



Review Article

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CONCEPT OF AMA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CLINICAL EVALUATION AND THERAPEUTIC VIEW ON AMAVATA (RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS)

Agarwal Vivek¹, Dubey Mukesh², Naresh Kumar^{3*}

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Rog Nidan, M.S.M. Institute of Ayurveda, B.P.S. Mahila Vishwavidyalaya Khanpur kalan, Dist. Sonipat, Haryana, India

²Assistant Professor, Department of Agad Tantra, M.S.M. Institute of Ayurveda, B.P.S. Mahila Vishwavidyalaya Khanpur kalan, Dist. Sonipat, Haryana, India

³Assistant Professor, Department of Dravyaguna, M.S.M. Institute of Ayurveda, B.P.S. Mahila Vishwavidyalaya, Khanpur kalan, Dist. Sonipat, Haryana, India

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*Corresponding author

E-mail: nareshbhargav73@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Today is the era of modernization and fast life, every body is busy and living stressful life. Changing of lifestyle of modern human being has created several disharmonies in his biological system. Due to weakness in Agni, adhya rasa becomes immature and improperly metabolized substance called Ama, which manifests in amasaya (stomach). Ama which is manifested due to derangement of Agni gets lodged in kapha-sthanas with the help of vitiated vyan vayu producing stiffness, swelling, tenderness, in the joint, making the person lame. Derangement of kapha dosha especially Shleshaka kapha in Amavata produces joint pain and swelling with tenderness which can be correlated with Rheumatoid Arthritis. The principles of management of Amavata are langana (fasting), swedna, drugs having tikta, katu rasa, deepana, virechan, snehapan, kshar basti which showed the therapeutic approach of ama related disorders.

KEY WORDS: Ama, Agni, Amavata, Rheumatoid arthritis.

INTRODUCTION

In 21st Century, change in dietary habits and emotional stress leads to hypo secretion of digestive juice (due to agnimandhya) and diminished gastro intestinal motility. In ayurveda, metabolic disorders or gastrointestinal disorders have been broadly described (ajirna, aruchi, amalpitt, udara roga, anaha, alasaka). Most of diseases of GIT tract occurs due to abnormal functioning of digestive and tissue fire (Agni). Agni either kayagni or jatharagni, dhatwagni or bhutagni plays a major role in digestion of food. Transformation of food substance in the body tissue is due to Agni. Agni is responsible for strength, health, longevity, vital breath and it determines the quality of food to be consumed.

The food, which is factor that nourishes deha dhatus, ojas and contributes to bala, varna etc. itself depends, for performance of its function on agni, as rasadi dhatus cannot be formed from a food which has not been digested.

If Agni is improperly processed during digestion and metabolism as a result undigested food substance evolves in the form of ama. As ama initiate certain reactions inside the body and manifests visuchika and alasaka. If it remain inside the gastrointestinal tract for longer duration, get converted to suktabhava as result amavisa. When ama combines with dosha and dushya it is called Sama state which is responsible for genesis of diseases. Ama Formation of Ama and its sequel showed as under-

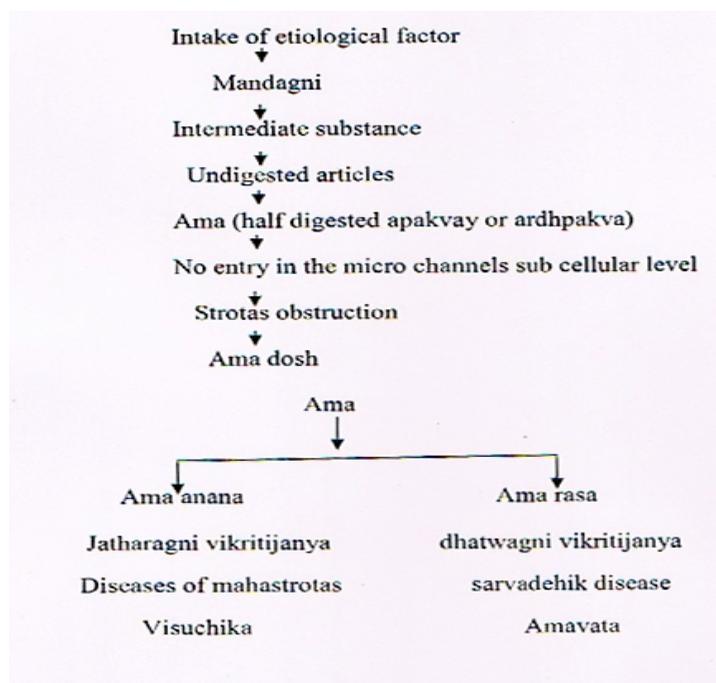
produces symptoms like pain and stiffness in the body. Direct influence of ama observed in Amavata, vatarakta and grahani etc.

Amavata is mostly the disease of Madhyama rogmarga. Asthi and Sandhi is chief site of the presentation of cardinal symptoms like sandhishoola, sandhigraha, sandhishotha etc¹. Though all the doshas take part in the causation of the disease, yet as clear from the term 'Amavata', ama and vitiated vata play the dominant role in the pathogenesis of disease. In modern medical science, clinical features of rheumatoid arthritis like pain, swelling, stiffness, fever redness, general debility are almost identical to the Amavata.

Conceptual Study of Ama with its formation

Abnormal dosha present in grahani manifest improperly digested food as result salivation, constipation, pain burning sensation, anorexia and heaviness manifest as symptoms of 'Ama'.

Consumption of food substance in excess along without following rules and regulations of dietetic described under astavidha ahara visesayatana leads to formation of Ama. Intake of food in improper time, which are too heavy, unctuous, cold, dry, despicable, constipative, irritant, unclear and naturally contradictory leads to development of Ama. Easily food when person afflicted, grief, indigestion, anxiety and fear.²⁻⁵



Biophysical properties of Ama

- Liquid
- Heavy
- Sticky in nature
- Foul smell
- Attain different colors, viscid, increased turbidity.
- Increased sourness

Prodromal features of Ama

- Stiffness
- Anorexia
- Excessive sleep
- Excessive pallor
- Dullness
- Continuous aversion from play, food, sleep, wet nurse has appearance of bathed when unbathed and vice-versa.

General symptoms of Ama

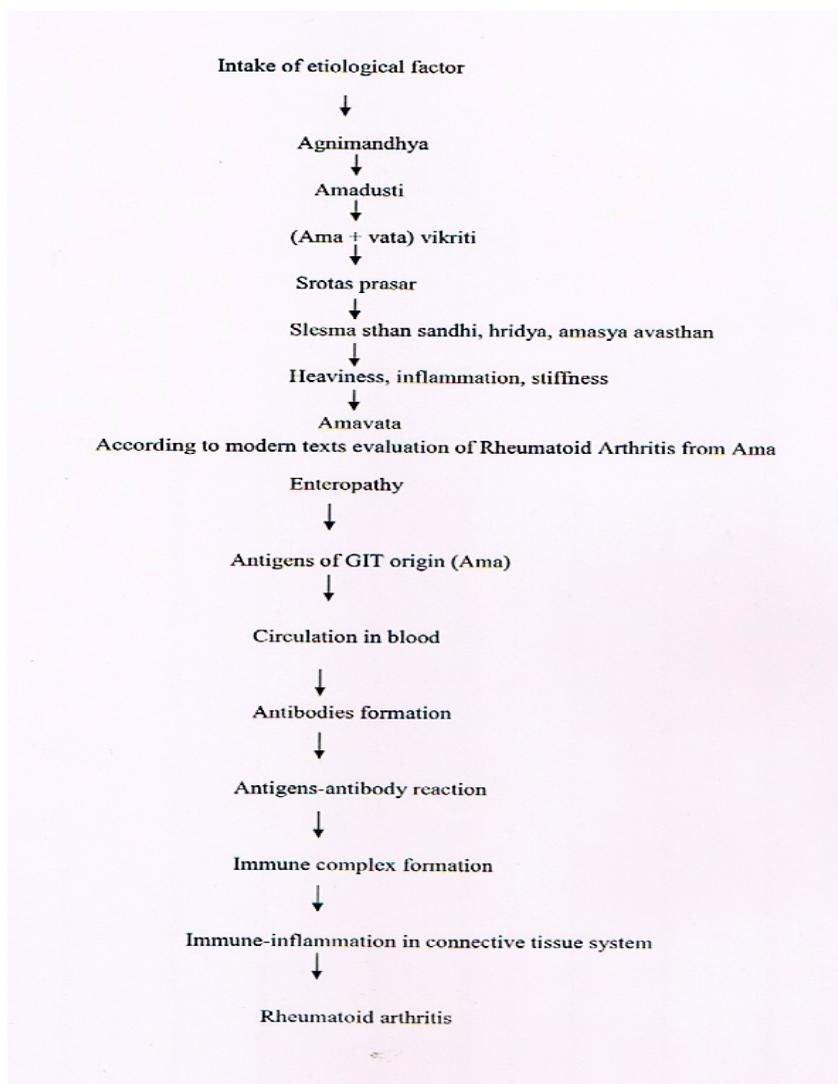
- Obstruction in Srotas
- Diminution of strength
- Heaviness
- Indigestion
- Obstruction for urine and stool
- Excessive secretion from oral cavity
- Lack of desire of food
- Disturbance in movement of vata⁷

Ama's clinical evaluated disease Amavata (Rheumatoid Arthritis)

Ama is responsible for manifestation of almost all the diseases like apaka, alaska, amavata, anaha in which Amavata is most common chronic joint disease which is spreading now-a-days and correlated with rheumatoid arthritis. In Amavata as ama gets accumulated in the joints leads to restriction in movement of joint, pain, tenderness, swelling in affected site or joint. Ama is major factor for production of Amavata.

Due to ingestion of the etiological factors like disagreement dietetics and drinks, hindered activities or behavior, slowness or inactivity in the digestive mechanism. Unchangeable or sedentary habits, consumption of sticky food followed by exercise etc. disturbs the normal function of Agni. As a result, food not properly digested, yields immature rasa in the amasaya and this undergoes fermentation and putrefaction because of its retention for longer duration, manifests 'Ama'. Then it absorbed in the system and is taken up by the aggravated and vitiated vayu specially to the kaphasthanas mainly amasaya, Sandhi, uras, kantha etc. and the same undergoes in the above mentioned sites and enters the Dhamani by circulation with the help of vata.

Here it amalgamates with the existing doshas and vitiated further in excess and produces distress in the body channels due to its excessive unctuous nature and some other different qualities of amarasa. This leads to general weakness and heaviness in the precordial region and this Amarasa is responsible for the genesis of symptom complex, that's why this disease is considered challenging and difficult to treat. So, both Ama and Vata aggravates simultaneously and enters kostha, trika and Sandhi and ultimately leads to stabdhata in the body, this is called 'Amavata'².



Amavata correlation to Rheumatoid Arthritis

- Genetic disease
- Chronic multisystem disease
- Involvement of one or more joint
- Systemic connective joint disorder
- Occurring in age group of 16-70 years.
- Characterized by pain, swelling, tenderness, stiffness.

Diagnostic criteria of Rheumatoid Arthritis

- Morning stiffness more than one hour
- Arthritis of three or more joint areas
- Arthritis of hand joint
- Rheumatoid nodules
- Rheumatoid factor
- Radiological changes
- Duration of week or more
- Swan neck deformity of fingers
- Ulnar deviation of fingers with vesting of small muscles of hand and synovial swelling at the wrist.

Clinical features of Rheumatoid Arthritis

- Involvement of knee and wrist joints
- Lymphadenopathy
- Spindal shaped small joints.

Investigative Interpretation

- Rheumatoid factor – positive
- ESR- raised
- Hb% - low
- CRP- reactive
- Synovial fluid analysis
- ASLO titer

Therapeutic view of Ama

- Keeping on fast.
- Emesis with hot saline water
- Application of fomentation and suppository.
- Vata-Shamaka- Fresh ginger, fresh garlic, black peeper, castor oil.
- Pitta-Shamaka- *Aloe vera*, coriander, guduchi, kalmegh remove toxins from system.
- Kapha-Shamaka- Ginger, cumin, pushkarmoola, tulsi, guggul.

Therapeutic view of Amavata (Rheumatoid Arthritis)

- Avoid incompatible food and habit
- Shodhan- langhan, swedna, snehnam

Shodhan

- Snehpana- Castor oil, nirgundi, dashmool
- Langhana (Fasting) – by complete absence of food or by preparation of mudga, yusha, laja
- Swedna (Fomentation)- ruksha kuti sweda
- Virechana
- Kshar basti

Shaman

- Amavatari ras
- Haritki churna
- Sanjeevani vatti
- Guggulu yoga- Shiva guggulu, Amritadi guggulu

According to Modern therapeutic view

General measures

- Rest physical and mental
- Avoid exercise

Drug treatment

- Analgesics
- NSAID'S

Local treatment

- Aids and appliances
- Physiotherapy

Surgical treatment

- Surgical fusion
- Synovectomy

CONCLUSION

Ama means undigested food which stays inside our body and causes many diseases. It is the root cause of nearly all the diseases. It is produced mainly because of mandagni (decreased digestive and tissue fire) i.e. impairment of the mechanism for the secretion of digestive juices and thereby digestion.

Due to hypo functioning of agni proper digestion of food doesn't takes place leading to formation of 'Ama', which is responsible for the manifestation of almost all diseases specially Amavata.

Sama is a condition manifests due to amalgamation of dosha and dushya resulting in to formation of various kinds of disorders like Amavata.

Ama, amadosha and amavisha plays and vital role in the pathogenesis as well as prognosis of diseases like Amavata.

In ayurveda, 13 types of Agni are described. Among all those types, jatharagni is the predominant which performs mainly digestion of food and thereby provides nutrients for the body and some sort of wastes in the form of mala (toxic products) which are excreted out from the body. Dhatus are nourished by the main part of digestion i.e. Prasad ansha. Food which is not properly digested, remains in the stomach whether half digested or not full digested and stays there for some time after that it starts moving in the channels of body and creates obstruction (strotorodh), after that it leads to production of diseases and produces symptoms like pain and stiffness in the body.

The factors helping in the production of ama involves food intake without digestion of former meal, intake of heavy, dry foods, food in excess amount with some psychological factors like anger, fear, passion, greed and excitement etc.

Amadosha is a condition in which tridoshas, seven dhatus as well as three malas (toxic products) become permeated with ama produced in the amasaya (stomach) and this ama dosha leads to the production of diseases.

In the treatment principles of ama, langhan (fasting), is of prime importance as it allows the undigested food to be digested.

Along with deepana- pachana dravyas which increase the digestive fire and promote digestion are also indicated for the patients of ama.

In the chronic joint disorders, this ama resides in the joints either in the form of synovial fluid as per modern science and leads to the inflammation, pain and tenderness etc.

Shodhan and shaman is the treatment indicated for these patients. In the Shodhan basti procedures, basti along with Swedna have been proved very beneficial.

According to modern science, there is no digestive action of fat or oil in stomach. The fat digestion and absorption takes place in large intestine and no food substances other than water and salt are absorbed from the large intestine not because it is impossible but because the chime does not contain absorbable substances by the time it reaches the large intestine. Basti drugs contain sneha dravya in sufficient quantity hence basti drugs mixed with sneha dravya when introduced through the rectum get easily absorbed in large intestine.

It can be suggested that basti and shaman drugs could provide a better therapeutic approach in the Amavata (Rheumatoid arthritis).

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