



### Concept of *Krimi*, from Vedic and *Ayurvedic* perspective-A Review Gavande Shivani S.<sup>1\*</sup>, Joshi Abhijit H.<sup>2</sup>, Sardeshmukh S.P.<sup>3</sup>, Deshmukh Vineeta V.<sup>4</sup>

1. Ph.D (Scholar) Ayurved-Kayachikitsa, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, Maharashtra, INDIA
2. HOD (Department of Ayurved), Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, Maharashtra, INDIA Contact No. : +91-20-24403080, E-mail: [ayutmv@gmail.com](mailto:ayutmv@gmail.com)
3. Ex. Dean, TMV, Contact No. : +91-20-67346000; E-mail: [ictcpune@gmail.com](mailto:ictcpune@gmail.com)
4. Deputy Director, BSDT's Integrated Cancer Treatment and Research Centre, Wagholi, Pune, Maharashtra, INDIA., Contact No. : +91 9820648058; E-mail: [vineeta\\_deshmukh@yahoo.co.in](mailto:vineeta_deshmukh@yahoo.co.in)

\*Corresponding Author: Contact No. : +91 9420205131, E-mail: [drshivanigavande@gmail.com](mailto:drshivanigavande@gmail.com)

#### Abstract:

Healthy state of body and mind is a key of happiness. In spite of technical and scientific advancement, incidence of various diseases in early age is a global issue. Changing lifestyle, altered food habits, vegetables, animal products grown and produced with artificial fertilizers and chemicals collectively cause vitiation of Doshas and to certain extend formation of *Krimi*. Knowledge of *Krimi* and its description in Vedas and Ayurvedic Samhitas is very unique and different from the concept of worm in modern medical science. *Krimi* is a broad terminology in ancient Indian science which encompasses various types of helminths, microorganisms like bacteria, viruses, fungi, protozoa causing a large variety of diseases. Therefore, diagnosis and treatment of *Krimi* is essential to treat various diseases including Anukta vyadhi like Cancer, CRF. Early days, there was a tradition of periodic deworming. Now a days, poor hygienic conditions, Unctus food, faeco-oral infection, contaminated food and water are the additional causes

for manifestation of *Krimi*. Treatment of *Krimi* as explained in Charak Samhita is Apakarshana (De-worming), Prakruti Vighaat (medicines, food and lifestyle which restricts formation and growth of *Krimi*) and Nidan Parivarjan (avoiding causative factors of manifestation of *Krimi*). This article elaborates concept of *Krimi* from Vedic and Ayurvedic perspective, which is useful for its' clinical application in the treatment of various dreadful diseases like cancer, diabetes, diseases of female genital tracts.

**Key words:** Worm, *Krimi*, Ayurved, Veda, Durnam, Insect

#### Introduction:

*Krimi* is a broad terminology in ancient Indian science which encompasses various types of *helminths*, bacteria, viruses, fungi causing a large variety of diseases. As per WHO, currant prevalence rate of worm infestation in adults in India is 4.92%. This figure is projected to rise at 2030. Worms are proved to be a causative factor of various diseases like *helminthiasis*, liver cirrhosis, aid-peptic disorders (caused due to *H. pylori*), and guinea-worm disease as

per modern medical science. The major pathogenic worms include roundworm, pinworm, whipworm, hook-worm, and dwarf round worm, guinea worm, tapeworm, flat worm, flukes, and liver flukes. As stated by Otto Braun-Falco et al in the chapter 9 of the textbook – Dermatology - “Diseases caused by worms”, there is no organ or organ system in which either worms or their larvae are not capable of establishing themselves. Even in the time before 2500-2000B.C. , when microscopic examination was not available, similar concept of Krimi is elaborated in ancient Indian Vedic literature and Ayurvedic texts in the form of hymns. Remedy for Krimi is explained in second and fifth khandas of Atharvaveda. Collective information about classification of Krimi on the basis of etymology of their various synonyms, sex, colour, gait, activity, site, pathological status and pathogenicity for various diseases as mentioned in ancient Indian texts is described in this article.

#### **Aim:**

To study concept of Krimi explained in Vedic literature and Ayurvedic texts.

#### **Objectives:**

To study classification, pathogenesis and morphology of Krimi in the view of Vedic literature and Ayurvedic texts.

#### **Materials and Methods:**

Literature review about Krimi, their synonyms, classifications and pathogenesis was done from ancient Vedic and Ayurvedic literature like Nirukt, Amarakosh, Vachaspathyam, Shabdakalpadruma, Girvan Laghukosh, Apte Dictionary, Ayurvedeeya Shabdakosh, Rugved, Atharvaved, Charak Samhita, Sushrut Samhita, Ashtanga Hrudaya, Ashtanga Sangraha, and Harit Samhita. Analysis and interpretation of

data collected from the literature is done on the basis of etymology of their various synonyms, classification of Krimi with special reference to sex, colour, gait, activity, site, pathological status and pathogenicity for various diseases.

#### **Analysis and interpretation**

##### **A) Synonyms of Krimi -**

i) Krimi, Krumi<sup>1</sup>, Krami, Keera, Kimidi - In Vedic literature, few words comes across as synonyms of Krimi as Krimi, Krumi, Krami, Keera, Kimidi.

कृ/क्रि+मी -कम् +इन् , अतद्वत्त्वं स 'भ्वमे' सम्प्रसारणञ्च ।

ii) Nilangu (नीलङ्गु)-

Amarakosh describes 2 varieties of Kshudra (क्षुद्र) Krimi, namely Nilangu<sup>2</sup> and Krimi

##### **B) Correlation of Krimi with certain entities**

In Vedic literature, there is a description of certain entities, which can be correlated to the concept of Krimi -

i) राक्षस (Rakshasa) - Krimi are said to be Rakshasa meaning demon which eat raw meat<sup>3</sup>.

क्रिमिः क्रव्ये मेद्यति ।

ii) असूर (Asura) – Meaning of Asura is those who destroy life.

अस् दीप्तौ उरः । अस्यति क्षिपति देवान् उरं विरोधे । सूरविरोधीति । दैत्ये /

Asuras, the evil spirit, does not stay at single place. They are the leaders of attacking microorganisms<sup>4</sup>.

According to Nirukt, Asura have an evil association as they are enemies of God (Dev)<sup>5</sup>. The Asuras, type of Krimi are said to be created out of anus of the creator.

iii) Apsara – Meaning fairy that makes noise.

निरुक्त –अप्सारीणि । अपि वा ।अप्सः  
। (नि.घ.३/७/६)

They don't stay at one place<sup>6</sup>. They can go anywhere in the body. They can be visualized clearly<sup>7</sup>.

iv) Gandharva

Gandharva are type of Krimi, which are in between a phase of birth and death. They are also termed as 'Yatana Sharira' or 'Gupta<sup>8</sup> Prani', meaning producing agony in the body or invisible creature respectively.

v) Yatudhaan – Yatudhaan is a synonym of Krimi meaning one which causes pain. These are Evil spirit or Demons<sup>9</sup>.

vi) Jantu –

The word Jantu<sup>10</sup> is used for Krimi in Kathopanishad and Mandukopanishad.

vii) Sarpa - In Chhandogyopanishad, Bhootvidya be an assumption of Krimi Vidnyan. Saptapath Brahman, Maitreya Samhita, Taittareey Upanishad recognize the description of Krimi as 'Sarpa'.

Worms are called serpents<sup>11</sup> for its serpentine activity.

**C) Classification and Nomenclature of Krimi—**

Krimi are classified and named according to morphology, movement, site, pathological aspect.

I. On the basis of morphology (includes particular form, shape, structure, colour)

a. Bahya krimi

i) Leeksha<sup>12</sup> - Eggs of louse – Those who are tiny and moving.

ii) Yuka – Louse – Those who are tiny, several legs and thus moving.

iii) Binduki – A type of Krimi, whose appearance is similar to Yava (Barley). It is a poisonous insect, growing in hot atmosphere and causes Pitta dominant diseases.

(Ref. - Sushrut Samhita). In another text, Binduki is described as rounded worm, which is grown in urine<sup>13</sup>.

iv) Charmayukika, Krishna, Shweta – Krimi which have skin like leather are termed as Charmayukika. Those having black colour are termed as Krishna and white colour are named as Shweta.

b) Abhyantar Krimi

Kikwisha,  
Gandupad, Kapinjala, Ayawah, Pippi  
lika, Darbhakusuma, Leliha, Snayuka  
, Mahapushpa,  
Mahagud, , Praloon, Chipit, ,  
Makeruk, Chipya, , Dwimukha,  
Pruthumunda, Dhanyankurnibha,  
Suchimukha, Kinchuk sannibha,  
Anwah, Sukshma, Udumbara

i) किकिशः<sup>14</sup> – A kind of worm (said to be injurious to hair, nail and teeth)(केशाद, नखाद)

ii) गण्डूपद<sup>15</sup> – गण्डूपदस्य रूपाणि पिच्छिलानि मृदुनि च। इति माधवकर रोगविनिश्चये । अशोधिकारे ।

iii) कपिञ्जल –

Because of its speed (जलते) like (इव), a monkey (कपिः)

iv) अयवः<sup>16</sup> –

अल्पो यवस्तु तुल्यो वा । पूरीषजे कृमीभेदे..

c) Morphology of Bahya and Abhyantar Krimi -

In Mahabharata, Krimi are described as Adrushya (invisible) and Sukshma<sup>17</sup> (Sharp penetrating).

सूक्ष्मः- सौक्ष्म्ययुक्त गुणविशेषः।  
 स्रोतोनुसरणशीलः।आग्नेयद्रव्यस्य गुणेष्वेकः  
 /सु.सू.४१/३  
 सूक्ष्ममार्गानुप्रदेशी।(डल्हण टीका सु.क.२/१९-  
 २०)

## II. On the basis of site or location

- लोमद्विप (Lomadwipa) – Type of Krimi which reside in body hairs i.e. Loma
- ककेरुकः –A worm in the
- III. On the basis of movement
- Bahya Krimi – classified on the basis of movement as Yuka and Plavangika

प्लवङ्गिका—प्लवङ्गः (पुं) प्लवेन द्रुतगत्या गच्छतीति ।

Abhyantar Krimi classified on the basis of movement as -

- Viyava (वियव)– A type of Krimi which is moving constantly वियति चाकाशे चरतीति ।
- Parisarpaja (परिसर्पज) A type of Krimi which is wondering in the periphery.  
परितो जलादिनां वेष्टने, समन्तात् गमने च।
- Charu (चारु) – A type of Krimi which affects steadiness of mind  
चारु-(पु.) चरति चित्ते इति।

## IV. On the basis of pathological status –

- Bahya Krimi – Matkuna  
मत्कुण<sup>18</sup> –मत्कुण (पुं) माद्यतीति ।  
मद्+किप्+कुणाति इति कुण् +क  
।ततः । मचासौ कुणश्चेति । कीट  
विशेषः । कारपोका इति भाषा ।
- Abhyantar Krimi –  
Charakacharya described  
Abhyantar Krimi on the basis of  
their action on producing

diseases at various sites like Antrad, Udarad, Udaraveshta, Hridayad, Darun, Sashul, Lelih, Keshad, Lomad, Sausurada, Nakhad, Dantad, Kikkistha, and Kushthaja.

\* चिपीट<sup>19</sup> –(पुं ) चयतीति ।  
 चि+बाहुलकात् पिट् च स कित्।  
 भक्ष्यद्रव्यविशेषः। चिपीटः  
 चिपीटाकारः। इति तट्टीका।

## V. On the basis of etymological meaning –

- Abhyantar Krimi  
Churu (चुरु), Sugandhak (सुगन्धिक),  
Kakeruk (ककेरुक), Sausurada  
(सौसुराद), Kipyra (किप्य),  
Jantumatahar (जन्तुमातरः) are the  
names of Krimi according to  
etymology.

\* ककेरुकः –A worm in the

\* किण्वः –A drug or seed/  
 sporangium used to cause  
 fermentation in manufacturing spirit

## VI. On the basis of shape –

- Vishwarupa (विश्वरूप)<sup>20</sup> - having  
different shapes and sizes (Atharva  
Veda 7)

स सर्वजानां स च विश्वरूपः ।  
 प्रसीदतामनिरुक्तात्मशक्तिः । विश्वे रेता  
 शक्तिर्यस्य । ब्रह्मा । इति हेमचन्द्रः

- Kanvah (कण्वः) –Very small in size  
and clever in nature
- Kshullakah (क्षुल्लकः)– Very small  
in size and reside in cluster  
(Atharva Veda 20)
- Keshah (केशः)– Having hair like  
structure on the body (may be  
flagellated or ciliated)

- e. Chaturaksham (चतुरक्षम्) – having four eyes with extraordinary action or able to move in all directions spontaneously (Atharv Veda 7)
- f. Triakuda (त्रिकुडा)– Having 3 haunches (Atharv Veda 18)
- g. Trishirashi (त्रिशिरसि)– having three heads (may be virupah(विरूपः), disfigured (Atharv Veda 18)

#### VII. On the basis of location:

- a. On mountain – Living on mountain or high altitude (Atharva Veda 5)
- b. In forests – Living in the forests (Atharva Veda 5)
- c. Inside the Aushadhi - medicines (Atharva Veda 5)
- d. On the body of cattle – living on cattle (Atharva Veda 5)
- e. In water – Living in water (Atharva Veda 5)
- f. Inside the soil – living inside the soil (Atharva Veda 5)
- g. Inside the human body—Avantrayam(आवन्रयम्) (residing in the intestines - Atharva Veda 4); Shirshantyam(शीर्षान्रयम्) (residing in head – Atharva Veda 4); Parshteyam (पार्श्वेयम्)(residing in ribs – Atharva Veda 4)

#### VIII. On the basis of colour:

- a. Arjunah (अर्जुनः)—Whitish but not white
- b. Babhruh (बभ्रुः)— Reddish brown (Tamra varna)
- c. Babhrukarna (बभ्रुकर्णः)— Reddish brown ears
- d. Rohitah (रोहितः) – Colour of blood

- e. Sarangah (सारंगः)— Different colors

#### IX. On the basis of Gait (manner of walking):

- a. Awaskavah (अवक्कः)— Performs downward movement
- b. Vyadhawah (विध्वः)— performs retreat movement
- c. Yewashesha (यवाशेषः)— Performs rapid movement

#### X. On the basis of sound:

- a. Kashakashah (कश्कशः)— produces rough sound
- b. Nawnimah (नान्निमहः)— produces low pitch sound

#### XI. On the basis of nature:

- a. Algandunah (अल्गण्डुनः) – Destroys blood and flesh
- b. Ajatkah (अजक्तः) – Causes shivering
- c. Ashrikpawah (असृक्पवः)— Site is blood and drinks blood
- d. Kravyad (क्रव्यादः)— Eats raw flesh
- e. Manohanan (मनोहननः) – Causes mental disturbances

#### XII. On the basis of sex:

Two types of worms are mentioned in Atharvaveda, male and female.

#### XIII. On the basis of pathogenicity:

- a. Sunama<sup>21</sup> :

This word is used for those worms who does not cause any disease or any harm to body e.g. lactobacillus in the intestine.

These organisms are helpful to the body. It helps to maintain functions of various systems of the body like lacto-bacilli.



b *Durnam* (दुर्नाम):

This word denotes harmful worms<sup>22</sup> and responsible for many diseases like Kshaya Roga, Yoni Vikara.

दुर्णामा योनिमाशये / ऋ.सं. १०/१६२/२

Such types of Krimi resides in womb (Yoni)<sup>23</sup>, eats flesh. It is serpentine and causes various diseases.

In Rugved, habitat of Durnam is described as Yoni (womb). It eats the flesh and causes diseases in the womb. It has capacity to move anywhere in body and causes disaster in the form of disease.

**Prevention and treatment of Krimi as explained in Vedas**

Prevention and treatment of Krimi is explained in Vedas. Various Mantras recommending worship of Maruta, Megha, Agni, Surya, Vidyut and Jala are described in Vedas with the aim of destroying Krimi. The principle behind this enchanting may be the following-

- Maruta (Wind) –Worship of wind to prevent microbes in the atmosphere which get scattered with blow of wind.
- Megha (Clouds) – Worship of Megha for rain to clear the environment and make it free from most of the microorganisms as they are washed away with showers.

c) Agni (Fire) – Fire is thought to be the most important source for disinfection from the ancient time.

d) Sheela (Stone) – Stones are used to destroy Krimi by crushing them.

e) Surya (Sun) – Sunrays with presence of ultraviolet rays (as per modern science) are potent enough to kill microbes in the atmosphere.

**Ayurvedic concept of Krimi**

Charakacharya has explained twenty types of Krimi<sup>24</sup> which can be grouped into four on the basis of their source. *Malaja* born of external excreta, *Purishaja* born of feces, *Shleshmaj* born of phlegm and *Shonitaj* born in blood.

Sushrutacharya<sup>25</sup> has described in-depth etiology, pathology and treatment of Krimi in Uttarsthaan 5<sup>th</sup> chapter. Twenty types of Krimi are classified with various categories as i) Drishta (दृष्ट) (visible) and Adrushta (अदृष्ट) (non-visible) ii) Purishaja (arose from feces), Shleshmaja (arose from Kapha dosha-phlegm) and Raktaja (रक्तज) (Arose from Rakta-blood) Krimi. Ashtang Sangraha and Ashtang Hrudaya Samhita explained causative factors and pathogenesis of Krimi in Nidansthana and its treatment in Chikitsasthan.

**Table 1: Types of Kaphaja Krimi according to Samhitas (Brihatrayee) in Ayurveda**

Sr. No.	CHARAK	SUSHRUT	VAGBHAT
1	ANTRAD (अन्त्राद)	MAHAPUSHPA (महापुष्प)	ANTRAD (अन्त्राद)
2	UDARAD (उदराद)	CHIPIT (चिपिट)	UDARAWESHTA (उदरावेष्ट)
2	HRIDAYAD (हृदयाद)	PRALON (प्रलून)	HRIDAYAD (हृदयाद)
4	CHURU (चुरु)	PIPPILIKA (पिप्पिलिका)	CHURU (चुरु)
5	MAHAGUD (महागुद)	DARUN (दारुण)	MAHAKUHA (महाकुह)
6	SOUGANDHIK (सौगन्धिक)	--	SOUGANDH (सौगन्ध)
7	DARBHAKUSUM (दर्भकुसुम)	DARBHAPUSHPA (दर्भपुष्प)	DARBHAKUSUM (दर्भकुसुम)

**Table 2: Types of Purishaja Krimi according to Samhitas (Brihatrayee) in Ayurveda**

Sr. No.	CHARAK	VAGBHAT	SUSHRUT	HAREET
1	KAKERUK (ककेरुक)	KAKERUK (ककेरुक)	AWA (अयक)	PRUTHUMUND (पृथुमुण्ड)
2	MAKERUK (मकेरुक)	MAKERUK (मकेरुक)	VIJYA (वियक)	DHANYANKURNIBHA (धान्यांकुरनिभ)
3	SOUSURAD (सौसुराद)	SOUSURAD (सौसुराद)	KIPYA (किप्य)	SUCHIMUKHA (सूचिमुख)
4	SASHOOL (सशूल)	SASHOOL (सशूल)	CHIPYA (चिप्य)	--
5	LALIH (लेलिह)	LALIH (लेलिह)	GANDUPAD (गण्डूपद)	KINCHUKSANNIBHA (किंचुकसन्निभ)
6	==	==	CHURU (चुरु)	ANAWAH (अण्वः)
7	==	==	DWIMUKH (द्विमुख)	SOOKSHMAH (सूक्ष्मः)

**Table 3: Types of Raktaj Krimi according to Samhitas (Brihatrayee) in Ayurveda**

Sr.No.	CHARAK	SUSHRUT	VAGBHAT
1	KESHAD (केशाद)	KESHAD (केशाद)	KESHAD (केशाद)
2	LOMAD (लोमाद)	ROMAD (रोमाद)	LOMAD (लोमाद)
3	LOMADWIP (लोमद्विप)	NAKHAD (नखाद)	LOMAVIDHWANSA (लोमविध्वंस)
4	SAURASA (सौरस)	DANTAD (दन्ताद)	SAURASA (सौरस)
5	UDUMBERA (उदुम्बर)	KIKKISHA (किक्कीश)	UDUMBERA (उदुम्बर)
6	JATUMATRA (जातुमात्र)	KUSHTHAJA (कुष्ठज)	MATRAHA (मातरः)
7	==	PARISARPAJA (परिसर्पज)	==

Madhav Nidan has classified Krimi as Bahya and Abhyatar Krimi. Abhyantar Krimi are again classified as Purishaja (fecal origin), Shleshmaj (phlegmic origin), Raktaj (haemic origin) Krimi (Madhav Nidan Adhyaya 16/1). Sharagdhara Samhita<sup>26</sup> has explained 20 types of Krimi in Pratham Khand, seventh

chapter. References of Snayuka Krimi (Guinea worm) and Vran Krimi are first seen in this Sharagdhara Samhita.

Valuable aspect of treatment with Rasoushadhi and Kashthoushadhi is well described for Krimi chikitsa in twentieth chapter of Ras Ratna Samuchchaya (R.R.S.21/223, pp.129).

Bhiashajya Ratnavali (Krumyadhikar pp.316-319) explained Rasa, Gandhak, Kashthoushadhi formulations and Pathya – Apathya in the management of Krimi.

#### **Conclusion –**

Concept of Krimi is explained broadly in ancient Indian literature and Ayurvedic texts, in terms of their etymology, synonyms, classification, diseases caused due to it and their treatment. As described regarding worms in modern medical science, Krimi also manifest in any part of the body and causes multiple disorders. Krimi mainly grow in Kapha dominant sites and rapidly multiply in Kleda (grossly vitiated Kapha dosha) and Aam (undigested food). They also manifest and grow in Rakta dhatu, abode of Rakta dhatu, Pakwashaya, Purisha, Mutra and Yoni. Surprisingly, Krimi affecting mind are also explained in Sanskrit Encyclopedia, Shabdakalpadruma as Charu and Manohanan. Such a variety of Krimi are responsible for a range of diseases from helminthiasis, liver cirrhosis, acid-peptic disorders, skin diseases to various types of cancers like GI malignancies, gynecological cancers, leukemia, Hodgkin's and Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. Treatment of Krimi is explained in Charak Samhita as Apakarshana (Deworming), Prakruti Vighaat (medicines, food and lifestyle which restricts formation and growth of Krimi) and Nidan Parivarjan (avoiding causative factors of manifestation of Krimi). Moreover, chanting of special hymns for worship of Maruta, Megha, Agni, Surya, Vidyut and Jala is also explained as an effective management of Krimi in Vedas, which needs special attention in today's raining incidences of epidemic diseases.

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