

AYURVEDA PERSPECTIVE OF AGNI AND ITS CORRELATION WITH DISEASE
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ABSTRACT

The ancient system of Indian medical science ayurveda describes various concepts related to the physiological functioning and biological response; *agni* is one of such concept. *Agni* considered responsible for digestive & metabolic functioning of the body. The digestion and assimilation of ingested food performed by the *agni* which is very essential process for the growth and development of human body. *Jatharagni*, *bhutagni* and *dhatvagni* contributes towards the digestive and metabolic activities of absorbed food. *Agni* offer *Arogya*, *Ayu*, *Bala*, *Swasthyam*, *Varnam*, *Utsaha*, *Ojha*, *Prabha* and *Teja* to the body which all resembles healthy physical and mental state. *Agni dusthi* is one of the causative factors for the many diseases therefore *agni* play important role towards understanding of disease pathogenesis, disease diagnosis and setting of treatment protocol. This article emphasized conceptual understanding of *agni* and its clinical significance.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Jatharagni, Agni, Assimilation.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the science of healthy living emphasized biological integrity with relation to various concepts. Ayurveda believe that the disease may occur due to the improper functioning of *dosha*, *dhatu*, *shrota* and *agni*, etc. *Agni* one of the important concepts which affect physiological functioning of human body and considered responsible for healthy well being. *Agni* correlates with digestive fire as per modern science and it is associated with activities of hormones, enzyme and co-enzymes which involve in digestive & metabolic functioning of body. *Ahara paka* (metabolic transformations) contributes greatly towards the healthy status and this process mainly affects by potency of *agni*, therefore proper functioning of *agni* is very essential for healthy living. The improper functioning of *agni* leads impaired transformation of food, *dhatu*s and *malas* which resulted abnormal physiological functioning of body. The *agni* relates with *Pitta* & *pachana*, *dahana*, *prinama*, *ranjana* and *prabhakarana*. There are three basic types of *agni*; *Jatharagni*, *Dhatvagni* and *Bhutagni*.

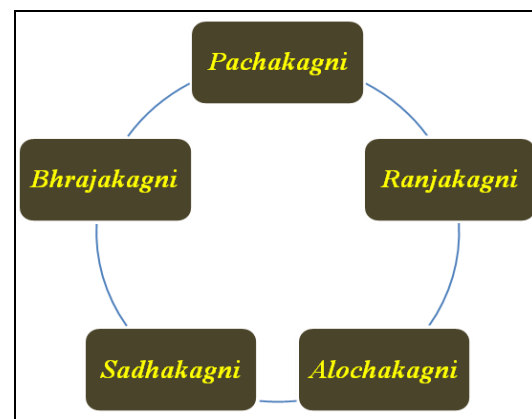


Figure 1: A classification of Agni.

Jatharagni

It is considered as primary digestive fire present in *kostha* and performs *pakadi karmas*. *Jatharagni* may be different at various level such as; *samagni*, *vishamagni*, *tikshnagni* and *mandagni*.

➤ **Samagni**

It is the state of *tridoshic* equilibrium in which *jatharagni* functions normally due to which complete digestion of food take places. The *samagni* help to digests and assimilates food material in a proper way therefore boost *dhatu*s and maintain good health status.

➤ *Vishamagni*

It is the state of strong appetite followed by loss of appetite. The potency of *agni* varies instantly.

➤ *Tikshnagni*

The *agni* excited by *pitta* and help to digests large quantity of food quickly, basically it is the state when potency of *agni* increased.

➤ *Mandagni*

This is the state of *agni* with low potency, poor appetite and decrease metabolism. *Mandagni* leads *Apakwa* followed by production of *ama* and *udarshoola*.

Dhatwagni

Dhatwagni resembles *pittas* concerned with the *dhatu*. There are different types of *Dhatwagni* which are as follows:

- *Rasagni*
- *Raktagni*
- *Mamsagni*
- *Medagni*
- *Majjagni*
- *Asthyagni*
- *Shukragni*

Dhatwagni help in digestion as to acquire nutrient for the nourishment of *Dhatu*. *Dhatwagni* mainly perform functioning for the maintenance of *dhatu*. *Dhatvagnis* not only perform synthesis of new tissue but also perform nourishment of tissue.

Bhutagni

Bhutagni resembles process of normal digestive functioning and activate composite element of the body. *Bhutagni* help to digest food element in their own component and after the digestion *bhutas* nourish specific *bhautika* elements. When *jatharagni* present in the stomach and duodenum then *bhutagnis* disintegrate food. *Bhutagni* help to convert digested materials in the liver.

Agni & Prakriti

- *Vata Prakriti* individual may have *Vishamagni* which involve disturbed digestive & metabolic activities.
- *Pitta Prakriti* person may have *Tikshnagni* which associated with hyper-metabolism.
- *Kapha Prakriti* predominantly persisted; *Mandagni* which involve hypo-metabolism and loss of appetite.

Disease and Agni

- *Agirana, aamdosa, alask, aamvisha, sokajatisar, visuchika, urustambh* and *ghradhnirog* etc. are diseases related to *agni*.
- *Vata rogas*; pain & paralysis associated with *vishama agni*
- *Pitta rogas*; acidity & *daha* associated with *tikshna agni*

- *Kapha rogas*; anorexia & *aam* associated with *manda agni*.
- Infectious disease; associated with *sama agni*.
- *Vishamagni* when affected by the *vata dosha* it leads *udargata roga*.
- *Tikshnagni* digest food quickly and produces hunger due to which throat, mouth and lips become dry (*Bhasmak Roga*).
- *Mandagni* and *Vishamagni* lead accumulation of *ama* and *rasa dhatu dushti* which produces symptoms like *srotorodha, balabhramsa, anilmudhata, alasya, nisthiva, malasanga* and *aruchi*.
- In elder age (geriatric condition) potency of *agni* lost leads to degeneration, decay, atrophy and defective metabolic functioning followed by disease pathogenesis.
- Reduced *dhatwagni* leads formation of *ama* in *dhatu* which resulted improper *dhatu vridhhi*.
- Strong *dhatwagni* utilizes nutrients quickly and destroy the *dhatu* itself thus resulted *dhatukshaya*.

Table 1: Clinical features of functioning of Agni.

Proper functioning of <i>agni</i>	Disturbance of <i>agni</i>
Proper diet supply	Anorexia
Proper evacuation of <i>mala</i>	Constipation & diarrhea
Boost immunity	Occurrence of infectious disease
Strength	Weakness
Improve organ functioning	Lethargy

Factors vitiate *agni*

Factors which may vitiate *agni* are as follows

- Excessive fasting, irregular eating, consumption of cold, dry, *snigdha* and putrid food.
- *Virudha Ahara* & incompatible activities during ingestion.
- Improper use of *vamana, virechana* and *vasti karma*.
- Disturbed life style.
- Psychological factors (tensions, anger, anxiety, greed and depression).
- Unhygienic conditions which may cause infections.

Management of vitiated *agni*

Ayurveda describe use of *dipanas* herbs to increase *agni* such as; *chitrak, clove, asafetida* and *ginger*, etc. These herbs increase *agni* which is associated with *kapha* and control nausea and vomiting after eating. These herbs also alleviate gas and offer *samana vayu*. Cumin, coriander and fennel also improve digestion which used as carminatives. Bitter herbs such as; gentian and *kutki* used when burning sensation associated with high level of *agni*, these herbs help to balance *agni* and boost overall metabolic process. Ayurveda preparation like red coral and *praval pishti* also help to reduces acidity and irritable bowel symptoms.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda describe *agni* as vital component which help in digestion of food and responsible for metabolic activities. *Agni* transformed food in nutritional energy which responsible for physiological functioning of body. *Agni* not only performs functioning of digestion but also contributes to the strength, luster, *oja*, *teja* and *prana* (life energy). *Samagni* resembles healthy physical and mental status while vitiated *agni* (*mandagni*) resulted diseased condition. *Agirana*, *aamdosa*, *alacak*, *aamvisha*, *sokajatisar*, *visuchika*, *urustambh* and *ghradhnirog* etc. are diseases related to *agni*. The good conduction of *aahar* and *vihara* along with ayurveda remedies help to manage diseases of *agni*.

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