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Review Article

UNDERSTANDING *HRIDROGA* IN THE LIGHT OF *SANTARPANA* AND LIFESTYLE DISORDERS

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ABSTRACT

Hridroga is one among the serious life-threatening condition which affects *Hridaya* is due to the deranged *Tridosha* and the vitiation of *Rasadhaatu. Hridroga* is enlisted under *Apatarpanottha Vikaras*. When we look into the *Nidanas* of *Hridroga*, most of them point towards features of *Apatarpana* meaning undernourishment or depletion. Metabolic syndrome is an asymptomatic pathophysiological condition characterized by central obesity, high blood pressure, insulin resistance, dyslipidemia and hyperglycemia. In the present era, the pattern of cardiovascular disorders has shifted, with increasing prevalence linked to sedentary lifestyle, over-nutrition, obesity metabolic syndrome that are characteristic of *Santarpana*. This study is an attempt to reinterpret and derive *Santarpanottha Nidanas* that may lead to *Hṛidroga*, aligning classical concepts with modern clinical presentations.

INTRODUCTION

'*Hridaye Baadhaam Kurvanti Tam Hridrogam Prachakshate'*[1] denotes any ailment or distress pertaining to the *Hridaya* is *Hridroga. Hridroga* is one among the serious life-threatening condition due to the disturbance in *Tridosha* and the vitiation of *Rasadhaatu.*[2] As per Ayurveda *Hridroga* is of 5 types namely; *Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, Sannipataja* and *Krimija.*[3] When we look into the *Nidanas* of *Hridroga*, most of them point towards features of *Apatarpana.*[4] It is mentioned that the *Nidana* of *Hridroga* are the same as enumerated in the *Gulmanidanam.*[5] *Hridroga* is enlisted under *Apatarpanottha Vikaras*.

On the other hand, *Santarpana* refers to *Brimhana, Triptikaaraka* that which causes *Brihatwa* and *Sthoulyatwa* of *Dhaatu* and *Shareera.* Consuming food that is heavy to digest, sweet, high calorie diet and unctuous or oily in quality, along with indulging in excessive sleep, excessive rest or lying down, comfort-seeking pleasures, and mental states like contentment, happiness, and absence of worry or concern contribute to a *Santarpana.*[6]

According to WHO, cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death globally, accounting for approximately 17.9 million deaths each year.[7] A significant proportion of these cases are linked to modifiable lifestyle factors such as poor diet, physical inactivity, and obesity all of which correspond to *Santarpana* in Ayurvedic terms.

Metabolic syndrome is an asymptomatic pathophysiological condition characterized by central obesity, high blood pressure, insulin resistance, dyslipidemia and hyperglycemia.[8] Metabolic syndrome is a risk factor for various conditions like cardiovascular disorders, type 2 diabetes mellitus, non-alcoholic steatohepatitis, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), chronic kidney disease, obstructive sleep apnea, certain cancers like colon liver due to chronic inflammation and insulin resistance.

In the modern era, the increasing prevalence of lifestyle disorders like metabolic syndrome demands a re-evaluation of classical Ayurvedic concepts. This study is essential to understand

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whether *Santarpanottha Nidanas* can offer deeper insights into the rising trend of *Hridroga* among overnourished individuals.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1. To review about *Santarpaneeya Nidanas*.
2. To study role of *Santarpaneeya Nidanas* in pathogenesis of *Hridroga*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The data for this study has been collected from traditional Ayurveda texts, commentaries, and a variety of scientific research databases. A detailed analysis of these articles and classical texts was performed to compile a qualitative review on the concept of *Santarpanottha Nidanas* that lead to *Hridroga.*

Hridroga Nidana

The causative factors of *Hridroga* as per Ayurveda can be divided into three categories;

Aharaja Nidana[9]

- *Ati Guru*- Overconsumption of heavy-to-digest or high calorie food.
- *Ati Amla* - Excessive intake of sour food.
- *Ati Kashaya* - Overindulgence in astringent food.
- *Ati Tikta* - Excessive consumption of bitter food.
- *Ama dosha* - Abundance of *Ama* in the body.
- *Adhyashana*- Overeating or frequent eating before previous meal is digested.
- *Karshana*– Emaciation (both *Aaharaja* and *Viharaja*).

Viharaja Nidana

- *Ati Shrama*- Extreme physical fatigue or strenuous work.
- *Abhighata*- Injuries, including both physical and psychological trauma.
- *Ati Prasanga (Ati Vyavaya*)- Excessive engagement in sexual intercourse.
- *Vega Vidharana Sandhaarana*- Forcibly suppressing natural bodily urges.
- *Vyayama* - Excessive physical strain
- *Teekshna/Ati Virechana* - Use of strong purgatives or excessive purgation therapy.[10]
- *Teekshna/Ati Vasti*- Use of strong enemas or excessive enema treatments.
- *Gadatichara* - Improper or insufficient treatment of other conditions.
- *Chardi* - Frequent or excessive vomiting.

Manasika Nidana

- *Bhaya* - Fear, panic
- *Sanchintana* - Overthinking, stress, and anxiety.

Santarpana and *Santarpana Janya Vikara.*

Santarpana is nothing but *Brimhana.* '*Brihatwa Sthoulyatwa Tad Brimhanam*' the increase in body size and adiposity reflects the effects of *Brimhana,* which when uncontrolled, initiates the development of *Santarpanottha Vikaras.* Excessive intake of *Snigdha, Madhura, Guru* and *Picchila Aahaara* such as *Navaanna*, meat of aquatic animals, milk products, and an indulgent lifestyle including daytime sleep and sedentary habits. These contribute to a state of *Santarpana,* predisposing the individual to a host of *Santarpanottha Vikaras.*[11]

Santarpana Nidana	**Modern Lifestyle**
Snigdha, Madhura, Guru, Picchila Ahara	High-fat, sugary, refined, processed foods.
Navaanna, Anupa and Audaka Mamsa	Excessive polished carbs, red meat, seafood-rich diets.
Dugdha, Ksheera, Goudika, Paayashika Ahara	Dairy-heavy, high-calorie desserts and milk-based items.
Atimatra Sevana	Frequent binge-eating, snacking.
Divaswapna	Sedentary lifestyle, afternoon naps, lack of activity.
Shayyasana Sukha	Couch-bound behaviour, minimal physical exertion.
Achintana, Santosha, Harsha	Overindulgence in comfort, no mental or physical challenge.
Avyayama/Alpa Vyayama	Sedentary office jobs, minimal physical movement.

The *Nidanas* of *Santarpana* indicate a lifestyle that encourages accumulation, stagnation, and *Srotorodha*. These lifestyle patterns lead to obesity, dyslipidemia, insulin resistance, and eventually cardiovascular diseases conditions that classically mirror *Santarpanottha Hridroga* in Ayurvedic terms.

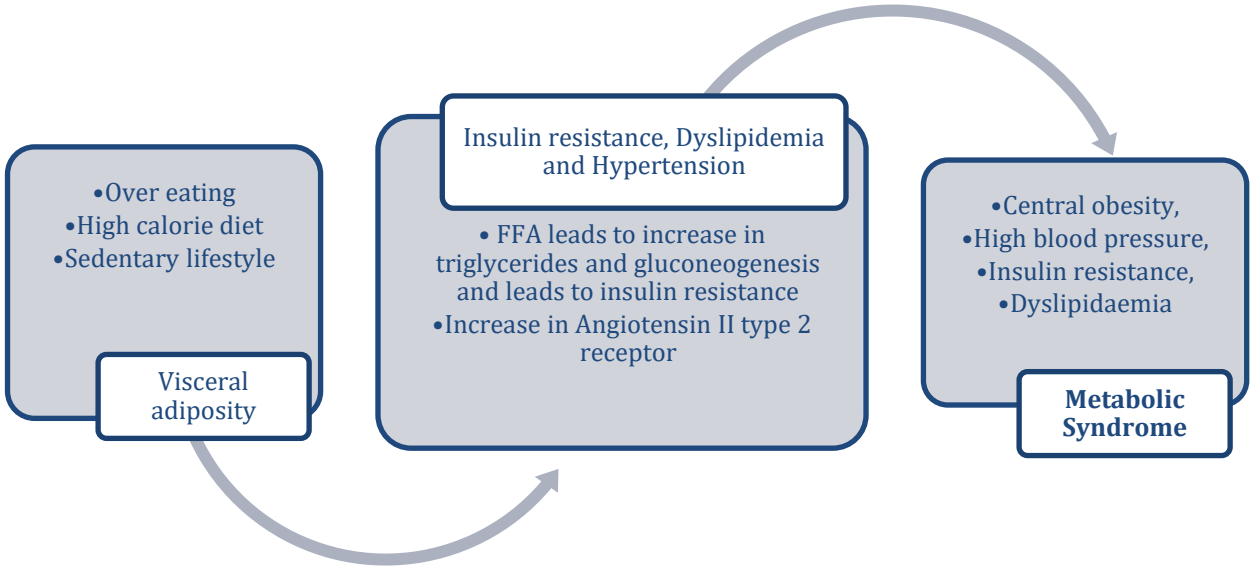

Figure 1: Modern biomedical understanding of the pathogenesis of metabolic syndrome

Figure 2: *Ayurvedic Samprapti* of *Santarpanottha Hridroga*

The first flowchart (Fig 1) shows how common lifestyle habits can gradually lead to metabolic syndrome, which is a major risk factor for heart disease. It typically starts with overeating, a high-calorie diet, and a lack of physical activity all of which lead to visceral fat accumulation, especially around the abdomen. This excess fat isn't just stored energy; it actively releases free fatty acids (FFAs) into the bloodstream. These FFAs stimulate the liver to produce more triglycerides and also push it to create more glucose through gluconeogenesis, making the body less responsive to insulin over time this is how insulin resistance begins.

At the same time, changes occur in blood pressure regulation, such as an increase in angiotensin II type 2 receptor activity, which contributes to hypertension. On top of that, disrupted fat metabolism leads to dyslipidemia, an imbalance in cholesterol and triglyceride levels. All these changes come together to form what we know as metabolic syndrome; a combination of central obesity, high blood pressure, insulin resistance, and abnormal lipid levels. This syndrome significantly increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases if not addressed early.

The Fig.2 presents the Ayurvedic explanation of how *Hridroga* can arise from *Santarpana*. When a person regularly consumes foods that are *Snigdha, Guru*, and *Madhura* combined with *Divaswapna, Aasyasukha* and lack of physical activity, leads to an internal state of excess nourishment. This is what Ayurveda describes as *Santarpana.* As a result, the *Agni* becomes weak, starts producing *Ama*, which is a sticky, undigested waste material that clogs the *Srotas*. This *Ama* spreads and begins to obstruct the *Srotas*, especially the *Medovaha Srotas*.

Over time, this blockage and accumulation disturb the balance of *Meda Dhatu*, leading to *Sthoulya* and a condition known as *Medasavrta Marga*. When this pathogenesis continues unchecked, it begins to affect the *Hridaya*, leading to the development of *Hridroga*.

DISCUSSION

Hridroga is classically described in Ayurvedic texts as an *Apatarpanottha Vikara*, meaning it arises due to undernourishment or depletion. However, in the context of today's lifestyle and disease trends, this understanding needs to be revisited. Modern cardiovascular disorders such as obesity, metabolic syndrome, and coronary artery disease (CAD) are on the rise conditions that are clearly linked to overnutrition, sedentary habits, and chronic stress.

In Ayurveda, *Santarpana* refers to a state of excessive nourishment. This includes the habitual consumption of *Snigdha, Madhura, Guru,* and *Picchila* food, along with indulgent lifestyle patterns like daytime sleep, minimal physical activity, and comfort-seeking behaviour. These factors lead to *Agnimandya*, resulting in the formation of *Ama* ultimately causing *Srotodushti*.

This Ayurvedic pathology correlates closely with the modern biomedical understanding of metabolic syndrome. The accumulation of visceral fat, elevation of free fatty acids (FFAs), insulin resistance, and chronic inflammation are reflections of *Kapha* and *Medo Vriddhi*, as well as *Ama* and *Srotorodha* described in Ayurveda. Furthermore, the Ayurvedic concept of *Medasavṛta Marga*, where *Meda* obstructs vital pathways, aligns with atherosclerotic changes seen in conditions like coronary artery disease.

Importantly, not all types of *Hridroga* are caused by *Santarpana Nidanas*. For instance, *Vataja Hridroga* is more closely associated with *Apatarpana Nidanas* such as emaciation, overexertion, and mental stress. In contrast, *Kaphaja Hridroga* often results from *Santarpana Nidanas*, with *Medasavrita Marga* leading to symptoms like *Ashmagarbha-vat Vedana* (a stone-like heaviness or pressure in the heart region).

Additionally, it is essential to understand that *Hridroga* does not refer only to myocardial infarction in the modern sense. Rather, it encompasses a much broader spectrum of both functional and structural heart conditions. These include not only ischemic heart disease (IHD) and coronary artery disease (CAD), but also cardiomyopathies, valvular heart diseases, arrhythmias, pericardial disorders, and congestive heart failure. Furthermore, infective and inflammatory cardiac conditions such as infective endocarditis, myocarditis, and pericarditis can also fall under the broader Ayurvedic concept of *Hridroga*, depending on the *Dosha-Dushya* involvement and clinical presentation. This highlights the need to interpret *Hridroga* not as a single disease entity, but as a category that includes multiple forms of *Hridaya* related dysfunction both acute and chronic, structural and metabolic.

With ongoing technological advancements and increasingly sedentary lifestyles, *Santarpana Nidanas* have become more dominant in the aetiology of heart diseases. Recognizing this shift allows for a more relevant and practical application of Ayurvedic principles. By identifying the patterns of *Santarpanottha Hridroga*, timely intervention through *Agni*- balancing, *Ahara-Vihara* regulation, and *Srotoshodhana* can support both prevention and management in today's clinical practice.

CONCLUSION

Today, heart diseases are becoming more common because of habits like overeating, eating unhealthy food, lack of exercise, and too much comfort. Ayurveda usually explains *Hridroga* as a disease caused by weakness or undernourishment, but in today's world, it can also be caused by too much what we call *Santarpana*.

This study shows that the reasons behind heart disease today like obesity, poor digestion, and blocked blood channels are very similar to what Ayurveda describes as *Medo Dushti, Agnimandya, Ama*, and *Srotorodha.* By understanding this connection, we can use Ayurvedic ideas to prevent heart problems early. Simple changes in food, lifestyle, and digestion can make a big difference in keeping the heart healthy.

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