



Conceptual Study of Anukta Vyadhi – Oral Cavity Cancer

with special reference to Mukhagata Roga

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ABSTRACT:

Cancer is known as one of the most dreaded diseases globally as well as in India. Cancer as a single disease is not mentioned in any of the Ayurveda classical literature, but diseases having similar conditions like Dushta Vrana, Dushta Granthi, Dushta Arbuda, Dushta Nadivrana etc. have been described in Ayurveda classical texts. Mukhagata Roga have been described in Sushruta Samhita, Charak Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, Yoga Ratnakar and Madhava Nidan. To understand the Nidan of oral cavity cancers according to Ayurveda, we have to understand the Hetu, Dosha Dushti and Samprapti causing the specific Mukhagata Roga. The different 'Vyadhi Roopa' or 'Vyadhi Lakshana' depends on the predominance of the Vikruta Dosha. In 'Mukha Pradesh' (Oral cavity) too, various diseases and symptoms are seen due to vitiated Doshas which resemble to Arbuda and can be correlated to oral cavity cancers. For the study of oral cavity cancers with an Ayurvedic perspective, available references from modern medicine like texts, articles, journals as well as

Ayurveda literature viz. Bruhat Trayi, Madhav Nidan, Yoga Ratnakar were collected and analyzed in a systematic manner.

KEYWORDS: Oral cavity cancer, Mukharoga, Anukta Vyadhi, Shotha.

Introduction:

Cancer has become a very commonly heard term now a days. It is a dreaded disease for which a definite treatment and cure is yet to be found. Globally a lot of research works from various streams of medicine are being carried out but it's still remains as a challenge to all.

World Health Organization in its latest survey has mentioned cancer as the second leading cause of death globally and has estimated 9.6 million deaths worldwide due to cancer in the year 2018 itself. One out of six deaths globally is due to cancer.

Oral cavity cancer is one of the top 10 types of cancers found presently worldwide. The oral cavity constitutes anatomically from the upper and lower

lips, upper and lower gingiva (gums), tongue, buccal mucosa and the retromolar trigone. The most common type of cancer of oral cavity is cancer of buccal mucosa followed by cancer of tongue.

Mukha Roga :

Shalakya Tantra is one of the eight branches of Ayurveda which particularly deals with the diseases occurring in head, neck, eyes, ear and oral cavity. Mukha Roga is described in ancient Ayurvedic texts like Sushrut Samhita, Charak Samhita, Astanga Sangraha, Yoga Ratnakar, Madhav Nidan, etc.

Seven parts of Mukha as explained in Sushrut Samhita and Yogaratnakar :

Mukha (Oral Cavity) consists of 7 different parts¹-

1. Oshtha (Lips)
2. Dantmoola (Gums)
3. Danta (Teeth)
4. Jivha (Tongue)
5. Talu (Palate)
6. Gala (Throat)
7. Mukhadi (All of the above mentioned parts as a whole).

Aetiological factors (Nidan) of Mukhagata Roga :

The etiological factors² taken into consideration while describing Mukhagata

Roga in ancient literature mainly constitutes of dietary factors like fish, buffalo meat, pork which are heavy to digest; soup of black gram, curds, milk and milk products, vinegar, sugarcane juice and jaggery syrup consumed in excessive proportion can cause diseases of Oral cavity. Also, consumption of excessive hot and spicy food items can lead to diseases of oral cavity. Sleeping regularly in prone position (Avakchhaya), improper brushing habits and oral hygiene, not following procedures like Dhoomapana (inhaling medicated fumes), Vamana (emesis), Gandusha (gargling with medicated decoctions) and Raktamokshana (blood-letting) whenever required can also lead to diseases of oral cavity.

Mukharoga Samprapti :

Improper dietary habit and improper behavioral habit leads to vitiation of Tridosha with the dominance of Kapha Dosha to develop oral cavity diseases³.

Types of Mukha Roga :

There are various differences of opinion regarding the Samkya Samprapti or number of types of Mukha Roga⁴. As per Sushrut Samhita, there are sixty five types of Mukha Roga. The details are given the following table.

Table 1: Types of Mukhagata Roga

Site	Sushrut Samhita	Astanga Hridaya	Charak Samhita	Yoga Ratnakar	Madhav Nidan
Oshtha	08	11	-	08	08
Dantmoola	15	13	-	16	15
Dant	08	10	-	08	08
Jivha	05	06	-	05	05
Talu	09	08	-	09	09
Kanta	17	18	-	18	17
Sarvamukha	03	08	-	03	03
Ganda	-	01	-	-	-
Total	65	75	64	67	65

Symptoms of Mukha Roga (Samanya Lakshanas) :

The general symptoms⁵ of Mukha Roga have been mentioned in the Vedana Adhaya of Kashyapa Samhita in context with pediatric group. These symptoms can also be co-related to other age groups. These symptoms are -

1. Excessive salivation
2. Anorexia
3. Regurgitation
4. Tachypnoea
5. Loss of appetite
6. Generalized weakness

Oral cavity cancers, which are in the category of Anukta Vyadhi, should be understood from Ayurvedic perspective by applying Siddhanta i.e. Ayurvedic principles mentioned in Samhita.

Ayurvedic principles used to understand Anukta Vyadhi with special reference to Oral Cavity Cancers:

a. Atidesha and Uhya Tantrayukti :

Acharya Chakrapani has mentioned “Atidesha Tantrayukti” and “Uhya Tantrayukti” which can help us to understand the term ‘Cancer’ from an Ayurvedic perspective.

Atidesha Tantrayukti⁶ means Sutra or principle explained in specific context and at the same time applicable to another context.

Uhyam Tantrayukti⁷ basically means logical interpretation about a scientific knowledge as stated in our ancient classical texts for better understanding.

In our Ayurvedic texts, there are guidelines or Sutras regarding specific diseases, their etio-pathogenesis, signs and symptoms and most importantly the management or treatment. A Vaidya can logically apply these principles and correlate them to Anukta Vyadhi like cancer, AIDS, etc. which are not mentioned in the classics.

b. Indistinguishable relationship between Tridosha and Vyadhi :

In the chapter 19 of Sutrasthana namely Astodareeya Adhyaya which mainly deals with the scientific classification of disease, Acharya Charaka describes “Tridosha” viz. “Vata”, “Pitta” and “Kapha” as the main cause for manifestation of a disease by giving an example of a bird. He states that a bird flies every day, but does not leave its shadow; similarly Doshas are always pivotal in causation of diseases⁸.

c. Guidelines to understand Anukta Vyadhi :

Various diseases have been described on the basis of etiology, symptoms, color, location, etc. Acharya Charaka in the chapter 18, Trishoteeya Adhyaya of Sutrasthana has clearly mentioned that a physician should not bother too much to understand name of the disease. The reason is that same vitiated dosha causes various disorders according to variation in etiology and location. Hence one should have complete knowledge about the Vikara Prakruti - state of vitiated Dosha, Dhatu, Mala causing disease; Adhisthanantarani - site of vitiated Dosha and Samutthanavishesha - cause of vitiation of Dosha. The thorough knowledge of these three important aspects helps in precise diagnosis and treatment^{9,10}.

d. Similar diseases to cancer as mentioned in Ayurvedic texts

Cancer is not mentioned in Ayurvedic Samhitas as a single disease. Various diseases mentioned in Ayurvedic texts like Dushta Vrana, Dushta Granthi, Dushta Arbuda, Dushta Vrana Shotha, Dushta Nadivrana, Dushta Visarpa show similarity with cancer.

Malignant tumors are similar to diseases like :

1. Dushta Shotha - (Malignant inflammation / oedema)
2. Dushta Vrana - (Malignant Wounds / Ulcers)
3. Dushta Granthi - (Malignant Nodes)
4. Dushta Arbuda - (Malignant Tumours)
5. Dushta Visarpa - (Malignant Spreading Cellulitis)
6. Dushta Nadivrana - (Malignant Fistula / Sinus)
7. Dushta Mansapradoshaja Vikara - (Malignant Diseases caused due to vitiation of Mansa dhatu)

The 'Dosha-Dushti' which may be 'Nija' (of internal epidemiology) or 'Agantu' (from external factors), creates an imbalance and accumulates at the sites of 'Kha Vaigunya' and becomes responsible for the disease status. The severity of the Hetus, Dosha-Dushti affects the severity of the disease.

e. Shotha, an underlying pathology for formation, manifestation and growth of cancer

- f. Charkacharya describes in detail about Shotha in his "Trishothiya Adhyaya". Shotha is seen in various forms and

parts of the body viz. Adhimansa, Arbuda, etc. Basically Granthi, Arbuda, Vidradhi, Visarpa, Nadivrana and Mansapradoshaja Vikara are various forms of Shotha (oedema), because Utsedha (growth / swelling) is the common and predominant symptom in them¹¹.

Sushrutacharya defines "Shotha" as any vitiation of the doshas causing an accumulation which may have a definite or irregular form occurring at skin or flesh¹².

It can occur locally (Ekanga) in the body or generally (Sarvanga). In case of Mukha Roga, 'Galarbuda', 'Kapharbuda', 'Talu-arbuda', etc; are examples of Ekanga Shotha whereas 'Sarvasara' where inflammation and ulceration of mouth is seen is an example of Sarvanga Shotha.

In normal individual, the Tridoshas are in harmony and constitute the different parts of the body in different proportions. Due to various etiological factors, the Doshas get vitiated and affect the Dhatus. In 'Mukha Pradesh' (oral cavity) too, various diseases and symptoms are seen due to vitiated Doshas which can be correlated to the signs and symptoms of oral cavity cancers and the side-effects of radiation and chemotherapy in these patients.

g. Stages of cancer according to 'Gati' and 'Swaroopa' of 'Dushta Dhatu' :

In 'Gata Vata', 'Vata' being located at a particular site gets vitiated and later causes specific symptoms pertaining to that particular Sthana¹³. The concept states invasion and manifestation of particular disease in successive Dhatus (deeper and deeper tissues) namely Rasa, Rakta,

Mansa, Meda, Asthi, Majja and Shukra, as disease progresses. In case of oral cavity cancers, metastasis in lymph nodes and in neck region, even upto the level IV nodes and metastasis in lungs are common and are considered as Dhatugata Awastha.

Sushrutacharya has also explained a stage Mansa Dhatu Paka meaning advance stage

of Mansa Arbuda, where Mansa Dhatu gets necrosed causing severe pain¹⁴.

Dhatugata Awastha in Dushta Arbuda i.e. malignant lesions can be co-related with metastasis, whereas Dhatu Paka Awastha can be co-related with advance necrotic stage of cancer.

h. Correlation of Mukha Roga with oral cavity cancer and its symptoms :

Table 2 : Correlation of Mukhagata Roga with oral cavity cancer and its symptoms:

Sr. No.	Name of the Mukha Roga	Site	Correlation with	Vitiated Dosha	Signs and Symptoms
1.	Kaphaj Jivha Kantaka	Jivha tongue	Chronic glossitis, Leucoplakia	Kapha	Jivha becomes heavy, thick, wide and is scattered with thorny buds resembling Shalmali Katak and is associated with pain, discomfort and itching sensation.
2.	Galarbuda	Gala Throat	Tumour in throat region in the vicinity of tongue	Tridosha	Hard, immobile, painless, non-suppurative, reddish tumour in the throat in the vicinity of tongue
3.	Kapharbuda	Kapola (Buccal Mucosa)	Cancer of Buccal Mucosa	Tridosha, Kapha dominance	Blackish-white color tumour in the oral cavity specifically in the internal surface of Kapola i.e. cheeks.
4.	Sarvasara Mukha Roga	Oral cavity	Pre-malignant and malignant stage.	Tridosha, Pitta dominance	Inflammation or ulceration in the oral cavity mainly seen in all types of oral cavity cancers
5.	Puti Mukhta	Oral cavity	Halotosis or oral unhygienic condition	Tridosha + Rakta	Foul smell comes from the mouth
6.	Gala Graha	Kantha (Oropharynx region)	Tumour in throat region	Tridosha, Kapha dominance	Immobile swelling inside the throat region associated with fever, anorexia and

Sr. No.	Name of the Mukha Roga	Site	Correlation with	Vitiated Dosha	Signs and Symptoms
					excessive salivation
7.	Talu Arbuda	Talu (Palate)	Carcinoma of Palate	Tridosha + Rakta	Red colored tumour resembling Padma Karnika
8.	Talu Shosha	Talu (Palate)	Atrophy of Palate	Tridosha with Vata and Pitta dominance	Dryness in mouth, Dyspnoea
9.	Talu Paka	Talu (Palate)	Ulceration of Palate	Tridosha with Pitta dominance	Formation of ulcer in the palate
10.	Alasa	Jivha (Tongue)	Sublingual abscess or carcinoma	Tridosha with Kapha and Rakta dominance	Progressive swelling underneath tongue causing immobilization and suppuration.
11.	Danta Vidradhi	Dant-moola (Alveolus)	Alveolar abscess	Tridosha with Rakta dominance	Swelling of gums associated with pain and edema, after suppuration discharges blood stained pus.
12.	Rakta Arbuda	Oshtha (Lip)	Swelling at lip	Tridosha with Rakta	Formation of reddish colored swelling which resembles Kharjura fruit
13.	Hanu Graha	Hanu (Jaw)	Trismus	Tridosha with Vata dominance	In this condition there is difficulty in opening of mouth and disability in movement of jaw

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