

## A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW ON VATAJA GRAHANI ROGA

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## ABSTRACT

*Grahani* (duodenum) is regarded as the seat of *Agni* (digestive fire) and is sustained by its strength. Any factor that disrupts the normal function of *Jatharagni* (a type of digestive fire) can lead to *Grahaniroga* (Diarhoea/Dysentry). *Grahaniroga* is categorised into different types based on the involvement of *Doshas*. Among all the kinds of *Grahaniroga*, *Vataja Grahani Roga* is more common and can be correlated with Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). The causes of *Vataja Grahani* are primarily factors that aggravate *Vata dosha*. These include *Katu*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya*, *Rooksha* and *Sheeta*. The consumption of factors that aggravate *Vata dosha* leads to vitiated *Vata* enveloping the digestive fire (*Agni*), resulting in *Manda Agni*, or weak digestive fire. This condition causes delayed and difficult digestion, leading to *Shukta paka* forming, where the food becomes acidic. In *Charaka Samhita*, the treatment for *Vataja Grahani* is explained in detail. These include *Aam Pachana*, *Deepaniya Ghrita*, *Anuvasana Basti*, *Virechana* and *Niruha Basti*.

**Keywords:** *Grahani*, *Vataja Grahani Roga*, *Agni*, *Ama Pachana*

## INTRODUCTION

The *Charaka Samhita* provides the most detailed explanation regarding the causes of *Grahaniroga*. Other classical texts typically attribute the primary cause of *Grahaniroga* to indulging in improper diet and lifestyle after recovering from *Atisara*. They collectively describe all the dietary causes that impair *Agni* with the term *Ahitashana*<sup>1</sup>. *Grahaniroga* arises from an abnormal state of *Agni*. This alteration occurs due to indulgence in *Nidana*. When *Agni* is impaired, it struggles to digest even the lightest foods, leading to the formation of undigested food, which converts into *Shuktata* and harms the body like *Visha*.<sup>2</sup>

*Grahaniroga* is categorised into different types based on the involvement of *Doshas*. According to the *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Astanga Hridaya*, *Bhavaprakasha*, and *Yogaratanakara*, there are four primary types of *Grahaniroga*: *Vataja Grahaniroga*, *Pittaja Grahaniroga*, *Kaphaja Grahaniroga* and *Sannipataja Grahaniroga*. Among all the kinds of *Grahaniroga*, *Vataja Grahani Roga* is more common and can be correlated with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). The causes of *Vataja Grahani* are primarily factors that aggravate *Vata dosha*. These include *Katu*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya*, *Rooksha* and *Sheeta*.<sup>3</sup> In *Charaka Samhita*, the treatment for *Vataja Grahani* is explained in detail. These include *Aam Pachana*, *Deepaniya Ghrita*, *Anuvasana Basti*, *Virechana* and *Niruha Basti*.<sup>4,5,6</sup>

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

A comprehensive study of the *Vataja Grahani Roga* concerning its aetiology, pathogenesis, clinical features, and management.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Source of Literature:

- Classical textbooks of *Ayurveda*.
- Published articles from periodical journals, these and other magazines.

## NIDAN OF VATAJA GRAHANI

The causes of *Vataja Grahani* are primarily factors that aggravate *Vata dosha*. These include:

### Aharaja Nidan (Dietary Factors)

*Katu* (pungent), *Tikta* (bitter), *Kashaya* (astringent), *Rooksha* (dry), and *Sheetala* (cold) foods: All these types of foods aggravate *Vata dosha*, leading to *Vishamagni* (irregular digestive fire), which results in *Agni dushti* (impaired digestion). This causes *Ahara Pachana* (food digestion) to be inconsistent—sometimes regular, sometimes excessive (*Teekshna*), and occasionally deficient (*Manda*).

### Pramitaashana (Very Less Intake of Food):

Consuming very little food can also lead to the aggravation of *Vata dosha* and irregularity in *Agni* (digestive fire), ultimately resulting in *Vataja Grahani*.

### Viharaja Nidan (Lifestyle Factors)

*Vega Nigraha*: Suppressing natural urges

*Adhwa*: Excessive walking

*Maithuna*: Overindulgence in sexual activities

These activities aggravate *Vata dosha*, impair *Agni*, and lead to *Vataja Grahani*.<sup>7</sup>

### Primary Consequences:

*Agni Vishamata*: Impaired digestion

*Vata Vriddhi in Koshta*: Altered motility in the gastrointestinal tract.

## SAMPRAPTI OF VATAJA GRAHANI

In addition to the general *Samprapti*, it is essential to understand the specific *Samprapti* of *Vataja Grahani*. While *Charaka* and *Vagbhata* have discussed this in detail, most other acharyas rarely address it.

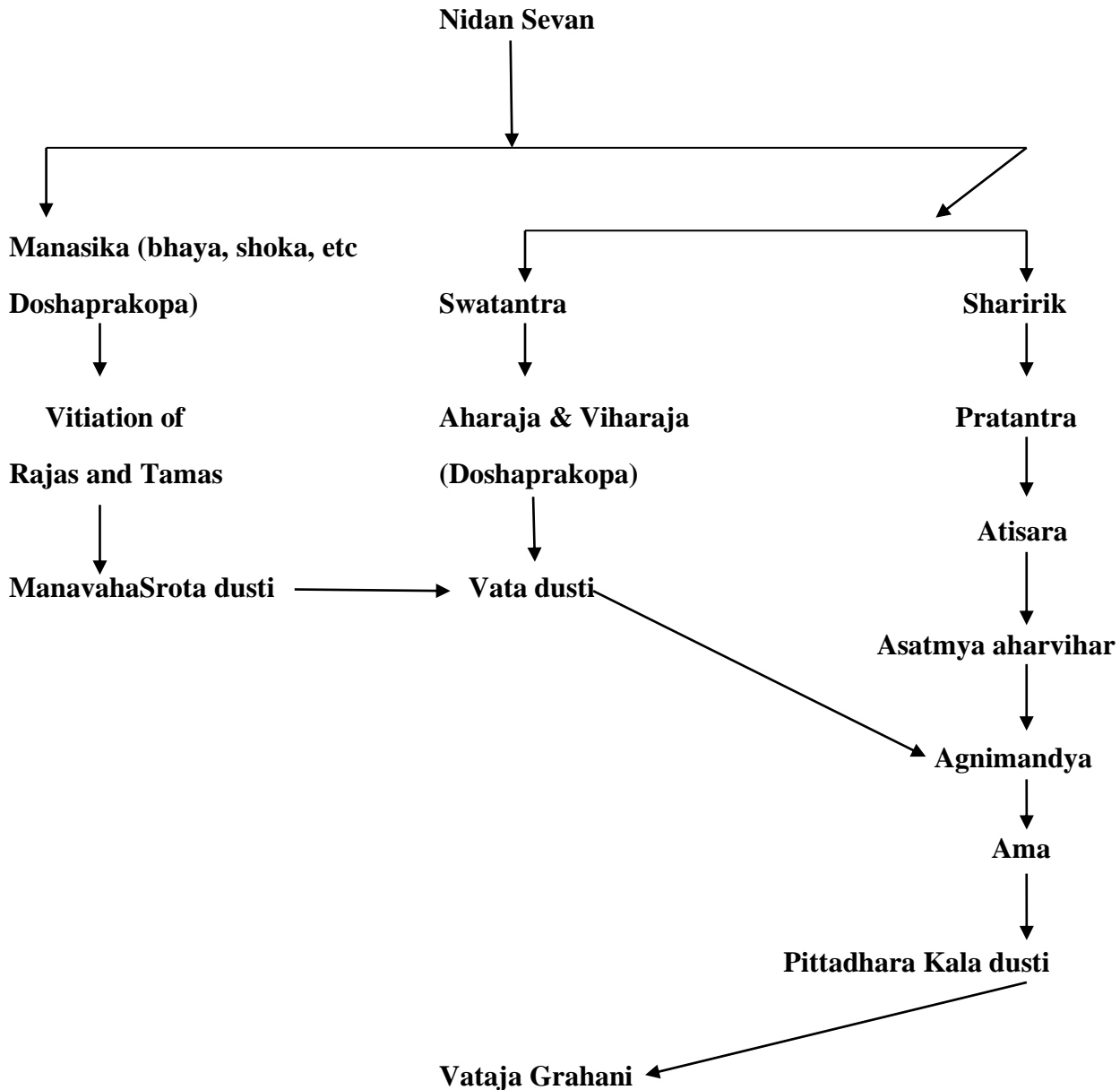
According to *Acharya Charaka*, consuming factors that aggravate *Vata dosha* leads to vitiated *Vata* enveloping the digestive fire, resulting in *Manda Agni*, or weak digestive fire. This condition causes delayed and difficult digestion, leading to *Shukta Paka* forming, where the food becomes acidic.<sup>8</sup>

Upon further analysis, the involvement of *Doshas* in *Vataja Grahani* appears similar to that in the general *Samprapti*. However, specific symptoms of *Vataja Grahani* indicate the participation of the mind (*Manas*). For these symptoms to manifest, the involvement of *Prana Vata* is crucial. Although there are no direct references to *Prana Vata* impairment, *Charaka Samhita Chikitsa Sthana* Chapter 28 mentions the

importance of protecting *Prana Vata* by treating all four types of vitiated *Vata doshas*. When *Prana Vata* is in its proper place, it protects all other *Vatas*.<sup>9</sup>

From this, we can infer that *Grahani* is a chronic disease (*Chira Kaleena Vyadhi*) that, if not treated according to its *Samprapti*, will likely lead to *Prana Vata dushti*. In some cases, *Prana Vata dushti* may occur initially due to factors like grief or fear, which

weaken the digestive fire (*Agni mandya*) and subsequently damage the *Grahani kala*, leading to *Grahani dosha*.



(Flow chart indicating pathogenesis of Vataja Grahani Roga)

## LAKSHANA OF VATAJA GRAHANI<sup>10, 11, 12, 13, 14</sup>

### Pratyatma Lakshana of Vataja Grahani

**1. Punaha Punah srujet varchaha:** A person with *Grahani* frequently passes stools. This is due to the increased *Chala guna* (mobility) of *Vata*. The reduction in the grasping function of *Samana Vata* and the increased action of *Apana Vata* lead to this symptom. In conditions like IBS, changes in stool frequency are a crucial criterion.

**2. Dravam/ Shushkam/ Tanu Mala Pravritti:** The patient may pass loose or watery stools alternating with hard stools. As the *Ahara Rasa* (digestive essence) enters the *Pakwashaya* (large intestine), the digestive fire (*Agni*) in the *Pakwashaya* typically dries the contents, forming a solid mass. However, when this drying process does not occur due to *Manda Agni* (weak digestive fire) and vitiated *Samana Vata*, the result is loose or watery stools (*Drava* or *Tanu Mala Pravritti*). Conversely, excessive drying of the contents in the *Pakwashaya* due to overactive *Agni* and prolonged grasping action of *Samana Vata* results in hard stools (*Shushka Mala Pravritti*).

**3. Parshwa shoola, Vankshana shoola, hrut peeda, shoolahika:** *Shoola*, or pain, is a primary symptom of *Vata dosha*. In *Vataja Grahani*, pain in the flanks (*Parshwa*), lower abdomen (*Vankshana*), and epigastrium (*hrut peeda*) is significant. *Acharya Sushruta* mentions "*Vatat Shoolahikam*," indicating that the pain is more intense due to the predominance of *Vata dosha*. Generally, *Shoola* is considered as abdominal pain (*Udara Shoola*).

**4. Ama Mala Pravritti:** *Ama Mala Pravritti* occurs due to the vitiation of *Kledaka kapha* or impaired *Agni*. This condition and increased *Vata* result in undigested waste (*Sama Mala*) expulsion without proper digestion (*Pachana*).

**5. Chirat Mala Pravritti and Dukhena Mala Pravritti:** Due to the chronic nature of the disease, patients experience delayed and painful defecation. The impaired *Munchana* action of *Samana Vata* leads to a delay in the passage of stools.

**6. Shabda Phena Mala Pravritti:** *Shabda Phena Mala Pravritti* refers to the passage of frothy stools accompanied by flatus. This occurs due to the increased

*Vata* in the gastrointestinal tract (*Koshta Gata Vata Vruddhi*).

### Samanya Lakshanas of Vataja Grahani

**1. Avipaka (Impaired Digestion):** *Charaka* describes the *Samprapti* (pathogenesis) of *Vataja Grahani*, explaining that aggravated *Vata* disturbs *Agni* (digestive fire) due to *Nidana Sevana* (causative factors), leading to impaired digestion.

**2. Kharaangata (Roughness All Over the Body):** This symptom arises from the increased *Khara Guna* (rough quality) of *Vata dosha*.

**3. Kantaasya Shosha, Trishna (Dryness in the Mouth and Throat):** Dryness is caused by the *Ushna Guna* (hot quality) of *Pitta*. The *Ruksha Guna* (dry quality) of *Vata* and the *Ushna Guna* of *Pitta* leads to dryness in the body. In the cases of *Ati Drava Mala* (excessive liquid stools) and *Tanu Mala Pravritti* (thin stools), the liquid part is not absorbed by the body and is expelled, resulting in this symptom.

**4. Hrit peeda (Pain in the Epigastrium/Heartburn):** This can be understood as both pain in the epigastrium and heartburn. It is due to the increase in *Vata* and *Pitta doshas*.

**5. Karshya (Thinness):** *Karshya* is a general symptom of *Grahani*. Individuals with a thin build are more susceptible to this condition.

**6. Greeva Ruja, Shiro Ruja (Neck Pain, Headache):** These symptoms are due to *Agnimandya* (weak digestive fire) and are characteristic of *Vata dosha* imbalance.

**7. Visuchika:** This symptom is a result of *Vataja Agnimandya*.

**8. Parikartika (Cutting Pain in the Anal Region):** This sharp, cutting pain is caused by *Vata dosha*.

**9. Kshut (Altered Hunger):** *Kshut* is due to the imbalance of *Pitta* and the irregularity of *Vata*. *Vishmagni* (irregular digestive fire) sometimes causes *Avipaka* (impaired digestion) and, at other times, increases hunger.

**10. Timira (Blurred Vision), Karna Swaana (Tinnitus), Dourbalya (Weakness), Vairasya (Altered Taste):** These symptoms are due to *Vata dosha* im-

balance and depletion of *Rasa* (nutrient fluid). They are more commonly observed in chronic cases.

**11. Jeerne Jeeryati cha Adhmanam, Bhukte Swasthyamupaiti cha:** Patients with *Grahani* experience abdominal distension during digestion or after digestion and feel relief after consuming food. This is due to altered *Samana Vata* and increased *Koshta Vata*.

**12. Griddhi Sarva Rasanaam, Loulyam:** Patients with *Grahani* crave all tastes and strongly desire to eat everything. This craving may arise due to persistent *Agnimandya* (weak digestion) and loss of taste. Consequently, they become greedy towards food. This symptom can be attributed to the involvement of the mind (*Manas*) in the pathogenesis. Frustrated by digestive issues, individuals may feel compelled to consume anything in hopes of finding relief.

**13. Manasaha Sadanam:** *Manasaha Sadanam* refers to constant feelings of depression. This is the sole direct symptom indicating the involvement of the mind (*Manas*). It is caused by the vitiation of *Prana Vata*, which indirectly occurs due to the imbalance of *Apana Vata* and *Samana Vata*.

**14. Sa Vata Gulma Hrdroga Pleeha Shankha:** Patients often approach the doctor suspecting they might be suffering from *Vata Roga* (diseases related to *Vata*), *Hridayaroga* (heart disease), *Pleeha* (spleen disorders), etc. The severity of symptoms associated with this condition can lead patients to believe they have a severe illness. Such thoughts instill fear in their minds, further exacerbating the condition.

### SAPEKSHA NIDANA (Differential Diagnosis)

To plan the appropriate treatment for *Vataja Grahani Roga*, it is crucial to differentiate it from the following diseases that share similar presenting complaints:

<i>Vataja Grahani</i>	<i>Pittaja Grahani</i>	<i>Kaphaja Grahani</i>	<i>Sannipataja Grahani</i>	<i>Ghati yantra Grahani</i>	<i>Sangraha Grahani</i>
Increased stool frequency Delayed delivery of stools. Passage of stools with flatus and frothy stools. Abdominal distension. Mental depression.	Indigestion <i>Neela peeta mala</i> <i>Pooti Amlodgara</i> Heartburn <i>Trishna</i>	Nausea, Vomiting, Loose stools, mucoid stools Stool quantity is more. <i>Akrishasy-aapi</i> <i>Daurbalyam</i>	<i>Tri dosha lakshanas</i> mixed	Pain in the flanks. <i>Gala jala Ghati Dhvani</i>	<i>Antra koojana</i> , Stools quantity more, Loose stools, Pain in the waist region Sticky mucoid stools once in 10,15, 30 days Chronic occurs as <i>Upadrava</i> to <i>Amavata</i> .

### CHIKITSA OF VATAJA GRAHANI

In *Charaka Samhita*, the treatment for *Vataja Grahani* is explained in detail:

**Amapachana:** The first line of treatment involves digestion of *Ama* (undigested food).<sup>15</sup>

**Deepaniya Ghrita:** Administered small quantities to kindle *Agni* (digestive fire). If there is improper evacuation of *Vata*, *Mutra* (urine), and *Purisha* (stools), continue *Snehana* (oleation) for 2-3 days, followed by *Abhyanga* (oil massage) and *Swedana* (sudation).

**Niruha Basti:** <sup>16</sup> Given as an immediate measure to pacify Vata.

**Virechana:** After *Niruha Basti*, purgation is planned to use *Tilvaka Ghrita* or *Eranda Taila*. *Anuvasana Basti* follows this with *Deepaniya* (digestive stimulant), *Amla* (sour), and *Vataghna* (Vata-pacifying) *dravya Siddha Taila* (medicated oil). *Anuvasana Basti* is indicated when there is *Rooksha Aashaya* (dry body), *Shudha Koshta* (clean bowels), and *Baddha Varchas* (formed stools).

**Diet and Ghrita Abhyasa:** <sup>17</sup> light foods (*Laghu Anna*) and regular use of *Ghrita* (ghee) are recommended after the procedures.

**Role of Basti in Vataja Grahani:** *Basti* (medicated enema) is indicated explicitly in *Vataja Grahani*, reflecting its importance in pacifying *Vata dosha*. *Ash-tanga Hridaya* supports *Charaka Samhita* in this approach, while *Sushruta Samhita* does not mention *Basti*.

#### Order of Procedures

In *Vataja Grahani*, the treatment sequence emphasizes the protection of *Vata*:

**Niruha Basti:** Used first for immediate *Vata* pacification.

**Virechana:** Administered with *Snigdha Virechana* (gentle purgation) using *Eranda Taila* or *Tilvaka Ghrita* to regulate *Vata*.

**Anuvasana Basti:** Indicated after *Virechana* for further *Vata* pacification.

After completing these procedures, **Ghrita Abhyasa** (regular use of ghee) is performed as a pacifying treatment. *Anuvasana Basti* is given at the end when the body is free from *Doshas*, not at the beginning.

*Vata* needs to be protected first throughout the treatment course for *Vataja Grahani*. Both *Pitta* and *Vata doshas* should be considered equally when planning the treatment. The sequence of procedures highlights the importance of balancing *Vata* to manage *Vataja Grahani* effectively.

#### DISCUSSION

*Grahaniroga* is categorized into different types based on the involvement of *Doshas*. According to the *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Astanga Hri-*

*daya*, *Bhavaprakasha*, and *Yogaratnakara*, there are four primary types of *Grahaniroga*: *Vataja Grahaniroga*, *Pittaja Grahaniroga*, *Kaphaja Grahaniroga*, *Sannipataja Grahaniroga*. Additionally, *Madhava Nidana* describes two more types: *Sangrahani* and *Ghatyantra Grahani*. Among all the types of *Grahaniroga*, **Vataja Grahani Roga** is more common and can be correlated with Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). The causes of *Vataja Grahani* are primarily factors that aggravate *Vata dosha*. These include: *Katu*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya*, *Rooksha* and *Sheeta*. According to *Acharya Charaka*, the consumption of factors that aggravate *Vata dosha* leads to vitiated *Vata* enveloping the digestive *Agni*, resulting in *Mandaagni*. In *Charaka Samhita*, the treatment for *Vataja Grahani* is explained in detail. These include: *Aam Pachana*, *Deepaniya Ghrita*, *Anuvasana Basti*, *Virechana* and *Niruha Basti*.

#### CONCLUSION

**Grahani** is regarded as the seat of *Agni* and is sustained by its strength. Any factor that disrupts the normal function of *Jataragni* can lead to *Grahaniroga*. Among all the types of *Grahaniroga*, **Vataja Grahani Roga** is more common and can be correlated with Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). The classical symptoms of *Vataja Grahani Roga* are reasonably similar to the symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). In spite of recent advances in the western medicine the treatment of IBS is mere symptomatic, but symptomatic management of any disorder is incomplete as it cannot break the chain of pathogenesis. Hence considering this lacunae ayurvedic treatment of this disease will be more beneficial for the patients.

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