhvabhagam vamana sangyakam*”^[7]

Vamana is defined as “the procedure which brings the vitiated dosha from urdhwabhaga of the body.” Chakrapani commenting on urdhwabhaga mentions that elimination of dosha from the mouth is considered as urdhwabhaga. This process has been considered as virechana also since it is primarily a shodhana, in the sense eliminating the shareeramala from the body. But conventionally virechana refers to purgation. This vamana therapy, a shodhana roopi - langhana brings the lightness in the body by eliminating the dosha.

2. Virechana

“*adhobhagam virechan sangyakam*”^[8]

The procedure which eliminates the dosha from *adhobhaga* of the body is called as Virechana, Chakrapani has considered *adhobhagahara* as elimination through *guda*. *Kapha* and *pitta* doshas are *drava* dhatus hence they can tolerate langhana (Bhavaprakasha), in the form of shodhana like vamana and virechana. In virechana, pitta, kapha and vata dosha gets eliminated sequentially and brings about lightness in the body.

3. Basti

Administration of *Aushadhi dravyas* through *guda* is Basti chikitsa, Here the basti does *dosha nirharana* by the route of the anus. By the dosha niraharana the lightness of the body occurs, hence basti is included in the langhana Chakrapani while commenting on “*Chatusprakara somshuddhi*” says that all the elimination therapies except the *anuvasana* type of basti is included under shodhana therapy, because *anuvasana* basti does not eliminate the doshas

from the body, instead helps in nourishing the same.

4. Shirovirechana

Shirovirechana is a synonym for nasya. In sushruta samhita nasya is defined as “The procedure of administrating Aushadha or Aushadha siddha Sneha through the nasal root”. It is of two types Shirovirechana and Snehana. In Sharangadhara samhita, nasya has been classified into two types *Rechana* and *Snehana*, *Rechana* does karshanata of the dosha. Shirovirechana is indicated mainly in kaphapradhana shirorogas like *Shirogourava*, *Shirashoola*, *Peenasa* etc. After going through the explanation of shiro-virechana acc to different authors, it seems to give the meaning of elimination of morbid dosha through the nose by administration of shirovirechana dravyas.

Shamanaroopi Langhanas

1. Pipaasa

Withholding the urge to drink water is called as pipaasa. This should not be done to such an extent as to cause bad effects like *Mukha shosha*, *Kanthashosha*, *Raktashosha*, *Hridayavyatha*. Pipasa improves *agni* and dries up the *kleda* and *abhishyandhi* conditions in the body. It is advised to correct the *atyambupana* defect which weakenes the *agni* and causes *ama*. By pipasa, *shamana* of the dosha takes place and body becomes light.

2. Maruta

This has been considered as shamanaroopilanghana. Maruta which is a synonym of vata dosha inside the body definitely plays an important role in maintaining *agni* and does pachanakarma in physiological condition. But here in this particular context maruta is the *vayu* outside the body. Certain types of maruta from particular direction is told to be diseases causing and some maruta from other directions has been told to be healthy. *Dushtamaruta* is told to cause *Janapa doshwamsarogas* so clean and fresh air has got much to contribute for the health of our body and vata kindles *jatharagni* and helps in *amapachana* and brings about lightness in the body. Chakrapani commenting on maruta says that exposure to the wind causes lightness but if it is cold wind, it is not so effective.

3. Atapa

This is also one type of shamanaroopi langhana and one among the 10 niragni sweda. In *Sharad rutu*, the *suryataptajala* is told to be *Hamsodaka* and *amritopama* and *nirdosha*. This reference of Vagbhata states that atapa does *shamana* of mainly kaphadosha and brings

laghuta in the body. In Atharvaveda we find extensive use of sunrays in treating various disorders like *hridroga*, *vrikkroga*, *yakratroga* etc. By looking into all these references it is very much evident that it can be used in many metabolic and digestive disorders caused by ama.

4. Pachana

Acharya Sharangadhara is the first author to define and differentiate pachana and deepana. Pachana is defined as “*pachayati aamam na vahni kuryad yat tadhvi pachanam*”.^[9] The procedure which does *amapachana* but does not do *agni deepana* is called as pachana. Deepika commentary on the above reference says “Ama pachana means doing rookshana karma in sama dosha, dhatu, mala”. In our classics quite good number of pachana dravyas are mentioned. Chitraka has been told to be the best among them. In samadosha conditions, by the proper administration of pachana dravyas body becomes light. Pachana has been indicated in the following madhyabala rogas like *hridroga*, *visuchika*, *alasaka*, *jwara*, *vibandha*, *gourava*, *udgara*, *hrallasa*, *arochaka* etc. diseases caused by vitiation of kapha and pitta dosha.

5. Deepana

This is defined as “*pachet na aamam vahnikruncha dipanam*”.^[10] The therapeutical measure which increases agni but does not do pachana of ama is called deepana in the diseases like *jwara*, *grahani*, *rajayakshma*, *atisara* etc. we find the indication of many deepana drugs. These drugs does agnideepana not only at the level of *jatharagni* but also at the level of *bhootagni* and *dhatwagni* and thus helps in the correcting the *agni* which is the main factor in correcting ama.

6. Upavasa

Means taking *atylpa ahara* or no ahara even when there is hunger. In our classics we find the indication of upavasa in terms of langhana in many instances, while treating the diseases like *jwara*, *visoochika*, *alasaka*, *medoroga* etc. upavasa is indicated as a treatment until it produces lightness and good effects in the body, but care should be taken that it never leads to the bad effects of *kshudha vegadharana*. Diseases like *chhardhi*, *ateesara*, *hridroga*, *hrallas*, *visoochika*, *alasaka*, *jwara*, *vibandha*, *gourava*, *udgara*, *hrallasa* etc. which are caused by vitiation of kapha and pitta and which are *alpabala* in nature are to be treated by the control of pipasa and upavasa.

7. Vyayama

Acharya Charaka has defined vyayama as “*Shareera cheshta sthairyath balavardhini*”^[11] means a physical action which is desirable and is capable of bring about bodily stability and strength is known as Vyayama. Arunadatta has defined vyayam as “*Shareerayasajanajam karma vyayam sadnitam*”^[12] means the action which brings the tiredness in the body is called Vyayam. Vyayam should be done only upto ardhshakti of a person. Vyayama is a type of niragni sweda. So sweda and vyayama both create ushna in the body and in turn causes agnideepti and ama pachana. Vyayam brings about *laghavata, medokshaya and agnideepti*, these qualities which are antagonistic to ama helps in the digestion of the same and will never give way for the formation of it again. In *Urusthamba, jalabhisarana vyayama* and in *sthoulya, vyavaya and vyayam* has been advised as treatment.

The Gunas of Langhana Dravyas^[13]

Laghu (light), Ushna (hot), Tikshna (sharp), Vishada (clean), Ruksha (dry), Sukshma (subtle), Khara (coarse), Sara (slippy), Kathina (hard) are gunas of langhana dravya.

Dominancy of mahabhuta in langhana dravya

Langhana dravyas possesses Akasha, Vaayu and Agni mahabhuta dominancy.

Samyaka yoga of langhana (proper langhana)^[14]

- Easy excretion of flatulence, urine, feces without any interference
- lightness of body and chest part
- clear belching
- cleanliness in throat and mouth region
- vanishing of giddiness and tiredness
- sweating
- *Ruchi* (desire for intake of food)
- increase in thirst and appetite, these are signs of proper langhana.

Indications for langhana therapy

- According to Vagbhata, *Mehadosha, Aamadosha, Snehaadhikya, Jwara, Urustambha, Kustha, Visarpa, Vidradhi, Pleeharoga, Sheeroroga, Kantharog, Netra roga* are few indications where langhana is the foremost given treatment.^[15]
- Similarly Yogratnakar has stated that *Aakshiroga, Kukshiroga, Pratishaya, Vrana, Jwara*, can totally be cured by langhana therapy within 5days.^[16] thus for a physician it is helpful

in day today clinical practice.

Contraindications of langhana therapy

- Vaidya Shodhala states avasthavishesh **langhananishidha:** *Vaatrogi, Kshudha, trushanapeedit, Mukha shosha, Bhram, Bala, Vriddha, Garbhini, Durbala*, one who is tierd due to *margparikramana, krodha, shoka, kaam* and *kshayajawara*.^[17]

Its very essential to follow the indications and contraindications during treatment. Since dosha samyata is our main objective if don't follow this then instead of establishing the balance it would vitiate the doshas.

Clinical Application of Langhana

1. **In Jwara**, jatharagni get vitiated with Doshas and immigrate from stomach to other parts of the body with rasa. So it becomes difficult for stomach to digest any food or medicines. For this firstly it is necessary to cure *agni (i.e. agni deepana)* by langhana and pachana. In Jwara first treatment is *Upavasa* (langhana). *In taruna Jwara* (initial stage of Jwara) langhana is mentioned in *chikitsa*.
2. **In Raktapitta**, blood get vitiated with Pitta due to *amadasha* and comes out from natural openings of the body, firstly should treated with langhana for ama pachana.
3. **In Amatisar** (i.e. dysentery with amavastha) diarrhea should not be stopped. langhana is told as treatment.
4. When we go to the shsasti upakrama of **Vrana** in sushruta, The first and foremost therapy we come across is *Apatarpana*. This apatarpana is not only confined to vrana but also can be implemented in some of surgical disorders like arbuda etc as the modern researches shown that the Fasting eliminates preneoplastic cells from our body.
5. **Margavarodhjanya Vatavyadhi** is due to *kapha* and *medas* that should be treated by rukshana and Langhana.
6. In **Vatarakta** as the pathology creates obstruction of *raktamarga* among which the accumulation of *kapha* and *medas* is major phenomenon (obstructive arterial disease) so in such conditions langhana is choice of treatment.
7. Some of the other margavarana janya rogas nothing but **Santarpanotta nidana janya vyadhis** like *Hrudroga* (IHD), *Pliharoga* (splenomegaly due to hyperlipoproteinemia), *gulma* and *Atisaar* (ischemic colitis), the langhana can be implemented.

DISCUSSION

The first line of treatment of ama i.e. Langhana gives sufficient time to the existing agni in the body to adequately complete the entire process of digestion of whatever residual amount of ama or food is left. Thus this treatment basically involves a process of load shedding in which new food is not introduced. So the agni is not overloaded. Thus unhampered agni gets enough time to digest by acting over whatever is left. In Nidanaparivarjana, langhana as upavaasa excludes all type of *nidaana sevana* which is the first step of *Chikitsaa*. It stops the formation of *sammurcchanaa* and directly improves *agni* and removes *ama*. In Charaka Samhita it is mentioned that in Amashayottha vyadhis and in Rasapradoshaja vyadhis langhana is first line of treatment. It has also been stated that *samadosh*a cannot be eliminated until and unless *ama* attains the *pakwa* form. For this, langhana is the best therapy.

CONCLUSION

For treating amavastha of vyadhi, first line of treatment is langhana (which creates laghu guna that is opposite to guru guna of ama). Langhana has been considered as best line of treatment for *ama*. Langhana helps in purifying body channels. As we know today's corporate world and lifestyle leads more to *Amajanya vyadhis* and for *amavastha* of various vyadhis it is that there is no alternative option for its treatment other than langhana. Excretion of residing ama in the body without curing or digesting it with langhana therapy destroys the body. The Langhana achieved will have Amapachaka effects at the Koshta level as well as Sarvadaihika level. Even animals too whenever get sick, they follow the rules of langhana therapy without consulting any doctor (they eat grasses and vomit, doesn't eat anything until they feel better), then we are the most evolved minded humans, should understand the unavoidable importance of langhana therapy.

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