

AN APPROACH TOWARDS DIAGNOSIS AND MANAGEMENT OF GRAHANI DOSHA

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ABSTRACT

The root cause of all disease lies within the process of digestion. The disease "Grahani" is the leading disorder of the gastrointestinal tract. The main site of Agni and the disease Grahani is the organ Grahani. Hence Grahani and Agni are interdependent. Grahani Dushti mostly leads to conditions like Praseka, Aruchi, Alasaka, Vilambika, Vishuchika etc. Mandagni causes improper digestion of ingested food when it goes to Adho-Marga, then it leads to Grahani Gada i.e. Grahani Dosha. Ayurveda has a lot to offer in the management of gastrointestinal ailments. In relation to children, there is demand of ideal drug. In support of this view, various Deepana Pachana drugs should be used followed by light diet regimen and then shifting on regular diet.

Keywords: Grahani, Agni, Mandagni, Deepana, Pachana,

INTRODUCTION

The disease in which the Grahani gets vitiated and there is impairment of agni is called as Grahani roga¹. Grahani is the specialized part of the maha strotas. Acc. to Acharaya Sushruta, the 6th pittdhara kala situated between Amashya and Pakwashya is called Grahani² while Acharya Charaka had mention it as the part being situated above the Nabhi, as it is the site of Agni and does grahana of anna, it is supported and nourished by the strength of Agni³. Hence Agni is to be corrected in all

stages of Grahani Roga. Agni and Grahani have Adhara-Adheya sambandha. Grahain means "that holds". The duodenum should be considered as organ Grahani as their functions resembles each other. The duodenum consists of four layers.

1. Mucosal
2. Sub mucosal
3. Muscular
4. Serosal

The eating habits, physical activities, rest and sleeping pattern are the principal factors that influence health and overall wellbeing of a child. An irregular eating pattern implies the intake of meals at different intervals of time, avoiding important meals & frequently indulging in fat rich fast food or junk meals causes many problems and one of them is 'Grahani Roga' that has become a global issue and more common in this modernized era. The disease, although is not life threatening, but causes a great distress to the children and also to their parents.

We can find the textual reference of *Grahani* in following Texts:

<i>Kashyapa Samhita</i>	<i>Sutra sthana 25</i>
<i>Charaka Samhita</i>	<i>Chikitsa sthana 15</i>
<i>Sushruta Samhita</i>	<i>Uttartantra 40</i>
<i>Ashtang Hriday</i>	<i>Nidana 8 and Chikitsa 10</i>

Definition:

Grahani defines a diseased condition. In which the integrity and functions of the duodenum is compromised. Normally, *Grahani* holds up the meals, until it is digested and releases it from the site only, after digestion is over. But when the function of *Grahani* is compromised due to weakness in the digestive fire, it releases the ingested material even in undigested conditions⁴.

Types:

There are four different types of *Grahani*⁵

- *Vataja Grahani* (Malabsorption caused by vitiation of the biological air)
- *Pittaja Grahani* (Malabsorption caused by vitiation of the biological fire)

- *Kaphaja Grahani* (Malabsorption caused by vitiation of the biological water)
- *Tridoshaja Grahani* (All the three biological humours are involved)

Etiopathogenesis:

Acharya Charaka while describing the treatment of *Amatisara* mentions that due to fault of Physician, if in this disease, *Sangrahana* drugs are given, then it may lead to *Grahani Dosha*.⁶

Acharya Sushruta says that the patients of *Atisara* during the stage of *Agnimandya* if indulge in injudicious diet, it may lead to *Grahani Dosha*.⁷

The immediate triggering aetiological factors which are stated to cause *Agnidushti* are⁸:

1. Dietetic Indiscretions:

- *Abhojana* (Abstinence from food)
- *Samashana, Vishamashana and Viruddhashana*
- *Atibhojana* (Over eating)
- Indigestion due to
 - (a) *Asatmya-Bhojana* (Unwholesome food)
 - (b) *Atiguru-Bhojana* (Heavy or indigestible food)
 - (c) *Sheeta-Bhojana* (Cold and state food)
 - (d) *Atiruksha-Bhojana* (Excessive dry food)
 - (e) *Sandushta-Bhojana* (Putrid food)

2. Adverse effect of therapeutic measures:

- *Virechana* (Purgation)
- *Vamana* (Emesis)
- *Snehana* (Oleation)

3. Emaciation or wasting brought about by other disease

4. Incompatibility of:

- *Desha* (Country)
- *Kala* (Climate)

- *Ritu* (Season)
- 5. Suppression of natural urges
- 6. Mental, Psychological and Emotional instabilities like
 - Impatience, envy
 - Fear
 - Anger, rage
 - Greed
 - Pessimistic outlook⁹

Similarly the aetiological factors responsible for production of *Amadosha* mentioned by *Acharya Charaka* in *Vimana* 2/8-9 are also responsible for causing *Grahani Dosha*.

Vataja Grahani Dosha:

Indulgence in food which is pungent, bitter, astringent, dry, contaminated, scanty or no food at all, too much of walk, suppression of natural urge of body, excess sexual activities make for increase of *Vata* which in turn destroy the digestive activity and produces the disease¹⁰.

Pittaja Grahani Dosha:¹¹

Indulgence in food which is repugnant, uncooked, causing heart sour and alkaline in nature give rise to increase of *Pitta* which in turn slows the gastric fire activity just like hot water poured over burning fire.

Kaphaja Grahani Dosha:¹²

Indulgence in food which is hard to digest, fatty, cold (taken very frequently) and sleeping immediately after mid day meal enhances *Kapha*, which sluggish the digestive fire and cause *Kapha Grahani Dosha*.

Premonitory symptoms:¹³

Prior to the manifestation of *Grahani* there will be pre sign and symptoms indicating the

development of the disease. One may experience slower digestion of food, hyperacidity, bad taste in the mouth, anorexia, increased thirst, gastric reflux, tinnitus and the noise of gurgling in the abdomen¹⁴. One may also feel lightheaded and notice a decrease in energy levels as *Rasa Dhatu* is not properly nourished due to inadequate absorption of nutrients across the intestinal wall and inferior quality of nutrient due to improper digestion.

Clinical Features:¹⁵

Features may include

- Thirst
- Anorexia
- Salivation
- Loss of taste
- Diarrhoea with fatty stools
- Swelling in hand & feet
- Joint pain
- Fever etc

Grahani caused by *Vata* leads to symptoms indicating imbalance of the five *Vayu* not only in the *Annavaha srota* but also in other areas of the body. The person suffering from *Grahani* can presents with dryness of the palate, noise in the ears - tinnitus, cough, dyspnoea all caused by *Prana vayu* aggravation¹⁶. Aggravation of *Apana vayu* leads to constipation; increased frequency of bowel motion, flatulence, passing wind on passing a bowel motion, frothy loose motions, and painful bowel motions due to intestinal cramping, dry faeces, and pain in the rectum. Aggravated *Samana vayu* fans *Jathara Agni* either igniting the fire further increasing hunger or blowing it out causing variable appetite and increased

Samana vayu activity causes loose bowel motions due to increased peristalsis in the small intestine. Aggravation of *Vyana vayu* leads to cardiac pain, *Vata* affecting *Mamsa dhatu* causes pain in the sides of the abdomen, thighs, groin and neck. The individual craves all types of food and feels satisfied when they have eaten¹⁷.

The disease caused by *Pitta* produces decoloration of the faeces due to *Ranjaka Pitta* aggravation so that the faeces are of bluish or yellow colour, the body odour of the individual is fetid, aggravation of *Pachaka pitta* causes hyperacidity resulting in heart burn and sour belching, also affecting the quality of stool so that it is liquid in consistency¹⁸. Anorexia, thirst, burning sensation in throat are also present in *Pitta* type *Grahani*¹⁹.

In *Grahani* caused by *Kapha*, *Kledaka kapha* in the stomach is increased damping *Jathara Agni* leading to *Manda Agni*. Excessive *Kledaka kapha* causes nausea and vomiting, heaviness in the stomach, retention of undigested food in the stomach leading to fermentation and burping with bad smell and loss of appetite. *Avalambaka kapha* that is aggravated causes cough with mucus, there is also aggravation of *Bodhaka kapha* causing excess salivation and mucus in the mouth and loss of taste due to saturation. Excessive *Kledaka kapha* passes into the colon and is passed in the stools that are broken and may be considerable in quantity. Due to excessive *Kapha* in the body one may feel lethargic and weak yet does not appear by physical observation to be showing signs of tissue weakness²⁰.

If it is caused by a combination of two of the *Doshas* or all three the disease will present

with a combination of all three types of *Grahani* as described above²¹.

The worst part of *Grahani* is that in later stages, the human body refuses to absorb carbohydrates and minerals. Here, the disease tends to be chronic.

Management:

In modern science treatment is being done according to the symptoms. If diarrhea predominates then anti diarrheal drugs and if constipation predominates then lactulose along with roughage diet, if abdominal pain predominates then antispasmodic drugs are effective.

Principle of *Grahani dosha* management:

Acharya Vagbhatta suggested that, all the treatment modalities of *Ajeerna* should be implemented in the management of *Grahani Ashrita Dosha*²². He also opines that, *Sama* and *Nirama Avastha* should be taken into account as per *Atisara Chikitsa*²³.

In the management of *Grahani Dosha*, the fact that along with *Agni Mandhya*, the *Pachana Shakti* and *Prachushana Shakti* of *Grahani* is deranged. Due to this the ingested diet undergoes *Putikriya*, and has actions similar to *Visha*, which produces symptomatology of *Ama*²⁴.

For this particular stage, *Shodhana Chikitsa* is preferred, considering the two staged of diseases viz. '*Amalinganvitam*' and '*Shariranugate Same*'.

Grahani associated with *Ama dosha*: when the patient having complaint of constipation, excessive salivation, pain abdomen, heart burn, heaviness then he should be treated with *Vaman* and that should be done by either luke

warm water or decoction of *Madanphala* or powder of piper and mustard²⁵.

- *Pakavasyasth upchara*: the patient should be treated with *Virechana*²⁶. The medicine having *Agni deepana* properties should be added in the *Virechana yoga*²⁷. When *Apkva Ahar rasa* is present in all over the body the *Langhana* and *Paachana* medicine should be given²⁸.
- After the purification of *Amashaya peya* prepared with *Deepana* and *Paachana dravyas* should be given to the patient²⁹.
- *Snehana*, *svedana* and *shoshana*, *langhna deepana paachana* and *sangrahni* drugs should be given as per the condition of the patients.

Having removed the Ama the treatment turns to treating the offending Dosh:

Vata is treated via *snehana* therapies – oleation measurements often in the form of medicated ghee to lubricate *Annavaha srota* pacifying *Prana vayu*, *Udana vayu* and *Samana vayu* should be given. Medicated oil and decoction enemas are also indicated in *Vata Grahani* which pacifies *Apana vayu* bringing all other *vayus* into balance. These are first administered depending on the individual's condition and are then followed by purgation therapies³⁰. Herbs utilized in the treatment of *Vataja Grahani* includes *Dashmula* – the ten roots: *Bilva* (*Aegle marmelos*), *Patala* (*Stereospermum suaveolens*), *Gambhari* (*Gmelina arborea*), *Syonaka* (*Oroxylum indicum*), *Agnimantha* (*Premna integrifolia*), *Shalaparni* (*Desmodium gangeticum*), *Prisniparni* (*Uraria picta*), *Brihati* (*Solanum indicum*), *Kantakari* (*Solanum xanthocarpum*), *Gokshura* (*Tribulus*

terrestris) and *Shunti* (*Zingiber officinale*)³¹. *Triphala* the three fruits: *Amalaki* (*Embolia officinalis*), *Bibhitaki* (*Terminalia belerica*) and *Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula*)³².

Treatment of *Pitta Grahani* is focused on pacifying *Pitta* accomplished via the administration of cooling digestive herbs and purgation therapies that effectively treat the very site of the disease that happens to be the seat of the *Pitta dosha*³³. Herbs used in treating *Pittaja Grahani* include *Chandana* (*Santalum album*), *Musta* (*Cyprus rotundus*), *Kutaja* (*Holarrhena antidysenterica*) and *Nimba* (*Azadiracta indica*)³⁴.

Kapha treatment is focused on lightening, heating and reducing therapies and medication. *Kledaka kapha* the culprit in damping *Agni* is brought into balance by emesis therapy and by strengthening the digestive fire³⁵. Herbs prescribed for *Kaphaja Grahani* included *Trikatu* – the three pungent's: *Shunti* (*Zingiber officinale*), *Maricha* (*Piper nigrum*) and *Pippali* (*Piper longum*), *Amalaki* (*Embolia officinale*) and *Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula*)³⁶.

Special Use of Takra in Grahani Dosh:

The authors of *Ayurvedic* classics have laid emphasis on the administration of *Takra* or *Takra Siddha Kashaya* as the main diet and medicine.

According to *Acharya Vagbhatta*³⁷

"*Takra is the best diet for patients suffering from Grahani Dosh*".

As the *Takra* is *Laghu* in *Guna*, possesses *Deepana* properties and attains *Madhura Paka*, it does not provoke and increase *Pitta*; because of *Kashaya Rasa*, *Ushna Veerya*, *Vikashi* and *Ruksha Gunas* it is useful in *Kapha*;

as freshly churned *Takra* is sweet, slightly sour, it will not produce *Daha* in the *Kostha* and it is also *Vatahara*. The advantage of *Takra* is that it contains less fat and is easily digestible³⁸.

Acharya Charaka has also suggested the use of *Takra* and *Takrarishta* in the routine treatment of *Grahani*³⁹.

Classics have also advocated the use of different kinds of *Panas*, *Takras*, *Suras* and *Asavas* in the management of *Grahani Dosha*.

Precautions or diet:

Dietary restriction has its own importance in treating *Grahani*. Buttermilk is the mainstay of the treatment. Salt, spice and water should be avoided. Sleeping for one hour during the day is beneficial.

Prognosis:

Grahani is curable if it occurs in children, Difficult to cure in middle age and incurable in older patients.

DISCUSSION

The word *Grahani* specifies a peculiarity of that organ *Grahani*. The meaning of that word means to hold or to provide a base for a particular thing. Another meaning of the word *Grahani* is to invade upon. *Grahani* is described to be situated in between *Aamashaya* and *Pakwashaya*. So, it can be said that *Grahani* is an organ which invades upon *Aamashaya* and by doing this it holds or obstructs the food and provides base for *Agni* (Digestive power) to act on the consumed food.

Various references are available in the classics regarding '*Grahani dosha*' in a scattered man-

ner, with the help of all these references and basic principles of the science regarding digestive process a concept is constructed as '*Grahani dosha*'. Which is accepted and well supported by Ayurvedic

classics too. Discussion over Probable mode of *Samprapti* of '*Grahani Dosha*,' as it is not directly mentioned anywhere in the classics, physiological consideration regarding *Grahani* is very important. It need not to emphasis again that '*Grahani dosha*' will manifest as improper digestion as it related mainly with process of digestion. The pathogenesis can be understood by two ways. In both the ways the affected things are same like *Jatharagni*, *Doshas* confined to *Grahani* and functions of *Grahani*, but the order would be different. In one way disturbed functions will start the course. While in other vitiation of *doshas* related to *Grahani* would take the lead, ultimately both would vitiated or disturb each other along with *Jatharagni* and lead to '*Grahani dosha*'. One more thing is to be remembered here is the relationship between *Agni* and *Grahani* with process of digestion. Both these factors are interdependent. So they are effective as well as affective to each other.

The disease '*Grahani dosha*' is differentiated with various other conditions like, *Krimi roga*, *Atisar*, *Visuchika*, *Ajirna*, *Pravahika* and *Grahani roga*. Although these all diseases are related to *Annavaha srotas* and *Agni dusti* only, but on the basis of *Sthan* of *Samprapti*, Nature of pathogenesis, Clinical manifestations and Severity, the disease '*Grahani dosha*' is differentiated from these conditions.

The main lacuna with the present available health practice (irrespective of the system) is

that emphasis is always given on curative aspect of disease but not to the preventive aspect. *Ayurveda* is unique in its approach, where it clearly mentions its ultimate aim as nothing but to prevent the disease, and maintain the health of healthy individual. An overview of *Ayurveda* text books reveals that drugs, formulations and advices given in the textbooks are equally helpful in curing as well as preventing the disease.

CONCLUSION

Grahani Dosha is a disease entity goes hand in hand with gastrointestinal disorders. It is a common problem for all age groups, but children are more vulnerable, hence has high incidence and recurrence. The main function of *Grahani* can be summarized as, it receives the food, It obstructs the food, It holds the food and It takes part in the process of digestion with the help of 'Agni' or *Pachaka Pitta* situated at the site. It leaves well digested food further into *Pakwashaya* and by doing all these functions, it helps to produce the most needed *bhavas* for body like, *Ayu, Varna, Bala, Swastha, Upachaya, Prabha* etc. In the course of the disease, due to vitiation of *doshas* confined to *Grahani* or due to disturb Functions of *Grahani*. '*Grahani dosha*' will manifest. Further if etiological factors remain persistent, '*Grahani dosha*' will turn in to *Grahani roga*. This condition can be understood by *Bhuyata vikriti, Linatwa* and *Bahudoshatwa*.

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Source of Support: Nil

Conflict Of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Asharafi Bakhtyar Et Al: An Approach Towards Diagnosis And Management Of Grahni Dosh. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2017 {cited August, 2017} Available from: http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/3031_3039.pdf