

A STUDY ON THE PROSPECTS OF AYURVEDIC THERAPY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF GASTROENTERITIS

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ABSTRACT

Gastroenteritis is a very common medical condition distressing life. Though it is not a fatal condition but mismanagement may produce serious consequences. Management of Gastroenteritis by conventional medicines is essential as well as life saving in acute and fatal condition but the complication of Gastroenteritis as well as disturbance of gastric flora by antibiotics is sometime causing patient trouble more than disease itself. Sometime patient have irregular bowel habit even for more than six months. If such patients give additional support of *Ayurvedic* medicines complication as well as toxic effects of conventional therapies can be minimized. The objective of this paper is to make readers aware about general management of gastroenteritis with the help of common and easily available *Ayurvedic* medicines.

Keywords: Gastroenteritis, *Visuchika*, *Ayurveda*

INTRODUCTION

Gastroenteritis is inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract, involving the stomach, intestines, or both; Gastroenteritis is frequently termed "stomach flu" or "gastric flu" because the most frequent cause of gastroenteritis is viral. However influenza viruses (flu viruses) do not cause gastroenteritis. Gastroenteritis can present as disease as well as symptom of other disease which further complicates its management.

Management of gastroenteritis in *Ayurveda*

According to *Acharaya Charaka*¹ a wise physician should first examine the specific characters of diseases and then take up the treatment only in case of curable diseases. A skillful physician always acts after careful examination². Thus before discussing the management of Gastroenteritis, the

pathophysiological aspect of disease as describe in *Ayurveda* should study.

Concept of gastroenteritis in *Ayurveda*

On the basis of chief sign and symptoms present in Gastroenteritis i.e. Vomiting and Diarrhea it can be correlate with *Visucika*, a disease describe elaborately in all the *Ayurvedic* texts. *Visucika* is described both as a disease and as a symptom in *Ayurveda*. The expulsion of undigested food either through upper or lower channels of the alimentary canal is known as *Visucika*³. *Visuchika* is *Amapradoshaja Vyadhi* as described by *Acharaya Caraka*⁴.

What is *Visuchika*?

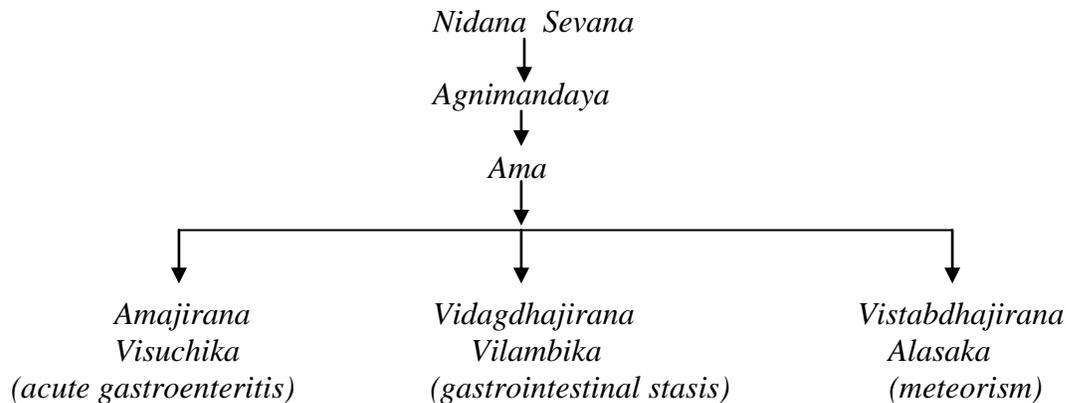
Clinical condition where in aggravated *Vata*, because of severe *Ajirna* (indigestion) produces pricking type of pain in body parts is called *Visucika*^{5,6}. The disease which indicates various possible complications is known as *Visuchika*. *Visuchika* and

Alasaka are *Amapradoshaja* diseases. According to *Acharya Charaka* Chyme disorder can be divided into two classes viz., acute alimentary irritation (*Visucika*) and intestinal torpor (*Alasaka*). *Visucika* is a condition in which vitiated *Agni* causes over-affection of *Ama* leading to expulsion of *Doshas* through both upper and lower passage.

Concept of *ama* and its role in pathogenesis of *Visucika*

The term *Ama* in ordinary parlance means unripe, uncooked, immature and undigested. In the context of medicine this term refers to event that follows and factors which arises as a consequence of the impaired functioning of *Kayaagani*. According to *Vagbhata* "due to hypo functioning of *Ushma (agni)* the first *Dhatu* viz. the *Rasa* or Chyme, is not properly formed. Instead, the *Annarasa* undergoes fermentation and or putrefaction (*dushta*) being retained in the *Amashaya*⁷. The *Agni*, impairment which may be brought about by abstinence from food, indigestion, overeating, irregular diet habits, indulgence of incompatible articles of food, the consumption of cold substances: mal effect of *Virechana*, *Vamana*, *Snehana*, the wasting of tissues which follows in the wake of diseases: allergic states, change in

climate, season, and the suppression of natural urges, fail to digest even the most easily digestible light food. Thus the undigested food attains *Shuktatwa* (fermentation), leading to the onset of toxic states⁸. Further *Acharaya* told that *Anna visha* is a serious toxic condition comparable only to acute state of poisoning. The symptoms of such type of indigestion are intestinal stasis (*Alasaka*), vomiting and dysentery (*Visuchika*), headache, fainting, giddiness, body ache, thirst, fever, anorexia etc. This *Anna visha* when combine with *Vatadi Doshas* produces different diseases. *Ama* is said to be the root cause of every disease in *Ayurveda*, *Amavisha* (Food toxins/ indigested food antigens) which is intensely toxic may endanger life and as line of treatment of *Amadosha* and *Visha* are of opposite kind; the former has to be treated as one of the fatal prognosis. *Acharaya Charaka* clearly mentioned that it is not only the dietary habit or changes in dietary habit that can cause indigestion the psychological status of the person also play a very important in *Ama* production. Dietic indiscretions and emotional stress both is equally provider for *Ama* genesis. Acute disorders of the alimentary system due to *Ama* may take the one or the other of following forms:



**Visuchika as a disease
Samparapti**

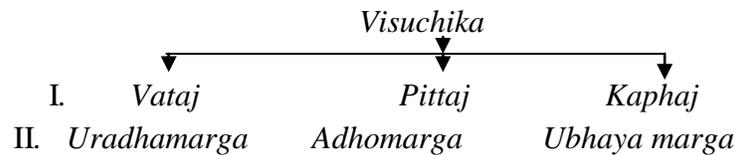
The aggravated *doshas* affect the undigested food and get mixed up with it. This combination obstructs a part of stomach and rapidly moves through upward and downward tracts separately to produce *Visuchika* as per involvement of particular *dosha*. **Vata**: produces colic pain, malaise, dryness of mouth, fainting, giddiness, irregular power of digestion, rigidity of sides, back and waist and contraction and hardening of

vessels. **Pitta**: causes fever, diarrhea, internal burning sensation, thirst, intoxication, giddiness etc. **Kapha**: causes vomiting, anorexia, indigestion etc.

Symptoms:

“*Murchatisara vamathu*” i.e. fainting, diarrhea, vomiting, thirst, abdominal pain, giddiness, rigidity of extremities, more of yawning, burning sensation, shivering, pain in heart region, and headache are the symptoms and sign of *Visuchika*.

Types of Visuchika



Visuchika Upadarva:

- *Nidranasha* (loss of sleep)
- *Arati* (restlessness)
- *Kampa* (Shivering)
- *Mutraghata* (Anuria)
- *Visamangata* (Coma)

Clinical presentation of disease

A patient of age 35 year being housewife by occupation and living at Samnaghata, Varanasi comes with the following chief complaints; Vomiting with watery stool -2 days, Pain in abdomen - 3 days, Excessive weakness -2 days, No H/O bloody stool, alternate diarrhea and constipation, tenesmus, mucous discharge in stool, No past H/O DM, HTN, BA, T.B.

General Physical Examination

Pallor +, Odema -ve, Lymphadenopathy -ve, Cynosis -ve, Clubbing -ve, Icterus -ve, Temperature- Afebrile, B.P = 100/60mmHg, P/R= 102/min, RR.= 20/mins

Systemic Examination

CNS: patient is well oriented with normal higher functions, Reflexes are B/L de-

pressed, Muscle Power= N (B/L), Muscle Nutrition= N, Co-ordination= well co-ordinate motor function, no sensory loss.

CVS: Tachycardia with no abnormal sound.

Respiratory System: B/L normal air entry with no added sound heard.

GIT: Paraumbilical mild tenderness with no organomegaly, guarding or rigidity, fluid thrill.

Investigations carried out

- Routine blood test: TLC= 8900/cumm, N75; L35; M02; E02; B05; Hbgm%=8.6gm/dl, PLT= 2lakh/cumm.
- RBS= 70gm/dl
- LFT: Total Bilirubin= 1mg/dl, SGOT= 46U/L, SGPT= 28U/L, Total Protein= 6.8 gm/dl.
- RFT: S. Creatanine= 0.8mg/dl, Urea= 40mg/dl, Sodium =148mmol/l, Potassium=2.8mmol/l.
- Urine (Routine and Microscopic) test =Normal.
- Stool Examination: No ova, cyst or occult blood.

Diagnosis

On the basis of clinical sign and symptoms the above case diagnosed as Acute Viral Gastroenteritis and according to Ayurvedic point of view as *Visucika* (Patient had given the H/O food intake in a marriage party 3 days before after which she develops the above symptoms thus it is *Asanchayajanya Amaja Vyadhi* i.e. *Kosthagata Ama avastha*).

Management of *visucika* through ayurvedic measures

Cikitsa Yojana (Treatment Protocol):

Nidana Parivarjana: Since *Visucika* is a *Amaprodosaja* disease *Laghana/Apatarpana* (Lightening therapy/ reducing therapy) is suitable line of treatment but should be used vigilantly after judging patients power (*bala*). *Amapachana*, *Agnideepana* drugs are the important therapeutic agents indicated in *Visucika*.

Visesha Chikitsa of Visucika:

Langhanam followed by *Samsarjan Krma* (advised after *Virechana Karma*) should be adopted in the treatment of *Visuchika*. *Pippali* and *Lavana* added water should be given as drink to induce *Vaman* (emesis) and after *Vaman –svedana* and *Phalavarti* is indicated. Caution: Rehydration should be started at once to prevent dehydration and other complications. Moreover *Sansodhana* therapy should be used only in that patient who do not have much water loss, young, and can endure the *Sansodhana Aushadhi*.

***Aushadha Yojana* (Drug treatment):**

In acute Gastroenteritis (*Visucika*), if the patient is able to take medicine orally then following drug should be given:

- *Sanjivini vati* -1(125mg) tab every 3hour alternate with *Lahsunadi Vati*- 2 tab (125mg) in *Nimbu swarasa*.
- A combination of *Swarnagairika* + *Amritadhara*+ *Mishri* is beneficial in *Pattika Prakriti* patient.
- *Pudina Arka/ Soupha Arka* 2-4 drops can be given 3-4 times.
- If the patient has abdominal pain then *Mahasankha Vati* (250mg) twice can be given.
- A decoction of *Nagarmotha*+ *Kutaja*+ *Bilva*+ *Sunthi* +*Ativisha* can be used for *Amopachana*.
- *Kutaja- Bilva panaka* or *Bilvavleha* can be given for *Stambana* of *Atimala pravritti*.
- Simultaneously Rehydration therapy should be continued to avoid Dehydration and its complication.

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Source of support: Nil
Conflict of interest: None Declared