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Ama nidana; a critical review

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Abstract:

The concept of Agni in Ayurveda holds the prime importance. All the disorders are resulted due to improper functioning of Agni. The first effect of improper functioning of Agni is production of Ama in the body. Ama is an important concept in Ayurveda, often referred to as a toxic substance or a metabolic impurity. It is considered to be the root cause of various diseases and health conditions. Ama results from incomplete digestion and metabolism of food, which leads to the production of a sticky, toxic substance that can accumulate in the body. The Nidana for development of Ama and further the course of Ama with Dosha – Dushya coherence resulting in various disorders are been discussed in following study.

Keywords: Agni, Ama, Dosha - Dushya

Introduction:

Agni in Ayurveda refers to the digestive fire or the biological fire responsible for the digestion, assimilation, and transformation of food, thoughts, and experiences in the body. The term "Agni" comes from the Sanskrit word for "fire," and it plays a central role in maintaining health and balance within the body. Ayurveda considers Agni to be the key factor that determines the overall well-being of a person. Any transformation of foreign material – *Vijatkiya Ghataka* into bodily material – *Sajatkiya Ghataka* depends on the optimum functioning of Agni. It is not only the digestive fire which digests food in alimentary canal but is much subtle and carry its functions on cellular level. The concept of Ama is the most important fundamental principle of Ayurveda in understanding the Pathophysiology of the diseases. Ama has its own importance in Nidana & Chikitsa of disease. The medicine to be used in a particular disease mainly depends on Sama and Niram avashta of it. Ayurveda attributes cause of any disease to an imbalance in one or all of the Dosha and for successful treatment of a particular disease Vaidya has to determine, whether the imbalanced Dosha is Saam or Niram.

उश्मणो अल्प बलत्वेन धातुमाध्यम् अपाचितम् |

दुष्टम् आमाशय गतं रसम् आमं प्रचक्षते ||

1. A.h. Su. 13/25

Due to altered functioning of *Agni - Ushma*, the first *Dhatu Rasa* is not properly digested, instead the *Anna rasa* undergoes fermentation being retained in the *Amashaya*. This *Rasa* is called as *Ama*. *Ama* is the first component formed due to weak digestive processes. It is in *amashaya*. *Madhvidana* states, the first state of vitiated *dosha* is called 'ama'. The byproduct of improper metabolism all over in the body can be termed as *Ama*. There are many factors which are responsible for altered functioning of digestive fire – *Agni*. Over time, the accumulation of *Aam* leads to the onset of various health conditions, including chronic illnesses, inflammation, and weakened immunity.

Ama hetu

<i>Aharajanya Hetu</i>	<i>Viharaja Hetu</i>	<i>Mansika Hetu</i>
<i>Abhojana</i>	<i>Viruddha cheshta</i>	<i>Kama</i>
<i>Atibhojan</i>	<i>Nishchalata</i>	<i>Krodha</i>
<i>Adhyashayna</i>	<i>Diwaswapa</i>	<i>Lobha</i>
<i>VishAmanshana</i>	<i>Ratrijagarana</i>	<i>Moha</i>
<i>Virudhashana</i>	<i>Vega vidharana</i>	<i>Irshya</i>
	<i>Ativyaya</i>	<i>Bahaya</i>
	<i>Vishyama Shayana</i>	<i>shoka</i>
	<i>Vyayama</i>	<i>Chinta</i>

The causes of *Aam* formation are numerous, including:

1. Improper Diet: Eating foods that are incompatible with one another, overeating, or consuming too much heavy, oily, or spicy food can weaken digestion.
2. Irregular Eating Habits: Eating at irregular times or skipping meals can disturb the digestive process.
3. Emotional Stress: Stress and negative emotions can interfere with the digestion process, leading to the formation of *Aam*.
4. Lifestyle Factors: Lack of exercise, poor sleep patterns, and sedentary living can contribute to the accumulation of *Aam*.

Ama state of *dosha* or *dhatu* is termed as a *saama dosha* or *saama dhatu* respectively. These

manifest different symptoms and produces number of diseases. The Sam *Dosha* and *Dushya* can be briefed as follows.

अविपक्वं असंयुक्तं दुर्गन्धं बहु पिच्छिलम् |

सदनं सर्वं गात्राणां आम इति अभिधीयते | |

2. B.P.madhya. 1/61

The general signs and symptoms according to *Acharya* are,

स्रोतरोध बल भ्रंश गौरव अनिलमूढता: |

आलस्य अपक्ति निष्ठिव मलसङ्ग अरुचिक्लमा: | |

3. A. H. Su 13/23

When this *Ama* gets circulated throughout body and vitiation of *Dosha* occurs, the *Sama Dosha lakshana* appears,

<i>Sama dosha</i>	Lakshana (symptoms)
<i>Sama Vata</i>	<i>Vibandha</i> , weak digestive capacity, <i>Antrakunjan</i> , painful sensation (<i>vedana</i>), swelling (<i>shopha</i>), pricking pain (<i>nistoda</i>), sequential and fleeting pain in various body parts, pain increases after oleation therapy, during morning and evening time, during cloudy weather
<i>Sama Pitta</i>	Foul smell, color of pitta will be greenish/ light blackish, <i>amla bhava</i> (sour nature of pitta), heaviness, sour eructation, burning sensation in throat and cardiac region.
<i>Sama Kapha</i>	<i>Avila</i> (increase turbidity in mala), thick in consistency, feeling of sticky phlegm in throat, foul smell cough, lack of appetite.

Dahtu lakshana

<i>Sama Dhatu</i>	Lakshana
<i>Sama Rasa</i>	Anorexia, tastelessness, <i>hrillasa</i> (nausea), <i>pandu</i> (pallor), <i>jwara</i> (fever), <i>klaibya</i> (impotency).
<i>Sama Rakta</i>	Various types of skin disorders and abscess, <i>raktapitta</i> (hemorrhagic disorders), inflammation of anus/penis/oral cavity, <i>kamala</i> (jaundice), <i>vatarakta</i> (gout), <i>arsha</i> (piles).

<i>Sama Mamsa</i>	<i>Arbuda</i> (tumor), <i>galashundi</i> (tonsilitis), <i>gandamala</i> (cervical adenitis), <i>upajihivika</i> (inflammation of epiglottis).
<i>Sama Meda</i>	<i>Prameha purvarupa</i> (prodromal features of prameha), <i>galaganda</i> (goiter), <i>madhumeha</i> (diabetes mellitus), <i>atisthaulya</i> (obesity).
<i>Sama Asthi</i>	Pain in teeth and bones, bony growth, disorders of hair/nails, toothache.
<i>Sama Majja</i>	Pain in joints, giddiness, syncope (<i>murchha</i>), blackouts (<i>tama</i>)
<i>Sama Shukra</i>	impotency (<i>klaibya</i>), sexual dysfunction, abortion, miscarriage, no conception, disorders of semen.

When *Aam* enters the bloodstream, it can circulate through the body and get deposited in the various tissues, leading to an imbalance in the body's structure and function. The quality and quantity of the *dhatu*s depend on the digestive fire (*Agni*) and the balance of the *dosha*s. A weak *Agni*, combined with the accumulation of *Aam*, can impair the nourishment of the *dhatu*s, resulting in tissue degeneration and disease.

- *Rasa* and *Rakta*: The first two tissues, *Rasa* (plasma) and *Rakta* (blood), are directly affected by *Aam*. If *Ama* accumulates in these tissues, it can cause poor circulation, reduced oxygen supply, and sluggish metabolism, leading to symptoms like fatigue, weakness, and skin issues.
- *Mamsa* and *Meda*: If *Aam* accumulates in the muscle (*Mamsa*) or fat (*Meda*) tissues, it can cause sluggishness, stiffness, weight gain, or loss of muscle mass. A buildup of toxins can impair physical strength and endurance.
- *Asthi* and *Majja*: The bones (*Asthi*) and bone marrow (*Majja*) are critical for the body's structural integrity. *Ama* can cause bone pain, joint issues, and hinder the production of healthy blood cells. This may lead to conditions like osteoporosis or anemia.
- *Shukra*: When *Aam* affects the reproductive tissues (*Shukra*), it can impact fertility and overall vitality. Toxins can lead to hormonal imbalances, reduced sexual vitality, and other reproductive issues.

Inference:

In Ayurveda, *Aam Dosha* and *Dhatu* play critical roles in understanding health and disease. *Aam*, the toxic byproduct of improper digestion, is a root cause of many health issues. Its accumulation can obstruct the nourishment of the seven essential tissues (*dhatu*s), leading to various physical and mental imbalances. By improving digestion, following a balanced lifestyle, and using detoxifying herbs, Ayurveda offers a holistic approach to eliminating *Aam* and nourishing the *dhatu*s. This balance is key to achieving optimal health and vitality, as it allows the body to function harmoniously and

prevents disease. The key to restoring health in Ayurveda is to reduce or eliminate Aam from the body. This can be achieved by knowing the *Ama Nidana* and thus following its treatment protocol which will clear Ama for better health.

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