



LITERARY REVIEW ON KRIMI

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the oldest medicinal system, and it has treasures of knowledge. From Rigveda to Samhita, *Krimi* has been critical in medical science for ages. *Krimi* is accepted as a causative factor of diseases. In Ayurveda, the concept of *Krimi* and their relation to the development of diseases have been described well. Also, its classification, signs, symptoms, and treatment are mentioned. The visible and invisible organisms that affect living beings are described in Ayurveda. The word *Krimi* is used broadly for all kinds of worms and micro-organisms. *Krimi* can be correlated with parasites and microorganisms mentioned in modern science. *Krimi* is described beautifully in Ayurveda as living in our body in different sites, which means the organism invades our body and is located in some particular site and produces various diseases.

Keywords: *Krimi*, Micro-organism, Ayurveda, *Krimi roga*, Diseases.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary medical science, microbes have been identified as the cause of a number of infectious diseases. Infectious diseases are prevalent these days. We have historical examples of Pandemic, Endemic, Plague, COVID-19, and Influenza outbreaks globally,

which resulted in loss of life. This is concerning because the increasing capacity of the pathogens to develop antibiotic resistance and the ill effects of antibiotics, which are also becoming a global threat to human health. To solve these problems, new options

need to be explored. Though Ayurveda, the oldest healthcare system, does not have direct references to micro-organism and antibiotics, a curious search in its literature shows a number of references stating that certain diseases are contagious. The clue for infectious diseases/ contagious diseases in Ayurveda is quite evident from the famous verse –

प्रसङ्गाद्वात्रसंस्पर्शात्त्रिश्वासात्सहभोजनात् |
सहशय्यासनाच्चापि वस्त्रमाल्यानुलेपनात् ||
कुष्ठं ज्वरश्च शोषश्च नेत्राभिष्यन्द एव च | औपसर्गिकरोगाश्च
सङ्क्रामन्ति नरात्ररम् ||^[1]

Kustha, Jawra, Shosha and Netrabhishyanda, etc., infectious diseases spread from one person. Close interaction, touching, sharing meals, bedding, sharing clothes and ornaments, etc., are some of the modes of transmission of infectious diseases. Such diseases are called *Bhutabhishangaja, Sankramaka, and Upsargika Rogas*. Words like '*Janapadodhvansa*' indicate the epidemics caused by infected water, air, etc.

The concept of '*Krimi*' finds the closest and appropriate relation with infectious diseases and is described beautifully in Ayurveda. The word '*Krimi*' is used in a broad sense for all kinds of worms (macro)

and micro-organisms. Thus, under the '*Krimi*' heading, they described worms, insects, bacteria, viruses, parasites, etc. All the *Acharayas* described '*Krimi*', classified them and gave their symptoms and treatment.

ETYMOLOGY AND DEFINITION OF THE WORD '*KRIMI*'

In *Shabdakalpadruma*^[2] word '*Krimi*' is derived from –

“भ्रमेः सम्प्रसारणञ्च”

means which moves about.

Acharya Yasakacharya described '*Krimi*' in three aspects-

क्रव्ये मेघति, क्रमते वसियात् सरणकर्मणः कामते वा।^[3]

- Those which grow by eating raw flesh are called as *Krimi*.
- *Krimi* word is derived from '*Krama dhatu*', which means *Gati, Kramu Pada Vikashepan*, that is, which moves with legs.
- Also, *Krimi* is made from *Kam Dhatu*, which means *Kanti* and *Kamna*.

SYNONYMS OF KRIMI-

Table-1 Synonyms of *Krimi*^[4] -

S.No	Synonyms for <i>Krimi</i>	Description
1.	<i>Rakshas</i>	Those which kills in lonely place and roam in night.
2.	<i>Pishacha</i>	Those who eat raw flesh.
3.	<i>Yatudhana</i>	Those which cause pain and problems in body.
4.	<i>Yatu</i>	Those which cause pain and problems in the body.
5.	<i>Asura</i>	Those which take away life.
6.	<i>Kimidi</i>	Those which penetrate through channels and roam in body, causing infections.
7.	<i>Gandharva</i>	Those which produce noise or attracted by smell and appearance.
8.	<i>Apsara</i>	Those which live in water bodies.
9.	<i>Durnam</i>	Those which are pathogenic to man.
10.	<i>Bhuta</i>	Those which are highly infective to humans.

LITERARY REVIEW

Description of micro or macro disease-causing organisms' dates back to the Vedic era in the name of *Krimi*.

A. VEDIC PERIOD (2500- 600BC)

Krimi is the oldest companion of mankind since the Vedic period. There are indirect references to microbes and the diseases caused by them in the name of *Krimi, Rakshash, Pishach, Nishachara*^[5] etc. And also mentioned *Surnam* and *Durnam Krimi* for non-pathogenic and pathogenic *Krimi*, respectively^[6].

There was a separate chapter called *Krimi Prakarna* in *Atharvaveda* where *Krimi* are divided into *Drishta* (visible) and *Adrishta* (invisible) *Krimi*. *Mantra Chikitsa* is indicated to treat *Krimi*. According to *Veda*, *Krimi* are scattered all around and are said to flourish in mountains, plants, forests and rivers. They flee from the atmosphere to our food, water, milk, and utensils and reach our bodies and cause diseases. Different types of *Krimi* are mentioned, some enter the cow's body and reduce the milk producing capacity of the cow, some enter the uterus and cause uterine diseases, abortions, intrauterine deaths and infertility, and some suck human blood, ruin flesh and restrict human growth. They also enter the eyes, nose, teeth and brain and cause diseases. Abdominal *Krimi* resides in the intestines of humans and animals. Some *Krimi* originate in unhygienic places. *Rajyakshma* is a communicable disease that spreads from one person to another by sharing their clothes and beds.^[7]

B. SAMHITA PERIOD (1000 BC- 1300 AD)

Ayurveda, based on principles routed from the *Vedas*, gradually evolved for centuries. It developed to such a size that it was divided into 8 branches. There are vast numbers of citations available in Ayurvedic literature that show evidence of *Krimi* in Ayurveda.

1. *Charaka Samhita* (1000BC-4000BC)

Details of *Krimiroga* are found in *Vimansthana* 7th chapter in *Vayadhiroopiya Adhayay*. *Acharya* described 20 types of *Krimis*, their morphological features and treatment. In *Kustha Chikitsa Adhayay*, he mentioned that in *Kaphaj Kustha*, parts of the body are eaten by *Jantu* ^[8]. He also mentioned that *Krimi* cause headaches and described it as *Krimij Shirosoola*.^[9] Likewise, in the aetiology of *Hridayaroga*, *Charaka* confirms bacterial origin as one out of five causes.^[10] He mentioned various *Dhupan Dravyas* (Antimicrobial medicines). to kill microbes^[11]. In treatment for *Vishamajwara*, he mentioned *Dhupan Chikitsa*^[12]. In *Apasmara Chikitsa*, he mentioned *Dhupan* with various herbs ^[13]. In *Arsha Chikitsa Dhupan yog* has been mentioned^[14]. In *Visha Chikitsa*, he mentioned *Dhupan* with herbs to kill microbes ^[15]. He hints the presence of *Krimis* in

Agantuja Jwara and *Bhutaabhisangaj Jawra*^[16]. *Charaka* affirms that *Krimi* found in blood vessels are microscopic, circular, or disc-like. He described *Raktaj Krimi* as *Sukshma Krimi*.

'सूक्ष्मत्वाच्चैके भवन्त्यदृश्याः'^[17]

2. *Susruta Samhita* (1000BC- 200AD)

Krimipratished Adhayay gave a detailed description of *Krimi*, their origin, etiology, types, symptoms and treatment ^[18]. In *Nidana Sthana*, *Upasargika Rogas*^[19] are mentioned, which are nothing but contagious diseases where infections occur, and *Krimi* (microbes) are responsible for it. In aetiology of *Kustha*, he stated that *Krimis* and *tridosha* are the cause of all kinds of *Kustha*^[20]. He mentioned *Dhupan dravyas* for *Vrana*.^[21]

In *Susruta Uttar Sthana Drishta* and *Adrishta* type of *Krimi* are explained as-

दृश्यास्त्रयोदशाद्यास्तु कृमीणां परिकीर्तिताः ।
केशादाद्यास्त्वदृश्यास्ते द्वावाद्यौ परिवर्जयेत्^[22]

3. *Ashtang Hridayam* (7th Century AD)

Acharya classified *Krimi* into *Bahya* and *Abhyantra*. Their etiology, morphology, and symptoms of diseases caused by them are described. He also mentioned that diseases are *Sanchransheela* (communicable). He described *Sukshma Krimi* as

'सौक्ष्म्यात् केचिददर्शनाः'^[23]

C. SAMGRAH KALA (7th Century AD to 16th Century AD)

Many *Acharya* compiled material from various *Samhita* in this era, making it more suitable and practical. In *Madhava Nidana*, *Harita Samhita*, *Sharangdhar Samhita*, and *Bhavprakash Samhita* broadly classified *Krimi* as *Bahya* (external) and *Abhyantra* (internal) and further classified into 20 types. These covered all micro to macro-pathogenic organisms, from viruses to parasites. They also elaborated on their origin, morphological features, symptoms caused by them and their treatment.

The following about *Krimi* is compiled from the above-mentioned treatises-
MODE OF INFECTIONS-

Table 2- According To Ayurveda, Different Modes of Infections Are^[24]

<i>Prasanga</i>	Contagious infection (Sexual or intimate contact)
<i>Gatrasamparsa</i>	Bodily contact infection
<i>Nishwasa</i>	Air borne infection
<i>Sahabhajana</i>	Food borne infection
<i>Sahasayya</i>	Contact infection (sharing same bed)
<i>Sahaasana</i>	Contact infection (sitting together)
<i>Vastramalya anulepana</i>	Contact infection (sharing clothes and cosmetics)

CLASSIFICATION OF KRIMI-

In Ayurveda, the *Vaikarika* (pathogenic) *Krimis* are described mainly. This can be seen from the classification of *Krimis* in two broad groups in *Charaka Samhita*^[25].

1. *Sahaja Krimi*—This probably reflects commensal bacteria, which normally reside in the human body from birth until death.

2. *Vaikarika Krimi* consists of those *Krimis* that are pathogenic to the human body. These are further classified according to their invasion site in the human body: *Bahya* (external) and *Abhyantara* (internal).

Table 3 Classification of *Krimi* according to different *Samhitas*-

S.N	Text	<i>Bahya Krimi</i>	<i>Abhyantra Krimi</i>			Total
			<i>Shleshmaj</i>	<i>Raktaj</i>	<i>Purishaj</i>	
1.	Ch.S	2	7	6	5	20
2.	Su.S	-	6	7	7	20
3.	As.H	2	7	6	5	20
4.	Ha.S	7	6			13
5.	Ma.N	2	7	6	5	20
6.	Sa. S	2+2	7	6	5	22
7.	Bh.S	2	7	6	5	20

All the *Samhitas* Classified *Krimi* into 20 types except *Harita Samhita*, where *Acharaya* classified *Krimi* simply into *Bahya Krimi* (7 in number) and *Abhyantra Krimi*, which (6 in number). No further classification is mentioned.

In *Sharangdhar Samhita*, along with 20 *Krimis* classifications, *Acharya* mentioned two other types of *Krimi*, i.e *Kaphraktaj Krimi* called *Snayuk Krimi* and others which live in wounds.

CONCLUSION

Though a complete description and three-fold treatment of *Krimi roga* may be found in the *Samhita* Period, the concept of *Krimi* and *Krimi Roga* has exist-

ed since Vedic times. The literature's profundity varies with the period and provides a more detailed explanation of *Krimiroga*. In Ayurveda, *Krimi* refers to all kinds of microorganisms. Because each *Krimi* is not described in depth, it is quite challenging to understand how *Krimi* and modern science are related.

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