

ROLE OF AGNI IN MAINTAINING HEALTHY SKIN: A REVIEW**Sonia Meend^{1*}, Priyanka Devatwal² and Sunil Kumar³**^{1,2}M.D. Scholar, Department of Sharir Rachana, National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur.³Professor & HOD, Department of Sharir Rachana, National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur.Article Received on
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Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur.**ABSTRACT**

Human skin is the largest organ of the human body as well the outermost covering of the body. In ayurveda terminology, skin is termed as *Twacha*. *Twacha* is the *updhatu* of *mamsa dhatu* and is *adhishtana* (seat) of *sparshnendriya*. In general impression, nowadays occurrence of skin diseases have increased. 50-60% of the patients seeking medical advice are suffering from skin disease. From *Ayurveda* perspective, *Agni* (digestive power) of an individual is considered to be the most important in keeping an individual healthy and in turn beautiful. *Agni* is the responsible factor for providing *Ayu* (longevity), *Bala* (strength), *Varna* (complexion), *Utsaha* (zeal),

Upachaya (proper assimilation), *Prabha* (glow). *Acharyas* have mentioned that a person is healthy if his/her *Agni* (digestive power) is *Sama* (proper). Since skin is the mirror of the metabolism taking place inside our body so no matter how much external cosmetics one apply but if his/her *Agni* is not proper, it will lead to the formation of *Saamaja dhatus* and in turn the effects will be projected on skin as acnes and various skin disorders. *Agni dushti* will also lead to *dhatu pradoshaja vikaras* out of which *ras pradoshaja*, *rakta pradoshaja*, and *mamsa pradoshaja vikaras* are mainly manifested on skin. If *Jathragni* of an individual is working properly, then proper *Ahaara rasa* will be formed. If *Dhatvagni* is proper, then proper formation of next *dhatu* from the previous *dhatu* will be there and *dhatu parampara* will go uninterrupted. Therefore formation of *Niramaja dhatus* will take place and as a result proper *dhatu saaras* like *twak saara*, *rakta saara* will be formed which will lead to a healthy and a beautiful body. So, *Agni* is the ultimate key factor for keeping the skin healthy throughout ages.

KEYWORDS: *Agni*, *varna*, *twak vikaras*, beauty, healthy skin.

INTRODUCTION

Human skin is the largest organ of integumentary system. According to modern science, it is the first line of defence and protects the body from external microbes, helps in protecting the body by maintaining homeostasis.

According to Ayurveda, skin is known as *twacha* or *twak*. It is the *adhishthana* (site) of *sparnendriya* which is a type of *panch gyanendriya*.^[1] In ayurvedic classics, *twacha* is developed in 3rd month of intra uterine life.^[2] According to Acharya Sushruta, *twacha* is described as “*ksheerasya santanika*”. it is developed as a layer of cream comes over milk during boiling of milk; in the similar way, *twacha* is formed from the heat generated by the *samyoga* of *shukra* and *shonita*.^[3]

From *Ayurveda* perspective, *Agni* (digestive power) of an individual is considered to be the most important in keeping an individual healthy and in turn beautiful. *Agni* is the responsible factor for providing *Ayu* (longevity), *Bala* (strength), *Varna* (complexion), *Utsaaha* (zeal), *Upachaya* (proper assimilation), *Prabha* (glow).^[4]

Acharyas have mentioned that a person is healthy if his/her *Agni* (digestive power) is *Sama* (proper).^[5] Since skin is the mirror of the metabolism taking place inside our body so no matter how much external cosmetics one apply but if his/her *Agni* is not proper, it will lead to the formation of *Saamaja dhatu*s and in turn the effects will be projected on skin as acnes and various skin disorders. *Agni dushti* will also lead to *dhatu pradoshaja vikaras* out of which *ras pradoshaja*, *rakta pradoshaja*, and *mamsa pradoshaja vikaras* are mainly manifested on skin.

If *Jathragni* of an individual is working properly, then proper *Ahaara rasa* will be formed. If *Dhatvagni* is proper, then proper formation of next *dhatu* from the previous *dhatu* will be there and *dhatu parampara* will go uninterrupted. Therefore formation of *Niramaja dhatu*s will take place and as a result proper *dhatu saaras* like *twak saara*, *rakta saara* will be formed which will lead to a healthy skin and a beautiful body.

Importance of *agni*

Agni is the prime factor for a person to live a long and a healthy life. In *Ayurveda* classics, *Agni* has been of prime importance for sustaining life and disruptions of *Agni* can lead to various types of disorders. According to Acharya Charaka, *Agni* is the responsible factor for

sustenance of *ayu*(longevity), provide *varna* (complexion), *swasthya* (good health), *utsaaha*(zeal to do any work), *upchaya*(assimilation of the ingested food), and *prabha*(lusture).^[6] *Oja*(immunity), *agnayah* (bio fires) and *pranas* are dependant upon *agni*. According to Acharya Charaka, if the *agni* of a person is extinguished, the person is similar to a dead person.^[7] According to Yog Ratnakar, *agni* is the *moola* for the *bala* (strength) of an individual.^[8]

In ayurveda classics, 13 types of *agni* are mentioned. 1 is *jathragni*, 5 types of *bhootagni* and 7 types of *dhatwagni* are mentioned.

Role of *jathragni* in maintaining skin health

This *agni* is considered as *pradhantam* (principle) of all *agni*. According to Acharya Chakrapani, illumination and diminuation of *Jathragni* directly imitates other *agni*.^[9] *Jathragni* is located in the *amashaya* and is responsible for the digestion of the ingested food. According to Acharya Chakrapani, treatment of *jathragni* should be considered as the treatment of the body.^[10] It plays a main role in digesting the ingested *ahara* (food material) and transforming it into *ahara rasa*. This *ahara rasa* with the action of *dhatwagni* is transformed into respective *dhatu* and the *dhatu kitta bhaga*. If *jathragni* is not proper or diminished then the *ahara rasa* will not properly digested. It will get accumulated in the *amashya* and ultimately leads to the formation of *ama*.^[11] These *ama* is nothing but the sticky toxins which are accumulated all over the body. These *ama* will block the *strotas* due to which *samchaya*(increase) of dosha will take place which will ultimately lead to *vyadhi*, manifestations of which are first seen over the skin since skin is the first mirror of the human metabolic process.

Role of *bhootagni* in maintaining skin health

Everything in the world is made up of *panchmahaboota* (*akash, vayu, agni, jala, prithvi*). *bhootagni* is the one which digest *panchmahaboota* present in our *panchbhautika ahara*. There are 5 type of *bhootagni* of each five basic element namely *akashagni, vayvagni, apyagni, parthivagni, tejogni*. These *agni* digest their own part of the element present in the food material. After the digestion of the food by *bhootagni*, digested material containing the qualities similar to each *bhoota* nourish their own specific *bhautika* element of the body.^[12] The *amsa* of *agni* situated in the *sweda* and *ambuvaha strotas* brings out *bhrajaka pitta* of skin and helps in digestion of *vayu* portion of *ahara*. If *bhootagni* is affected, the subsequent portion of the body nurtured by the type of *bhootagni* will be affected. For eg. When

vayvagni is normally distributed among skin, skin gets lusture and when deranged, then discolouration of the skin and disturbances in sense of touch takes place.

Role of dhatwagni in maintaining skin health

Dhatwagni is nothing but small and scattered portions of *jathragni* in *dhatu*s which are responsible for the *chaya* and *upchaya* of *dhatu*s. *Ashtang hridaya* clears that the moiety of *kayagni* that are distributed to and permeate to all the *dhatu*s is *dhatwagni*. A decrease of it (*dhatwagni*) to below the normal makes the *dhatu*s increase in their amount (*dhatu vridhhi*) and a increase in *dhatwagni* leads to decrease in *dhatu* (*dhatukshaya*).^[13] There are seven *dhatwagnis* namely *rasagni*, *raktagni*, *mamsagni*, *medogni*, *asthyagni*, *majjjagni*, *shukragni*. If *Dhatwagni* is proper, then proper formation of next *dhatu* from the previous *dhatu* will be there and *dhatu parampara* will go uninterrupted. Therefore formation of *Niramaja dhatu*s will take place and as a result proper *dhatu saaras* like *twak saara*, *rakta saara* will be formed which will lead to a healthy and a beautiful body.

If *dhatwagni* is not proper then *samaja dhatu*s are formed and *mala bhaga* of *dhatu*s increases in amount. Therefore *dhatu sara* are not formed properly which ultimately leads to *dhatu pradoshaja vikaras*, effect of which are manifested over skin; mainly *rakta pradoshaja* and *mamsa pradoshaja vikaras*.

CONCLUSION

Therefore *agni* is the key factor responsible in keeping individual healthy and in turn beautiful. If all the 13 types of *agnis* of an individual are in healthy state then it will definitely bestow not only beautiful skin but also good health. If the *agni* is not proper then it will lead to *apakwa anna rasa* (undigested food particles) in the *amashaya* (stomach). This is nothing but *ama* (toxins) which gets accumulated all over body and leads to various types of skin diseases. Proper balance of all the type of *agni* is responsible for formation of proper *dhatu*s and subsequently proper *dhatu saras* formed utimate effect of which is seen on the skin.

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