

AN ANALYTIC REVIEW OF AMLAPITTA IN THE PURVIEW OF CHANGING LIFE STYLE

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Abstract

Ayurveda is a science of life and more than just a medical system. We all part and parcel of nature. So, Ayurveda helps to maintain the health in a person by using the inherent principles of nature to bring the individual back into equilibrium with their true self. It has been in existence since the beginning of time. Due to its simplicity and scientific nature, Ayurveda has drawn the attention of the global population. It is well known for its role in the management of the chronic, incurable and degenerative of iatrogenic diseases. More balanced life style will be regulated by tracking eating, sleeping and activity patterns. It was designed to work by connecting to a smart phone by informing the user to be conscious about the concern of health. In this series, Amlapitta has become one of the common problems today due to the change in lifestyle. It is more of a psycho-somatic disorder caused due to dietetic indiscrimination and mental stress and strain. It is a pitta pradhana disease of the Annavaha and Purishavaha srtotas caused due to mandagni and ama. The patho-physiology of the Amlapitta states it to be a disease caused due to functional disturbance rather than organic lesion. Hence this article suggested that how changing life style causes the Amlapitta and what done in this condition for the preventive in detail.

Key words: Amlapitta; Acidity; Ayurveda; Health; Pitta; Life Style.

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INTRODUCTION

The health is supreme foundation for the achievement of happy life. The objective of Ayurveda is to accomplish the physical, mental, social and spiritual well being by any of adopting preventive and promotive approach as well as to treat the diseases with its various remissive approaches.^[1]

Since the time immemorial the man has been in quest of the knowledge of ways and means by which he can attain ideal health increase the longevity and achieve happiness. He has searched the food, drugs and other amenities of day to day life, that would help him in living a life to the full span, prevent the sickness and delay the aging process. Today in many ways people has great opportunities of better life than ever before. Still it is clear that they need to evolve some new strategies as to follow the golden old rules, which are proved for millenniums in each and every field of life. The life style is one such most important filed of life. The same subject have been brought into focus and witnessed by Ayurvedic classics. In these sequences Amlapitta is most important difficulty due to faulty life style.^[2] It is characterized by acid regurgitation, nausea, heart-burning indicating the vikriti of pachakapitta along with the kledaka kapha and samana vayu.^[3]

While describing the prognosis of Amlapitta, it has been stated that it can be cured easily if promptly treated at the earliest with proper pathyapthya.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Different Ayurvedic classical books, research papers and journals were referred to fulfill this part. It comprises of subsections dealing with life style, there changes and effect on Amlapitta disease.

Review of Amlapitta (Acidity)

According to Ayurveda, acidity is recognized as Amlapitta. Acidity is a condition in the human body when there is an excess secretion of acid within the stomach. In Ayurvedic terminology, agni (digestive fire) is considered as the protector of the human body while Ama (toxic) is the cause of the disease.^[4] The main cause is the indiscretion in taking food which leads to three types of doshika (physical energies) imbalance: vata, pitta and kapha. Ayurveda has provided ample herbal and home remedies for treating various diseases, including acidity, heartburn and gastritis.

The three doshas vata, pitta and kapha, present in the human body are found in the grahani (duodenum), which is considered as the seat of digestive fire or agni.^[5] It is also said that eating and fasting during indigestion leads to problems like acidity, heartburn, gastritis, which is referred as Amlapitta.^[6]

Definition and etymology of Amlapitta

According to Acharya Caraka, Natural property of Pitta is Amla & Katu.^[7] But Acharya Sushruta has enlisted Katu as its original rasa and when Pitta becomes Vidagdha then it changes into Amla.^[8] In commentary of Shrikanthadatta on the relevant chapter has defined that it is a condition where excessive secretion of Amla guna, Pitta takes place causing vidahyadi conditions.^[9]

Amla (Sour taste) + Pitta (Excessive salivation) → Amlapitta (Chemical substance for digestion, transformation and transmutations)

Therefore, it means a condition in which sourness of Pitta gets increased. In disease Amlapitta, the Pitta gets vitiated by one or all gunas, causing various patho-physiological conditions of Anna and Purishavaha Srotasa.

Table 1: Viruddhahara (Dietetic incompatibilities) which causes Amlapitta

Sl. No.	Etiological factor	Dosha prakopa	Sl. No.	Etiological factor	Dosha prakopa
1	Adhyasana (To eat before the previous food digested)	Tridosha	26	Bhrista – Dhanya	Pitta
2	Abhishyandi Bhojana	Pitta Kapha	27	Dustanna	Tridosha
3	Ajirna (Indigestion)	Pittakapha	28	Buktwa Diwaswapa	Kapha
4	Ama (Undigested food)	Tridosha	29	Gorasa (milky product)	
5	Ama Pakwanna (Mal cooked or uncooked food)	Pitta	30	Guru Bhojana (Heavy diet)	Kapha
6	Akala Bhojana (Untimely diet)	Kaphapitta	31	Ikshuvikara (Sugarcane product)	Kapha
7	Amla Sevana (Eating of acidic substances)	Pittakapha	32	Kulattha Sevana	Pitta
8	Ame Ame Ca Puranant (To eat without appetite)	Pitta	33	Madya (Alcohol)	Tridosha
9	Antarodaka Pana (To drink much water during food)	Pitta	34	Paryusitanna	Tridosha
10	Ati-ushna Ahara (Very hot diet)	Pitta	35	Pitta Prakopi Annapana	Tridosha
11	Ati-snigdha Ahara (Fatty diet)	Pitta Kapha	36	Pistanna	Pitta Kapha
12	Ati-ruksha Ahara (Coarse diet)	Vata-pitta	37	Pruthuka Sevana	Pitta
13	Ati-drava- Sevana (Excess liquid)	Pitta	38	Pulaka Sevana	Pitta
14	Atisnana (Lengthy bath)	Vata kapha	39	Semidhanya	
15	Buktwa Avagahana (Tub-bath)	Vata kapha	40	Viruddhasana (Incompatible diet)	Tridosha
16	Ati sheeta ahara	Vata-pitta	41	Viruddhahara	Tridosha
17	Ati Shushka Ahara	Vata-pitta	42	Ati-tikshna Ahara	Vata-pitta
18	Vidahi Annapana	Pitta	43	Kale Anashana	Vata
19	Apakwanna Sevana	Pitta Vata	44	Visamashana	Vata
20	Phanita Sevana	Kapha	45	Vegavidharana	Tridosha
21	Apriya Ahara	Tridosha	46	Irshya	Vata
22	Vishtambhi Ahara	Trodosha	47	Shoka	Vata
23	Kama	Vata	48	Udvega	Vata
24	Krodha	Pitta	49	Bhaya	Vata
25	Moha	Pitta			

This disease mainly due to vitiation of Pitta (Pachaka-Pitta) but Kapha & vata dosha also are mentioned by shrikanthadutta.^[11] In Samhitas some other words have also been mentioned in the reference of Amlapitta like Amlaka, Dhumaka and Vidaha etc.^[12]

Factors responsible for the Amlapitta

After a careful screening and analysis of the etiological factors of Amlapitta, may be discussed under following groups.

Aharaja hetu (Dietary factors)

The first and the foremost group of etiological factors of Amlapitta may be considered as the dietary factors. Under this group the intake of food against the code of dietetics i.e. Ahara Vidhi Vidhana (Dietetic Rules) and Ashatau Ahara Viseshayatana (Causative factors responsible for the wholesome and unwholesome effect of the methods for diet intake) is included. Various types of incompatible substances, excess use of Pitta aggravating factors like Katu, Amla, Vidahi etc. kullatha (*Dolichos biflorus*) and untimely consumption of food are the factors against the

dietetic code and they directly disturb the Pitta equilibrium.^[12] Viruddhahara (Dietetic incompatibilities) is a causative factor of Amlapitta, which the entire causative factors. (Table 1)

Viharaja hetu (Habit factors)

To keep the health undisturbed, one is required to follow the healthy code of habits. It requires having regular habits of defecation, to eat properly and to sleep in time. It is not to suppress the natural urges, maintaining the equilibrium of the body constituents and by that obviously, he would maintain good health and proper functioning of the body. If these instructions are not followed regular, the whole functioning of the body will be disturbed and in long run, they will cause the disturbance of the equilibrium of Pitta and digestion which ultimately will lead to Amlapitta.^[12]

Manasika Hetu (Psychological factors)

Manasika bhavas plays an important role in maintaining the health. On the other hand an abnormal psychology, in terms of anger, anxiety, greediness etc. would affect the physiology of digestion. Either there would be a lesser secretion of the digestive juice or secreted at improper time and sometimes it may be secreted in excessive quantity. All these conditions lead to indigestion which ultimately gives rise to Amlapitta.^[12]

Agantuja Hetu (Miscellaneous factors)

Allied factors can be taken under this factor. Under this group constant and excessive consumption of alcohol, tobacco, beverages, smoking or other irritant substances etc. are taken. These substances cause a local irritation in the stomach which in turn secretes more gastric juice.^[12]

Samprapti

Due to nidana seven, pitta prakopa may occur and this prakupitta pitta mixes with sanchit pitta and it leads to Amlodagara (sour belching), Daha (burning sensation) etc. symptoms. It results in Amlapitta. If nidanas are Amlarasa pradhan (sour taste), prominent 2nd stage of avasthapaka takes place which leads to increase pittodirana (Own properties Ati Usnata / Atitiksnata). This Amapitta (Premature pitta) produces Amlodagara, Daha etc.^[12] (Chart 1)

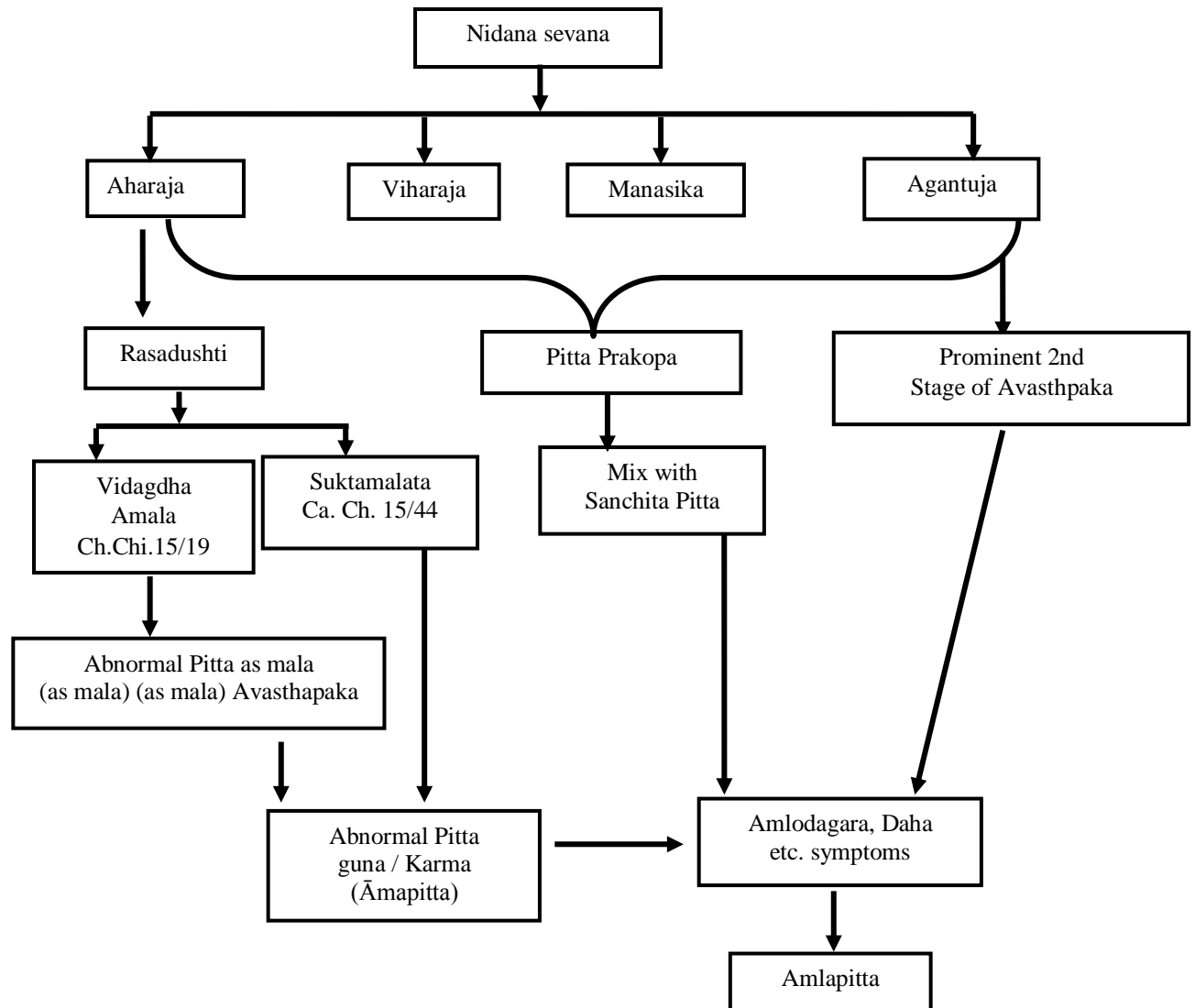
Anshanshakalpana

In the pathogenesis of Amlapitta, first there is production of Shuktapaka due to Agni dushti and if it mixes with Pitta it produces the disease. Means along with excessive HCl secretion there may be production of organic acids. So whenever patients complain about hyperacidity, his thorough examination as per Ayurvedic point of view should be done. We must analyze that either the pitta is premature (Amapitta) or it is mixed with the ama of digestive system (Samapitta) as treatment differs in these situations. Mainly Drava and Amla guna is increased in this disease. By observing the signs and symptoms of disease, it can guess by which guna (property) the Pitta is vitiated. (Table 2)

Table 2: Symptoms produces according to property of Pitta

Sl.No.	Guna	Lakshana (Symptoms)
1.	Drava	Hrillas, Asyastravana, Chhardi
2.	Amla	Amlika, Amlasyata, Amlodgara, Amlarasayukta, Chhardi
3.	Tikshna	Vedana, Vrana (ulcer)
4.	Ushna	Ura-Udara-Kantha Daha, Jwarapratiti, Aushnya, Sarvangadaha
5.	Vistra	Aasyadaurgandhya, Loha-Ama Gandha, Utsahhani
6.	Sara	Asamhatmalapravritti

Chart 1: Pathogenesis of Amlapitta



By analyzing these Guna, the line of treatment can be changed accordingly e.g. if Ushna-Tikshna-Drava Guna is involved then Guduchi churna (*Tinospora cordifolia*) and Amla-vistra bahal, asthira Guna is involved Shunthi churna (*Zingiber officinale*) can be used because the property of Guduchi is Tikta and Kashaya rasa and Shunthi is Ushna Virya (Potency) reduces the complaint. If physician able to differentiate these properties then we can treat the patient easily and get better result. Likewise if these properties involved different Dhatus, then the line of treatment has been changed and it should be according to progression of pathogenesis.

DISCUSSION

The faulty food habits and life style have a definite impact on biorhythm of intestinal function. Amla, is important as it indicates a group of Gunas (Gunasamgraha). The Mahabhautic constitution of Amla Rasa (Prithvi + Agni) helps to explain the Urdhva and Adho Gatis (upward and downward movements) of Amlapitta.^[13] The Dravyas constituting above two Mahabhutas are Ubhayagami (Acting upwards as well as downwards). In brief Nidanans (cause) of Amlapitta are divided into four groups i.e. Aharaja, Viharaja, Manasika and Agantuja.

The Aharaja Hetus are again divided into two subgroups. i.e. Nidanas related with Ahara Vidhi Vidhana and Nidanas related with Ahara Dravyas.

Ahara plays an important role in maintenance of health. If Ahara is not consumed in prescribed way it may leads to diseases. In this era of modernization and civilization the society is conscious enough about "What to eat? and How to eat?" The awareness about the food items, their quantity, quality and nutritional values etc. is increasing gradually, and then also the popularity of fast food is greater due to the fast life.

In Aharavidhivisheshayatanani (what to eat) includes 8 factors Prakrti (nature of substances), Karana (processing of substances), Samyoga (combination of different substances), Rashi (quantum of substances to be taken), Desha (habitat of substances), Kala (time as age, seasons and conditions), Upayogsamstha (dietetic rules) and Upayoktri (habit and state of individuals) and Upayogsamstha (how to eat) includes 12 factors Ushnamashniyat (hot), Snigdhamashniyat (unctuous), Jirneashniyat (one should take food only when previous meal is digested), Viryaviruddhamashniyat (one should take food having no contradictory potencies), Ishte deshe Ishta sarvopakarane (one should take food in proper place equipped with all the accessories), Natidrutamashniyat (one should not take food too hurriedly), Nativilambitam (one should not take food very slowly), Ajalpan – Ahasan – Tanmanabhunjit (one should not talk or laugh or be unmindful while taking food) and Atmanamabhisamikshya (one should take food in a prescribed manner with due regard to his own-self).^[14]

These factors are most important aspect from the preventive and curative aspect of health. They are to be examined before food intake and are to be followed during food intake. In the Samprapti of Amlapitta, the normal and

abnormal functions of Amla Rasa are basically attributed to Pitta Dosha. Amla Rasa and Amla Vipaka have important roles in the pathogenesis of Amlapitta. Dosha, Dushya, Srotas, Agni and Ama are the five basic most components of disease process. Involvement of these factors, with different Gunas is responsible for different symptoms of Amlapitta. The Samprapti can be understood by different aspects, such as on the basis of six Kriyakalas, based on the Adhistanas and based on Gunas.

Urdhvaga and Adhoga are two Gatis of Amlapitta. Among these, Urdhvaga Gati symptoms tend more towards Annavaha Sroto Dushti and Adhoga Amlapitta is related with Purishavaha Srotas. Though Amlapitta has got its effect almost on all the Srotas, the above two Srotas are most important in the development of disease Pitta and Kapha dushti is more prominently observed in Urdhvaga, while Vata is vitiated in Adhoga Amlapitta.^[15]

Acharya Charaka has mentioned in Nidana Sthana the "irregular dieting habit" is explained as an etiological factor for consumption.^[16] When an individual takes different types of food articles viz. Pana (Beverages), Ashana (Eatables), Bhaksya (Masticable) and Lehya (Linctus) without paying due regards toward their properties and wholesomeness for the individual then all the three Doshas imbalanced which are responsible for all the diseases.^[17]

Sinful acts and unwholesome diet are the two important factors for the causation of diseases. In the absence of these factors, the individual becomes free from all the diseases. Paying due consideration to the quality and time, a self controlled men should regularly take such useful food and drinks as are conducive to the internal power of digestion, including metabolism like an Ahitagni (a men who perform Yajna), who takes diet conducive over of digestion being aware of wholesomeness of food and drinks, who resort

to meditation of Brahma and charity, enjoys bliss without any disease during the present as well as future lives.^[18]

The disorders caused by not following the rules as well as observation of today's society are given with each rule. The rules are supported by modern physiological and experimental studies. Some points are applicable to all the statements collectively and separately. While mentioning dietetic rules it is already considered that they should be applied along with proper diet. Wholesome diet if taken in improper way can lead to diseases. In the same way improper diet even taken in proper manner leads to disorders.

CONCLUSION

Amlapitta is very common and major problem due to changing life style habits. In the ancient text books of Ayurveda it is described that irregular food and life style habits are the main causative factor for the disease. While describing the total management for this disease, it is very much emphasized that treatment will be only successful if the causative factor are corrected and implementation in the proper approach.

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