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A literary review article on *Agnikarma* in *Kamala*

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ABSTRACT

Jaundice is defined as a yellowish discoloration of skin, mucous membrane and sclera due to the deposition of bile pigment (bilirubin). It can be classified as pre-hepatic, hepatic and post hepatic jaundice. The causes of various forms of Jaundice are either acquired or congenital. The incidence of jaundice in India is 2.37-3.15 per 1000 population. Varied reasons result in jaundice. Some of them are medically managed whereas some require surgical interventions. The underlying causative factors and clinical manifestations in such conditions are similar to *Kamala* described in *Ayurveda*. Various treatment protocols have been mentioned by various *Acharya* in their respective *Samhita*. One among them is a handbook for an *Ayurvedic* physician from Andhra Pradesh, written by Basavaraju named as *Basavarajiyam* where he has mentioned *Agnikarma* in *Kamala Vyadhi* which is a unique practice that might help for early recovery of patients. Another famous book on *Vidya* and *Agnikarma Chikitsa* by Dr.R.B. Gogate from Maharashtra also mentions about similar kind of treatment. By considering all these, the present article is aimed at understanding the textual references of *Agnikarma* in *Kamala*.

Key words: *Agnikarma*, *Basavarajiyam*, *Jaundice*, *Kamala*

INTRODUCTION

Kamala Vyadhi, also known as Jaundice, is a common liver disorder that affects millions of people worldwide. *Ayurvedic* Standard Treatment Guidelines (ASTG) published by ministry of AYUSH government of India in 2007, has mentioned treatment of *Kamala* at 3

different levels - PHC, CHC, hospital at institutional level. Here they have given clinical features, investigations, various formulations, dose and mode of administration of oral medications, *Pathya-Apathya* (diet and lifestyle educations) that can be followed during *Kamala*. By this we can understand the importance of treating *Kamala*.^[1] The disease *Kamala* is *Nidanarthakara Roga* of *Pandu*. It is a disease where the *Rakta Dhatu* gets vitiated along with *Pitta Dosha*. It is mentioned under *Raktapradoshaja Vikara*.^[2] It is also a synonym of *Pandu*.^[3] Some consider it as a type of *Pandu* whereas some consider it as a separate *Vyadhi*. The patient of *Pandu* (anemia), if excessively consumes the *Pittakara Ahar Vihaar* like *Amla rasa* (sour food), *Madya*, etc., then this aggravated *Pitta* burns *Asrig* (blood) and *Mamsa* (muscle) further producing the symptoms like *Pandu* (pale skin), *Tandra* (drowsiness) and *Balakshaya* (debility).^[4] Some consider it as a separate *Vyadhi*.

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Etiopathogenesis of Kamala**Koshthashakshrita Kamala^[5]***Pandurogi Pittakara Aahara Vihara Sevan*

Increased Ushna, Tikshna Guna, Dushta Aahara Rasa

*Pachak Pitta Dushti and Rasa Dushthi**Agnimandya**Rakta and Mamsa Vidaha**Yakrutaagamana**Koshthashrita Kamala***Shakhashrita Kamala^[6]***Vata and Kapha Prakopa Hetu**Rukshaguna Pradhan Vata Dosha gets Kapha Murchita*Obstruction of *Pitta Nalika**Vimargagamana* of *Pitta* all over*Haridra Twacha, Netra, Mootra**Shakhashrita Kamala***Samprapti Ghataka^[7]****Dosha:** *Pitta Pradhana Tridosha***Dusya:** *Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa***Agni:** *Jatharagni, Dhatvagni***Agnidushti:** *Mandagni***Ama:** *Agnijanya***Srotas:** *Rasavaha, Raktavaha, Annavaha***Srotodusti:** *Sanga, Atipravrutti, Vimargagamana***Udbhavasthana:** *Amashayotha, Koshta, Mahasrotas***Sancharasthana:** *Koshta***Vyaktasthana:** *Twak, Nakha, Netra, Shakha***Purva Roopa^[8]**

- *Twak Sphutanam* (cracking of the skin)
- *Sthivanam* (salivation)
- *Gatrasada* (lassitude)
- *Mridbhakshana* (desire for eating clay)
- *Kuta Shotha* (swelling of the eyelids)
- *Vinmutra Peetatwa* (yellow color of the stool and urine)
- *Avipaka* (indigestion)

Roopa^[9]

- *Haridra Varna* of *Netra, Twak, Nakha, Aanana* (Yellow color of Sclera, skin, underneath the tongue)
- *Rakta Peeta Varna* of *Shakrit* and *Mutra* (changes in color of stool and urine)
- *Hatha indriya* (hampered in functioning of sense organs)
- *Avipaka*
- *Dourbalya* (Fatigue)
- *Aruchi*
- *Karshya* (Changes in Weight)

Classification of Kamala

- *Charakh Samhita^[10]* - *Koshtha shakhashrith, Shakhashrith.*
- *Sushrut Samhita^[11]* - *Kamala, Halimaka, Kumbhahvaya (Kumbha Sahva), Lagharaka (Laghrakaalasaka).*
- *Astanga Hridaya^[12]* - *Swatantra, Paratantra.*

Kamala can be correlated to jaundice.^[13] Jaundice is yellow skin pigmentation caused by elevation in serum bilirubin level (also termed as icterus); often more easily seen in sclera. Scleral icterus becomes clinically evident at a serum bilirubin level of greater than 51 µmol/L (3 mg/dL).^[14] The incidence of jaundice in India is 2.37-3.15 per 1000 population.^[15] The causes of various forms of Jaundice are either acquired or congenital. It can be classified as

1. Hepatocellular
 - a. Acute: Viral hepatitis, Drug hepatitis, Alcoholic hepatitis, etc.
 - b. Chronic: Congenital hyperbilirubinemia, Cirrhosis
2. Obstructive
 - Without mechanical obstruction
 - a. Acute: Drugs, e.g. chlorpromazine, viral hepatitis with cholestasis etc.
 - b. Chronic: Primary biliary cirrhosis
 - With mechanical obstruction
 - a. Intra hepatic (medical)
 - b. Extra hepatic (surgical)
3. Hemolytic ^[16]

Table 1: Clinical presentation of a case with jaundice varies according to the cause.

| Conditions | Symptoms ^[17] |
|----------------------|---|
| Hepatitis | Fever, abdominal pain, jaundice, anorexia, tastelessness |
| Hemolytic jaundice | Insidious onset and long duration of jaundice, dark colored urine and stool |
| Obstructive jaundice | Abdominal pain, pruritus, and alcoholic stools (in case of bile duct stone) Painless progressive jaundice with palpable gallbladder (in carcinoma of the pancreas) |
| Cirrhosis of liver | Portal HTN, jaundice develops during decompensation of liver disease |

Conventional treatments for *Kamala* primarily focus on managing symptoms and addressing the underlying cause, such as viral infections, alcohol abuse, or liver diseases. However, these treatments often have limitations and may not provide complete relief. *Agnikarma* (Thermal cauterization) is an important para surgical procedure and is still used extensively in surgical practice in modified form of electrical thermal cautery. A disease cauterized with *Agni* will not recur and diseases which are not curable by medicines, surgery and alkali therapy are curable by *Agnikarma*.^[18]

Table 2: Upakaranas (instruments) are used to perform Agnikarma.

| Type of <i>Dagdha</i> | <i>Upakarana</i> ^[19] |
|--|---|
| <i>Twak Dagdha</i> | <i>Pippali</i> , <i>Ajashakrit</i> (Excreta of goat), <i>Godanta</i> (Cows teeth), <i>Shara</i> (Arrow head), <i>Shalaka</i> (Metal rod) |
| <i>Mamsa Dagdha</i> | <i>Jambavoushta</i> (a piece of black stone made like a <i>Jambuphala</i>), <i>Itara Loha</i> (Rods of other metals like <i>Tamra</i> , <i>Rajata</i> etc.) |
| <i>Sira</i> and <i>Snayu</i> (vessels, ligaments) | <i>Kshaudra</i> or <i>Madhu</i> (Honey), <i>Guda</i> (Jaggery), <i>Sneha- Ghrita</i> , <i>Taila</i> , <i>Vasa</i> and <i>Majja</i> |
| <i>Sandhi</i> and <i>Asthi Dhatus</i> (joints and Bones) | <i>Kshaudra</i> or <i>Madhu</i> (Honey), <i>Guda</i> (Jaggery), <i>Sneha - Ghrita</i> , <i>Taila</i> , <i>Vasa</i> and <i>Majja</i> |

Based on *Akruti* (shape) *Agnikarma* can be done in 4 kind^[20]

- 1) *Bindu* (shape of dot)
- 2) *Valaya* (circular ring)
- 3) *Vilekha* (vertical line)
- 4) *Pratisaran* (scrapping)

Benefits and advantages of Agnikarma

One of the key advantages of *Agnikarma* in treating *Kamala* is its non-invasive nature. Unlike invasive procedures, *Agnikarma* does not involve surgical incisions or the use of strong medications, making it a safer and more accessible option for patients. Additionally, *Agnikarma* is known for its minimal side effects and relatively quick recovery time. It is a technique that involves the controlled application of heat to specific points on the body. It aims to alleviate various diseases by balancing the body's energies and promoting healing.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To review the available literature regarding *Agnikarma* in *Kamala*.

METHODOLOGY

Various textbooks are reviewed critically and scientifically to understand *Kamala*, jaundice, *Agnikarma*, and *Agnikarma in Kamala*.

DISCUSSION

Treatment of *Kamala* mainly includes *Nidana Parivarjana*, *Shodhana Chikitsa*, *Shamana Chikitsa* (e.g. *Pachana*, *Deepana*, *Snehana*, *Pitta shamak Chikitsa*), *Rasayana* etc. *Basavarajiyam* describes *Agnikarma* as an effective treatment for *Kamala*. It involves the precise application of heat to specific points on the body, indirectly targeting the liver and associated organs. The controlled thermal stimulation is believed to restore the balance of bodily energies, promoting liver function and aiding in the elimination of toxins. In the text, *Valaya* type of *Agnikarma* in *Ghutika* (elbow) and *Manibandha* (wrist joints) is mentioned, which can be performed with *Swarna* (gold), *Tamra* (copper), or *Rajata* (silver) *Shalaka*. There is no direct reference that connects *Manibandha* region of right hand to *Yakrut*, but just like *Agnikarma* on *Manibandha sandhi* of *Vama Hasta* (left hand) is mentioned to treat *Pleeha Roga* (spleen disorder) similarly *Agnikarma* on *Dakshina Hasta* (right hand) may have some role in treating *Yakrut Vikara* (liver disorders). Here, *Twak Dagdha* has been followed with the help of *Swarna*,

Tamra and *Rajata Shalaka*, as *Kamala* shows its *Lakshana* over *Twacha* (skin). *Haridra* rhizome can also be considered as modified *Shalaka* as well.^[21] While *Agnikarma* shows promise in the treatment of *Kamala*, it is essential to approach its integration with conventional medicine cautiously. Collaborative efforts between *Ayurvedic* practitioners and modern healthcare professionals can help bridge the gap, ensuring a holistic approach to patient care. Further studies and collaborations are needed to explore the full potential of *Agnikarma* in the treatment of *Kamala* and other ailments, ultimately benefiting individuals seeking holistic and personalized healthcare solutions.

CONCLUSION

Traditional treatments for *Kamala* often involve medication, dietary modifications, and rest. However, Dr. R.B. Gogate's research suggests that *Agnikarma* can offer a unique and effective alternative. According to his research, *Agnikarma* helps stimulate the liver, enhance bile secretion, and improve overall liver function. By targeting specific points on the body associated with liver health, *Agnikarma* aims to restore balance and alleviate the symptoms of *Kamala*. The controlled application of heat through *Agnikarma* is believed to enhance blood circulation, reduce inflammation, and promote the elimination of toxins from the body. Dr. R.B. Gogate's research on *Agnikarma* in the treatment of *Kamala* opens up new possibilities for integrating this ancient technique into modern medical practices. While further research and clinical trials are necessary to validate its efficacy, holds promise as a complementary therapy for various liver-related conditions. Its non-invasive nature, minimal side effects, and potential to enhance liver function make it an attractive option for patients seeking alternative treatments.

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