

Conceptual Review Study of Ama

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Received : 15 March 2024

Accepted : 23 March 2024

Abstract

Undigested substance, which remains unripe, immature and uncooked in called as Ama. It does some abnormal changes in the body. It is caused due to Agnimandya (weak digestive fire). So it is the reason responsible for indigestion. It leads to formation of toxins, which cannot be eliminated from the body or neutralized. This Ama causes vitiation of doshas. This vitiated doshas affects dhatu satmya and it gets altered. It provokes some pathogenesis and results in formation of diseases like Amavata, katigata Vata, Grahani roga etc. It is preliminary stage of most inflammatory, infective and degenerative changes that ultimately proceeds to formation of disease. The present study is an attempt to study conceptually Ama.

Keywords: Undigested, Digestive, Fire, Ama

Introduction:

Balanced condition of Dosha, Agni, Dhatu and malas is called Swastha condition of our body. By any reason, Agni is weakened; it causes improper digestion of Ahar rasa. So first Dhatu, namely rasa dhatu, is not properly formed. It results in formation of undigested, immature, unripe substance, which gets lodged in Amashaya. This entity is called as Ama. It is the main factor, which ultimately leads in formation of many diseases like Amavata. It has some toxins, which are hazardous to the body. The condition arises from a variety of factors including Agni impairment, indigestion, excessive eating, inconsistent dietary habits, consumption of incompatible food items, intake of cold substances, and the adverse effects of vama,

virechana, and snehana. Additionally, Acharyas have identified certain Aampradoshaj disorders like visuchika, Alasaka, and Vilambiks, which result from the amalgamation of Ama with Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. Therefore, Ama is the primary element contributing to the onset of the disease. So present study – “Conceptual Review Study of Ama” has been taken.

Aim

To study conceptually Ama.

Objective:

To take various references related to Ama in various Ayurvedic Samhitas.

Material and Methods:

Literature review is done through all available Ayurvedic Samhitas, texts, various research papers available in Journals and online data available.

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Review of Literature:

Ama: Undigested Food and Its Properties

1. Definition of Ama:

- Ama refers to undigested food resulting from the hypofunctioning of Ushma (Agni), specifically affecting the first bodily tissue (Dhatu) called “Rasa” or chyle.¹
- Instead of proper digestion, the ingested food (Anna rasa) undergoes fermentation or putrefaction (Dushta) and accumulates in the Amashaya (stomach). This undigested Rasa is termed as Ama.

2. Dushta Amashaya :

- Properly digested food is beneficial for health, akin to “Amrita,” while undigested or Apakwa food becomes harmful, akin to poison (visha).
- Ama, in its poisonous stage, results from incomplete digestion and fermentation within the stomach, leading to harmful effects on the body.

3. Properties of Ama:

- **Avipakwam** - Refers to indigestion due to impaired functioning of Jatharagni (digestive fire), Bhutagni (elemental fire), and Dhatwagni (tissue-specific fire). Ama always exhibits Apakwa (undigested) qualities.
- **Asamyuktam** - Ama remains in an inassimilable state due to its incompleteness.
- **Durgandham, Bahupicchilam** - Ama produces foul odors and extreme pastiness due to protein putrefaction.
- **Sadanam** - Ama obstructs natural bodily functions, causing disability.
- **Tantumata** - Ama’s viscous and spindle-like properties prevent complete expulsion from the body.
- **Snigdhatva** - Ama adheres to bodily elements due to its Kapha nature.

- **Guruta** - Ama remains heavier (guru) than properly digested substances due to dominance of Jala and Prithvi Mahabhutas.
- **Aneka varna yukta** - Ama’s color varies based on the combination of Pancha Mahabhuta components.
- **Asukari** - Ama spreads quickly within the body.
- **Shulanubandha** - Ama disrupts Vata function, leading to pain (shula).²
- **Visha rupata** - Ama exhibits symptoms similar to poison (visha).
- **Sarvaroga hetutwa** - Ama mixed with Doshas, Dhatus, and Malas causes various diseases (Amaya).

Sama: Ama-Permeated Conditions

- Sama refers to a condition where Ama permeates the Tridoshas (Vata, Pitta, Kapha), Sapta Dhatus (seven bodily tissues), and Malas (waste products) due to its presence in the Amashaya.
- Diseases arising from this Ama-imbued state are categorized as Sama types of diseases.
- Sama Dosha can vitiate Doshas, Dushyas, and Malas, leading to various health issues. It spreads throughout the body’s channels (roga marga) and can move between different compartments (shakha and koshttha).³

Pathogenesis of Ama

Agni dusti (kayagni, Bhutagni, Dhatwagni)



Ama (Mixed with Dosha,
Dushya and Mala)



(samavastha)

(Circulate in all srotas and
kha-vaigunya at particular site)



vyadhi (sakhagata, kosthagata,
marmasthi samdhi)

Symptoms of Ama :

To gain clarity about the pathological state of Ama within the body, it's essential to recognize the characteristics of doshas in both Samavastha (balanced state) and Niramavastha (imbalanced state). Samadosha refers to the equilibrium of doshas, and their symptoms are described during Samavastha.:-

- Srotarodha
- Balabhramsa
- Gaurava
- Anila mudhata
- Alasya
- Apakti
- Nisthiva
- Mala samga
- Aruchi
- klama
- Praseka
- Vistambha
- Arti
- Bidaha
- Tandra
- Hridayavisuddhi
- Garu udara
- Suptata

Nidana of Ama

Aharaja⁴

- Abhojana
- Dagdha & Ama ahara sevana
- Adhyasana
- Asuchi, Asatmya sevana
- Viruddha bhojan
- Sushka, Ruksha Ahara
- Ati seeta bhojan
- Atyambhupluta ahara (for long duration)
- Bistambhi Ahara sevana

1. Guna (Qualities) and Ama Formation:

- According to the gunas (qualities) of food, certain attributes

like guru (heavy), shita (cold), bistambhi (sticky), shushka (dry), vidahi (causing burning sensation), ruksha (rough), and pichchhila (slimy) contribute to the formation of ama (undigested toxins).

2. Timing and Quantity of Food Intake:

- It is advisable to eat only when the previous meal has been fully digested. Consuming food during indigestion leads to mixing with the remnants of the earlier meal, resulting in quick food spoilage. Conditions like ajirna bhojana (eating before digestion), adhayashana (eating at irregular intervals), and vishamashana (eating incompatible foods) can lead to ama vikara (formation of toxins). Proper food quantity depends on the strength of agni (digestive fire).

3. Role of Ahara Parinamakara Bhavas:

- The ahara parinamakara bhavas (factors affecting food transformation) play an active role in digestion. For instance:
 - Ushna (heat) digests food.
 - Vayu (air) facilitates absorption.
 - Kleda (moisture) contributes to softness.
 - Sneha (unctuousness) aids complete transformation.
 - Kala (time) influences digestion.
 - Samayoga (balanced use of dietary factors) considers the timing, season, and other factors. Imbalance in these leads to agni vikruti (disturbed digestion) and amotpatti (toxin formation).⁵

4. Vihara (Lifestyle Factors):

- Lifestyle choices impact digestion:
 - Ratri jagrana (staying awake at night) provokes vata and kapha, leading to agni dusti (digestive impairment) and ultimately amotpatti.

- Vega dharana (suppressing natural urges) affects digestion.
- Diva swapna (daytime sleep) disrupts digestion.
- Uncomfortable beds (dukhasayya) can also contribute.

5. **Manasika (Mental Factors):**

- Mental states like worry (chinta), grief (shoka), fear (bhaya), anger (krodha), and anxiety (uptapa mana) impact digestion.⁶

6. **Other Factors:**

- Effects of purgation (virechana), emesis (vamana), and oleation (snehana).
- Tissue wasting (vyadhi karshana).
- Allergic reactions due to changes in place, climate, or season (deshakalarttu vaishamya).

7. **Classification of Ama:**

- Ama can be categorized as follows:
- Ama produced by impaired agni (jatharagnimandya) or by vitiated bhutas (bhutagnimandya).
- Ama formed during the accumulation of waste products (mala samchaya rupa).
- Ama produced independently of agni, such as in the early stages of dosha imbalance or due to external factors like poison.⁷

Discussion and Conclusion:

- Acharya Vagbhata defines ama as a condition where the tridoshas, sapta dhatus, and malas become impregnated with undigested toxins in the stomach (amashaya). Diseases arising from this state are termed sama types.
- Ama can vitiate doshas, dushyas, and malas, leading to various diseases.
- It spreads throughout the body, affecting all channels (roga marga).
- Accumulation of ama obstructs channels, becoming the origin of disease.

- Proper management of ama is crucial for maintaining health.

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