

Ama Pachana - Conceptual study as per classics of Ayurveda

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ABSTRACT

Modifications and changes in lifestyle affects the health in such a way that, it will be responsible for getting affected with various disorders. *Jatharagni* plays the key role in the process of digestion. Many factors from modified and changed lifestyle affect *jatharagni* which leads to the formation of *ama*. *Ama* is the first product formed after the improper digestion. It is considered as root cause of diseases. Hence by managing *ama*, leads step towards disease free life. *Pachana* is a one way to achieve it. In all these measures *pachana* is the first one which is mentioned by *Ayurveda*. *Srotorodha* (congestion of *doshas* in the body), *Balabhransha* (weakness in forms of physical strength), *Gaurava* (heaviness in the body), *Anilmoodhata* (vayu indolence), *Aalasya* (loss of enthusiasm), *Apakti* (loss of digestion), *Nishtiva* (excessive spitting), *Malasanga* (constipation), *Aruchi* (tastelessness), *Klama* (mental fatigue). In the treatment measures are *pachana*, *deepana*, *snehana*, *swedana* and *shodhana*. In all these measures

pachana is the first one which is mentioned by *Ayurveda*. Hence *ama pachana* is selected for this article. As *pachana* is also mentioned in the treatment measures of *ama*, it is the most important treatment measure in the process of treatment of *ama*. *Ama* is enough explained in classical texts of *Ayurveda*, which is considered as root cause of diseases. And *pachana* is the best line of treatment for management of *ama*, which is basic treatment to start management of *Ayurveda*, such as treatment of diseases, before *Panchakarma* and *Rasayana chikitsa*.

KEYWORDS

Ama Pachana, Management Guideline by *Ayurveda*,

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, there are a lot of changes in the lifestyle of people and it also brings changes in their food habits. Modifications and changes affect the health in such a way that, it will be responsible for

getting affected with various disorders. *Jatharagni* plays the key role in the process of digestion. Many factors from modified and changed lifestyle affect *jatharagni* which leads to the formation of *ama*. *Ama* is the first product formed after the improper digestion.

Ama, which is improper digestive product further leads to many diseases and disorders. In many of diseases ‘*ama*’ formed due to improper digestion is the main cause as it hampers the other system’s mechanism and metabolic functions. As *ama* is one of the leading cause of all diseases, *Amaya* is the alternative name for diseases. *Amaya* is a Sanskrit word which is used for diseases which literally means that born out of *ama*. *Ama* formed due to malfunctioning of the digestive and metabolic mechanisms, combines with the other factors and also affect them which further leads to hampering their normal functions

The symptoms of *ama* i.e. when *ama* indulges with *dosha*, *dushya* and *malas*. They are as follows:

Srotorodha (congestion of *doshas* in the body), *Balabhransha* (weakness in forms of physical strength), *Gaurava* (heaviness in the body), *Anilmoodhata* (*vayu* indolence), *Aalasya* (loss of enthusiasm), *Apakti* (loss of digestion), *Nishtiva* (excessive spitting), *Malasanga* (constipation), *Aruchi* (tastelessness), *Klama* (mental fatigue).

In the treatment measures are *pachana*, *deepana*, *snehana*, *swedana* and *shodhana*. In all these measures *pachana* is the first one which is mentioned by *Acharya*. Hence *pachana* for *ama* is selected in this study.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To study *ama pachana* as per classical texts of *Ayurveda*.

MATERIALS

Classical texts of *Ayurveda*, such as *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtang*

Hridaya Samhita, *Madhava Nidana*, and *Sharangdhara Samhita*.

METHODOLOGY

The concept of *ama* and *pachana* has been reviewed from the classical texts of *Ayurveda*. Concurrent literature on *ama* and *pachana* has been studied from books and articles.

AMA

Ama is considered as one of the main cause of all diseases by different *Acharyas*. In *Ayurveda*, the importance of *ama* is explained by giving alternative name to disease from the name of *ama* i.e. *Amaya* – which is born out of *ama*.^[1,2]

Definition of *ama*:

Ama is nothing but the product form due to improper digestion. It is the product which does not have qualitative aspects that will help for health of person. *Ama* is the substance which is involved in the process of *paka* (*pachana* or digestion of food) without attaining its final form.^[3]

Causes of *ama*:

There are different causes of *ama*, which can be listed as follows –

1. *Agnimandya*
2. *Dhatvagnimandya*
3. *Mala sanchaya*
4. *Dosha sammurchana*
5. *Krimivisha*

1. *Agnimandya*: It is considered as main cause of *ama*. It is also mentioned in the definition of *ama*, *agnimandya* leads to the formation of *ama*. *Dhatvagni* also plays important role in the formation of *ama*, but the power of *dhatvagni* also corresponds to the *jatharagni*. Hence there is a lot of importance to the *jatharagni* and *agnimandya* plays key role in the formation of *ama*.^[4] According to the *Madhava*, the power or intensity of *jatharagni* is weakened

which results into the formation of undigested *ahara rasa*. This undigested *ahara rasa* causes harmful effects to the body leading many diseases. Hence it is the root cause of many diseases. *Charaka* has listed causes of *agnimandya*^[5] like fasting, eating during indigestion, over eating, irregular eating, and intake of unsuitable, heavy, cold, too rough and contaminated food, improper administration of *virechana*, *vamana* and *snehana*, emaciation due to some diseases, faulty adaptation to place, time and seasons and suppression of natural urges. Due to which *agni* is deranged and becomes unable to digest even the light food, being undigested gets fermented and becomes toxic.

2. Dhatvagnimandya: From *ahara rasa*, the nutrient substances undergo the process of formation of *dhatu*s with the help of metabolic factors. Therefore, when the *dhatvagni* is deranged, the process of formation of *dhatu*s is also decreased which leads to the formation of incomplete and improper substances (*ama*). This type of pathology leads to various diseases. This also leads hampering of normal functions and activities of *dhatu*.^[6] The power of *dhatvagni* depends upon the *jatharagni*. *Dhatvagni* is nothing but the part of *jatharagni* which is present inside all the seven *dhatu*s. This is also a factor responsible for the increase or decrease of *dhatu*s due to debility and intensity of the *dhatvagni* respectively.

3. Mala sanchaya: According to *Madhava*, *ama* is the *ahara rasa* which is formed after incomplete or improper digestion due to *agnimandya*. Also, *ama* is the unwanted substance which are formed due to retention of *mala*. Due to retention of *mala* harmful and unwanted substances produced. Hence *mala* should be expelled out timely. *Malas* also have their own functions, retention leads to the disturbance in their functions and abnormal actions in the body.^[7]

4. Dosha Sammurchana: *Mala* denotes not only *purisha*, *mootra* and *sweda* but also *dhatu malas*. *Dhatu malas* are *kapha*, *pitta*, *kha-mala*, sweat, nails etc.^[8] Some *acharyas* opine that *ama* gets formed from mixing of vitiated *doshas* with one another just as the poison is formed from mixing of different kinds of *kodrava*.

5. Krimivisha: If the immunity of body is good, not producing any harmful effects even after affection of *krimi* (worms). But low immunity leads to *krimi* affect body and produce a toxic substance, which is considered as *ama*. Not only excessive eating but also other factors cause production of *ama*. *Charaka* has explained it in *vimana sthana*. When food is taken in excessive amount according to hunger; causes indigestion which further leads to formation of *ama*. These other factors are physical and psychological, they mainly cause *agnimandya* and further produces *ama*. They are –

Eating food with properties such as *guru* (heavy to digest), *ruksha* (rough or not smooth), *sheeta* (cold), *shushka* (dry), *vidahi* (producing burning sensation), *vishtambhi* (constipating). Intake of unhygienic food, irregularity in the food timing, Psychological factors also affect the *agni* such as *kama*, *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (griddiness), *moha*, *irsha*, *shoka* (sorrow) etc.^[9]

Characteristics of *ama*:

The characteristics of *ama* are given as^[10] – Characteristics of *ama* are *avipaka*, *asnayukta*, *durgandha*, *picchila*, *bahu*. It produces effects on body is *sadana gatrata*. All these are explained as follows -

- *Ama* is formed due to incomplete or improper digestion. Hence it is in indigested form (*avipaka*),
- *Ama* is different substance from *ahara rasa* as *ama* is indigested and *ahara rasa* is completely digested one. Hence

it is different or not similar (*asanyukta*),

- *Ama* is like a waste or harmful substance hence it smells bad (*durgandha*),
- This improperly formed *ama* is viscous in nature (*picchila*),
- This incompletely digested *ama* is produced in large amount (*bahu*).

Normal function of *ahara rasa* is to supply nutrition to the body. It also produces enthusiasm in body and mind. But due to formation of *ama*, this function of *rasa* is disturbed which causes weakness or hyperesthesia of body parts.

Symptoms of *ama*:

When *ama* is produced in the body it affects and produces symptoms in the body which are^[11] –

- *Srotorodha* (congestion of *doshas* in the body): *Srotas* are free channels for the flow of different objects. *Rodha* means obstruction. Obstruction in their free flow is considered as *srotorodha*.
- *Balabhransha* (weakness in forms of physical strength): weakened in relation with the physical strength or become weaker in physical power.
- *Gaurava* (heaviness in the body): body tends to have a feeling of heaviness.
- *Anilmoodhata* (*vayu* indolence): improper or distorted functioning of *vayu* in the body.
- *Aalasya* (loss of enthusiasm): feeling of sluggishness or lazy though capacity to work quite enough.
- *Apakti* (loss of digestion): improper digestion or decreased capacity of digestion.
- *Nishtiva* (excessive spitting): excessive spitting due to excessive salivation hampering other things.
- *Malasanga* (constipation): being constipated or improper bowel evacuation.

- *Aruchi* (tastelessness): continuously sensation of tastelessness.
- *Klama* (mental fatigue): feeling of weakness without any strenuous work.

Adverse effects of *ama*:

When this *ama* hampers other body contents disturbs their properties and functions. They may affect *doshas*, *dhatu*s or *malas*. When *ama* combines with or affected with these ones they are termed as '*sama*'. For example - *ama* affects *vata dosha* then considered as *sama vata dosha*.^[12] The symptoms of *sama dosha* are given as –

***Sama vata*:** When *ama* affects the *vata dosha* leading to the *sama vata* conditions. *Sama vata* produces symptoms like *vibandha*, *agnimandya*, *tandra*, *antrakoojana*, *vedana*, *shotha* etc. while travelling or passing through body, it produces obstruction by adhering walls of the lumens of channels. It affects that places where it goes causing variety of symptoms. Symptoms aggravate more due to situations like sunrise, cloudy seasons, night or anointing body both externally and internally.^[13]

***Sama pitta*:** When *ama* affects *pitta dosha* symptoms of *sama pitta* produced which are *durgandha* (foul smell), *harit* (green), *shyava varna* (bluish black), *amla rasa* (sour), *sthira* (stable/immobile), *guru* (heaviness), *amlaka* (sour eruptions), *daha* (burning sensation) of *kantha* (throat) and *hrut* (cardiac region).^[14]

1. *Durgandha* – when *ama* affects vitiated *pitta dosha* the properties of *ama* and *pitta* concile together producing foul smell.
2. *Harit shyava varna* – in *sama pitta*, natural colour of *pitta* get affected due to *ama* producing green or bluish black colour.
3. *Amla* – *pitta* is also of *amla* taste but sourness is increased in sour much more amount due to the partial or

incomplete digestion and retention leads fermentation which is not favorable.

4. *Sthira and guru* – naturally *pitta* is not stable it is *drava* (liquid) but *ama* with properties *picchila*, *guru* etc. leads to immobile state of *sama pitta*.
5. *Amlika* – this *amla sama pitta* and fermentative products leads to the sour eruptions. This *sama pitta* further leads to *amlapitta* if not treated and continuously following causes of it.
6. *Kantha-hrut daha* – *ushna* (hotness) is one of the natural properties of *pitta*. In *sama pitta*, *pitta* affects the body contents wherever it goes. It affects throat or cardiac region when retain at that places producing burning sensation.

Sama kapha: *Ama* affects *kapha dosha* produces symptoms of *sama kapha* which are *avila* (increased turbidity), *tantula* (thread or filamentous), *styana* (thick and dense) *kapha* which stagnates in the throat. It produces *durgandha* (foul smell), *kshuda vigat* (complete lack of appetite), *udgar vigat* (obstructed eruptions). Appearance of *kapha* becomes turbid, thread or filamentous, thick, dense because of properties of *ama* (such as *guru*, *picchila* etc.) which affect *kapha*.^[15]

Amapradoshaja vikara:

Aacharya charak mentioned 2 diseases under this title in his 2nd chapter of *Vimanasthana*, which are *alasaka* and *visuchika*.^[16]

1. Alasaka: It is one of the *amapradoshaja vikara*, having strong *ama* manifestation.^[17] *Ama* formed after the incomplete and improper digestion, get affected by *vata* which cause retention of *ama* in the body. *Ama* produced because of its own causes and *vata* vitiated also because of its own causes. They lead to the stoppage of movement, devoid of upward or downward expulsion of *ama*. This leads to the retention of *ama*.

Hence *ama*, undigested food retains without any movement like lethargy or lazy one producing pain is considered as *alasaka*.

Dandalasaka: When *doshas* are vitiated in great extent, small channels are also blocked by *ama* prohibited movement of body, making body very much stiff like a rod (*danda*). It is *asadhya* condition.

2. Visuchika: It is one of the diseases having strong *ama* manifestations^[18] All *doshas* are vitiated to great extent along with production of *ama* leads to diseases *visuchika* in which expulsion is in both ways i.e. upward and downward as vomiting and loose stool respectively. The name '*visuchika*' is given after the pricking pain which is produced in it.

Amavisha:^[19] Due to the *virudhashana* (ingestion of unwholesome food), taking food in excessive quantity, *adhyashana* (taking food before complete digestion of food which is previously taken), *ajjernashana* (taking food while indigestion) – *ama* converts into *amavisha*. Whenever *ama* transformed into *amavisha* it will get all the 10 properties that of poison (*visha*). Hence it is difficult to manage *amavisha* due to the contradictory line of treatment for *ama* and *visha*, such as *ushna* and *sheeta chikitsa* respectively.^[20]

Management Guidelines of Ama:^[21]

If the *doshas* are mixed with *ama* and are circulating all over the body may be accumulated in the *dhatu*s and also in the state of not stirring up, they should not be eliminated forcefully in those conditions. Such an attempt will be like taking out the juice from an unripe fruit, which causes damage to the body. Vitiated *doshas* should be expelled from the body in state of *nirama* only. Hence *pachana* of *ama* should be done so that *doshas* can be expelled out. *Pachana* of *ama* takes place after the administration of carminative and digestive drugs. Further

anointing, sudation and followed by purifactory measures in accordance with location and strength of *doshas*.^[22]

REVIEW OF PACHANA

Sharangdhara has explained definitions of different *karmas* from which *pachana* is the one also. *Pachana* is the process which concerns about the digestion of *ama* and not with the *agni deepana* i.e. stimulation to the digestion power (*agni*).^[23] Also there is a one example given in the definition which is *Nagkeshara*. *Dravyas* which are with the capacity to do the *pachana karma* are mainly acting on the *ama* for its digestion. It may or may not enhance the *agni*. These *dravyas* helps in the digestion of *ama* which is already formed which further affects body and its contents causing various diseases. Also further it affects *agni* and causes production of *ama*, and cycle goes on. In this definition *Acharya* clearly indicates that *pachana karma* mainly concerns about digestion of *ama*. *Chakrapani* explained in his commentary *Ayurveda dipika on Charak Samhita* that *pachana* means *amadosha pachana* i.e. digestion of *ama*.^[24] It is the process of metabolic transformation of undigested substances into digested ones. This process of metabolic transformation of *ama* is nothing but *pachana*. *Acharya* explained this one in the context of the *pachana* in the *jwara*.

Criteria of *pachana*:

Charaka and *Vagbhata* have mentioned the conditions in which *pachana* as a treatment measure can be used. *Langhana* indicated when *doshas* are in mild state *langhana – pachana* (both fasting and digestive *dravya*) is indicated when the *doshas* get aggravated moderately. When *doshas* vitiated excessively, expulsion is the only way to root out them from their origin.^[25] *Pachana* is indicated in the diseases with having dominancy of *kapha* and *pitta dosha*, also

diseases with a kind of moderate strength (*madhyambala rogas*).^[26] Conditions in which *pachana* is mentioned as treatment measure are –

- *Madhyambala rogas*
- *Kapha – pitta dominant rogas*
- *Vamana* (vomiting)
- *Atisara* (diarrhoea)
- *Hrudroga* (heart disease)
- *Visuchika* (loose motions and vomiting caused by *ama*)
- *Alasaka* (restricted/obstructed movement of *ama*, retention of *ama*)
- *Jwara* (fever)
- *Vibandha* (constipation)
- *Gaurava* (heaviness of body)
- *Udgara* (eruction)
- *Hrullas* (nausea)
- *Arochaka* (tastelessness)

Wise physician should use *pachana chikitsa* in such conditions which are mentioned above and similar to these ones. All these diseases have similar kind of root cause i.e. *ama*. *Ama* produced in the body further cause various kind of diseases. For the treatment, *pachana* of *ama* is necessary. In such a way *Acharya* explained treatment of all these diseases. Mentioning ‘wise physician’ criteria highlights the importance of *pachana* as treatment of *ama*.^[27] *Charaka* has described the treatment measure of *ama*, when it goes deeper inside the body. If *ama* is in the *pakwashaya* or *leen* state (*anutklisha* – stuck, unprovoked to move outside). In such conditions *sravana* (increased secretions) should be done along with *deepana dravyas*. If *ama* gets absorbed in the body, then it should be treated with *langhana* and *pachana*.

Panchabhautikta of Pachana:^[28]

Chakrapani has clarified that, *vayu* and *agni mahabhutas* are predominantly present in *pachana dravyas*. All *dravyas* are *panchabhautika* i.e. contains five

mahabhutas but some of them are dominant leads to their actions. *Pachana* is *karma* which enhances the digestion. As explained earlier *saman vayu* and *pachaka pitta* coordinately enhances the work of *agni*. Their coordinated action enhances the process of digestion i.e. *pachana*.

Pachana as apatarpana:

1. Part of langhana – The treatment measures are mainly divided into two types i.e. *santarpana* and *apatarpana*. *Santarpana* and *apatarpana* also named as *bruhana* and *langhana* respectively. *Acharya charak* mentioned *pachana* as a part of *apatarpana* in ‘*langhanabruhaniya*’ and ‘*janapadodhivansaniya*’ *adhyayas*.^[29] *Pachana* is the one of the type of *langhana* in *dashavidha langhana*.

Apatrapana is of 3 types^[30] –

1. *Langhana* (for less amount of *doshas*)
2. *Langhana – pachana* (for moderate amount of *doshas*)
3. *Doshavasechana* (for high amount of *doshas*)

Langhana and *pachana* both are indicated in the moderate morbidity. Their coordinated effect is useful for the management of *doshas* similar to sink that is acting sun and wind in a one way and sprinkling dust and ashes on the other way. Due to sun and wind causes drying of the matter just like *langhana* and by the dusting dust and ashes causes absorption of *doshas*. *Vagbhata* considered *langhana* is of two types, as *shodhana* and *shamana*.^[31]

From these types of *langhana* i.e. *shodhana* and *shaman*, *shamana* includes 7 types of aspects which are^[32] –

Shamana is that, which neither expects nor excites the *doshas* but mitigated the increased *doshas* and maintains the normalcy of the *doshas* within the body. It is of 7 types – *pachana* (increased digestion), *deepana* (carmination), *kshuta* (supressing

appetite), *trushna* (suppressing thirst), *vyayam* (exercise), *atapa* (exposing to the sun), *maruta* (exposing to open air).

Vagbhata has elaborated that, for the management of *ama* and *amavikara* (born out of *ama*) *apatarpana* should be used. *Apatarpana* also termed as *langhana*. *Ama vikara* are diseases born out of *ama* which are occurred due to the incomplete or improper digestion of food. Three kinds of *apatarpana* are explained from which appropriate to the *doshas* should be adopted after careful consideration of all aspects.^[33]

Pachana in different vyadhi conditions -

1. *Jwara*^[34]
2. *Arochaka*^[35]
3. *Rasapradoshaja vikara*^[36]
4. *Shotha*^[37, 38]
5. *Arsha*^[39]
6. *Grahani*^[40]
7. *Atisara*^[41]
8. *Anaha*^[42]
9. *Visarpa*^[43]
10. *Madatyaya*^[44]

Pachana in different karma chikitsa -

1. *Anulomana*:

कृत्वा पाकं मलानां यद्
भित्वाबन्धमधो नयेत्।
तच्चानुलोमनं ज्ञेयं यथा
प्रोक्ता हरीतकी।।^[45]
शा.सं.पू.४/४

2. *Grahi*:

दीपनं पाचनं यत्
स्यादुष्णत्वाद्
द्रवशोषकम्।
ग्राहि तच्च यथा शुण्ठीं
जीरकं गजपिप्पली।।
[46] शा.सं.पू.४/१२

3. *Sranana*:

पक्तव्यं यदपक्त्वैव
श्लिष्टं कोष्ठे
मलादिकम्।
नयत्यधः संसनं तद्यथा
स्यात् कृतमालकः॥
[47] शा.सं.पू.४/५

Significance of *pachana* in *panchakarma*:

Poorvakarma mainly includes processes prior to preparation of *panchakarma* (i.e. before the main *panchakarma* process). It mainly includes *snehana* and *swedana*. But before *snehana* and *swedana*, *pachana karma chikitsa* should be given.

Significance of *pachana* in *rasayana*:

Rasayana is mainly concern with retardation of ageing changes and sustaining healthy cognitive and intellectual faculties. Before to start the *rasayana* therapy, it is advised that *poorvakarma* should be done. This includes *deepana*, *pachana*, *snehana*, *swedana*.

DISCUSSION

‘*Amaya*’ alternative name for disease indicates role of *ama* in the production of diseases. It is considered as root cause of diseases. Hence by managing *ama*, leads step towards disease free life. *Pachana* is a one way to achieve it. In all these measures *pachana* is the first one which is mentioned by scholars of *Ayurveda*. It is also known that, the things which are mentioned earlier have more importance than other later ones or firstly mentioning shows the priority. As *pachana* is also mentioned in the treatment measures of *ama*, it is the most important treatment measure in the process of treatment of *ama*.

CONCLUSION

Ama is enough explained in classical texts of *Ayurveda*, which is considered as root cause of diseases. And *pachana* is the best line of treatment for management of *ama*, which is basic treatment to start management of

Ayurveda, such as treatment of diseases, before *Panchakarma* and *Rasayana chikitsa*.

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