

## CONCEPT OF LANGHANA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO AMAVATA

Sagar Manisha Suryakant<sup>1</sup> Chandurkar Vivek Shrirampant<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>P.G. Scholar Final Year, <sup>2</sup>M.D.(Kayachikitsa), Professor and H.O.D.

Kayachikitsa Department, Seth G.R. Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Solapur, Maharashtra, India

## ABSTRACT

*Amavata* (Rheumatoid Arthritis) is a chronic inflammatory autoimmune disorder, having major clinical features like; *sandhi-Shoola* (Joint pain), *Sandhi- Shotha* (Joint and peripheral tissue inflammation), *Jwara* (Fever), *Sandhi Graha* (Morning Stiffness). These symptoms affect day to day activities of people. In India many people suffer by *amavata*. Today's changing life style and eating habits (fast foods, bakery products) are responsible for formation of *Ama* (Substance produced in stomach by impaired digestion). *Ama* results due to *agnimandya* (decreased function of digestive fire), which is considered to be root cause of *amavata*. In modern science there is only symptomatic and suppressive treatment is available for *amavata* but the pathogenesis remains same. For *Samprapti Vighatana* (Breaking of pathogenesis) and its management, *amavata* requires rational approach. Therefore in ayurveda as *Amavata* is considered to be *rasaja* and *amashayotha vyadhi*; *Agnideepana* (enhances digestive fire) and *Amapachana* (digestion of ama) are the basic principles of treatment. Hence, *Langhana* (complete fasting or light diet) plays major role in this, which increases the digestive fire and helps in digestion of already formed *ama*.

**Keywords:** *Mandagni, Amavata, Langhana.*

## INTRODUCTION

*Amavata* as a separate disease entity was described for the first time in detail by *madhavakara* in his famous treatise *madhavaNidanam*, dealing with the aetiopathogenesis of the disease in a systematic manner besides the signs, symptoms, complications and prognosis. *Amavata* has been named, taking into account two predominant pathological factors i.e. *Ama* and *vata* as they have important place in *nidan*(Causative factors) and *chikitsa* (treatment) of this disease. *Amavata* is the disease affecting *madhyama*

*roga marga*(pathway which includes diseases related to joints and vital points of body) it involves *marma*(Vital points in our body), *asthi*(Bones) and *sandhis*(Joints). The disease is a product of vitiation of *tridosha* though *ama* and *vata* are the initiating factors in its pathogenesis. Term *amavata* reflects the equal role of both *vata* and *ama*. Though *ama* is the initiating factor of this disease; which produced due to *mandagni* (decreased digestive fire). Hence For *Agnideepana* (Enhances digestive fire) and *Amapachana*(Digestion of ama),

*Langhana* (Complete Fasting or light diet) is the basic treatment which is given in Ayurvedic texts. In *chakradatta*, *chikitsasutra* of *Amavata* starts from *langhana*... which indicates the importance of *langhana chikitsa*.

#### CONCEPT OF LANGHANA:

Ayurveda explains about six basic principles of treatment called as *shat-upakrama*. Among them first one is *Langhana* derived from the word *laghu* which means light (opposite of heavy)

The procedure which creates *laghavata* (lightness) in body is called *langhana*. The substance which carry out functions of *langhana* have the characteristics like *laghu* (Light), *ushana* (Hot), *tikshana* (Fast penetrating), *vishada* (cleansing), *sukshma* (Micro), *khara* (Rough), and *sara* (Movable).

#### EFFECT OF LANGHANA:

During *langhana* (complete fasting/Light diet), food is not available for digestion; the agni metabolize the *ama* and *sama doshas* and resulting in *agnideepana* and *amapachana*.

Among three doshas; Vitiated *Kapha dosha* is responsible for *strotasavarodha* (Blockings in body channels) due to its *guru* (heavy), *Abhishyandi* (Channel clogging) and *picchila*(Sticky) *guna*(properties).which are resembles to the properties of *ama*, therefore *ama* is also responsible for *Strotasavarodha*. In *langhana* there is absence of food or light diet increases *laghuta* (lightness) in body and it reduces the *ama* and Vitiated *kapha* and helps to destroy the blockings in body channels.

#### TYPES OF LANGHANA:

The classics mentions 10 types of *langhana* therapies; *shodhana-vamana* (emesis), *virechana*

(purgation), *shirovirechana* (instillation of medicine through nostrils), *niruhabasti*(decoction enema), *pippasa* (Thirst), *maruta sevana*(exposure to wind), *atapa sevana* (exposure to sunshine), *pachana* (digestion of ama), *upavasa* (fasting) and *vyayama* (Exercise).

*Acharya vagbhata* have classified *langhana* into two types;

**shodhana:** 5 types of *shodhana* viz *vamana* (emesis), *virechana*(Purgation), *nasya* (Instillation of medicine through nostrils), *niruha basti* (Decoction enema), *raktmokshana* (Bloodletting) and

#### Shaman:

*Pachana* (The drugs which digest the ama), *deepana* (Which enhance the agni), *kshut* (Fasting), *trushna* (thirst), *vyayam* (Exercise), *atapa sevana* (Exposure to sunshine), *maruta sevana* (Exposure to wind)

#### INDICATION OF LANGHANA:

*Rogi*, *Rogi bala*, *Roga* are the basic criteria which should be taken into account before indicating *langhana* .

#### DISCUSSION

The body functions are governed by three basic entities called *vata*, *pitta*, and *kapha* . When these three are coordinating and cooperating with each other we are at the best of our health.

*Amavata* brings two components these are *ama* and *vata*.

#### Mandagni:

*Mandagni* (decreased power of digestion) is a root cause for all diseases. Here it does not mean only *jathragni* (digestion power) but seven *dhatwagni* (metabolism at the level of tissues) and three *malagni* are also considered under *mandagni*, and they are also able to create diseases. *Vayu*, *Pitta* and *kapha*; three *dosha* plays important role to

create *mandagni* when they increases or decreases in their proportion *agni* gets *manda*, and *mandagni* produces *Ama*. When it bleeds with *dosha* and *dhatu*; changes its proportion, becomes cause to create diseases. They are known as *samaawastha* of *roga* (the stage of disease with ama). In *Amavata* also *mandagni* produces *ama* and the disease *amavata* having the *samaawastha*. For that *agnideepana*, *Amapachana* treatment are the first principles; mainly *ksut-pipasa* *vegddharana* and *pachana* are the types of *langhana* included in the *chikitsa* of *Amavata*.

### **Ama**

*Ama* has a capacity to create blocks in the body due to its property of sticking to the surface of cells and channels of the body (transport systems). *Ama* is a metabolic toxin which has been created due to errors in metabolism, both at the gut as well as cellular levels.

Sluggish digestion or weak metabolic fire leads to indigestion. This leads to the formation of unprocessed food essence (*ahara rasa*) which is about to get into the circulation for being distributed to nourish the body tissues. From this, the first tissue *rasa dhatu* is improperly formed and is unprocessed. This unprocessed and contaminated *ahara rasa* formed in the *amashaya* (Stomach) is called *Ama*. As *Ama* is the root cause of *Amavata*; it is very important to take ama into consideration while treating a disease. Therefore management of *ama* should be the first step of treatment. In *Amavata* as *ama* or *sama dosha* lodged into *shleshma sthana* (Joints and heart) which should not be moving out by *Shodhana* therapies. Because it is just like a attempts to taking the juice from an

unripe fruits, leads to the destruction of site where the *Ama* has been lodged. Hence, *ama* should be treated with *Langhana*.

### **Vata**

Vata is component in the causation of painful conditions in amavata.

Among these Three *doshas*; *vata* is te important one which governs *pitta* and *kapha*, the tissue components, the distribution of essential nutrients in the body, the elimination of wastes and toxins, the normal functioning of the organs of the body, mind and the intellect and all other activities. All the activities are disturbed when *vata* is vitiated due to various factors. Vitiating *vata* causes blocks at various parts of the body, causes either excessive or deficit discharge of essential or non essential things, disturbs the body functions, degenerates the tissues, breaks the integrity of the body components, disturbs the immunity and causes various dysfunctions resulting in painful diseases, when the normal physiological process in which *vata* is impaired and results in the malformation of *vata* with *ama* then it is termed as *Amavata*. *Ama* is thrown out by vitiated *vata*, to the *shleshmasthana* as *vayu* keeps the *ama* in mobile state. *Chesta* like *Ankuchana* (flexion), *Prasarana* (Extention) is restricted in amavata due to pain, it reveals the predominance of *vata dosha* in amavata.

According to classics, *Langhana* helps to increase digestive power by *Amapachana* and remove stagnation and blocks in tissues and channels regresses the pathological processes, strengthens the digestive system. It reduces the *sandhi shoola* (pain) and *shotha* (inflammation). It has been described that *sama dosha* cannot be eliminated from the body until and unless ama attains the

*pakwa* form and for this purpose *langhana* is the best therapy. *Langhana* is contraindicated in *vataavidhi* but is indicated in *Samavata*. Hence care should be taken to stop the *Langhana* as soon as *nirama vata* condition is achieved. Therefore *langhana* should be given in *Amavata* upto the achievement of *niramaawastha*.

### CONCLUSION

*Ama* is the root cause of *Amavata* and responsible for *strotasavarodha*. *Langhana* helps to increase digestive fire and *amapachana*. And remove the blockage in body channels therefore *langhana* is the basic principal of treatment in *Amavata*. Therefore, the concept of *langhana* is most useful part in the management of *Amavata*.

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### CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

**Vd. Manisha S. Sagar**

Final Year P.G. Scholar,  
Department of Kayachikitsa,  
S.G.R. Ayurved Mahavidyalaya,  
Solapur, Maharashtra, India

**Email:** mnshsagar3@gmail.com

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