



REVIEW ARTICLE ON MADHUR AVASTHAPAKA

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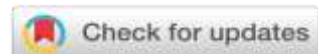
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ABSTRACT

In biology, human is known as consumers. It means that a human has to ingest all nutrients, minerals, vitamins, and water for his survival. You are not what you eat, you are what you digest and absorb. In practice, it is seen that food is not propagated further, if it is not digested well, in the normal status of the digestive tract. This condition could probably not indicate physiology.

Avasthapaka gives a general view of Ayurveda about digestive stages. Ayurvedic classics explain the whole process of digestion that starts from the intake of food and takes place in three stages called avasthapaka, these are Madhur avasthapaka, Amala avasthapaka, and katu avasthapaka. Avasthapaka is observed during the action of Jatharagni and Bhutagni. It shows the effect for a short duration and can be directly perceived by physical symptoms in the body. A study of each stage is necessary as each stage is said to nourish one Dosha. Since every Dosha is responsible for controlling the entire physiology of living being, it is really worth going through the details of Avasthapaka. Clinical effects of Avasthapaka like when a person is suffering from Kaphaja swasa, accentuation of his (asthma) disease is an outward expression of first avasthapaka as dosha kapha gets accentuated in this stage and worsens the condition of the patient. Any kind of change in avasthapaka can lead to pathogenesis with particular signs and symptoms.

Keywords: Dosha, Avasthapaka, Madhur avasthapaka, Amala avasthapaka and katu avasthapaka.

INTRODUCTION

Life span is depending on the living style one adopts. Wrong lifestyle adaptations give miseries and sorrows¹. Right habits give healthy and happy sound life. Through Ayurved, we learn how to increase healthy life². A person never consumes food out of greed or when he is unaware of what he eats. One should knowingly and decidedly eat food. Hence it is vital to test what you are consuming³. Man, who eats healthy with a proper code of conduct related to intake of food live 36000 nights or 100 years with a healthy life and the blessing of good people⁴. All benefits of food get by the individual if and only if food is digested⁵. From the essence of digested food is generated seven Dhatu, matter required for special senses and upadhatu. The Avasthapaka stage is denoted by Rasa. Which stage is dominant is dependent upon the Panchabhautik composition of eaten food. Food is ingested into the Koshta by Prana Vayu. Anna attains Mruduta by the action of Snehana, after which food splits into small particles in the stomach. Agni gets stimulated by Samana Vayu and it helps for digestion of the food. Fire cooks the rice kept in the vessel, so the Agni helps in the digestion of food which is present in the Amashaya for the production of Rasa and Mala⁶

Avasthapaka with respect to Location

First Avasthapaka takes place in Urdhwa amashaya⁷. Bhojana Kalena Dosha Prakopa Kapha Udirana -Immediately after consuming food⁸. Entire food acquires sweet Rasa as a first stage of digestion with Mahabhutagni is prithvi and apa. This gives rise to accentuating Kapha.

Aim: To understand *madhur Avasthapaka* and their relationship with Dosha.

Materials and methods: Concept of Madhur Avasthapaka as explained in *Samhitha* and modern concepts from the textbook of physiology.

Avasthapaka

Madhuravasthapaka :

Annasya Bhuktamatrasya shadrasasya prapakatah. | Madhuraadhyahat Kaphoth bhavath Phenabhuta Udheerayet ||⁹ (Ch.Chi 15/9)

Food containing six Rasa is ingested (Annasya Bhuktamanasya), Foamy secretion of Madhur Kapha takes place as a primary event in digestion. The first stage occurs as the separation of Prithivi mahabhuta and jala mahabhuta. While jatharagni acts on food. This is already grinded by teeth and break it into the Panchabhautik components. Prathavi and jala Mahabhut constitute Madhur Rasa and Kapha Dosha. That's why the first stage gave Kapha Dosha and Madhur Rasa. The first stage is needed to consider as food digestion in the stomach still the food gets mixed with acid and becomes acidic. When the ingested matter is in the mouth, Rasa is perceived by the tongue. Once it passes beyond the mouth, it is guessed by its effect on the living body .¹⁰

Judgment of the First stage of digestion as 'Madhura: Suppose sweet food is ingested. It is recognized by the tongue as 'sweet'. When it comes to the location of the first stage of digestion, it remains sweet; rather its sweetness is accentuated due to the addition of constituents of sweet Rasa, as a result of the digestion process. This is manifested on the body in the form of accentuated Kapha. Suppose spicy food is ingested. It is recognized by the tongue as 'spicy'. When it comes to the location of the first stage, it behaves as if it is 'sweet'. What is the meaning of food behaving as if it is 'sweet'? - Spicy food, which burns the tongue and mucus membrane of the mouth, rings tears in the eyes, and makes the nose run; should irritate the mucous membrane of the stomach immediately after reaching it. Individuals eating spicy food should get a 'burning sensation', till the food is excreted out of the intestine. However, this does not happen. Once the taste is realized on the tongue, food swallowed is not that irritant (vidagdha -face) and burning as should be expected. This is because of the thick coverage of mucus protecting the mucous membrane of the esophagus and stomach. In addition, saliva helps to bind and wrap this food. Since this stage is nonirritant to the mucus membrane of the stomach, it is called the 'Madhura' stage. This is only Rasa, which never produces any irritation. It is therefore proposed by

Ayurveda that manifestations in terms of accentuated Kapha will vary in 'Sweet' and 'Spicy' food quantitatively. With heavily sweet food, satiety will be more; drowsiness and heaviness of the meal will be more than with spicy food. Yet, the first stage is a non-irritant stage (avidagda kapha-faera). This is a stage of accentuated Kapha. The accentuation of Kapha is responsible for Madhura Rasa and vice versa.¹¹This 'sweet' and 'cool' Kapha keeps the food nonirritant, in fluidly status, and viscous condition hence it is derived that the first stage is the Madhura stage, generating Kapha. The practical aspect, if observed as per today's physiology, dictates - When food is received in the receptacle of the stomach, it is churned and made soft and is mixed well with gastric juices. This churning gives a semisolid appearance to food. Not only does it become foamy but till it is well mixed with acidic gastric juice, it remains non-irritating due to the covering of gastric mucous. The stage of digesting food, till it acquires acidity, can be termed the first stage or 'Madhura - Rasa' Avastha - pāka. Food with any Rasa taken in this stage will fill the stomach to some extent and offers a little or more heaviness depending upon the quality of the food. If more unctuous food is eaten, it gives more heaviness. Doṣa Kapha is generated and nourished in this stage. In modern anatomy and physiology stomach is the first receptacle of food, where food comes in mechanically digested status by grinding of teeth and contains salivary secretions. Cells of the mucous membrane of the stomach secrete very strong acid HCl. A copious amount of thick and viscid, insoluble mucus is present here to protect the mucous membrane. It softens food and wraps it in such a fashion that even spicy food is unable to irritate the mucous membrane of the stomach all these thoughts in certain aspects match concepts of Ayurvedic digestion - the first stage. The digestion of carbohydrates starts in the oral cavity. When the food is chewed, it is mixed with saliva which contains ptyalin (alpha-amylase) which is an enzyme for digesting starches and mucus secretion that contains mucin for lubricating and surface protective purposes. Saliva does Pachana and Kledana of carbohydrates that is this enzyme hydrolyses starch

into disaccharide maltose and other small polymers of glucose. The food remains in the mouth only for a short period of time. With the help of Prana Vayu and Samana Vayu deglutition of chewed food to the stomach takes place. Starch digestion continues in the body and fundus of the stomach for long as one hour before the food becomes mixed with stomach secretion. Mixing of food in the stomach with gastric secretions forms a semifluid mixture called chyme, which resembles the formation of Phenabhuta. Carbohydrates are almost converted into maltose and other small glucose polymers before passing beyond the duodenum or upper jejunum¹². These glucose polymers are sweet in nature hence this stage of digestion is called Madhura Avasthapaka^{13,14}

DISCUSSION

- One opinion is mentioned above. It is said that Rasa performs its functions at avasthapaka. In the first stage of digestion, Doṣa Kapha is generated due to sweet Rasa. It happens due to 'Kapha-facilitating' qualities or attributes of sweet Rasa; whatever type of food is eaten. If food is of such qualities so as to replenish Kapha, say, sweet, heavy, unctuous, etc, copious Kapha is generated. If food is of opposite qualities, say, light, spicy, bitter, or astringent, etc, only a small amount of Kapha is generated.
- Food containing six Rasa is not capable of generating Kapha. It is a prime event of digestion, where Sweet Rasa evolved and is responsible for generating Kapha.
- It is not necessary that food should come in contact with agni to undergo avasthapaka. Default locations of Kapha and other Doṣha are fixed. Rasa like sweet etc permanently exists there. These Rasa are responsible for food turning into stages and generating Kapha and other Doṣa.
- Sweet Rasa by default is located above the heart in the gastro- intestinal tract. For the strength of the living body, Kapha is replenished there.
- About the increase in the amount of Doṣa after avasthapaka, the statement is read that this increase is true. Mala-Kapha and other Doṣha are

generated in the form of Mala when Dhatu is generated.

- These stages are due to the inborn locations of Doṣa. In the upper part of the body, above the heart, Doṣa Kapha prevails by default. Hence food when traverses this part of the body through the gastro-intestinal tract, the first stage prevails.
- Agni may or may not be considered as suggested by one of the opinions of commentators. Nevertheless, it does not appear very sensible in physiology. In practice, it is seen that food is not propagated further, if it is not digested well, in the normal status of the digestive tract. This condition could probably not indicate physiology.
- It is opined that Vrdhhi or accentuation of Doṣa is done only after Vipāka, but this opinion is also opposed by the last reference and it is stated that accentuation of Doṣa is observed due to avasthapaka as well.¹⁷

CONCLUSION

Avasthapaka can be directly perceived by physical symptoms in the body. Clinical effects of avasthapaka. When a person is suffering from Kaphaja disease, accentuation of his disease is an outward expression of the first avasthapaka as Doṣa Kapha gets accentuated in this stage and worsens the condition of the patient. While doing proper digestion guideline we can prevent the gastrointestinal diseases and prevent the severity of it. With modification in lifestyle, we live a healthy and long life.

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