



ROLE OF AGNI IN PANCHAKARMA

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ABSTRACT:

Agni refers to fire. Fire is one among *pancha mahabhuta*. Nature shows the existence of living being Human being is one among the different species of the nature. That's why it has been said as *Prakruti Purusha samya* in ayurveda. According to ayurveda components of *Sharira* is *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *mala*. *Sharira* is also called as *purusha*. Combination of *panchamahabhuta*, *chetana* and *manas* is *purusha*. *Panchakarma* has become most popular now a days as detoxification procedure. It is not only restricted to detoxification but also helps in preventing and maintaining the healthy body. Main purpose of *panchakarma* is elimination of toxins from each cell of the body. If procedure carried in normal *agni* it helps in reaching the potency of *dravya* to each cell and can achieve the target without any complications. *Jathara agni* is one among 13 types of *agni* which is very important and can be said as the main *agni* which maintains other *agni* in our body. If disturbed leads to impaired functions of metabolic process and hampers other systemic circulations which can be correlated to *srotodusti* in Ayurveda.

Key words: *Jathargni*, *Panchamahabhuta*, *Panchakarma*, Detoxification, Metabolism.

INTRODUCTION:

Acharya charaka has mentioned *lokha purusha Samya Siddhanta* [1] according to this theory whatever is present in universe is present in our body. The universe is *panchabhautika* and human body is also *panchabhautika*, all the *ahahara* and *aushadhi dravyas* are *panchabhautika* [2] Tridoshas are biological and functional form of *panchamahabhutas* as Vata = Akasha + Vayu. Pitta= Agni + Jala. Kapha= Prithvi + Jala *purusha* is the combination of *prithvi, aap, tejas, vayu, akasha* and *avyakta brahma* is *purusha*. [3] Also combination of *panchamahabhutas chetana, atma* and *manas* is *purusha*. [4]

Importance of Agni

Agni provides *ayu*[longevity], *bala*[strength], *varna*[color], *swasthya*[healthy], *uthsaha*[enthusiasm], *Upachaya*[nourishment], *prabha*[complexion], *oja* etc by providing nourishment to all *dhatu*s. It is the *agni* that plays an important role in the nourishing part because *rasadhi dhatus* cannot even *apakwa*[undigested] *ahahara*[food]. So only *jathar* originate from *agni* is known as the king among all the forms of *agni*. [5] As the *ahahara dravya* is *panchabhautika* during digestion of food all *panchabhutika* constituents of our food provides nutrition to *panchabhutika* constituents of our body by their own properties. Eg- Parthiva constituents of food provide nutrition to *parthiva* constituents of body. [6]

When the *agni* is diminished it takes the person's life towards death, when *agni* in proper state it enhances the healthy life span with out diseases. [7] *Ahahara dravya* is undergoing into *paka*[digestion] in the presence of *agni* hence *agni* is a factor which is responsible for *vriddhi*[increase] and *kshya*[decrease] of *dosha dathu mala* and mainly intensification and diminution of all other forms of *agni* is depend on *jathar agni*. [8] The formation of *dathus* takes place due to respective

agni. So *agni* helps in formation and maintenance of *dathus*. [9]

Agni is an important factor for the assessment of health [10] and disease and most of the diseases are caused due to impairment of *agni*. [11]

Classification of Agni [12]

1. *Jatharagni* (digestive fire) 1
2. *Bhutagni* (elements of nature) 5
Prathiva (Earth), *Jala* (water), *Agni* (fire),
Vayavya (air), *Akasha* (space),
3. *Dhatwagni* (metabolism) 7
Rasa (lymphatic system), *Rakta* (blood),
Mamsa (muscle), *Meda* (fat), *Asthi* (bones),
Majja (bone marrow), *Shukra* (semen),

All these 13 *agni* are interconnected in their functions. And helps in *poshana* of the living being. Among 13 *agni*, *jatharagni* is most important because if *jatharagni* is in proper state further chain will be continued in proper manner and achieve the function. *Bhutagni* acts after *jathar agni* but before *dathawagni* this represents the basic metabolism of carbohydrates, proteins and fats. [13] *Dhatwagni* is responsible for transformation of one *dathu* into another namely *rasagni* to *rakta dathu* and *raktagni* and *raktagni* into *mamsadathu* and *mamsagni* chain continues till *shukradathu* and *ojas*. [14] This includes the factors responsible for digestion and metabolism in various tissues. This includes endocrine and exocrine secretions neurotransmitters. All the three classification of *agni* are interconnected and interdependent, the energy mechanism takes place in every cell. Mitochondria are the power house of the cell. The release of adenosine triphosphate (ATP) to give energy is an example of *agni* working at cellular level.

Types of Jatharagni. [15]

Depending on bala

Tikshna Agni - Predominance of vitiated pitta dosha

Mandagni - Predominance of vitiated kapha dosha

Vishmagni - Predominance of vitiated Vata dosha

Sama Agni – Tridoshas in balanced state or else considered agni in normal state in healthy person.

Relation of agni and panchakarma.

Kosta and agni plays an important key factor mainly in panchakarma to achieve *samyak lakshanas* of the procedure.

Acharya charaka explained after proper *snehana* and *swedana* deciding proper medicine with proper dosage but *vega* starts only after digestion of *aushadhi*. [16]

Improper digestion of food leads to formation of *ama* which is responsible for all the diseases like here indigestion of medicine leads to *vyapat*. So optimal functioning of *agni* is needed to carry out *shodhana*.

For transformation of *amavasta* into *niramavasta pachana* of *ama* is essential. That is why *deepana* and *pachana* is told as *purvakarma* before to the *pradhana karma*.

Role of agni in snehana (oliation therapy)

Dosage of *sneha* is decided on the time taken for digestion of *Sneha*. I.e *hresiyasi matra* test dose. *Pravara sneha matra*, *madhyama sneha matra*, *uttama sneha matra*. Selection of type of *sneha* ie *vasa* and *majja* should be administered in those who are having *pravara agnibala*. *Agni* should be assessed prior to *snehana* for fixing the dosage of *sneha* and to select appropriate *sneha*. If *pravara matra Sneha* administered in case of *avara agni bala* it causes *mandagni* and leads to *ajeerna*. It may give rise to many complications when *sneha* not taken in proper *matra*. [17] The *agni* in normal condition helps in basic metabolism of *sneha* components at hepatic level and carries out the absorption of nutrients in the liver. Several processes such as transamination, deamination, betaoxidation of fattyacids glycolysis takes place in liver. So *sneha* administered in *mandagni* leads to hampering in the chain of metabolism and forms free radicals.

Effect of snehapana in mandagni

If *sneha* administered in *mandagni* it further aggravates the condition of the disease and exhibits symptoms like *grahani gadha*, *trishana*(thirst), *arochaka*(tastelessness), *praseka* (excessive salivation), *aasyavairasya* (lack of interest in food) *chardana*(vomiting), *tikta amlodgara*(bitter and sore belchings). [18]

Benefits.

Proper administration of *sneha* in normal *agni* stabilizes the *antaragni* and helps for poshana of *dosha* and *dhatu*. [19]

Role of agni in swedana (fermentation)

Helps in deciding the type of *sweda* ie *snigdha* or *ruksha sweda* Eg: *snigdha sweda* should not be given in *ajeerna* or *amaavastha*. *Niragni* (with out fire) *sweda* or *ruksha sweda* to be adopted in *amavastha*. *Swedana* increases the *agni* at all levels like *jatharagni*, *dhatwagni* and *bhutagni* in this way it helps in liquification of vitiated *doshas* through *ushna guna* and removes obstruction in the channels and brings the *prakupita doshas* from *Shaka's* to *kosta*. [20]

Role of agni in vamana (emetic therapy)

During *purvakarma* ie *deepana* (ignation), *pachana* (digestion), and *snehapana agni* should be assessed properly because if there is no proper *agni* there will be no proper *snehana* if no proper *snehana* there will be no proper *utklesha* of *doshas* and if no proper *utklesha* of *doshas* there will be no proper elimination of *prakupitadosha* leading to *ayogalakshana* of *vamana*. If *vamana* conducted in *teekshanagni* the given medicines will undergo digestion very soon and causes *vipareeta pravartana* of *prakupita dosha* along with normal *dosha* leading to *atiyoga* of *vamana*.

Role of agni in virechana (purgation therapy)

Vegas start only after digestion of *aushadhi*. If medicine given in *alpagni* may leads to *ayoga*. If in *mandagni* causes *vamana* as there will be indigestion of *virechana dravya*, leads to *ajeerna* and *ama vikaras*. If *aushadhi* administered

in *tikshanagni* leads to rapid elimination of *doshas* in short period and causes *vyapat* (complications)

Agni in samsarjana karma (diet regimen)

Agni becomes weak due to elimination of *doshas* from the body after *samshodhana karma*. So, to restore the capacity of *agni peyadi samsarjana krama* is followed after *shodhana*. [21] Eg: As a small spark of fire gets kindled into a big and stable flame when fed gradually with dry grass, cowdung cakes, similarly *agni* gets ignited gradually increases and becomes stable.

Role of agni in Basti (enema therapy)

Niruha basti is having multipurpose actions depending upon the medicines used in preparation of *basti dravya*. Because it does *Shoshana, shamana, bhulana, utkleshana, lekshana* etc. So there is no such restrictions in administration of *niruha basti*. Research work conducted by MES Ayurveda Vidyalaya, Maharashtra as single case study, To assess the effect of *yapana basti* in *agnimandya* and *dehabalakshya*. Conclusion: *Yapana basti* is effective in *agnimandya* and *dehabalakshya*. This tells that *niruha basti* increases *agni*,

Sneha part used to be as per the dosage said in *kapha dosha*.

Anuvasana basti It is mainly administered for the purpose of *snehana* so here role of *agni* is very very important. Because main drug is *sneha* alone. *Gunas* of *sneha* are *Guru* (heavy), *snigdha* (oily), *manda* (slow), *drava* (liquid), *picchila* (sticky), etc *Gunas* of *agni ushna* (hot), *tikshna* (sharp) *sara* (fast), *laghu* (light), *ruksha* (dryness).

Both are opposite so if *agni* is normal, *agni* helps in digestion of *sneha*. And if *agni* gets Vitiates there will be impairment in the *gunas* of *agni* which further leads to improper digestion of *sneha* further which ends up by forming *ama*.

Role of agni in Nasya. (nasal therapy)

Indicated only when the person is having *deeptagni*. If *Nasya* administered in *mandagni* or *ajeerna* causes occlusion of the channels of circulation and leads to movement of *doshas* in opposite direction and causes *swasa, kasa, chardi, shirogaurava, shiroruja*.

Role of agni in Raktamokshana (blood letting therapy)

After *raktamokshana* procedure to maintain *agni laghu, naati ushna, nati sheeta, deepaniya Anna* is advised. [22] Because after *raktamokshana*, *rakta* may not be *sthira* so it is important to maintain *agni*.

This says that *rakta mokshana* procedure should be followed in normal *agni*.

Role of agni in Bahirparimarjana chikitsa (external procedures)

In this part skin comes in contact with medicine. As said earlier *agni* acts on each cell of our body so if *agni* is *manda* there will be delayed or lack of absorption through skin. *Bhrajaka pitta* present in skin gets *ksheena*[less] and so causes obstruction in *sukshma srotas* present in skin. So only in *mandagni abhyanga, kati basti, janu basti, seka, lepas* are contraindicated.

DISCUSSION:

Agni possesses similar properties like *agni mahabhuta* as *ushna, tikshna, sukshma, laghu* and *ruksha vishada*. [23]

Here we can think of *Gunas* of *vamana* and *virechana dravyas* they are also same *ushna tikshna sukshma* etc.

Both are same except *vyavahi* and *vikasi guna*. According to *samanya vishishesha siddhanta, Samanyam vriddhi karanam*. If *agni* is normal it enhances the potency of the procedure and proper *shuddhi* occurs ie *pravara shuddhi* with *samyak shodhita lakshanas*.

If *agni* is *manda* or gets disturbed there will be opposite *gunas* which decreases the potency of the procedure, there will be no proper elimination of *doshas* leads to *ayoga* of *vamana* and *virechana*. Panchakarma is not only *shodhana*

procedure it includes both apatarpana and santarpana chikitsa. Depending on the avastha of the dosha treatment is being selected. Panchakarma possesses two words pancha means 5 number and karma means procedure they are Vamana, Virechana, Basti, Nasya, Rakthamokshana. Here Vamana, Virechana & Rakthamokshana are only for shodhana purposes but Basti & Nasyakarma act as shodhana, shamana, tarpana, brahmana etc properties depending on the medicines selected according to the rasa, guna, veerya vipaka and avastha of the dosha. Even than agni is very essential part in all the conditions because without proper agni there is no action of Dravya, just like boiling rice without fire means u are unable to prepare rice without fire.

CONCLUSION:

Among 13 types of *agni jatharagni* is important because it facilitates secretions of various enzymes leading to digestion of food materials and medicines, along with it helps in transformation of *dhatu*s if gets disturbed leads to disturbance in the metabolic process of whole body.

Main purpose of *panchakarma* is elimination of toxins from each cell of body. If medicines administered in normal *agni* helps in reaching the potency of *dravyas* to each cell and can achieve the target. Otherwise, it leads to further aggravation of symptoms along with complications.

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