



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 8 · Issue 3

March 2023

Journal of
**Ayurveda and Integrated
Medical Sciences**

www.jaims.in

JAIMS

An International Journal for Researches in Ayurveda and Allied Sciences



Maharshi Charaka
Ayurveda

Indexed

Rogamarga - A clinical and therapeutic indicator: A Critical Review

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ABSTRACT

Rogamarga is the unique speciality of Ayurveda which means the pathway of diseases. The *Rogmarga* act as passage for movement of *Doshas* and site of amalgamation for morbid *Doshas* and *Dushyas* (body tissue). It is essential to understand pathological process involved in manifestation of disease. The normal relationship between *Rogmarga*, *Doshagati* and *dhatu* formation is responsible for health status of individual and any disturbance in the same is responsible for morbidity. Hence, the concept of *Rogmarga* is vital to understand patho-physiology of body systems. It has diagnostic, prognostic and therapeutic utility both in acute and chronic disease.

Key words: Pathway, *Rogmarga*, pathological process, *Khavaigunya*, Ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

Understanding pathogenesis is still a challenge before medical fraternity, as the process is subtle. Both contemporary as well as classical science has given different postulates to prove it, yet it is still difficult to understand the concept. *Rogmarga* has important contribution in understanding in the manifestation of disease process. The detailed description of *Rogmarga* is given in classical texts. Acharya Chakarpani vividly explain the concept for the understanding of diagnosis and prognosis of disease. While Acharya Madhvakara explained it for therapeutic purpose. The basis of

Rogamarga is movement of Dosh from one original site to other. During physiological and pathological condition *Dosha* move from *Shakaha* to *Koshtha* and vice versa and hence it has important role in the manifestation of disease. *Rogamarga* describes the relationship between different tissues and organs of the body. It also helps us to understand the *Dosha Gati*, *Kha-Vaigunya* and *Samprapti* of disease. The study of these parameters and *Trividha Rogmarga* is helpful in the management (*Chikitsa*) of various progressive and chronic diseases. As per classical text *Rogamarga* has an important contribution in disease progression. *Rogamarga* is explained in *Nirdesh Chatuska* in “*Tisraishaniya Adhyaya*” of *Sutrasthan* of *Charaka Samhita*.^[1] Acharya Chakarpani explained the *Rogamarga* for the understanding prognosis of *Roga*.^[2] While Acharya Madhavakara explained it for therapeutic purpose.^[3] In *Ashtang Hridaya*, *Rogamarga* is explained in chapter “*Doshabedheyamadhyaya*” in *Sutrasthana*.^[4]

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Submission Date: 12/01/2022 Accepted Date: 21/02/2023

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: www.jaims.in

DOI: [10.21760/jaims.8.3.15](https://doi.org/10.21760/jaims.8.3.15)

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Present review aims to know about *Rogamarga* and its importance in the *Chikitsa*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The searching methodology included two parallel grounds, classical text and search engines like Google scholar, PubMed, Cochrane including Mesh terms *Rogmarga*, disease pathway etc.

Rogamarga

The word *Rogamarga* means the disease pathway. The word *Roga* means *Vyadhi*, which gives 'Ruja' (pain) to the body. The word *Marga* means *Pantha*, *Ayana* i.e., pathway, way, passage and channel from where *Roga* spreads into the body.^[5] *Rogamarga* means the way through which the disease progress into the body. According to *Acharya Hemadri* quotes "*Roganam Marga Rogamarga*" which means the pathway of disease is considered to be *Rogamarga*.^[6]

Type of Rogamarga^[7-9]

Different *Rogamarga* has been explained in text as mentioned in table1.

Table 1: Classification of Rogamarga.

As per disease manifested	Sakha (Bahya)	Marmaasthisandhi (Madhyama)	Koshtha (Abhyantara)
As per Dosha Gati	Kshya	Sthana	Vridhi
As per Dosha Gati	Urdhava	Adhah	Tiryaka
According to Ritu	Chaya	Prakopa	Prashamana

1. Rogamarga as per disease manifested

a) **Bahya Rogamarga** - It means pathway of external disease. it constitutes 'Tvak' (Skin) and other 6 *Dhatus* i.e., *Rakta* (Blood), *Mamsa* (Muscles), *Medas* (Fat), *Asthi* (Bone), *Majja* (Bone marrow), and *Sukra* (Semen). Any changes in *Rasa Dhatu* will be reflected through skin. Diseases such as '*Masak*, *Vyanga* (Skin disease), *Ganda* (Goitre), *Alaji* (Skin disease), *Arbuda* (Tumour), *Arsas* (piles), *Gulma* (Tumour) and *Sopha* (inflammation) occurs in *Bahya Rogamarga*.

b) **Madhya Rogamarga** - It constitutes *Tri Marmas* (Vital organs) i.e., *Murdha* (head) *Basti* (bladder), *Hridaya* (heart) & *Sira* (vein); *Asthi* (Bone), *Sandhi* (joints), *Snayu* (ligament) and *Kandara* (Tendon). Diseases such as *Yakshma* (tuberculosis), *Pakshavada* (hemiplegia), *Ardita* (facial palsy), *Murdharoga* (Diseases of head), *Hridya Roga* (Diseases of heart), *Basti Roga* (Diseases of urinary bladder) and Diseases of *Sandhi* (joints), *Asthi* (bones), *Trika* (sacral region), *Sula* (pain) and *Graha* (stiffness) occurs in this pathway.

c) **Abhyantra Rogamarga** - It consist all *Kosthangas* (visceral organs), *Mahasrota* (GI tract), *Antah Kostha*, *Sarira Madhya*, *Mahagatra*, *Mahanimna*, *Amasaya*, *Pakvasaya*. Diseases such as *Chardhi* (vomiting), *Atisara* (diarrhoea), *Kasa* (cough), *Svasa* (breathing disorders), *Jalodar* (ascites), *Jwara* (fever) and internally manifested *Sopha* (swelling), *Arsa* (piles), *Gulma* (tumour), *Visrpa* (erysipelas), and *Vidradi* (abscess) occurs in this *Marga*.

2. Rogamarga on the basis of Dosha-Gati^[10]

- Kshaya* (Less than normal)
- Sthana* (Normal state of *Dosha*)
- Vridhi* (More than Normal)

3. Rogamarga on the basis of Dosha-Gati.

- Urdhwa Gati* means upward movement of *Dosha*. eg. *Urdhwaga Raktapitta*, *Chardi* etc.
- Adho Gati* means downward movement of *Dosha*. eg. *Atisara* (diarrhoea), *Pravahika* (dysentery), *Grahani* (irritable bowel syndrome), *Adhoga Raktapitta* (bleeding disorders), *Adhoga Amlapitta* (hyper acidity) etc.
- Teeryak Gati* means both side movement of *Dosha*. eg: *Teeryaka Raktapitta*, *Jwara* (fever), *Mandagni* (slow digestive power) etc.

4. Rogamarga on the basis of Ritu (seasonal variations).

Vata accumulates in *Grishama*, get aggravated in *Varsha* and get pacified in *Hemanta Ritu* and similarly the other two *Doshas*.

Pathological aspect of Rogamarga

Each *Roga Marga* is allotted a set of structures or organs. Certain disease are manifested through this pathway. As the pathological process occurs when morbid *Doshas* moves through these *Rogamargas*. The role of *Rogamarga* starts from *Prasara Avastha* (spreading stage) of *Satkriyakala* (six stages of disease progression). These spreading *Doshas* get localized at the site of *Khavaigunya* (site devoid of normalcy) where amalgamation of *Dosha-Dushya* take place and pathogenesis happens. The micro and macro channels help in transformation and transportation of *Dosha* and *Dhatu* has clinical significance in pathological process. Through these channels the pathogenesis can progress in many directions, but in which particular direction and pattern it will progress is decided by the concept of *Rogamarga*. Besides *Rogamarga* also plays an important role in the *Nidanarthakarata Vyadhis* because there is a movement of vitiated *Dosha* from one passage to other.^[11] In equilibrium state of body, no *Rogamarga* will be reserved for travel of vitiated *Doshas*. Moreover, the *Srotas* that get vitiated behaves as *Rogamarga*.

Diagnostic aspect: Prognosis of disease based on Rogamarga

For the treatment of disease, one should know about the prognosis of the disease. *Ayurveda* commentator's *Acharya Chakrapani* and *Gangadhara* shares their views on the *Sadhyasadyata* of *Rogamarga*. *Gangadhara* says that the diseases of *Bahyarogamarga* (external pathway) are *Sukhasadhya* (easily curable), the disease of *Madhyama Rogamarga* (middle pathway) will be *Krichrasadhya* (difficult to cure) or *Yapya* (relives but not cures) and that of *Abhyantara Rogamarga* (internal pathway) are *Sukhasadhya* (easily curable), *Krichrasadhya* (difficult to cure) or *Yapya* (relives but not cures) or *Asadhya* (incurable) depending on manifested symptoms.^[12]

Diseases of *Madhyama Rogamarga* will have serious complications, as the particular structure has to exhibit great amount of resistance to combat the complications. The complications may vary from mild to severe within a short period in diseases of

Abyantara Rogamarga. While in *Bahya Rogamarga*, *Upadrava* will be minor or uncommon. Hence, *Rogamargas* gives important clue about prognosis of disease.

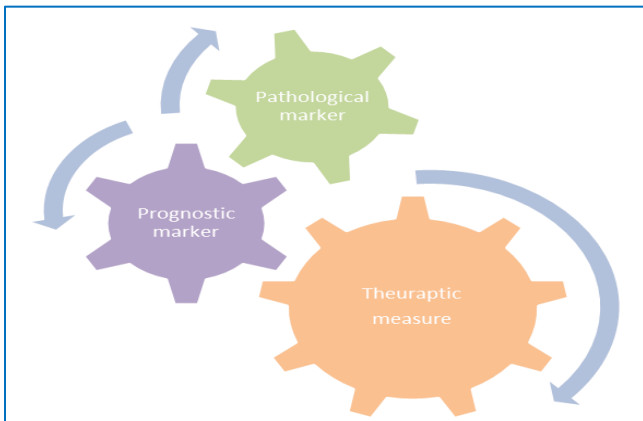
Therapeutic aspect

Rogamarga is mentioned for *Chikitsa Bhedarth* purpose in *Madhava Nidana Samhita*. As vitiated *Doshas* travel through *Rogamarga*; therefore, its proper understanding is must for breaking pathological process. The vitiated *Dosha* travel and spreads through *Rogamarga*. So *Rogamarga* concept is very important for the proper management of a disease. *Jatharagni Mandya* is main responsible factor for the diseases related to *Abhyantara Rogamarga*. The treatment plan should be to increase digestive fire. Different treatment modalities like *Deepana*, *Pachana* and *Vamana* or *Virechana* should be administered as per the condition. The diseases occurring in *Madhyama Rogamarga* are pain dominating, has sudden loss of function and manifested as a result of continuous stress. Here, *Shodhana* will be the line of treatment. But when there is the involvement of *Marma* (vital organs), *Paripalana* of *Marma* along with *Basti Chikitsa* is very effective.^[13] However, the diseases of *Shiras* like *Ardita*, *Manyastambha*, *Pakshaghata* etc. can be treated with *Nasya*.^[14] In case of *Bahyarogamarga* disease, there is formation of *Ama* resulting in *Dhatvagnimandhya* (slow metabolism). Therefore, morbid *Doshas* should be brought back to their original places with the help of *Snehana* and *Swedana*. When *Doshas* enters *Koshtha* they are eliminated through *Vamana* or *Virechana* depending on the condition. In classics, *Virechana* and *Rakta Mokshana* are preferred for *Bahya Rogamarga Vyadhi* due to involvement of *Rakta* in pathogenesis.

DISCUSSION

The knowledge of *Rogamarga* helps to know the *Dosha-Gati*, disease progression and its diagnosis. The pathological process is subtle hence the changes manifested through entrance of vitiated *Doshas* in *Rogamargas* in of very much clinical significance. It acts as a pathway for mapping the pathological process. Besides, it also facilitates the knowledge about the

prognosis of the disease. The understanding of pathophysiology of the disease is very necessary before management in classics. Therefore, it may act as an important instrument for checking pathogenesis, prognosis and deciding the therapeutic route of interventions. (Figure 1)



The transformation and mitigation of vitiated *Doshas* may be achieved through proper knowledge of *Trividha Rogamargas*. It act as an important preventive, prognostic and therapeutic tool.

CONCLUSION

Rogamarga serve as an important tool for mapping pathological changes. It also has diagnostic and prognostic and therapeutic significance. As it is the site where pathogenesis occurs, so it plays inevitable role in subclinical, clinical and complication stages of morbidity. The prognosis of particular disease is based on its pathway. The disease following a particular *Rogamarga* has same line of management. Hence, the concept may serve as unique contribution in clinical medicine. Though, there is an urgent need to explore it with the help of clinical features and biological markers.

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How to cite this article: Manish Kumar, Meenakshi Sharma, Pooja Arya, Deepti Mehta, Sisir Kumar Mandal. Rogamarga - A clinical and therapeutic indicator: A Critical Review. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2023;03:84-87.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.8.3.15>

Source of Support: Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.
