



A REVIEW ARTICLE ON 'AN AYURVEDIC REVIEW OF AGNI AND ITS IMPACT ON THE HUMAN BODY, HEALTH AND DIGESTION.

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ABSTRACT

In *Ayurveda* it is considered that all the diseases result due to low appetite. For this reason, '*Kaya Chikitsa*' (body treatment) is also referred to as '*Agni Chikitsa*'. *Agni* (fire) present in the *Jathara* (stomach) which digests the food is *Bhagavaniswara*- almighty god- himself; he receives (substances of) sweet and other tastes (for growth and maintenance of the body), he is being subtle (minute) it is not possible to perceive him. Served by *Prana*, *Ap-ana* and *Samana* (the three divisions of *Vata*), by blowing increasing, protecting and preserving it. It stimulates other *Agni* to carry out their respective functions. Food nourishes body *Dhatu*s, *Ojas*, strength, complexion etc. It all depends on the equilibrium state of *Agni* otherwise *Rasa* etc. cannot be produced or manufactured from undigested food. Almost all diseases arise due to sluggish functions of *Agni*, especially *Udara Roga*.

Keywords: *Agni*, *Mandagni*, *Tiksnagni*, *Visamagni*, *Pacakagni*

INTRODUCTION

In all the 13 types of *Agni* (fire) residing in the body, *Pacakagni* is stated to be responsible for digestion and metabolism. Due to the excess of *Kapha*, *Pitta*, *Vayu* and due to the equality of these three *Doshas*, *Agni* (fire) is considered to be of four types respec-

tively. There are various types of *Agnis* but while treating the patients, mainly '*Jatharagni*' (digestive fire in GI tract) is considered. The *Ayurvedokta* '*Jathar Agni*' loosely corresponds to the hydrochloric acid, bile, pancreatic juice and various enzymes

present in GI tract which helps in digestion of various food particles. As per Ayurveda the properties of all such digestive juices which represent 'Agni' (fire) for cooking (digesting) uncooked food are *Ushna* (hot), *tikshna* (pungent), *dravya* (liquid), *Katu* (bitter), *Amala* (sour), *Haritpeet* (greenish yellowish). Food provides nutrition to the body by virtue of which body gets energy, power (*Bala*) and enthusiasm (*Utsah*) to perform activities. Good nutrition brightens the complexion (*Varna*), radiance (*Teja*), and lusture (*Prabha*). It tones the muscles and offers good build (*Upachaya*). The *Agni* digests this food and converts it into body compatible nutritious juice which provides the nutrition to the *Dhatu*s like *Rasa* (plasma), *Rakta* (blood), *Mamsa* (muscles), *Asthi* (Bones) etc (*Agni Hetu Hu Rasadaya Ha*). If *Agni* is cooled, individual dies. If *Agni* is normal, then individual lives long. If *Agni* is altered, individuals suffer from diseases.

Pacakagni is stated to be responsible for digestion and metabolism. It is of four kinds based on the involvement of *Dosas*.

1. The first variety is not associated with *Dosas*, and it is called *Samagni* state, and it is the physiological state of *Agni*. The remaining three varieties of *Agni* are the pathological ones, and which are responsible for improper functions.
2. *Visamagni* state due to *Vata*.
3. *Tiksnagni* state due to *Pitta*.
4. *Mandagni* state due to *Kapha*.

JATHARAGNI

Jatharagni is the chief among all types of *Agnis* because functions of *Bhutagni* and *Dhatvagni* depend on this. Aggravation or diminution of *Jatharagni* results in aggravation or diminution of *Bhutagni* and *Dhatvagni*. Therefore, by all means one has to protect *Jatharagni* by consuming suitable wholesome dietetics and behaviour because longevity and strength depends on the normal state of *Agni*. On the contrary one who consumes unwholesome diet due to greed, succumbs to disease caused by the vitiation of *Grahani*. *Grahani Dosa* refers to diseases located in *Grahani*. This specific term refers to 4 types of *Grahani Roga*. This also includes *Agnimandhya*, *Ajirna*

etc. which are manifest due to vitiation of *Grahani*. The term '*Grahani*' as a disease entity specifically used for the ailment *Grahani Gada*, which manifest due to malfunctioning of the *Grahani*. Irregular digestion and metabolism cause imbalance in *Dhatu*s. The intense digestion and metabolism and less consumption of food leads to depletion of *Dhatu*s. Once the empty spaces (*Srotas*) become abnormal, it brings abnormality in normal *Dhatu* by not transporting to required destination, this is because of the abnormality in *Srotas*. *Srotas* vitiates other *Srotas*, *Dhatu*s vitiates other *Dhatu*s, for all these happenings disturbed *Dosas* are responsible. *Dosas* get aggravated by the disturbed functions of *Agni*. That's why life span, health, strength and nourishment etc. are depends on *Agni*. *Jatharagni* is the main principal substance responsible for disease and health. During its normalcy it is responsible for longevity, complexion, strength, health, enthusiasm, well built, lustre, immunity (*Ojas*), temperature, other *Agni*'s (*Bhutagni* and *Dhatvagni*) and other vital functions all are dependent on *Jatharagni*. Healthy state of body and diseased condition is entirely dependent on *Agni*.

SAMAGNI

The *Samagni* state of *Agni* is the circumstance in which *Dosas* are in an equilibrium state and carry out their regular metabolic and digestion processes.

It is characterized by:

1. Digestion of food within the stipulated period of time, if a person consumes normal quantity of food.
2. Belching which is free from morbidities.
3. Enthusiastic about doing all activities.
4. Proper elimination of natural urges without any difficulties.
5. Feeling of lightness all over the body.
6. Timely hunger and thirst.

VISAMAGNI

Due to uneven *Agni* function, a condition known as *Vishamagni* results in incorrect digestion and metabolism.

1. Sometimes *Agni* performs normal functions.
2. Flatulence
3. Abdominal pain

4. Upward movement of *Vata* inside the *Kostha*.
5. Diarrhoea
6. Heaviness in abdomen
7. Intestinal gurgling
8. Straining exercise for evacuation of stools.

TIKSNAGNI

Tiksnagni is the state in which hyperfunctioning of digestion & metabolic activities are observed.

1. Quick digestion of food even after taking more quantity of food.

ATYAGNI

1. The *Tiksnagni*, if increases greatly is called *Atyagni*.
2. Quicker digestion of food even after eating a larger quantity of food often.
3. At the end of digestion, it produces dryness, burning sensation and warmth in the throat, palate and lips.

-*Agni* is the heating attribute of *Pitta*. Always there is a close association exists between *Agni* and *Pitta* i.e. *Agni* is the substance which originates (*Janya*) and *Pitta* is the source of origin (*Janaka*). Due to this difference between the *Janaka* and the *Janya*, the aggravated *Pitta* might even reduce the *Agni*. It is only in association with *Vata*, that *Pitta* becomes powerful and manifests *Atyagni*.

MANDAGNI

When the digestive system is weak and takes a long time to digest a little food, it is said to be in the state of *mandagni*.

1. Slower digestion of food even after taking less quantity of food.
2. Heaviness in abdomen
3. Heaviness in head
4. Cough
5. Dyspnoea
6. Excessive salivation
7. Vomiting
8. Weakness of the body.

CONCLUSION

Agni, the notion of fire in Ayurveda, is crucial to our general wellness. *Agni* is the intelligent force that permeates every cell, every tissue, and every function

in the human body. In the end, substances which enter our cells and tissues, and should be eliminated as waste is decided by *agni's* discernment. In this way, *agni* is the gatekeeper of life. According to *Acharya Charaka*, different kinds of dietetic substances are digested by their own *Bhutagni*, encouraged and enhanced by *Antaragni (Jatharagni)*, which is then digested and metabolized by *Dhatwagni* to associate the body with the nutritional strength, complexion, and happy life in addition to providing energy to the seven dhatus. The *agni* unconditionally supports life when it is in a normal state. When this *agni* becomes morbid or tainted, it becomes a source of numerous illnesses. It is also claimed that all illnesses stem from a morbid *agni*, meaning that a disturbed *agni* is the main factor in the development of all psychosomatic illnesses. The doshas also continue in their undisturbed state and support our body, mind, and life if the *agni* is operating regularly. On the other hand, if the *agni* is disrupted, the doshas will also be upset and lead to a variety of illnesses. Thus, comprehending *agni* is among the key ideas for comprehending the nature of sickness as well as the suggested principles of treatment.

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