

CONCEPT OF AGNI AND AHARA PAKA

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Abstract

All the transformation in the universe are brought about by the single principle agni. Similarly all the changes or transformation in the universe are represented by a single term paka. The concept of paka is based on the concept of agni, kaala, and dik. The first one being the primary factor. Metabolic transformation occurs after consumption of food. That leads to formation of two parts, prasada part and kitta part will be excreted by the body in the form of mala, mootra, sweda. Similar to digestion of carbohydrate, protein and fat metabolism, avasthapaka is also divided into madhuraavasthapaka, and amlaavasthapaka. In the third stage of digestion, the absorption of nutrients occurs in the large intestine and formation of faeces with production of pungent smell (katubhava) occur. The ahara rasa which is having madhura and lavana rasa gets madhuravipaka, amla rasa gets amlavipaka, katu, tikta, kshaya rasa gets katuvipaka. In the bhutagni and dhatwagnipaaka body basic structural elementary tissues (i.e.) saptadhatu are formed and each cell of body is nourished by bhutagnipaaka. Function of dhatwagni are mainly two (i.e.) one is synthesis of new tissue and second is to yield energy for the function of tissue. Thus in current scenario, agni and ahara paka provides an extensive field for researchers.

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INTRODUCTION

All the transformation in the universe are brought about by the single principle agni. Similarly all the changes or transformation in the universe are represented by a single term paka. The concept of paka is based on the concept of agni, kaala, and dik. The first one being the primary factor. Metabolic transformation occur after consumption of food. That leads to formation of two parts, prasada part and kitta part will be excreted by the body in the form of mala, mootra, sweda. In current scenario, agni and aharapaka provides an extensive field for researchers.

Agni and pitta

Agni converts food into energy, which responsible for vital functions of our body. Therefore Acharya Charaka says that agni is responsible for cause of life, complexion, strength, health, nourishment, luster, oja, teja (energy), prana (life energy).

Stoppage of the function of agni, the individual dies and when the agni of an individual iasama, then that person would be absolutely healthy and would lead a long, healthy life.^[1]

Pachaka pitta is the agni concerned with the building up procedures in the body. Ts has 13 divisions i.e. 1- Jataragni, 7 - Datuwagni, 5 - Bhutagni. The date parimama process incorporates the reactions of all there forms of agni. Infact for each dhatu and for each fraction of the dhatu, there is a corresponding agni. In other words, every part of the body has its own inherent agni.

Madhuraavasthapakam

This phase start from the entry of the food into the mouth. Propulsion of food from the mouth to urdhvaamasaya is brought by prana vayu.^[2]

This aspect of digestion in urdhvaamasaya is done by Madhurabhava. During this stage orgin of kaphadosha occurs in the form of foam.

This stage can be compared with digesting of carbohydrate as when we consume food firstly digestion of carbohydrate occurs and even it start in oral cavity by salivary amylase and the end products of carbohydrate digestion are mono saccharides (i.e.) Glucose fructose and galactose these are sweet in taste.^[3]

Amlaavasthapakam

Food which has undergone Madhurapakaenter into panchamanashaya. Here it become vidagdha (acidity) and amlabhava originates This stage is also called panchyamanavastha because it occurs in pachamanashaya.^[4]

Digestion of protein and fats occurs in this stage by pachakapitha (HCL). This paka involves the conversion of insoluble proteins into the soluble ones under the influence of enzyme pepsin in the presence of Hcl⁵. The outcome of this phase is acidified chyme and it is in pakwapakwa stage. The partly digested food enters into adhoamasaya and stimulates the secretion of acchapitta (pancreatic juice). The concept of acchapittha includes bile, pancreatic juice. It causes further digesting of proteins carbohydrates and fats of the chime.^[6]

Katuavasthapakam

After amlaavasthapakachyme goes to pakwashaya and here by the action of agni the liquid part of the food gets dried up forming pindaroopa and during this stage katubhavayuthavayu originates. This stage occurs pakwashaya hence it is called pakwaavastha.

This aspect relates to the aerid and pungent nature of reactions that occur in the large

intestine during the formation of faeces.^[7] All the three stages of digestion reveals complete digestion of food and conversion of the food into ahara rasa and kittabhaga.

Vipaka

At the end of the digestion the digested food have their original rasa of the ingested food. This is called as vipaka. Madhura rasa and lavana rasa have madhuravipaka. Amla rasa have amlavipaka. Tikta and kashaya rasa have katu vipaka.^[8]

Bhutagnipaka

The bhutagnipaka and dhatuagnipaka comes under secondary digestion and metabolism. Bhutagni is the one that is present in a basic element (bhutas). There are five agni in each of the five basic elements namely partiva, apya, tejas, vayavya, and nabhasa. Each and every cell in our body is composed of these five mahabhutas. Each cell consists of these five bhutagni also. To convert exogenous substance to part of the body there exists a process of paka, which is attributed to bhutagni.^[9] Thus cause the appropriate nourishment of tissues. In modern physiological prospective, bhutagnipaka can be equated to the digestion of food substances in the liver. The essential factors like vitamins, essential amino acids, essential fatty acids should be converted to body tissue to yield energy.^[10] Thus essential factors are bhutagniamshaas. Bhutagni functions are carried in the portal system, liver and vascular system through which ahara rasa is circulated in the body for nourishing the rasadisapta dhatu.^[11] Hence liver is considered as center of bhutagnivyapara. After completion of bhutagnipaka only, the formation of ahara rasa is formed and rasa absorption is possible.

Dhatwagnipaka

This is the final stage of food transformation, i.e. Metabolism. The ahara rasa is transported to different dhatus in their respective channels. When they reach their respective dhatus, the dhatwagni present at the place further transform this ahara rasa and again there will be formation of saara and kitta portions. The transformation is in the form of rearrangement of panchabhoutika factors to form body tissues. The saara portion contributes for the dhatu proper and upadhatu. The kitta portion forms various metabolic wastes.

The prasadapaaka is stated to yield the seven kinds of poshaka or asthayidhatu. The nutrient fraction of rasa provides nourishment to rakta that of rakta to mamsa, that of mamsa to medas, that of medas to asthi, that of asthi to majja, that of majja to sukra.

The poshaka rasa dhatu is transformed into raktadhatu by the heat generated by ranjakapitha and rasagni in the body. The poshakaraktadhatu is transformed into mansadhatu by the vayu, jala, tejas and heat generated by raktagni in the body. The poshakamamsadhatu is transformed into medasdhatu by the prithvi, jala and mansagni. The poshakamedadhatu is transformed into asthidhatu by the prithvi, vayu and medasagni. The poshakaasthidhatu is transformed into majjadhatu by the prithvi, jala, vayu and asthyagni. The poshakamajjadhatu is transformed into shukra dhatu.^[12] The time period of prasaadapakka is 6 days and nights. The process is a continuous one.^[13] Each one of the seven poshakadhatu will be transported to their respective poshyadhatu, through srotases. These srotases are called dhatuvahasrotamsi. These are seven in number.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Ayurveda gives utmost importance to the maintenance of agni in our body. Moreover by defining “kayachikitsa” as kayasantaragnichikitsa” chakrapanidatta indicates that the aim of chikitsa is nothing but to correct the inner agni. In other words, all the treatment aim at the establishment of well formed dhatus.

Concept of aharapaaka is the basic fundamental physiological process that occurs in body by the action of pranavayu, samanavayu, bhodakakapha, and pachaka pitta. Ingested food is to be digested, absorbed and assimilated which is unavoidable for the maintenance of life. These processes occur under aharapaaka. Similar to the description of digestion and metabolism, Ayurvedic texts have described aharapaaka very beautifully into stage by stage.

Each stage has its correlation with modern texts like avasthapaaka. It is the conversion of macromolecules to micromolecules which is suitable for absorption which is suitable for absorption. Similar to digestion of carbohydrate, protein and fat metabolism, avasthapaaka is also divided into madhuraavasthapaaka, and amlavasthapaaka. In the third stage of digestion, the absorption of nutrients occurs in the large intestine and formation of faeces with production of pungent smell (katubhava) occur.

The ahara rasa which is having madhura and lavana rasa gets madhuravipaka, amla rasa gets amlavipaka, katu, tikta, kashaya rasa gets katuvipaka. In the bhutagni and dhatwagnipaaka body basic structural elementary tissues (ie) saptadhatus are formed and each cell of body is nourished by bhutagnipaaka. Function of dhatwagni are mainly two (ie) one is synthesis of new tissue and second is to yield energy for the function of tissue.

If the dhatwagni is impaired both of these will be impaired. Hence each stage of aharapaaka has clinical importance. If people consume balance diet at proper timing there will be proper digestion and he will live healthy life. So to maintain the healthy status of healthy living being is compulsory to have a normal functioning of jataragni, bhutagni and dhatwagni. As when these agni will be normal functioning the process of aharapaaka will be normal and the normal formation of doshas and dhatus will occur.

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