



Review Article

A CONCEPTUAL STUDY ON *ROGAHA SARVEPI MANDAGNAU* (*MANDAGNI IS THE ROOT CAUSE OF ALL DISEASES*)

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ABSTRACT

“*Swasthasya swasthya rakshanam, Aturasya vikara prasamanam ca*” is main goal of Ayurveda which means to protect and maintain *Swasthya* (wellness) of a healthy person and to treat diseases of diseased. Ayurveda given many fundamental concepts like, *Tridosha, Srotasa, Agni, Dhātu, Mala, Ojasa* etc. Among them *Agni* is regarded as one of the fundamental concepts that controls how the human body functions physiologically and responsible for maintaining good health. *Agni* controls the genesis and dissolution of the universe as well as metabolism and catabolism of an organism. It is described by *Acarya* that *Agni* is responsible for strength and life exists due to proper functioning of *Agni*. We find that almost all diseases in the Ayurveda are an outcome of *Mandagni* (impaired digestion). *Mandagni* is the state of *Agni* which cannot digest even little quantity of food in the scheduled time. The aim of this article is to provide light on the physiological and aspects of *Agni*, as well as its function.

INTRODUCTION

For thousands of years, Ayurveda has been a successful and complete healthcare system in India. The main objective of Ayurveda is “*Swasthasya swasthya rakshanam, Aturasya vikara prashamanam ca*” means to protect and maintain *Swasthya* (wellness) of a healthy person and to treat diseases of diseased.^[1] Sushruta has defined *Swasthya* as a state of equilibrium of *Tridosha* (fundamental physiological governing principles of the body), *Agni* (metabolic and digestive processes) *Dhātu* (principles that uphold the formation of body tissues) and *Mala* (waste products) along with state of blessing in sense organs, mind and the soul.^[2] This explains the holistic health strategy by preserving the *Tridosha, Agni, Dhātu* and *Mala* in balanced. So, Ayurveda believe that the disease may occur due to the improper functioning of *Dosha, Dhātu, Srotasa* and *Agni* etc. *Agni* is regarded as one of the

fundamental concepts that controls how the human body functions physiologically and responsible for maintaining good health. Although the word “*Agni*” literally means “fire,” but in Ayurveda it signifies many different kinds of elements that affect and regulate how a living organism digests and metabolise in living organism. It is described by *Acharya* that *Agni* is responsible for strength and life exists due to proper functioning of *Agni*. We find that almost all diseases in the *Ayurveda* are an outcome of (impaired digestion).^[3] The present review article is an attempt to throw insight on a few concepts of *Agni* related to health and disease and how they may affect the outcomes.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

To study the concept *Agni* from various Ayurvedic texts.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Details about *Agni* has been collected through various Ayurvedic Samhitas like *Brhadtrayi (Caraka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya), Laghutrayi (Bhavaprakasha Samhita, Sharangadhara Samhita and Madhava Nidana)* and relevant online article as well as reference books.

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Concept of Agni

Derivation

The word *Agni* denotes the root “Anj” which means “To glitter” or root “Daha” which means “To burn” and “Ni” which means “To carry”. Thus, etymology states that *Agni* carries everything in it. It

moves everywhere, transforming substances, burning, absorbing, shining, and growing. *Agni* provides as a centre around which the other elements that are in charge of preserving health, causing illness. [4]

Agni converts food in the form of energy, which is responsible for all the vital functions of our body.

Table 1: According to different Ayurvedic texts type of Agni [5]

S.No	Type	Type of Agni
1.	<i>Karyakarana</i>	(3) <i>Karya, Karana, Karyakarana</i>
2.	Acc. to <i>Darshana</i>	(3) <i>Sharira, Indriya, Vishaya</i>
		(4) <i>Bhaumaja, Divyaja, Akaraja, Audaryagni</i>
3.	Acc. to <i>Bala of Agni</i>	(4) <i>Samagni, Vishamagni, Mandagni, Tikshnagni</i>
4.	Acc. to <i>Karma of Agni</i>	(5) <i>Pacakagni, Ranjakagni, Alocakagni, Sadhakagni, Bhrajakagni</i>
5.	Acc. to <i>Adhishthana</i>	(3) <i>Doshagni, Dhatvagni, Malagni</i>
	a) <i>Caraka</i>	
	b) <i>Vagbhatta</i>	(3) <i>Jatharagni, Bhutagni, Dhatvagni</i>

Significance of Agni

There are many different ways to ingest food, including eatables, drinks, linctus (licked) and masticable food. All of them are considered healthful when taken in balance and without contamination. Because of the effects of *Jatharagni, Bhutagni* and *Dhatvagni*, these substances go through a metabolic change. Since the food consumed is *Pancabhautika*, it must first be transformed by the corresponding *Bhutagni's* before *Jatharagni*, can stimulate *Bhutagni* and make it easier for *Dhatvagni* to handle the tissue metabolism. After that, *Tridosha* helps the metabolized metabolic products to continuously circulate inside the *Srotasa*. In addition to promoting tissue growth. Once the appropriate nutrients from digested food materials are received, the *Dhatus* continue to function normally. So, *Jatharagni* is the mainly responsible for disease and health.

The importance of *Agni* in several contexts in Ayurveda texts. *Acarya Caraka* has described the importance of *Agni* like; *Ayu* (longevity), *Varna* (complexion), *Bala* (strength), *Ojasa* (Immunity), *Teja* (body warmth), *Agnayah* (other metabolic components), *Prana* (life) all are dependent on *Jatharagni*. [6] If *Agni* gets extinguished the person dies and on the contrary, if it is proper then person lives long and disease free. If it gets affected person suffers from diseases and hence *Agni* is the root cause for both health and disease.

Further, it should also be observed that the digestive capacity cannot be enhanced by fasting nor by excessive consumption of food just as the fire gets extinguished by non-availability of fuel or by sudden excess of fuel. [7]

The existence of *Dosha* in normalcy is fundamental to the functioning of all body components. The normal or abnormal state of *Dosha* is dependent on *Agni*. [8]

Acarya Sushruta mentioned that *Vivecana* (proper separation) of *Dosha, Rasa, Mutra, Purisha* is done by *Pacakagni* which suggests that deranged *Agni* can cause accumulation of *Mala* in *Koshtha* which leading to various disease. [9]

Association between Agni and the term Pitta

Acarya Sushruta states that *Agni* cannot exist in the body without *Pitta* because substances with similar properties are used when *Agni's* properties are diminished and cold treatments have been suggested when *Agni's* properties are greatly increased. [10]

Assessment of Agni

Firstly, *Vaidya's* responsibility to initiate treatments by thoroughly examining the disease before planning the line of treatment. [11] Many tools are used in *Ayurveda* to evaluate either the disease or the patient. *Dashavidha Pariksha* is one such tool which includes ten parameters one of them being assessment of *Agni*. [12] *Agni* can vary depending on a person's temperament like *Prakrti, Rtu, Vaya* etc.

Table 2: Prakrti related influence on Agni [13]

S.No	Doshaja Prakrti	Agni
1.	<i>Vataja</i>	<i>Vishamagni</i>
2.	<i>Pittaja</i>	<i>Tikshnagni</i>
3.	<i>Kaphaja</i>	<i>Mandagni</i>
4.	<i>Samadoshaja</i>	<i>Samagni</i>

Table 3: Seasonal influence on Agni ^[14]

S.No	Rtu	Bala of Agni
1.	Shishira	Tikshna
2.	Vasanta	Manda
3.	Grishma	Durbala
4.	Varsha	Durbala
5.	Sharada	Manda
6.	Hemanta	Tikshna

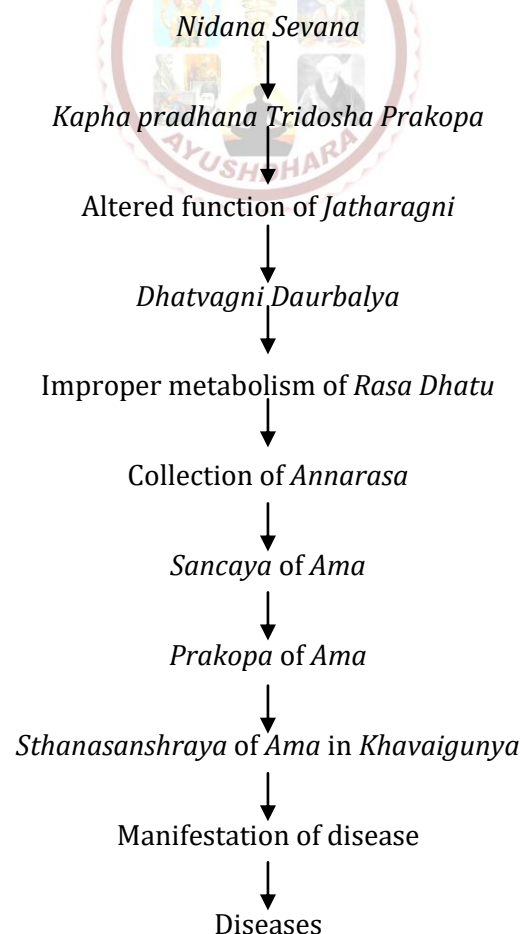
Table 4: Age related influence on Agni ^[15]

S.No	Vaya	Agni
1.	Bala	Mandagni
2.	Yauvana	Tikshnagni
3.	Vriddha	Mandagni

Jaranashakti can be able to evaluate Agni on the basis of *Anumana Pramana*. ^[16] *Jaranashakti* includes both *Abhyavarana* (quantity of food) as well as *Pacanashakti* (digestion power). The signs of proper digestion are *Udgarashuddhi* (normal eructation), *Vegotsarga* (urge to pass urine and motion), *Laghuta* (lightness), *Kshuta* (hunger), *Pipasa* (thirst). ^[17] *Agni* can be examined further by determining whether the diet has been adequately digested or if indigestion exists based on the time it takes for these symptoms appear after a meal.

“Roga sarve api mandagnau”^[3]

According to *Acarya Vagbhata*, *Mandagni* is the cause behind majority of diseases. When *Agni* is unable to digest food properly, it enters this stage. *Mandagni* can exist in any of the three *Jatharagni*, *Dhatwagni* and *Bhutagni* level. *Mahastrotasa* diseases are caused by *Mandagni* at the *Jatharagni* level, while other diseases are caused by *Mandagni* at the *Bhutagni* and *Dhatwagni* levels. Improper food digestion due to decreased *Agni* results in the formation of *Ama*. The unwanted, improperly digested residual essence of food is the *Ama* which is most important part of pathogenesis of many diseases. ^[18]



Mandagni	
Main Dosha Imbalance	<i>Kapha</i>
Main Mahabhautika composition	<i>Jala + Prthvi</i>
Common symptoms related to Mandagni	- <i>Cirat Paka</i> - <i>Bhojana pascata Guruta</i> - <i>Bhojana pascata Nidra etc</i>
Metabolism Type	Slow, Under active
Appetite	Dull, Low
Emotional imbalance	- Sadness - Depression - Laziness - Greed - Dull mind

CONCLUSION

Agni is an essential element that regulates every aspect of being alive. *Agni* affects health and disease because its functional state determines whether *Dosha* perform normally or abnormally. Due to faulty status of *Agni*, a variety of unripe, undigested or unmetabolized by products are formed and that have the potential to block the *Srotasa*, thus resulting in accumulation of *Dosha* and finally manifest as sickness. *Ayurveda* emphasizes that most of the diseases are the by-product of *Agni Dushti* that is why strengthening and restoring *Agni* (the digestive and metabolic fire) is the fundamental basis of treating every illness according to *Ayurveda*. The purpose of *Ayurveda* is promotion of health in healthy and cure of disease in diseased is possible only with due maintenance of *Agni*. Implementation of *Shamana* (palliation) or *Shodhana* (purification) for the cure of disease, both require good *Agni*. Therefore, *Agni* plays a key role in occurrence of all diseases and also in its cure. *Agni* has been compared by *Acarya Sushruta* as the ultimate lord.

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