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### Agni and Koshtha – A Clinical Perspective

**Dr Anagha Kiran Yadav<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Uttam Kashinath Bande<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>P.G. Scholar, Dept. Kriya sharir, Yashwantrao Ayurvedic College, Post Graduate Training & Research Center, Kodoli, Maharashtra.

<sup>2</sup>Professor, Dept. of Kriya sharir, Yashwantrao Ayurvedic College, Post Graduate Training & Research Center, Kodoli, Maharashtra

#### ABSTRACT

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणीनां देहमाश्रितः प्राणापान समायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् । - भगवत् गीता

Agni is the transforming element that transforms five elements of food into five elements of the body (Panchamahabhutas) with the help of Prana and Apana.

On observation, The Koshtha and Agni share similar functions which ascertain their synergistic existence. This emphasizes the relative understanding of Koshtha, Agni and Doshavastha comprising Samprapti while deciding treatment.

**Keywords:** Agni, Koshtha, Doshas.

#### INTRODUCTION

The important functioning element influenced by Doshas, held in Koshtha is Agni. The heat in Koshtha can digest food and separate the digested products to Sara and Kitta i.e. Sara-Kitta Vibhajana. The functioning of Agni is Maintained with the support of Vayu.

आगमाच्च पश्यामो न खलु पित्तव्यतिरेकादन्योऽग्निरीति | अ. ह. सू. 12/12

The Ayurved Shastra ascertains invariable association of Agni to Pitta and this Pitta (Jatharagni) bestows and controls the functions of other Pittas that are situated elsewhere in the body.

#### Functions of Agni –

1) Digestion of Food and its Segregation into Sara and Kitta.

Segregation of ideal Doshas and Rasa from the Sara bhaag of food.

#### AIMS

To Study the concept of Agni and its association with Koshtha in a Clinical Perspective.

## OBJECTIVES

- 1) To review Agni from different Ayurvedic Classical Texts.
- 2) To understand the concept of Koshtha from different Ayurvedic Classical Texts.
- 3) To understand the association between Agni and Koshtha.

## REVIEW

Similarities between Koshtha and Agni –

Koshtha	Agni
1) Ashrayroop	1) Shaktiroop
2)Rasa-Dosha-mutra vibhaga Ashray	2)Vivechayati Dosha-Rasa-Mutra-Purishani
3)Ahara paakadhar	3)Paakadi Karmana Karitaha
4)Purish Pravrutti Hetu Bhutanadi	4)Grahani Ashritvat
5)Purish Pravrutti Hetu bhutva- Vayu Agni dharana	5)Vayu Agni Prabhavena Purish Pindikaran.

Types of Agni –

Types	Details
1) Samagni	It is responsible for the proper digestion of food consumed at an appropriate time.
2)Vishamagni	- Vaat bahulyena -It's the Agni that digests food sometimes quickly and sometimes slowly.
3)Tikshnagni	- Pitta bahulyena -It Exists in three levels- 1)Agni that digests excess food in a short time. 2)Agni in its high point i.e 'Atyagni' 3) Atyagni instantly digests frequently consumed heavy foods and causes a burning sensation in the throat, tongue, palate, etc at the end of digestion.
4)Mandagni	-Kapha bahulyena -The Agni that takes a long time to digest even a small quantity of food.

Vyadhi awasthas of Agni-

दोषच्छन्नेऽनलो नालं पक्तुं दोषौषधाशनम् । - वृद्धमाधव

The pathological alteration of Agni by Dosha is primarily by 2 means-

- 1) Doshacchena Agni (Dosha covering Agni)

## 2) Dosh Vaishamyaja Agni (Dosha working through Agni either as Vishama, Tikshna or Manda.

These conditions result in –

Dosha	Sthana	Ajirna	Vyadhi
Kapha	Amashaya	Amajirna	Alasaka, Jwara etc
Pitta	Pachyamanashaya	Vidagdhajirna	Grahani, Amlapitta etc
Vaat	Pakvashaya	Vishtabdajirna	Udavarta, Arsha etc

Agni and Doshas at different Phases of Digestion in Koshta-

1<sup>st</sup> Phase of Digestion-

In Amashaya the digestive process is affected due to heavy foods or due to Mandagni and that transforms into Aam.

This Aam remains in Koshta or travels throughout the body with Rasa.

In such conditions, Kapha generated is Heavy (Guru), Dense (Sthana), and phenibhoot.

2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of Digestion-

Here all food undergoes Vidahitva generating clear Pitta.

When Daha occurs it is called Vidaha.

Such foods are retained in the gut for a prolonged time and thus generated Pitta becomes sour and is called Amlapitta.

विरुद्धो विषमो वा दाहो - विदाहः । ततो विदाहद्वेतोरम्लता यातम् ॥ इह हि द्विविधो विदाह प्रथितो दोषस्थानकृतो द्रव्यकृतश्च ।

The genesis of Vidaha is due to 2 Causes-

- 1) Doshasthanakruta (Altered Pachyamanwastha)
- 2) Dravyakruta (e,g intake of Kulatha)

3<sup>rd</sup> Phase of Digestion-

In Pakvashaya, Vaat absorbs Water from Digestive residue leading to the formation of stools. If this phase is aggravated by the dryness of Vaat, it leads to the hardening of faeces and thus leads to diseases of Udavarta.

वर्तः पुरीष पिण्डीकरणं | - अ. ह. सु.

Causes of Kayagni Doshaj-

कायाग्निदोषजा रोगाः प्रायेणाजीर्ण मूलकाः। अतीसार ग्रहण्याध्या आमपक्वाश्रयाश्रयाः ॥ - सुनि  
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नाजीर्यति सुखेनान्नं विकारान् कुरुतेऽपि च ।

तदजीर्णमिति प्राहुस्तन्मूलविविधा रुजः ॥ - सुनि 241

That means-

Most of the diseases are rooted in the derangement of “Kayagni doshaja” i.e. digestive fire.

This also relies on the site where the derangement is caused. E.g.-

In the gut- it causes diseases like Ajirna, Grahani, Atisar etc

In Dhatus- it causes diseases like Prameha due to alteration in Dhatvagni.

In joints- It causes diseases like Aamvaat, Vaatrakta etc.

These are caused by aggravated Doshas and can produce- Visuchika, Alasaka and Vilambika.

Alasaka- Here Doshas are Stagnated in Koshtha.

Visuchika-Here Doshas are expelled out continuously through the anal or oral pathway.

This Vaat, Pitta, and Kapha are in Malaroop, which is aggravated in Nishthapaak, replacing the Sararoop.

Wholesome and unwholesome foods are the source of health and ill-health respectively. Gut is the receptacle, where such foods get transformed, hence its supremacy in maintaining health and understanding ill health. As per the famous adage the physical appearance of a person denotes the nature of food one is habituated to. Food is the source of body, and the transformation of food to sharir (body) is by the action of agni at koshtha. The food itself forms the basic cause of disease genesis as it is at koshtha the health derangement is initiated, due to improper food habits. The wholesome food consumed in accordance to prescribed method (vidhivihitam) sustains health in all animate beings (pran). The food is the fuel for the sustenance of life thus of all the body components (avayavas), koshtha gains the highest precedence, as it is the receptacle of food transformation, and also the site of agni. Therefore assessment of koshtha is the prime criteria in disease diagnosis as well as in treatment.

Though dosha and agni gets greater emphasis; in view of treatment, koshtha that harbours dosha and agni is the one which polarize the treatment principle. And so, koshtha derives the greater emphasis as it commands doshas and agni for normal functioning or abnormal

progression. Thus, in perspective of pathology and treatment, koshtha can be defined as the polarising entity that clearly divides the entire disease patterns basically to two entities; and over them the altered dosha, agni works breeding to innumerable diseases.

## DISCUSSION

The clinical condition is a relative complex of altered Agni, residing in a specific type of Koshtha and the variation in Doshas. Influenced by Agni and Koshtha such doshas cause the Samprapti of any disease.

The unified Analysis of Koshtha, Agni, Altered Dosha, Lakshana and Vyadhi has to be done in a presenting clinical condition.

The pathological variation of Agni is always in association with the Koshtha Variation.

From the perspective of Chikitsa, the Doshavastha is associated either with Deeptagni or Mandagni.

## CONCLUSION

अनात्मवन्त पशुवत्भुञ्जानो येऽप्रमाणतः |

रोगनिकस्य ते मूलमजीर्णं प्राप्नुवन्ति हि || - सु सू 21

In brief, all Clinical conditions are rooted in altered food habits and Ajirna is the source of all diseases.

This reveals the greatest fact that any disease can be resultant of Doshas travelling through the path of Koshtha into its Doshavasthas or direct affection of the target site (eg Rasaja, Raktaj)

Hence, no clinical presentation can be diagnosed outright by considering the mere presentation.

E.g. Diabetes as Prameha.

It is inevitable to track down the Dosha Pathway that has resulted in the Presenting Clinical Condition.

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