

## CONCEPT OF *DOSHAJA KASA* – A REVIEW ARTICLE

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## ABSTRACT

In the Ayurvedic classics, *Kasa* is considered as an independent disease. It may also occur as *Lakshana* (symptom) or *Upadarava* (complication) in other diseases. It is an example of *Pranavaha Srotas Dushti*. According to *Acharya Charaka*, the *Moola* of *Pranavaha Srotas* are *Hridaya* (Brain, Heart) and *Mahasrotas*. *Acharyas* have described definition, etiological factors, prodromal symptoms, symptoms, types of *Kasa* along with all *Pathya* (wholesome) & *Apathya* (unwholesome) and therapeutic measures. *Kasa* is manifested with the vitiation of *Vata & Kapha*. Understanding and differentiating *Kasa* is important for its effective treatment. The study of *Kasa* is necessary as it can be associated with many complications if left untreated. In this context different *Lakshanas* (symptoms) of *Doshaja Kasa* explained by *Acharyas* can be used for diagnosis as well as prognosis of the disease. Thus, with help of this study alternate safe methods of treatment can be employed. So, its identification as *Doshaja Kasa* can be a ray of hope for the diagnosis.

**Keywords:** *Kasa, Pathya Apathya, Pranavaha Srotas*

## INTRODUCTION

*Kasa* has been described as an independent disorder as well as symptom of many diseases and if neglected it may result in disease with poor prognostic condition.

Early intervention is necessary in case of *Kasa* as it is a potential *Nidanarthakara Vyadhi* (disease itself become causative factor for other disease) to produce

*Kshaya* (depletion of bodily tissues or *Dhatu*s).<sup>1</sup> Cough can be correlated to the description of *Kasa* in Ayurveda. It is the most frequent symptom of respiratory disease.<sup>2</sup> In its acute form it is usually protective, but if it becomes chronic, impaired quality of life. It may be classified as productive or dry as well as acute subacute or chronic. The prevalence of cough in India is 5% - 10%.<sup>3</sup> It is the one of the most common presenting complaints (30%) at the primary care setting.<sup>4</sup> It is also a common manifestation of tuberculosis in India with an incidence of 2.79 million.<sup>5</sup> Use of wood and coal, Poor housing, cooking in open, sanitary condition, low living standard, are the causes for maximum respiratory infections in rural areas while in the urban areas pollution from industry and vehicles, tobacco, smoke, exposure to allergens have been correlated with airway hyperactivity. The diagnostic evaluation of cough can be challenging for physicians because it is a disorder of respiratory system having broad differential diagnosis.

#### Material and Methods

For this conceptual study various *Ayurveda Samhitas* – *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Astang Hridaya*, *Madhav Nidana*, *Bhaishjya Ratnavali*, Literatures and articles have been reviewed.

#### Nirukti

*Acharya Charaka* defines *Kasa* as -

Release of obstructed Vayu with the production of abnormal sound is called as *Kasa*. This may be dry (without secretions) or productive (with secretions).<sup>6</sup>

*Acharya Sushruta* defines *Kasa* as -

Production of a typical sound obtained from broken bronze vessel is the cardinal symptom of the disease.<sup>7</sup>

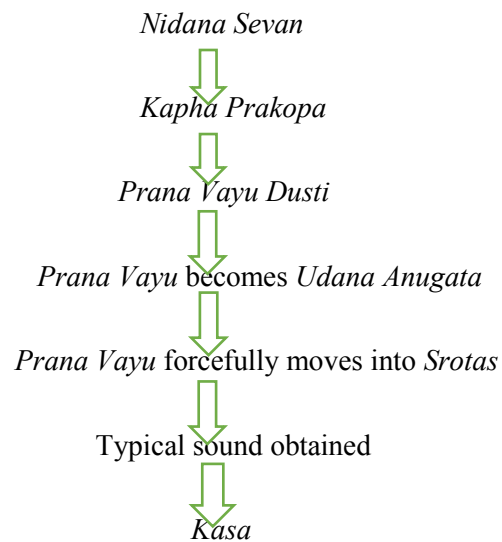
#### Nidana (Etiological Factor)

*Nidana* (etiology) of *Kasa* mentioned in the classics can be categorized as *Samanya* and *Vishesh Nidana*. *Samanya Nidana* mentioned by *Acharya Sushruta* and *Acharya Madhava* are *Dhoom*, *Dhooli*, *Raja*, *Vyayama*, *Rukhsya Anna Sevan*, *Bhojanvimargaman*, *Chavathu-vegavarodh*, *Vishesh Nidana*.<sup>8,9</sup>

#### Samprapti of Kasa

*Acharya Charaka* explained the *Samprapti* (pathogenesis) of *Kasa*<sup>10</sup> – as because of *Vata Prakopa*, downward movement of *Pranavayu* is obstructed and thus attains upward movement with *Udana Vayu* and

localised in throat and chest. Obstruction at chest and neck region forces them to get filled up in the channels of head and neck. After that sudden extension or jerky movement in areas of *Hanu* (temporomandibular joint), *Manya* (neck) and the whole body accompanied by contraction of thoracic cage and eyes leading to increase in the intrathoracic pressure, all directed towards glottis. Then there is Forceful expulsion of air because of the sudden opening of glottis producing a typical sound is called *Kasa* which is either dry due to absence of sputum or accompanied with sputum. In *Ashtanga Sangraha Acharya* explained that due to *Vata Prokopa*, *Apana Vayu* is obstructed and it attains upward movement.<sup>11</sup>



#### Samprapti Ghataka (Pathological Factor):

**Dosha:** Vaat + Kapha

**Dushya:** Ras, Anna

**Srotas:** Rasvaha + Pranavaha

**Srotodusti Lakshna:** Sanga

**Adhithana:** Ama- Pakwashayotha, Pranavaha srotas, Ura-Kantha

**Swabhava:** Aashukari

**Sadhya- Asadhyata:** Naveen - Sadhya, Jirna – Kricchryasadhya

**Agnidusti:** Agnimandhya

#### Purvaroop (Premonitory Symptoms)

*Acharya Charaka* mentioned *Shooka Poorna Gal Asya* (sensation of in throat and mouth), *Kanthe Kandu* (itching in throat), *Bhojyanam Avarodh* (obstruction to the normal flow of food).<sup>12</sup> In addition to these *Purvaroop*

(Premonitory symptoms), *Sushruth* has mentioned *Kanth Kandu*, *Bhojanavrodha*, *Gala Talu Lepa* (coating in the throat & palate), *Arochaka* (anorexia), *Swasabda Vaishmya* (hoarseness of voice), *Agnisada* (reduced appetite) etc.<sup>13</sup> *Madhav Nidana* mention *Purvaroopo* (Premonitory symptoms) same as *Charaka*.

**Types of Kasa:** (According to *Brihatrayee* and *Laghutrayee*)

- 1) *Vataj Kasa*
- 2) *Pittaj Kasa*
- 3) *Kaphaj Kasa*
- 4) *Kshaja Kasa*
- 5) *Kshtaja Kasa*

*Kshaja Kasa*, *Kshtaja Kasa* are produced by aggravation of all of the 3 *Doshas*.

### Roopa (Symptoms)<sup>14, 15</sup>

**Table 1:** Showing *Roopa* (symptoms) of *Doshaja Kasa*

<i>Vataj Kasa</i>	<i>Pittaj Kasa</i>	<i>Kaphaj Kasa</i>
<i>Hridayashoola</i> (chest pain)	<i>Mukha-kantha Shushka</i> (dryness of Mouth and throat)	<i>Nisthivateghanam Kapha</i> (secretion of sticky mucous)
<i>Murdhashoola</i> (Headache)	<i>Jwara</i> (fever)	<i>Kanthe Kandu</i> (itching in throat)
<i>Parshwashoola</i> (pain in flanks)	<i>Aruchi</i> (anorexia)	<i>Utklesh</i> (Nausea)
<i>Udarashoola</i> (abdominal pain)	<i>Chardi</i> (vomiting)	<i>Peenasa</i> (coryza)
<i>Shankhashoola</i> (pain in temporal region)	<i>Urovidah</i> (burning in chest)	<i>Murdhashoola</i> (Headache)
<i>Kasatishushkamev</i> (Dry cough)	<i>Pandu</i> (anaemia)	<i>Mandagni</i> (indigestion)
<i>Prasaktvegastu</i> (continuous bouts of cough)	<i>Pitta Nisthivan</i> (Yellow Sputum)	<i>Guruta</i> (heaviness in body)
<i>Bhinnaswara</i> (Hoarseness of voice)	<i>Trishna</i> (thirst)	<i>Vaman</i> (vomiting)
<i>Ksheena Bala</i> (Loss of strength)	<i>Bhrama</i> (vertigo)	

**Upashaya And Anupashaya:** *Upshaya* (relieving factors), *Anupshaya* (non-relieving factors) are helpful in diagnosing the diseases.<sup>16</sup> In the context of *Kasa* (cough), *Upashaya* and *Anupashayas* are not told by the ancient *Acharyas*. It can be understood that the *Nidana* (etiology) of *Vataj Kasa* which are *Rooksha*, *Sheeta* and *Laghu - Ahara*, *Vihara* and *Aushadha* will be *Anupashaya* and opposite (*Snigdha*, *Ushna* and *Guru*) will be *Upashaya* for *Vataja Kasa*. Same as *Snigdha*, *Ushna* and *Laghu - Ahara*, *Vihara* and *Aushadha* will be *Anupashaya* and opposite of it (*Rooksha*, *Sheeta* and *Guru*) will be *Upashaya* for *Pittaja Kasa*. Also, *Snigdha*, *Sheeta* and *Guru-Ahara*, *Vihara* and *Aushadha* will be *Anupashaya* and opposite (*Rooksha*, *Ushna* and *Laghu*) will be *Upashaya* for *Kaphaja Kasa*.

**Updravya:** In the context of *Nidanarthakara Roga* (disease itself become causative factor for other disease), *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned that untreated or partially treated *Kasa* (cough) will produce *Kshaya*

(depletion of bodily tissues or *Dhatu*).<sup>17</sup> When due to lack of proper treatment or low immunity of the patient one disease leads to advancement of another one then it is called as *Nidanarthakara Roga*.<sup>18</sup> It is mentioned in *Ashtanga Hridaya* that if *Kasa* (cough) is neglected then leads to *Shwasa* (dyspnoea), *Kshaya*, *Chardi* (vomiting) and *Swarabheda* (hoarseness of voice).<sup>19</sup> *Ashtanga Sangraha* mentioned that *Kasa* leads to *Varna* (complexion), *Oja* (Sara or essence of all *Dhatu*), *Bala* (strength) and *Mamsa Kshaya* (depletion or decrease of *Mansa Dhatu*).<sup>20</sup> In *Bhavaprakasha*, it is explained that, it can lead to *Upadravas* (complications) like *Jwara* (fever), *Arochaka* (anorexia), *Shwasa* (dyspnoea), *Swarabheda* (hoarseness of voice) and *Kshaya* (depletion of bodily tissues or *Dhatu*).<sup>21</sup> So, from all the above we can say that early intervention is necessary in case of *Kasa* (cough) as it is a potential to produce various *Updravyas* (complications) and also *Vyadhi* (disease) like *Kshaya* (depletion of bodily tissues or *Dhatu*).

**Sadhya Asadhyata:** In Ayurveda, Diseases that can be cured are often referred to as *Sadhya* (curable). *Asadhya* (uncurable), as the name suggests is exactly opposite to *Sadhya* (curable). According to *Acharya Charaka* - All the *Doshaja Kasa* are *Sadhya* (curable) because they are due to single *Dosha*.<sup>22</sup> If *Kasa* is present in aged person then it is said to be *Yapya*. *Yapya* is type of *Asadhya*, in which the treatment applied afford relief to the patient, but within a short span, relapse again.

**Pathya - Apathya:** *Acharya Charaka* has stated *Pathya* (wholesome) as a synonym of *Chikitsa* (treatment), it

shows the importance of *Pathya* (wholesome) in Ayurvedic way of treating any disease. He had also given equal importance to *Pathya Vihara* (wholesome life-style) along with *Pathya Aahara* (wholesome diet). According to Ayurveda, most of the diseases develop because of the faulty and unhealthy eating habits, along with the day to day activities and seasonal regimes. By following *Pathya* (wholesome) and avoiding *Apathya* (unwholesome) in the primary stage of any disease can treat that disease.

**Pathya in Kasa**<sup>23</sup> –

**Table 2:** Showing *Pathya Aahara* and *Vihara*

	<b>Pathya Aahara</b>	<b>Pathya Vihara</b>
VAATAJ KASA	<i>Shali, Yava, Godhuma, Shastika Gramya, Anupa mansa Vastuka, Amla Arnal, Ikshurasa</i>	<i>Snaihika Dhumapana</i>
PITTAJ KASA	<i>Draksha, Pippali, Triphala Ikshurasa Ghrita Godhuma</i>	<i>Virechana</i>
KAPHAJ KASA	<i>Laghu anna, Laja, Yava Ushnodaka, Sura Madhu</i>	<i>Swedana</i>

**Apathya Aahara Vihara –**

**Table 3:** Showing *Apathya Aahara* and *Vihara*

	<b>Apathya Aahara</b>	<b>Apathya Vihara</b>
<i>Vaataj Kasa</i>	<i>Kashaya, Katu, Tikta Rasa, Laghu, Rooksha, Sheeta</i>	<i>Ati Vyayama, Sheeta Jala Snana, Vegavidharana</i>
<i>Pittaja Kasa</i>	<i>Katu, Amla, Lavanaa Ushna, Vidahi</i>	<i>Ushna Kale Aatapsevana,</i>
<i>Kaphaja Kasa</i>	<i>Madhura, Amla, Lavana, Snigdha, Guru</i>	<i>Divaswapna, Asyasukham</i>

## INVESTIGATIONS

Laboratory investigations help the physician to confirm the diagnosis, though much can be diagnosed based on the clinical signs and symptoms.

1. Routine blood investigations like TLC, DLC, AEC, Hb%, ESR helps to rule out Anaemia and eosinophilia, etc.
2. Sputum smears examination.
3. Culture of sputum wherever necessary.
4. Chest Radiograph may help to indicate the presence and extent of inflammation.

5. Bronchoscope or laryngoscope may be used to inspect the interior of bronchi and larynx, when a physician can't come to a conclusion with Radiograph.

## DISCUSSION

The diagnosis of *Kasa* (cough) is challenging as it can be present as both, i.e. *Pradhan Vyadhi* or *Updravya* of any disease. For diagnosis of any disease it is very important to have full knowledge about the *Nidana* (etiology), *Purvaroop* (prodromal symptoms), *Roopa* (symptoms), *Samprapti* (pathogenesis) and *Samprapti*

*Ghataka* (pathological factors) of that disease. Method of diagnosis mainly depends upon the understanding of *Dosha* and *Dushya*. As *Charaka* said that *Kasa* is a potential *Nidanarthakara Vyadhi* (disease itself become causative factor for other disease) to produce *Kshaya* (tuberculosis), from this we can understand that in its acute form it may be easily curable with the help of *Nidana Parivarjana* and by following *Pathya* (wholesome). But when it advances from acute form to chronic form it can lead to *Kshaya*, starting from depletion or *Kshaya* of *Dhatu*s (damage or depletion of bodily tissues) takes place in the direction of their nourishment i.e. *Rasa* (plasma) then *Rakta* (blood) then *Mamsa* (muscle tissue) and so on and ultimately leads to depletion of all the *Dhatu*s (bodily tissues). After understanding these aspects one can attempt to cure the disease. Also, by modification in food habit, and by following *Pathya* (wholesome) and avoiding *Apathya* (unwholesome) in the primary stage of disease we can treat disease.

## CONCLUSION

*Kasa* is a disturbing disease of *Pranavaha Srotas*, commonly observed in general practice. In *Ayurveda*, *Kasa* is mentioned as a separate *Vyadhi* and also as a symptom. *Kasa* also found as *Poorvarupa* and *Upadrava* in different diseases. It is manifested with the vitiation of *Vata & Kapha*. In this study *Kasa* is taken as a *Vyadhi*. As a symptom *Kasa* completely correlates with cough reflex but as disease, it cannot be correlated with any single respiratory disease in modern Medical science. Study of *Kasa* is necessary because if left untreated it can be associated with complications. The different *Lakshanas* (symptoms) of *Doshaja Kasa* explained by various *Acharyas* can be used for diagnosis as well as prognosis of the disease. By knowing the symptoms of *Doshaja Kasa* given in the classics we can easily treat patients having *Kasa* after understanding the *Dosha* vitiated. Also, modification in food habit, and by following *Pathya* (wholesome) and avoiding *Apathya* (unwholesome) in the primary stage of *Kasa* (cough) can treat this disease. To treat it in early stage is important because if neglected it may result in disease with poor prognostic condition.

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