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Importance of *Agni* and its role in *Chikitsa*

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ABSTRACT

Agni is the principal component of the body for every physiology. The metabolism, catabolism, transformation, digestion, destruction of toxins all are brought about by *Agni*. In sort *Agni* is life, when *agni* is lost there will be end of life. Its functions at various levels and intensities bring normal continuity of life. As long as *Agni* functions normally inside the body the person continues to live. Normal and optimized property of *Agni* provided good health, life span, strength, nourishment. The goodness of *Agni* is expressed by proper *Prabha*, *Varna* and right functioning of *Ojas*. If the functioning of *Agni* gets deteriorated then all the goodness in the body will be lost. The body gets open to various diseases and life ends due to deterioration of vital functions.

Key words: *Agni*, *Agnimandya*, *Ayurveda*.

INTRODUCTION

Agni is the one which brings about the transformation of consumed *Aahaara Vihaaraadi Dravya of Vijaateeya* (incompatible) origin to *Sajaateeya* (homogeneous) nature.

Agni digests food when in optimum stage. Due to various reasons there may be fluctuation in intensity of *Agni* in the form of *Vridhi*, *Kshaya* or *Agni Vishamata*. Therefore to compensate these fluctuation one has to follow proper *Aana Sevana Vidhi* to maintain *Agni*. A good *Agni* only can provide energy, good health and long life. *Agni* is a basic essential of life and has been a proof of our evolution and a source of lot of

innovations through ages. Even today much of our life activities depend on fire and its utility in one or the other form.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

The main aim of this article is to review *Agni* from various Ayurvedic texts.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Information regarding *Agni* is collected from various Ayurvedic Samhitas.

Pitta is Agni^[1]

- *Agni* in the body is *Pitta* = The *Pitta* expressions of heat and digestion sustains the Life
- Five groups (5 *Pitta*) of *Agni* derivatives disposed in wholesome body distributes the effects of *Agni*

Forms of *Agni*^[2]

- *Sariram* in the solar region - *Adityaloka*
- *Indriyam* - in the eye *chakshu*
- *Vishaya* - object.
- *Divyam* - lightning etc.
- *Audaryam* - the cause of digestion of ingested food

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- *Akarajam* - produced in mines - gold etc.

Agni and Body

- Thus *Chikitsa* is based upon *Agni* and its regulations.

Agni derivative^[3]

- *Ayu* - Longevity
- *Varna* - Complexion
- *Balam* - Strength
- *Swasthyam* - Health-
- *Utsaaha* – Enthusiasm
- *Upachaya* - body accumulation
- *Prabha* - Luster
- *Ojas* - tissue essence
- *Agnayah*-Bio fires
- *Prana* - Life (*Pranavata*)

The place of Agni^[4]

- The seat of Agni is *Grahani*
- *Grahani* is named as it receives the food
- It's placement is between *Amashaya* and *Pakwashaya*

Agni and Ritu

Functions of Agni^[5]

- Agni is the cause of digestion
- It converts the food in to *Ahara Rasa*
- *Rasa* nourishes the tissues
- Tissues build the body Without Agni the food cannot convert food and develop the tissues.

Hetu of Agni Dushti^[6]

- Excessive Water Intake
- Untimely Food Intake
- *Vegadharna*
- *Nidra Viparyaya*

- Psychological Causes like Hatredness, Anger, Fear, and Grief.
- *Dosha Vaishamya* causes disease and the same causes *Agni Vaishamaya*.
- Long standing disease will also deteriorate the quality of *Agni*.

Samprapati of Agni Dushti

- *Agnimandya* is a main step occurring in pathogenesis of much disease. *Hetu Sevan* cause *Dosha-Prakop*. These *Prakupit Dosha* vitiate *Dushya* and their *Samuurchhana* which leads to many diseases, mostly it start with *Agnimandya*.
- Due to decrease in intensity of *Agni*, the *Apachitahar Rasa* is produced lead to *Strotorodh* and *Rasa Aamanirmiti*. There while treating any disease always to be start with *Amapachan* and *Agnivardhan Chikitsa* to get fast and complete cure.

Types of Agni^[7]

- *Jatharagni/Pachakagni* - is digestive secretions
- *Bhootagni* - are elemental enzymes that are responsible for micro-elemental converters
- *Dhatwagni* - are 7 corresponding tissue building enzymes
- Few more related terms used are
- *Kostagni* - the digestion process responsible secretionsthrough out Gastro Intestinal Tract
- *Dehagni* - body temperature sustenance mechanism
- *Kayagni Amsha* - the micro katabolic agents eliminate the heat

Jataragni^[8]

- The seat is *Amashaya*
- The function is Macro digestion
- Vitiation cause - *Agnimandya* - root cause of disease
- Management – easy

- *Langhana* is adopted
- *Ushna - teekshna* - Pitta food increases *Agni*

Bhootagni^[9]

- Seat *Agniyashaya* (Liver/ Pancreas)
- Function = micro digestion
- *Peelupaaka*
- *Pitarapaaka*
- Vitiation makes - tissue building material insufficiency
- Management supplementary therapy
- Food supplementations / *Brimhana* therapy
- *Madhura, Sheeta* foods - Pitta pacification materials required

Dhatwagni

- Tissue transformative or builders
- Function - development and maintenance of tissue
- Vitiation - either bulk or lack
- Management - Both *Langhana* and *Brimhana* are adopted situational

Kayagni Amsha

- In the tissues of end processing the rudimentary bio-enzymes that are present when enhanced reduces the tissues and subsided develops - a cytokine properties of cellular level that liberates heat and rise the BMR.

Types of Agni vitiation^[10]

- *Agni* is fundamental to digest

Vitiated states are - *Vishama,*

Teekshna, Manda, Sama

Agni Attributions to Digestion

- *Amavastha* - Pre digestive phase
- No contact of digestive secretions
- *Pachyamanavastha* - Para digestive phase
- Semi Digestive phase of food /medicine

- *Pakwavastha* - Post digestive phase
- Effective assimilation / drug action phase

Pathya Apathya for Agni Dushti

- Avoiding the foods and that seem to cause indigestion in some cases indigestion in some cases is the most successful way to treat it. Smokers can help relieve their indigestion by quitting smoking or at least not smoking right before eating. Exercising with a full stomach may cause indigestions scheduling exercise before a meal or at last an hour afterward might help.

Functional forms of Agni

- Normally the *Agni* based on functions
- Longevity-(*Ayu*) cyto-sustenance mitochondria.
- Complexion (*Varna*) developers - Bio-luminance
- Strength (*Balam*) - Immuno-boosters
- Health (*Swasthyam*) - vital promoters
- Enthusiasm (*Utsaaha*) - physico-psycho stimulators
- Body accumulation (*Upachaya*) - Body bulk promoters
- Luster (*Prabha*) - Bio-luminosity
- Tissue essence (*Ojas*) - vital function triggers
- *Agnayah* -Bio fires
- *Prana* - Life (*Pranavata*)
- *Ushma* - is the heat reflection in the hind part of Gut and integumentary system

Interventions of Agni in Shamana Chikitsa^[13]

- *Deepana* - without digesting the *Ama* improves the digestive secretions
- *Pachana* - digests the *Ama* but doesn't secretes the digestive secretions
- *Deepana Pachana* - digests the *Ama* and improves digestive secretions

Interventions of Agni Shodhana Chikitsa

- *Anulomanaa*
- *Kritwa Paakam*

- *Sramsana*
- *Paktawyam Yadi Paktaiva*
- *Rechana*
- *Vipakwam Yadapakwam*
- *Vamanaa*
- *Apaka Pitta Shleshmanau*
- *Vasti*

Why It Is Useful^[14]

- Extinguishing the *Agni* is Death
- The biological fire-heat expression is Life The temperature - pressure - mass triad of physical represents the *Pitta-Vata-Kapha*
- The External (Sun) and Internal (*Pitta*) Heat is the basis of Life^[15,16,17]

If the fire in us gets diminished or blown off, we don't exist.

- *Agnimandya* is a *Mula* for the occurrence of any disease.
- Due to *Guru Ahara Vihara, Anshana* and *Vishamashana*, and unhealthy lifestyle *Agni* of human body gets vitiated and leads to many diseases like *Alsaka, Visuchika* etc.
- If we treat *Agni* then no disease will occur that means if we treat the *mula karna* of disease then no. Of diseases will be treated automatically.
- If we want to remain healthy, so we need to follow *Dinacharya, Ritucharya*, and have knowledge of *Prakriti*, and *Agni* according to which we control our food habits and diet.
- Thus, *Chikitsa* depends upon *Agni* and its regulation.

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