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A literature review of *Amavata* & its management through Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT

In the present era *Amavata* is the most common disease affecting a large aged population. *Amavata* term derived from words as "Ama" & "Vata". The word *Ama* is the condition in which various ailments in system creates toxic effect. *Amavata* is a disease caused due to the vitiation or aggravation of *Vayu* associated with *Ama*. Vitiated *Vayu* circulates the *Ama* all over the body through *Dhamanies*, takes shelter in the *Shleshma* Sthana (*Amashaya*, *Sandhi*, etc.), producing symptoms such as stiffness, swelling, and tenderness in small and big joints, making a person lame. The symptoms of *Amavata* are identical to rheumatism, which include rheumatoid arthritis and rheumatic fever. *Amavata* is one of the challenging disease for the clinicians due to its chronicity, incurability, complications and morbidity. The allopathic treatment provides the symptomatic relief but the underlined pathology remain untreated due to absence of effective therapy and also giving rise to many side effects, toxic symptoms and adverse reactions also more serious complications like organic lesions. The treatment procedure described are *Langhan*, *Swedan*, *Tikta-Katu Deepan*, *Virechan*, *Basti* etc. So, the present study deals with systemic review of *Amavata* from all the classics of *Ayurveda* and its management.

Key words: *Amavata*, *Ama*, *Langhan*, *Swedan*, *Virechan*, *Basti*

INTRODUCTION

Now-a-days erroneous dietary habits, lifestyle and environment have led to various autoimmune disorders i.e., *Amavishajanya* Vikaras and *Amavata* is one among them. Treating or managing *Amavata* /Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) is a challenge for both modern & *Ayurvedic* physicians. Rheumatoid arthritis has become a leading cause of disability. It is an

autoimmune inflammatory disorder that primarily affects joints. According to the arthritis foundation of USA, RA is the second most common type of arthritis and widely prevalent throughout the world. In India the prevalence has been estimated 0.7%. Onset of RA is most frequent during middle age and women are affected 2.3 times as frequently as men. Modern science states that RA is an autoimmune chronic inflammatory disorder in which immune system fails to recognise self-antigens and mounts a misguided attack against them which ultimately results in an inflammatory response. RA usually involves peripheral joints in a systemic distribution, where synovial membrane becomes inflamed. As the disease progress the inflamed synovium invades and damages the cartilage and bone of the joint. The potential of the synovial inflammation to cause cartilage destruction is the hallmark of the disease. Pathogenesis includes synovitis, synovial cell hyperplasia, hypertrophy with CD4 lymphocytic infiltration, synovial effusion, pannus formation, cartilage loss, fibrosis, bony erosion,

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deformity, fibrous and bony ankylosis, muscle wasting, periarticular osteoporosis and results in both articular and extraarticular manifestations. Course of the disease is variable. It can be slowly progressive or rapidly progressive & erosive arthritis with marked deformity with downhill course. Even with the use of NSAID (Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs), glucocorticoids, DMARDs (Disease Modifying Anti Rheumatic Drugs), treatment does not provide a complete cure and have their own side effects. According to Ayurvedic literature, the pathology of *Amavata* starts with long term incidence of *Mandagni* in body which leads to the formation of *Ama*. This *Ama* gets mixed with vitiated *Vata* and enters the joints leading to the stiffness of the joints, such condition is known as *Amavata*.

Definition of Amavata

Amavata is a condition where *Stabdghata* of the body occurs due to lodging of vitiated *Ama* and *Vata* in the *Trika Sandhi* and Commenting on the word “*Yugapat*” *Madhukoshakara* explains it as simultaneously *Vata* and *Kapha* while in *Atanka Darpana*, it is explained as *Ama* and *Vata* as both are held responsible for its pathogenesis.

Nidana

विरुद्धाहारचेष्टस्य मन्दाग्नेर्निश्चलस्य च ।

स्निग्धं भुक्तवतो ह्यन्नं व्यायामं कुर्वतस्तथा ॥ (Madhav Nidan 25/1)

Viruddha Ahara (Incompatible food): The food which causes vitiation of the *Doshas* without expelling them out of the body is called *viruddha ahara*. *Viruddha ahara* plays important role in the formation of *Ama*.

Viruddha Cheshta (Improper physical activity): We have detailed description of *virudhahara* in our classics but *Viruddha Cheshta* is not mentioned clearly. In *Bhavaprakasha*, *Vidyotini Tika*, it is mentioned that doing exercise after having food etc can be considered as *virudha cheshta*.

Mandagni (Decreased digestive power): *Mandagni* itself causes the formation of *ama* due to improper digestion.

Nischalata (Lack of physical activity): Sedentary life style leads to the vitiation of *agni* and thus causing *ama* formation in the body.

Snigdham Annam Bhuktwa Vyayaamam: Doing physical exercises soon after the intake of heavy or fatty food hampers digestion and leads to *ama* formation in the body.

Purvarupa

1. *Agnimandya*: It is a results of hampered function of *Agni* due to consumption of *Nidana*.
2. *Apaka*: It is due to *Agnimandya* because proper digestion & metabolism does not take place.
3. *Daurbalya*: It is a result of improper digestion of *Dhatu* & deprived of sufficient nourishment.
4. *Angamarda*: All type of nourishment of *Dhatu* presence a form of *Ama*, so body feeling ache, that is called *Angamarda*.
5. *Aruchi*: When the function of *Rasanendriya* is impaired by vitiated *Rasa Dhatu* & *Bodhaka Kapha*, they produced *Aruchi*.
6. *Gaurava*: It is result of vitiated *Kapha* & *Ama* which produce heaviness in the body.
7. *Gatrastabdghata*: *Guna* of *Ama* like *Picchila*, *Guru*, & *Sheeta* circulate in the body with the help of *Vyanavayu*, it gives rise to *Gatrastabdghata*.

Rupa of Amavata

Acharya Madhavakara has given the symptoms of *Amavata* as

- *Samanya Lakshana*
- *Lakshana Sanachaya* of *Pravrudha Amavata*.

Lakshana of Amavata

अङ्गमर्दोऽरुचिस्तृष्णा आलस्यं गौरवं ज्वरः ।

अपाकः शून्यताऽङ्गानामामवातस्य लक्षणम् ॥ (Madhav Nidan 25/6)

1. *Angamarda* - Body ache
2. *Aruchi* - Anorexia
3. *Trushna* - Thirsty

4. *Gourav* - Heaviness in the body
5. *Aalasya* - Lethargy
6. *Anga-shunata* - Swelling in the body
7. *Jwara* - Pyrexia
8. *Apaki* - Indigestion

Lakshana of Pravridh Amavata

1. *Agnidaurbalya*
2. *Praseka*
3. *Aruchi*
4. *Gaurava*
5. *Vairasya*
6. *Ruja & Shotha* in *Hasta, Pada*
7. *Vrishchikadanshavatavedana*
8. *Kukshikathinyav*
9. *Kukshishoola*
10. *Vibandha*
11. *Antrakujana*
12. *Anaha*
13. *Chhardi*
14. *Hritgraha*
15. *Jadya*
16. *Bhrama*
17. *Murchaha*
18. *Nidra-viparyaya*
19. *Daha*
20. *Bahumutrata*

Samprapti

युगपत्कुपितावन्तस्त्रिकसन्धिप्रवेशकौ ।

स्तब्धं च कुरुतो गात्रमामवातः स उच्यते ॥ (Madhav Nidan 25/5)

The produced *Ama* due to *Mandagni* and Vitiated *Vata* *Dosha* due to above mentioned etiological factors are

the main causes of *Amavata*. These two simultaneously enters the *Trik* region & other *Sandhi* (joints) and causes stiffness and pain, resulting in *Amavata*.

Samprapti Ghatakas

- *Dosha* - *Vata Kapha Pradhana Tridosha*
- *Dhatu* - *Rasa, Mamasa, Asthi, Majja*.
- *Srotas* - *Annavaha, Rasavaha, Asthivaha, Majjavaha*.
- *Srotodusti* - *Sanga, Vimaragagmana*.
- *Udbhavasthana* - *Amashya (Ama), Pakvasaya (Vata)*.
- *Adhithana* - *Sarvanga Sharira Specially Sandhis*
- *Vyaktasthana* - *Sandhi*
- *Roga Marga* - *Madhyama Roga Marga*
- *Agni* - *Jatharagni Mandya, Dhatwagni Mandya*.

Chikitsa Sutra

लङ्घनं स्वेदनं तिकं दीपनानि कटूनि च ।

विरेचनं स्नेहपानं बस्तयश्चाममारुते ॥

सैन्धवाद्येनानुवास्यः क्षारवस्तिः प्रशस्यते ।

आमवाते पंचकोलसिद्धं पानान्नमिष्यते ॥ (Chakradutta25/1)

1. **Langhana:** *Langhana* is the 1st line of treatment to digest *Ama*. Here *Langhana* means not complete fasting but, intake of light food. The duration of *Langhana* varies from person to person depending upon individual capacity.

2. **Swedana:**

रुक्षः स्वेदोविधातव्योवालुकापुटकैस्तथा ।

उपनाहाश्चकर्तव्यास्तेऽपिस्नेहविवर्जिता ॥

(Yogratnakar Purvardh - *Amavata Chikitsa & Bhava Prakash* 26/14-15)

Swedana is done locally on affected joints. In *Amavata*, *Ruksha Sweda* is recommended (sudation without oil/fat). For the procedure of *Ruksha Sweda*, *Valuka* (sand) is recommended. *Snehana* is contraindicated in *Amavata*.

3. Katu, Tikta, Pachak-Aahar & Aushadhi:

The drug which possesses *Katu* (pungent), *Tikta* (bitter) *Rasa* and which act as *Deepana-Pachana*, are recommended in *Amavata*.

4. Virechana:

For *Virechana*, *Eranda Taila* and *Haritaki* are used. In *Amavata* without any preoperative procedure *Virechana* is recommended directly. *Eranda* acts as *Sroto-Shodhaka*, *Shothahara*, *Shoolahara* and *Amavatahara*.

5. Basti Chikitsa:

Chakradutta recommends *Kshara Basti* and *Anuvasana Basti* in *Amavata*.

6. Shaman Aushadhi:

- *Maharasnadi Kwath* (Vangsen27/50-59)
- *Nagar Churna* (Bh.R.29/16), (Chakradutta25/12)
- *Amritadi Churna* (Bh.R.29/52), (Chakradutta 25/14), (Vangsen27/48)
- *Alambushadi Churna* (Bh.R.29/44-47), (Vangsen 27/62-65)
- *Shatapushpadi Lepa* (Bh.R.29/11-12)
- *Simhanada Guggulu* (Bh.R.29/192-195), (Chakradutta 25/33-38)

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