



ETIOPATHOLOGICAL STUDY OF MOST COMMON DIGESTIVE DISORDER AJIRNA (INDIGESTION)

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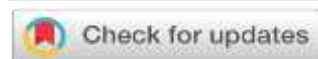
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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an age-old traditional medical science that deals with the management and prevention of diseases. *Ayurveda* considers Health and Disease both as the products of food and lifestyle. Today when the population is moving with modernization in the 21st century many diseases emerge out due to improper diet, faulty lifestyle, and unhealthy food. lack of exercise, mental stress, and sleep also produce many lifestyle diseases. *Ajirna* is one of the most common diseases which is originated from digestive insufficiency (*Agni*) due to all the above factors of the modern Era. *Ayurveda* has given prime importance to *Agni*. *Agni* presents in the *Jathara* (Stomach and Intestine) which digests and metabolizes the food and assists in the growth of the body hence it is termed as *Bhagawan Ishvara*- almighty God- himself. *Ayurveda* considers that no disease ever be developed without the derangement of *Agni*. Disturbed functions of *Agni* cause indigestion of food and are termed *Ajirna* (indigestion). *Ajirna* is the most important source of production of *Ama*. *Ajirna* arises as a result of less, excessive, and irregular digestion of food, and in the long-term of this situation production of *Ama Dosa* circulates all over the body. Further *Ama Dosa* combined with other *Dosas* and *Dushyas* vitiated them and produce many diseases. *Dincharya*, *Ratricharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Sadvrita*, and *Pathya Palana Dasvidh bhojana Grahan Niyam* are the preventive measure for *Ajirna* in *Ayurveda*.

Keywords: *Ajirna, Agni, Ama.*

INTRODUCTION

Ajirna is the state of incomplete process of digestion of ingested food. The main reason for indigestion is the malfunctioning of *Agni*. Incomplete digestion and metabolism due to disturbed digestive fire lead to the formation of under processed state of food termed *Ajirna*. It is an important digestive disorder caused by the malfunctioning of the *Agni* system. The definition of health in *Ayurveda* is “*Samadosha Samagni Samadhatu Malakriya Prasannatma Indriya Mana Swastha Abhidayate*”¹. It means a person is said to be healthy when there is balance in *Dosas* (*Vata, Pitta, Kapha*), *Agni* (Metabolic factor), *Dhatu* (tissue), *Mala* (Excretory products), and harmony in mental factors like *Indriyas, Manas, Atma*. These are signifying the role of *Agni* in the maintenance of normal health. Excessive diet without the concern of *Kaal, Matra, Rashi, or Guna*, intake of opposite characteristics at a Time, Excessive Sweet, Excessive Bitter or Salty food, repeatedly consumption of food, *Chinta, Shoka, Bhaya*, etc causes *Annavaha Srotas Dushti* which leads to Indigestion (*Ajirna*²).

Types of Agni – Three main types of *Agni* have been described in *Ayurveda* namely *Jatharagni / Pachakagni, Bhutagni*, and *Dhatvagni*³.

➤ **Status of Jatharagni according to Dosha:** Different functional states of *Jatharagni* are produced due to the influence of *Doshas*.

- **Mandagni:** Due to the influence of *Kapha* causing *Amajirna*.
- **Tikshnagni:** Due to the influence of *Pitta* causing *Vidagdhajirna*.
- **Vishmaggni:** Due to the influence of *Vata* causing *Vishtabhajirna*.

- **Samagni:** Equilibrium state of *Dosha*. *Mandagni*⁴ is that which is incapable of digestion even a small quantity of food. *Vishmaggni* digest the food sometimes properly and sometimes improperly and *Tikshnagni*⁵ is that which digests the usual quantity of food or even excess quantity without any difficulty. Out of these four only *Samagni*⁶ is said to be ideal because in these conditions *Dosas* are in an equilibrium state and perform normal digestion and metabolism and responsible for strength, health, longevity, and vital breath that's why they should be protected by proper intake of food if a person is deprived of food and drinks *Agni* become disturbed.

Role of Agni -

The term *Agni*, in the common language, means fire. *Acharya Charak* has described *Agni* determines the quantity of food to be consumed⁷. Digestion is performed by various digestive juices (*Pachaka Rasas*) which in *Ayurveda* are termed *Pachaka pitta*⁸ or *Pachaka Agnis*. In the modern sense, these are called Enzymes. Thus, *Ajirna* is caused due to the deficient functioning of the *Pachaka Pitta* a state known as *Mandagni*, and it is responsible for the causation of *Ajirna* when the food eaten is not digested properly that leads to the formation of *Ama* which is the route of many diseases. The *Pachaka Pitta* governs digestion stimulates digestive enzymes and separate nutrient and waste products located in between the *Ama-saya* and *Pakvasaya*⁹.

NIDANA (Causative Factors) – The *Nidana* factors are broad of four types of *Ajirna*^{10 11 12}.

A. Food Related (<i>Aharaj Nidan</i>)	B. Lifestyle (<i>Vihara Nidan</i>)	C. Psychological	D. <i>Agantuj Nidan</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Atyambupana</i> (excess water drink) 2. <i>Atimatra Bhojan</i> 3. <i>Atilanghan</i> 4. <i>Vishamasama</i> (irregular meal) 5. <i>Asatmyaahara</i> (incomplete food) 6. <i>Kaphakara Ahar</i> 7. Food Related- <i>Atiruksha, Atisnigdha Gurubhojan, Vidahibhojan, Amabhajna, Vishtambhi Pishtabhojan,</i> etc. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Vegadharana</i> (suppression of natural urges) 2. <i>Swapanaviparayaya</i> (sleep disturbances) 3. <i>Ratrijagran/Divashayan</i> 4. Aversion to <i>Dincharya, Ratricharya, Ritucharya Sadvritacharya.</i> 	<i>Dwesh</i> (Jealousy), <i>Bhaya</i> (fear), <i>Chinta</i> (worry), <i>Krodha</i> (anger), <i>Moha, Raga, Lobha,</i> and eating food when there is aversion for it.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Virechana Snehavasti Vyapad</i> 2. <i>Sneha Vibhram</i> 3. <i>Desh Kala Vaishmaya</i> 4. <i>Vyadhi Karshana</i> (due to any illness)

SAMPRAPTI (Pathogenesis) –

Due to excessive usage of the above factors the power of *Agni* or digestive fire becomes very weak, hence

it cannot digest the food properly even in a very small amount. In this disorder, *Pachakapitta, Samanvata,* and *Kledak Kapha* are vitiated mostly. Vitiating of *Tridosas* specially *Kapha*^{13 14} dominating.

Intake of *Aharaj, Viharaja, Mansika, Agantujnidan*



Vitiating of *Tridoas* specially *Kapha* is Dominating



Impairs *Jathragni*



Agnimandya (digestive Insufficiency)



Ajirjirna (Indigestion)

SAMPRAPTI GHATAKA

Dosa - In pathophysiology *Samanvata, Pachaka Pitta,* and *Kledaka Kapha* are involved. The *Samanvata* -It controls all the secreting and motility functions of the two *Ashayas* and helps in the action of digestive enzymes, the assimilation of the end product of food, and their separation into various tissue elements, and when vitiated it caused indigestion. The *Pachakapitta* – The *Amla Guna* and *Drava Guna* of *Pachaka Pitta* get vitiated. *Kledak Kapha* situated in *Amashaya* is to counter act the destructive action of *Pachaka Pitta*. due to the imbalance of *Pachaka Pitta Pachana Kriya* is also disturbed. The *Kledakakapha*- is situated in *Amashya*. It is moist the solid food and any abnormality in its function lead to impairment of *Agni*. Any type of

disturbance in *Agni* may start the pathogenesis of *Vishmagni, Tikshnagni,* and *Mandagni*.

1. **Dushya (Pachakagni, Rasa)** - *Rasa* is the first *Dhatu* to receive the *Ama Anrrasa* i.e., *Rasa* is *Dushya*
2. **Adhithana** - *Amashya, Grahani*
3. **Strotas (Annavaha)** – The disease involved *Amashya, Grahani,* and *Pakwashaya, Strotas* seem to be mainly concerned but *Rasavaha Strotas* which is the first *Ama* produced due to *Agni* may get involved.
4. **Vyadhi** – *Amashayothana*
5. **Dushtiprakara** - *Sanga*
6. **Agni** - *Jathragni*
7. **Marg** - *Abhyantara*

PURVAROOPA (Prodromal Features)¹⁵

1. *Annabhilasha* (dislike for food)
2. *Aruchi* (Anorexia)
3. *Chardi* (vomiting)

RUPA/SAMANYA LAKSHANA¹⁶

1. *Malavibandha* or *Atipravriti*
2. Obstruction of *Apanavayu* and *Udgara*
3. *Shaithilya*
4. *Shirasula*
5. *Murchha*
6. *Bhrama*
7. Heaviness of the body
8. *Angamarda*
9. *Trisna*
10. *Jwara*
11. *Aruchi* and *Avipaka*

Specific signs and symptoms of various types of Ajirna¹⁷

- **Amajirna:** *Amajirna* is characterized by the heaviness of the abdomen or the whole body, nausea, swelling of the cheeks and eyes, belching, and similar to those occurring soon after meals signify occurrence of *Amajirna*.
- **Vidagdhajirna:** *Vidagdhajirna* is characterised by giddiness, thirst, fainting, sour and hot belching, excessive perspiration, and a burning sensation inside the body.
- **Vishtabdhajirna:** *Vishtabdhajirna* is characterised by pricking pain in the abdomen, long stasis, tympanite's, non-movement of flatus, obstruction of stool, delusion, and general malaise.
- **Rasheshajirna:** *Rasheshajirna* is characterised by aversion to food, pure belching, and heaviness.
- **Dinapakiajirna:** In which the food is digested on next day this occurs due to overeating of food and waiting alone is required for such a condition but causes no difficulty.
- **Prakritiajirna:** It prevails till the consumed food is completely digested. After the completion of digestion, its manifest symptom like hunger, thirst, defecation, etc.

UPADRAVA of AJIRNA¹⁸ - Fainting, Delirium, Vomiting, Excess salivation, Debility, Giddiness, and death.

Effect of Ajirna- When *Ajirna* is combined with *Pitta* causes a burning sensation, thirst, and diseases of oral and other *Pittaj vikaras*. When *Ajirna* combined with *Kapha* causes *Rajyakshma*, *Pinasa*, *Prameha*, and other *Kaphaja Vikara*. When *Ajirna* combined with *Vata* leading to the manifestation of various *Vataj*

Vikara. When *Ajirna* afflicts urine, stool, and *Dhatus* gives rise to urinary disorders gastro intestinal disease, and disease of *Dhatus* respectively¹⁹.

UPASHAYA

- The first line of treatment for all types of *Ajirna* is “*Langhan*” (fasting).
- Never suppress the natural urges.
- Always prefer light food in moderate quantity. *Ayurveda* has mentioned everyone should eat up to half or three of the fourth capacity of the stomach²⁰. Also mentioned for regular use of *Deepan Dravya* like *Ushna*, *Tikshna Dravya* as *Jeerak*, *Pippale*, *Rasona*, and *Shunthi* for proper digestion of food.
- Take some freshly grated ginger, sprinkle some rock salt on it and chew it just before beginning the meal. It will result in the elimination of any kind of digestive problems, gas, belching, etc.
- Avoid drinking excessive water during hunger because it can weaken the digestive fire.
- *Acharya Susruta* has mentioned the person is awake during the daytime and his heart is open like the flower of a Lotus and the body tissue is not soaked with more moisture consuming food day time, is beneficial through the person is suffering from indigestion, but during night time the heart being closed because of sleep and the body tissues having more moisture so, consuming food at night is not beneficial for the *Ajirna* patient²¹.

The following medicines are useful to treat Ajirna²²

- i. *Amajirna* - *Hingvastaka Churna*, *Lasunadi Vati*, *Sanjivani Vati*, *Chitrakadi vati*.
- ii. *Vidagdhairna*- *Shankha Vati*, *Lavanabhaskara Churna*, *Arogyavardhni Vati*.
- iii. *Rasaseshajirna*- *Lavana Bhaskar Churna*, *Agnitundi Vati*, *Sukti bhasma*.

ANUPASHAYA - *Guru*, *Vidahi* and *Vishtambhi bhojan*, *Asatmya Bhojan*, *Virudha bhojan*, *Atiambupana*, *Tikshna Virechan*, *Vegadharan*, *Adhhyashana*, *Samshan*, *Vishmation*, *Raktmokshan* etc.

DISCUSSION

Food has been given a very significant place in an individual's life because it is the primary requirement of the body. It is a basic need being the source of mental and physical energy. The food that is eaten, not only effects the body and the efficiency of the mind but directly effects nature and habits also. Lifestyle changes such as an increasingly sedentary lifestyle due to the growing use of technologies in daily life cause a higher level of physical inactivity and an unwholesome diet

the disturb sleep pattern and wrong Dietary habits are changes the mechanism of internal vital organ and related systems of the body at first, they directly hamper the digestive juice and enzymes (*Pachaka pitta*) therefore food converted into undigested material which leads to the onset of *Ajirna*. For the prevention of *Ajirna*, *Acharya Charak* has mentioned *Astahar Vidhi Vishes Ayatana*. As well as *Acharya Shushrut* also mentioned "*Dashvidha Ahara Vidhividhan*. Both principles have some important points like *Prakriti, Karan, Samyog, Rashi, Desha, Kala, Upayogsanstha*, and *Upyokta* are mentioned by *Acharya Charak*, also said that *Shitahara, Ushnaahara, Snigdhaahara, Rukshahara, Dravahara, Shushkahara, Ekakalika, Dvikalika, Aushadayukta, Matraheena, Prashaman Karak, Vrittipayojak Ahara* are the rules²³ for diet intake. A person who intakes food according to described above rules and follows a proper *Dinchraya, Ratricharya, Ritucharya, Sadvrita*, and *Pathya Palana* then he never would suffer from *Ajirna* (Indigestion) along with any type of digestive and other system-related abnormalities.

CONCLUSION

Deranged functions of *Agni* lead to indigestion of food known as *Ajirna* (indigestion). *Ajirna* is the primary source of production of ama which is the cause of almost diseases. So, all the *Acharyas* have described *Ajirna* in detail including its etiology, symptoms, fatal sign, and treatment also. Avoidance of the etiological factor is the preliminary step in any disease management. Improper lifestyle, erratic seasonal regimen, mental disturbance, and related other diseases may contribute to the development of *Ajirna*. *Ajirna* is *Krichhsadya* but can be treated by *Nidan Parivarjanam* & proper management of *Agni* for the proper digestion of ingested food. The following lifestyle in *Ayurveda* comprises Rules and regulations of *Ahara* and *Vihara* including *Dincharya, Ratricharya, and Ritucharya*. By following some important principles like *Ahara Vidhi Vidhan* and *Ashtahar Vidhi Vishes Ayatanam*. The quantity of food intake depends on the *Agni* of a person and *Swarupa* of *Ahara Dravya* i.e., *Guru* or *Laghu* but now a day's food is taken without deliberation of *Agni* and nature of food items along with they do not proper physical activity which is a most common cause for it. So, everyone should follow the rules and regulations for Diet and Lifestyle prescribed in *Ayurveda* for the Prevention of life style disorders like *Agnimandya* and *Ajirna*.

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