

A REVIEW OF AMLAPITTA IN AYURVEDA “AN EMERGING LIFESTYLE DISORDER

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a science of life and more than just a medical system. The health is supreme foundation for the achievement of happy life. The objective of *Ayurveda* is to accomplish the physical, mental, social, and spiritual wellbeing by any of adopting preventive and promotive approach as well as to treat the diseases with its various curative approaches. Due to its simplicity and scientific nature, *Ayurveda* has drawn the attention of the global population since the dawn of the civilisation. The life style is one such most important field of life. The same subject has been brought into focus and witness by *Ayurvedic* classics. In these sequences, *Amlapitta* is most irritating disease due to faulty life style, dietic indiscrimination, and mental stress/strain and due to complication of certain disease and medications. It is a *Pitta* predominance disease of the *Annavaha* which affects also the *Purishvaha strotas* occurs due to *Mandagni* and *Ama*. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned in *Nidana Sthana* that the “irregular dieting habits and faulty life style” are the etiological factor for almost all the diseases including *Amlapitta* in brief. While describing the prognosis of *Amlapitta*, it has been stated that it can be cured easily if promptly treated at the earliest with proper *pathyapthya* and *Upashaya*. Paying due consideration to the quality and time, a self- controlled men can avoid the condition.

Keywords: *Amlapitta*, *Ama*, *Mandagni*, *upashaya*, life style

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a science of life and more than just a medical system. The health is supreme foundation for the achievement of happy life. The objective of *Ayurveda* is to accomplish the physical, mental, social, and spiritual wellbeing by any of adopting preventive and promotive approach as well as to treat the diseases with its various curative approaches. The life

style is one such most important field of life. In these sequences, *Amlapitta* is most irritating disease due to faulty life style, dietic indiscrimination, mental stress/strain and due to complication of certain disease and medications^[1] It is a *Pitta* predominance disease of the *Annavaha* which also affects the *Purishvaha strotas* & occurs due to *Mandagni* and *Ama*. *Acharya*

Charaka has mentioned in *Nidana Sthana* that the "irregular dieting habits and faulty life style"^[2] are the etiological factor for almost all the diseases including *Amlapitta* in brief. *Ayurveda* is working since long in the direction of WHO recent motto of 'Health for all'. Although there is a significant advancement in the field of modern medicine, still the mankind is suffering from many different diseases. *Amlapitta* is one of them, and is very distressing due to its chronic, relapsing and remittent nature. Modern era's changing lifestyle along with changing food culture and depending upon one's body constitution, *Amlapitta* is one of the most common symptom (disease) seen in the society. 'Hurry', 'Worry', and 'Curry' are the three main reasons for the disease.

Stressful daily routine, insufficient sleep at night, irregular meal times or skipping meals, eating too late at night, spicy food habits like pizza, burger, Chinese food, oily foods, pickles, salty and sour foods like chips, over eating of stale and fermented foods (bakery foods, idli, dosa, etc), sleeping immediately after meals, lack of rest, fast moving lifestyle, suppression of urges, worries, walking for long hours during night.

All these above factors result in excessive increase of 'Pitta dosha' which tries to find its way out of the body either through oral or rectal pathway and along with it exhibits symptoms of *Amlapitta*[3]. While describing the prognosis of *Amlapitta*, it has been stated that it can be cured easily if promptly treated at the earliest with proper *pathyapthya*.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The basic and conceptual materials were collected from the *Ayurvedic* classics viz. *Brhat-*

trayi and *Laghutrayi* with their available commentaries, research papers and journals.

CONCEPTUAL PART

According to *Ayurveda*, hyperacidity is recognized as *Amlapitta*. Hyperacidity is a condition in the human body when there is an excess secretion of acid within the stomach. In *Ayurvedic* terminology, *Agni* (digestive fire) is considered as the protector of the human body while *Ama* (toxic) is the cause of the disease^[3]. The main cause is the indiscretion in taking food which leads to three types of *doshika* (physical energies) imbalance: *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha*. *Ayurveda* has provided ample herbal and home remedies for treating various diseases, including acidity, heartburn and gastritis.

Definition and etymology of *Amlapitta*

According to *Acharya Charaka*, Natural property of *Pitta* is *Amla & Katu*^[4]. But *Acharya Sushruta* has enlisted *Katu* as its original rasa and when *Pitta* becomes *Vidagdha* then it changes into *Amla*^[5]. In commentary of *Shrikantha Datta* on the relevant chapter has defined that it is a condition where excessive secretion of *Amlaguna* of *Pittadosha* takes place causing *vidahyadi* conditions^[6].

Amla (Sour taste) + *Pitta* (Excessive salivation) - *Amlapitta*

Therefore, it means a condition in which sourness of *Pitta* gets increased. In disease *Amlapitta*, the *Pitta* gets vitiated by one or all gunas, causing various patho-physiological conditions of *Anna* and *Purishavaha Srotasa*.

This disease mainly due to vitiation of *Pitta* (*Pachaka-Pitta*) but *Kapha & vata dosha* are also mentioned by *ShrikanthaDutta*. In *Samhitas* some other words have also been men-

tioned in the reference of *Amlapitta* like *Am-laka*, *Dhumaka*, *Vidaha* etc.^[7]

CAUSES OF AMLAPITTA:-

After a careful screening and analysis of the etiological factors of *Amlapitta*, may be discussed under following groups.

AHARAJA HETU (Dietary factors):

The first and the foremost group of etiological factors of *Amlapitta* may be considered as the dietary factors. Under this group the intake of food against the code of dietetics i.e. *Ahara Vidhi Vidhana* [8] (Dietetic Rules) and *Ashta Ahara Viseshayatana* (Causative factors responsible for the wholesome and unwholesome effect of the methods for diet intake) is included.

Ahara group.

(a) According to the type of *Ahara*- *Kulattha* , *Pruthuka*, *Pulaka* (Husky food).

(b) According to the quality of food- *Abhisyandi*, *Atisnigdha* (Unctuous), *Atiruksha* (Very coarse and dry), *Gurubhojana* (heavy diet) and *Vidahi Anna-Pana*.

(c) According to the *Samskara of the Ahara*- *Apakwanna* (uncooked food) *Bhristadhanya* (Roasted paddy), *Ikshuvikara* (Sugar-cane products), *Pishtanna* (flour).

(d) According to the *Pitta provocative potency of diet*

- *Adhyashana* (eating before the digestion of previous diet).
- *Ajirnashana* (intake of food in indigestion condition).
- *Ati-Ushna* (Very hot), *Ati-Amla* (intake of excessive acidic diet), *Ati-Drava* (intake of excessive liquid).
- *Ati Tikshna*, *AtiPana* (Over drinking).

- *Katuannapana* (Pungent diet and drinks), *Virruddhasana* (incompatible diet).

(e) Faulty dietary habits:

- *Akalabhojana* (untimely eating).
- *Antarodakapana* (drinking of excess water during meals).
- *Kala anashana* (not taking the diet at proper time).
- *Vishamashana*.

VIHARAJAHETU (Habit factors)

- *Atisnana* (Taking excessive bath).
- *AtiAvagahana* (Excessive swimming or tub-bath).
- *Bhuktwadiwasvapna* (Sleeping immediately after meals in daytime).
- *Vega Vidharana* (Suppression of natural urges).
- *Shayya Prajagarana* (Improper sleeping schedule).

Manasika Hetu (Psychological factors)

Manasikabhavas plays an important role in maintaining the health. On the other hand an abnormal psychology, in terms of anger, anxiety, greediness etc. would affect the physiology of digestion. Either there would be a lesser secretion of the digestive juice or secreted at improper time and sometimes it may be secreted in excessive quantity. All these conditions lead to indigestion which ultimately gives rise to *Amlapitta*.^[12]

Agantuja Hetu (Miscellaneous factors):

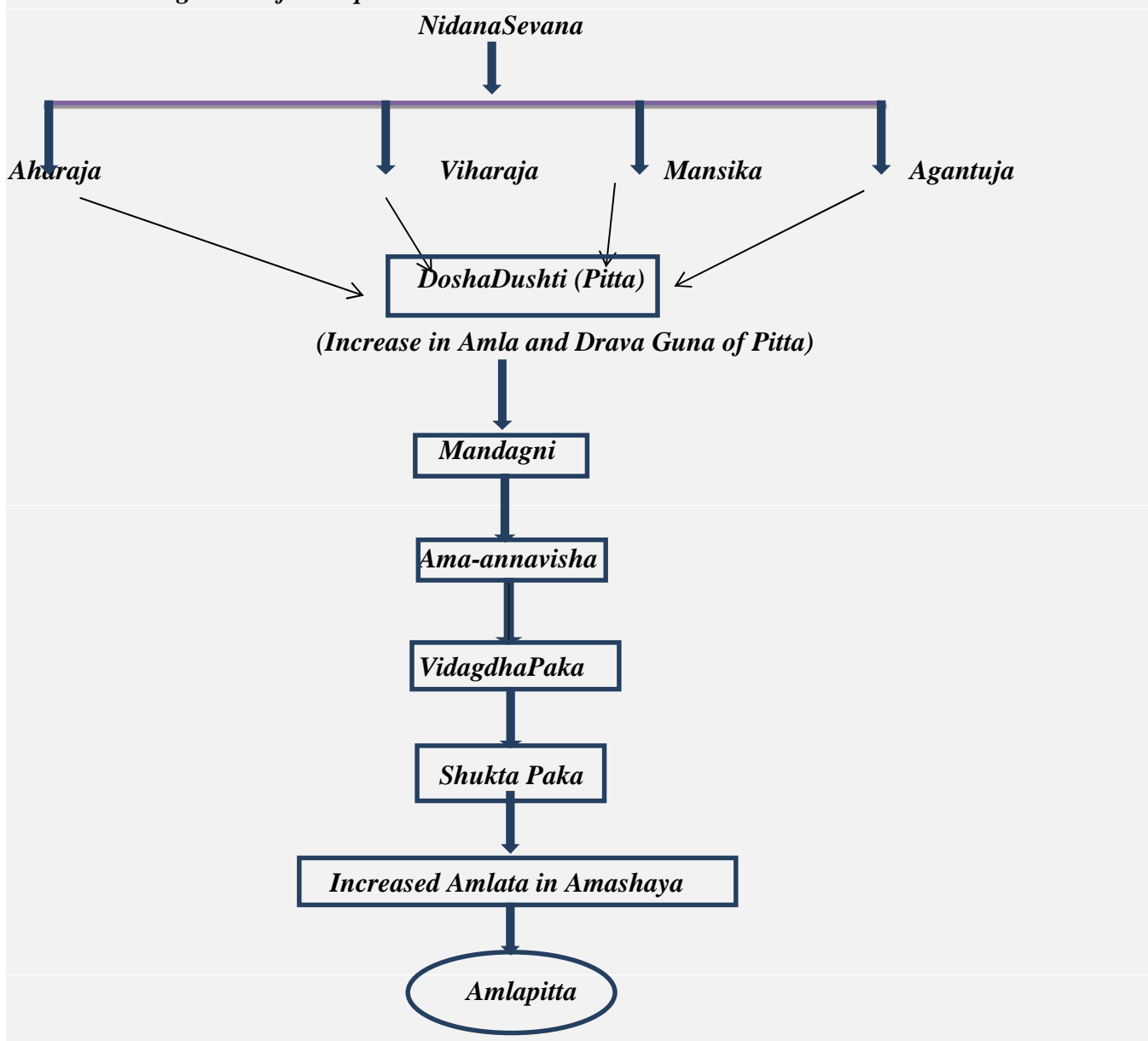
Allied factors can be taken under this factor. Under this group constant and excessive consumption of alcohol, tobacco, beverages, smoking or other irritant substances etc. are taken. These substances cause a local irritation in the stomach which in turn secretes more gastric juice.

SAMPRAPTI

Due to *nidanasevan*, *pitta prakopa* may occur and this *prakupitta pitta* mixes with *sanchit pitta* and it leads to *Amlodgara* (sour belching), *Daha* (burning sensation) etc. symptoms. It results in *Amlapitta*. If *nidan*s are *Amlarasa*

pradhan (sour taste), prominent 2nd stage of *avasthapaka* takes place which leads to increase *pittodirana* (Own properties *AtiUsnata / Atitiksnata*). This *Amapitta* (*Premature pitta*) produces *Amlodagara, Daha* etc.^[16] (Chart 1)

Chart 1: Pathogenesis of Amlapitta



CLINICAL FEATURES OF AMLAPITTA:

There are various clinical features have been mentioned in our *ayurvedic* literatures i.e. *Avipaka* (*Indigestion*), *Tikta-Amla Udgara* (*Bit-*

ter-sour eructations), Aruchi (Loss of appetite), Gaurava (Heaviness in body), Klama (Mental fatigue), Utklesha (Nausea), Hrita-Kantha daha (Retrosternal burning), Udara- Adhamana (Flatulence), Chhardi (Vomiting), Shiro-ruja

(Headache), Antrakujana (Gurgling of intestine), Vidbheda (Diarrhoea), Romharsha (Horripilation), Hrita shula (Pain in heart region).

According to gunas clinical features of amlapitta are:

S.No.	Guna	Lakshana (Symptoms)
1.	Drava	Hrillas, Asyastravana, Chhardi
2.	Amla	Amlika, Amlasyata, Amlodgara, Amlarasayukta, Chhardi
3.	Tikshna	Vedana, Vrana (ulcer)
4.	Ushna	Ura-Udara-KanthaDaha, Jwarapratiti, Aushnya, Sarvangadaha
5.	Vishra	Aasyadaurgandhya, Loha-AmaGandha, Utsahahani
6.	Sara	Asamhatmalapravrutti

PATHYA AHARA – VIHARA ^[9]

PATHYA AHARA:

- Purana Shali, Mudga, Masura Harenu Go-ghrita
- Go-dugdha Jangala Mansa Kalaya Vasa pushpa
- TiktaShaka Avidahi Lashuna Haritaki Pippali
- Yava Godhuma Sharkara Karvellaka Patola
- Vriddha Kushmanda Kapittha Madhu Saktu
- Dhatri

PATHYA VIHARA:

- SatmyaPrayoga
- NidanaParivarjana
- Samuchitavyayama
- Deshantaragamana

APATHYA AHARA-VIHARA ^[9]

APATHYA AHARA

- NavannaVirrudhaanna Pitta-prakopakaahara
- Masha Kulattha Taila Sandhana Kalpana
- Avidugdha Amla-Lavana-Katuanna
- Guru anna Dadhi Madya Dhanyamla

Apathya Vihara:

- Vega vidharana Chinta
- Krodha Shoka

DISCUSSION

The faulty food habits and life style have a definite impact on biorhythm of intestinal function. The *Mahabhautik* constitution of *Amla Rasa* (Prithvi + Agni) helps to explain the *Urdhva* and *AdhoGatis* (upward and downward movements) of *Amlapitta*. [10] The *Dravyas* constituting above two *Mahabhutas* are *Ubhayagami* (Acting upwards as well as downwards). In brief *Nidanas* (cause) of *Amlapitta* are divided into four groups i.e. *Aharaja*, *Viharaja*, *Manasika* and *Agantuja*. *Ahara* plays an important role in maintenance of health. If *Ahara* is not consumed in prescribed way it may leads to diseases. In this era of modernization and civilization the society is conscious enough about "What to eat? How to eat?" The awareness about the food items, their quantity, quality and nutritional values etc. is increasing gradually, and then also the popularity of fast food is greater due to the fast life.

Principles of *Ashtahar vidhivishesha-yatana* and *dashvidha vidhan* are most important aspect from the preventive and curative aspect of health. They are to be examined before food intake and are to be followed during food intake. In the *Samprapti* of *Amlapitta*, the normal and abnormal functions of *Amla Rasa* are basically attributed to *Pitta Dosha*. *Amla Rasa* and *AmlaVipaka* have important roles in the pathogenesis of *Amlapitta*. *Dosha*, *Dushya*, *Srotas*, *Agni* and *Ama* are the five basic most components of disease process. Involvement of these factors, with different *Gunas* is responsible for different symptoms of *Amlapitta*. *Urdhvaga* and *Adhoga* are two *Gatis* of *Amlapitta*. Among these, *Urdhva Gati* symptoms tend more towards *Annavaha Sroto Dushti* and *Adhoga Amlapitta* is related with *Purishavaha Srotas*. Though *Amlapitta* has got its effect

almost on all the *Srotas*, the above two *Srotas* are most important in the development of disease *Pitta* and *Kaphadushti* is more prominently observed in *Urdhvaga*, while *Vata* is vitiated in *Adhoga Amlapitta*.^[11] While mentioning dietetic rules it is already considered that they should be applied along with proper diet. Wholesome diet if taken in improper way can lead to diseases. In the same way improper diet even taken in proper manner leads to disorders.

CONCLUSION

Amlapitta is very common and major problem due to changing life style habits. In the ancient text books of *Ayurveda* it is described that irregular food and life style habits are the main causative factor for the disease. While describing the total management for this disease, it is very much emphasized that treatment will be only successful if the causative factor are corrected and implementation in the proper approach.

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