

ANALYSIS OF PHYSIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES OF JATHARAGNI: AN
AYURVEDIC REVIEWGajanan Sopanrao Wayal^{1*}, Jyotsna Gulhane² and Dharamchand Ratanlal Gupta³¹Professor, Sharirkriya Department, RRK Ayurved College, Murtijapur, Maharashtra, India.²Professor & Principal, Rasshashra Department, SRC Ayurvedic College, Chikhli, Maharashtra, India.³Professor, Anatomy Department, SRC Ayurved College, Chikhli, Maharashtra, India.

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ABSTRACT

Agni is the essential driving force behind the process of digestion and transformation within the body. The food we eat needs to be digested, absorbed and assimilated in order to maintain life and all this mechanism is controlled by Agni. Classical Ayurvedic texts tend to identify Pitta with Agni which is said to be found in all Paramanu of the body and hence is innumerable. According to its functions and areas of action, Agni is divided into various categories including Jatharagni, Bhutagni and Dhatvagni. Jatharagni is the most important because it breaks down four forms of food and transforms it into Rasa and Mala. Agni plays a central role in the transformation of food and assimilation of consumed Aahar, in this context Jatharagni is most important particularly. This article analyzes physiological perspectives of Jatharagni.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Jatharagni, Ahara, Pitta, Prasad, Kitta.

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, *Agni* is considered a basic factor involved in digestion and metabolism of the body. It controls the entire process of converting food consumed into absorbable and assimilable states for the purpose of maintaining life. The term *Agni* refers to both digestive and metabolic activity which plays an essential function in the conversion of food to energy, which maintains all the physiological functions necessary for life. Ayurveda recognizes *Dehagni* as the foundation of a number of primary areas of health such as life, complexion, vitality, vigor, luster, *Ojas*, *Tejas* and *Prana*.^[1-3]

Acharya Charaka also emphasizes that the failure of *Agni's* function will result in death, whereas *Sama Agni* provides utmost health and long life, etc. Any deficiency or impairment in *Agni*, on the contrary, deranges metabolic processes, and the result is disease. Therefore, *Agni* is now regarded as the source of life and health. From a contemporary scientific viewpoint, cellular metabolism, with ongoing cell division and activity, occurs in all tissues during the whole of life. *Agni* is classified into a number of types, such as *Jatharagni*, *Bhutagni* and *Dhatvagni*, based on its roles and domains of operation, amongst them *Jatharagni* is very crucial for governing major metabolic activities.^[3-5]

Jatharagni is the chief digestive fire residing in the *Jathara*, its seat is the *Grahani*, it temporarily stores food inside the *Amasaya* to facilitate proper digestion. *Jatharagni* is described as a *Kala* named *Pittadhara*, located at the entrance of the *Pakvashaya*, acting as a gatekeeper that regulates the flow of digested food. This *Agni* is essential for the preservation of life span, health, vitality, *Ojas* and the vigor of both *Bhutagni* and *Dhatvagni*. The vigor of *Grahani* is obtained from *Agni*, and the reverse. Thus, any perturbation in *Agni* leads to the vitiation of *Grahani*, eventually causing diseases.

Jatharagni is considered the most fundamental among all forms of *Agni* since all the nutrients first pass through it for digestion. It operates on food composed of the five *Mahabhutas* and converts it for further processing and assimilation by the *Dhatu Paramanus*. It also has a major role in discrimination between the *Prasad* and *Kitta* during digestion. In addition, *Jatharagni* is closely related to *Dhatvagni*, the metabolic fire at the tissue level. *Dhatu Paka* depends solely on a balanced *Jatharagni*. When *Jatharagni* becomes *Tikshna* or *Manda*, it interferes with the function of *Dhatvagnis*, causing different metabolic disorders. Therefore, *Jatharagni* controls all the other forms of *Agni* and their functioning depends solely on the condition of *Jatharagni*.^[4-6]

Functional states of jatharagni

Since *Jatharagni* acts on the consumed meal initially, it is considered the most important *Agni*. It breaks down materials made up of the *Mahabhutas* and changes them so that the corresponding *Dhatus* may properly absorb

them. Additionally, it is essential for separating food into its waste and nutritional essence. *Jatharagni* is also divided into four functional types as mentioned in **Figure 1**.

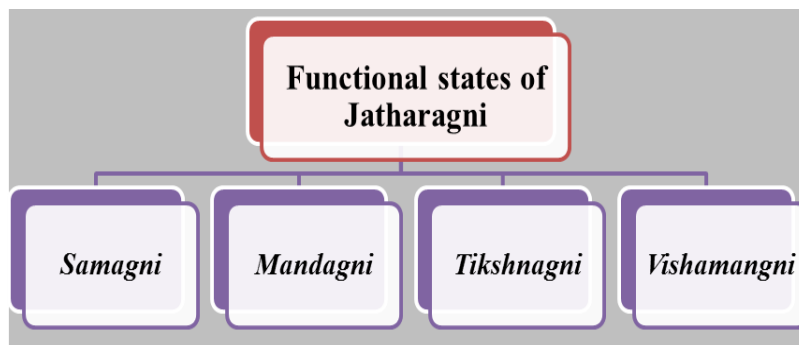


Figure 1: Functional states of *Jatharagni* .

As mentioned above in Figure 1, *Samagni*, *Mandagni*, *Tikshnagni* and *Vishamagni* are the functional state of *Jatharagni*.

Samagni

This is *Agni's* physiological and balanced condition, when assimilation and digestion take place correctly and promptly. Strong health results from adequate nutrition of the *Dhatus* brought about by proper digestion which facilitate by *Samagni* state.

Vishamagni

Digestion and metabolism are erratic in this state, because of its irregular digestion; *Agni* can cause symptoms like flatulence, upward shift of *Vata*, discomfort in abdomen, heaviness and diarrhea, etc. *Vata Dosha* disturbs this kind of *Agni*, which is linked to a number of *Vata*-related illnesses.

Tikshnagni

Regardless of the kind or amount of food consumed, *Tikshnagni* is characterized by a too powerful or keen digestive fire that causes quick digestion. This *Agni* makes one feel hungrier and produces a burning feeling in the lips, throat, and mouth. *Tikshnagni* is associated with *Pitta*-related diseases (*Pittaja Vyadhi*) and is usually brought on by an aggravation of *Pitta Dosha*.

Mandagni

A state of weak or sluggish digestion is indicated by *Mandagni*, heaviness, excessive salivation, nausea, coughing and general weakness are signs of this illness, which causes people to be unable to digest even little amounts of food. This *Agni* has the slowest rate of food digestion; it causes *Kapha* related illnesses and is frequently linked to *Kapha Dosha*.^[6-8]

Physiological importance of *jatharagni*

Jatharagni is the primary bio-energy which causes health as well as disease. If it works efficiently, it nourishes longevity, strength, vitality, complexion, immunity,

internal heat and efficient functioning of all other *Agnis*. The balance or imbalance of *Agni* determines the health of the body directly whether it should remain healthy or fall ill.

Jatharagni has an important role to play in digestion and metabolism of all food regardless of *Rasa*. *Jatharagni* has a function in segregating the food into the *Sara* and *Kitta* part. *Jatharagni* is not one entity but is a group of *Agnis* that are located in various parts of the gastrointestinal tract, like the *Amashaya* and *Grahani*. These *Agnis* function in a series, with *Jatharagni* having partial control over them. Additionally *Jatharagni* affects *Dhatvagni* and *Bhutagni*, two other forms of *Agni* in the body. Additionally, it regulates the many *Pitta doshas*, especially through *Pachaka Pitta*, which controls digestion and affects the actions of *Sadhaka*, *Ranjaka*, *Alochaka* and *Bhrajak Pitta*. *Jatharagni* is hence the primary regulator of all *Agnis* and *Pitta* subtypes in the body.^[8-10]

CONCLUSION

Agni has a very important role in keeping the body healthy, health or disease of the body solely relies on the condition of *Agni*. *Agni* is the fuel for the body which governs many metabolic activities of body. *Jatharagni* plays a very vital role since it allows the secretions of a number of different enzymes and chemicals, thus creating proper digestion. *Dhatvagni* and *Bhutagni* cause food to digest, absorb, and assimilate. *Agni*, apart from contributing to digestion, also significantly impacts the health's status, digestive as well as excretory activities of body. *Agni* is involved in the creation of *Bala*, *Varna*, *Prabha* and *Upachaya*. Ayurveda attributes any imbalance in *Agni* as the causative factor for all disease states. *Agni* has been portrayed as an essential constituent that facilitates the process of digestion of food and is involved in metabolic processes. *Agni* converts food into nourishing energy, necessary for the physiological action of the body. *Samagni* signifies good physical and mental health, but a vitiated *Agni* (*Mandagni*) causes disease.

All the ailments like *Aamdosa*, *Ajirana*, *Alasak*, *Sokajatisar*, *Aamvisha* and *Urustambh*, etc. are concerned with *Agni*. Good conduction of *Aahar*, *Vihara* and Ayurvedic treatment is the secret to controlling diseases related to *Agni*.

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