



Review Article

ANALYTICAL REVIEW ON INFLUENCE OF *KRODHA* (ANGER) ON *AGNI* - A CONTEMPORARY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Agni is the supreme entity residing in the living being responsible for digestion of *Ahar dravya*, *Jatharagni* is the principle *Agni* among all categories of *Agni*, it should be suitably maintained. Ayurveda suggests that there are number of factors like *Krodha*, *Shoka*, *Chinta*, *Bhaya* etc. *Manas bhava* affects the normal function of *Agni* apart from *Doshik* influence. In Ayurveda *Ati*, *Heen* and *Mithya yoga* of *Asatmendriyasamyoga*, *Pradnyaparadha* and *Parinama* are the main etiological factors for anger. **Objective:** This study attempts to understand effect of *Krodha* on *Agni* with supportive classical and contemporary view. **Data source:** The literary study has been conducted through various ancient text like- *Charak samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Astang Hridayam* and other Ayurveda texts. Various websites were also referred in this context. **Discussion and Result:** *Pitta-Vata Vriddhi* occurring on *Krodha* can be correlated to activation of sympathetic Nervous system. *Agni dushti* and *Saman Vayu dushti* that occurs in *Krodha*, can be understood as disturbance in enzymatic activities and motility of GIT. So, *Krodha* is the reason for impaired digestion of food and generation of different GIT disorders. **Conclusion:** This analytical study suggests that there is direct relationship of status of *Manas* (mind) and *Agni* (digestive fire).

INTRODUCTION

The concept of *Agni* in Ayurveda is unique. Literary meaning of *Agni* is fire which in Ayurveda pertains to digestive fire. Different types of hormones and different types enzymes and co-enzymes etc., are all part of this digestive fire which could be equated with metabolic functions of the body. This *Agni* consistently functions in the living body. *Agni* changes the food in the form of power and performs vital functions in our body. Therefore, Ayurveda considers that *Agni* is the essential part of life^[1]. *Agni* performs different functions in the body viz., skin glow, power, health, nutrition, brightness, *Oja*, *Teja* (energy) and *Prana* (life power)^[2].

Acharya Charak has mentioned that if Functioning of the *Agni* ceases in a living being then death will ensue because all work in our body depend on *Jathragni*^[3].

Jatharagni is the principle *Agni* among all the categories of *Agni* and it is a source of strength to *Bhutagni* and *Dhatvagni*^[4]. So, *Jatharagni* should be suitably and carefully maintained because life and strength of individual depends upon it. The main seat of *Jatharagni* is *Grahani* as it receives the food for the digestion.

Food is supposed to be consumed with complete concentration of *Manas* (mind) and with due regard to oneself. Intake of wholesome and delicious food with pleasing and wholesome smell (including taste, color, touch and sound), nourishes senses and sensory organs. Wholesome food taken even in proper quantity, do not get properly digested when the individual is afflicted with anger, fear, grief, sorrow, excessive sleep and excessive vigil^[5].

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The *Bruhatrayi* were referred regarding the references for the concept of *Krodha*, *Agni* and

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physiological aspects were studied from modern physiology books. Later, proper correlation was done between Ayurvedic and modern views to build valid and reliable hypothesis.

Literary Review

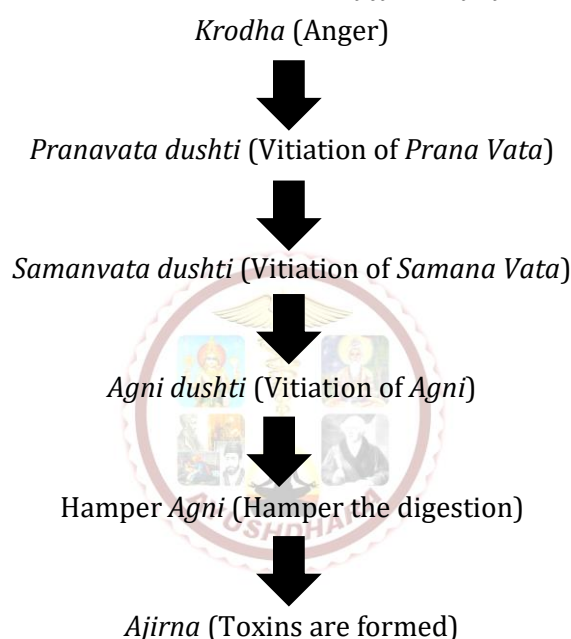
Krodha

The word *Krodha* is derived from root word *Kradh + Bhaave ghan*. Synonyms of *Krodha* are *Kopa, Amarsha, Rosha, Pratigha, Rut, Krudha, Manyu, Utsava* and *Aastu*^[6] etc. It has following meanings like anger, wrath and passion according to various dictionaries^[7]. Anger considered as the feeling which gives rise to the *raudra* sentiment. In *Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta* chapter three, *Shri Krishna* stated that *Kama* and *Krodha* both have *Rajoguna pradhanatvam*^[8].

Agni

The word *Agni* is derived from *Agi Gatau Dhatu*, which means a particular substance which goes continuously and through which perception of knowledge is made possible^[9]. Synonyms of *Agni* are *Vaishvanar, Vahni, Veetihotra, Dhananjaya, Jvalana, Anala, Hiranyaretas, Dahana, Vibhaavas, Sichi, Bahul* and *Vasu*^[10]. Besides the textual meaning, in correct sense, it implies the agent, which is concerned with digestion, disintegration or breakdown process. It comprehends various factors concerned with digestion and metabolism.

Although *Agni* is single entity, according to its place and actions during food digestion, assimilation and metabolism it has thirteen types. They are one *Jatharagni*, five *Bhutagni* and seven *Dhtavagni*. They function at different levels, right from *Ahar grahana* to *Dhatu nirmana*.



(Figure 1: Flow Chart No 1 - Influence of Krodha on Agni dushti)

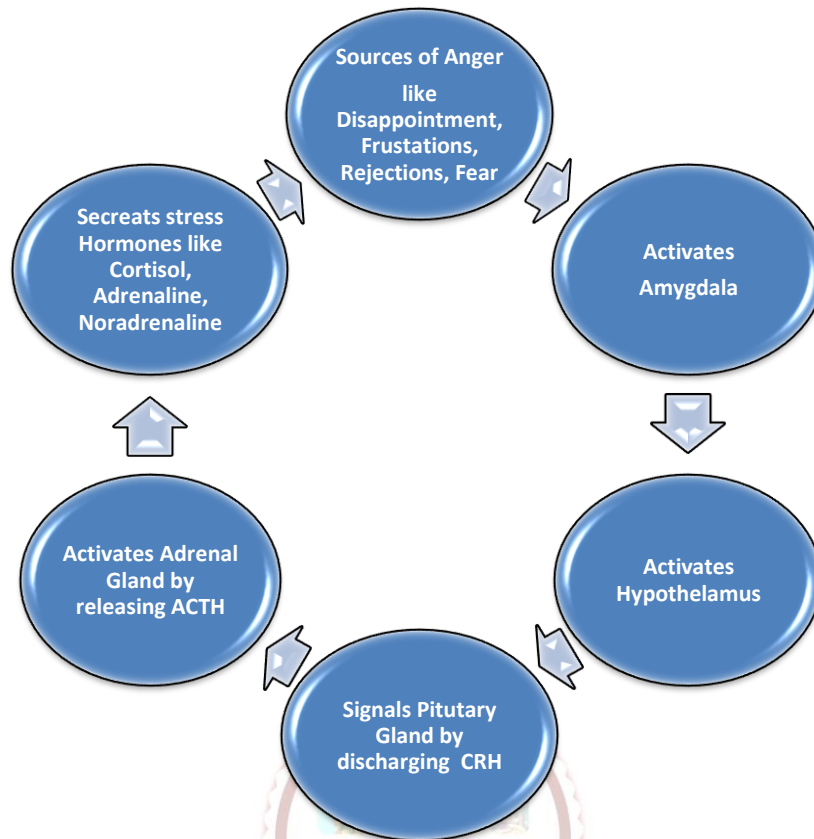
Anger

Anger is one of the most powerful and vital emotions. It can be necessary tool for survival and can cause significant difficulties if it persists to long, knocking mind associated with thinking, feeling, behaviour and relationship^[11]. It is an emotion that involves a strong uncomfortable and awkward response to perceived provocation, hurt or threat. When personal boundaries get demolished then anger gets aroused and some even show anger when a person feels their personal boundaries are being or going to be violated. Some have a learned tendency to react to anger through retaliation as a way of and some even show coping behavior. Anger can be divided into three modalities: Cognitive (appraisal), somatic-affection (tension and agitations) and behavioral (withdrawal and antagonism)^[12]. Some psychologists describe anger as an example of psychological pressure that the human system utilizes for survival up to a certain limit and within a time frame which on exceeding could bring drastic changes in personality, behavior and body also^[13,14].

Anger affects different body system resulting in alteration in physiological changes as increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure and increased level of adrenaline and noradrenalin due to sympathetic discharge which is due to the body's mechanism to cope up with fear, hurt or agony. Anger is an emotion which initially triggers fight response which turns into flight response if there aren't proper resources at disposal.

Modern psychologist believe that anger has a functional value for survival and is a primary, natural and mature emotion felt by all humans at some point or the other. It can affect personal as well as social well-being and can impact negatively both the body and the mind if left unaddressed^[15].

Figure 2: Flow Chart No 2 - Physiology of Anger



- Elevated cortisol causes neurons to accept too much calcium through their membrane. A Calcium overload can make cells fire too frequently and die. The Hippocampus and Prefrontal cortex (PFC) are particularly vulnerable to cortisol and this has a negative effect.
 - Prefrontal cortex (PFC) – Elevated cortisol causes a loss of neurons in Prefrontal cortex. Suppressed activity in the PFC hampers judgmental power of individuals.
 - Hippocampus – Elevated cortisol kills neurons in the hippocampus and disrupts the creation of new ones. Suppressed activity in the hippocampus weakens Short term memory. It also prevents one from forming new ideas properly.
 - Too much cortisol will decrease serotonin, the hormone that makes one feel happy. A reduction in serotonin level makes one more sensitive to feel anger and pain. This causes aggressive behavior and sometimes may lead to depression.
- Effect of Anger on Body**
- 1) Cardiovascular system
 - Increase in heart rate
 - Increase in arterial blood pressure
 - Increase in arterial tension
 - Increase in blood glucose level
 - Increase in blood fatty acid level
 - When these symptoms become chronic, blood vessels becomes atherosclerotic and plaques could form. This can lead to stroke and heart attack.
 - 2) Immune System
 - Disturbances in thyroid function test
 - Reduction in the number of natural killer cell
 - Increase the number of virus infected cells
 - May increase the incidence of cancer
 - 3) Others
 - Could increase intra ocular pressure
 - Could cause disturbance in vision
 - Increases the intensity and frequency of migraines and headaches
 - May reduce the bone density
 - 4) Digestive System
 - Reduces the blood flow of G.I tract
 - Disturbs the G.I. metabolism
 - Increases the intensity and frequency of dry mouth

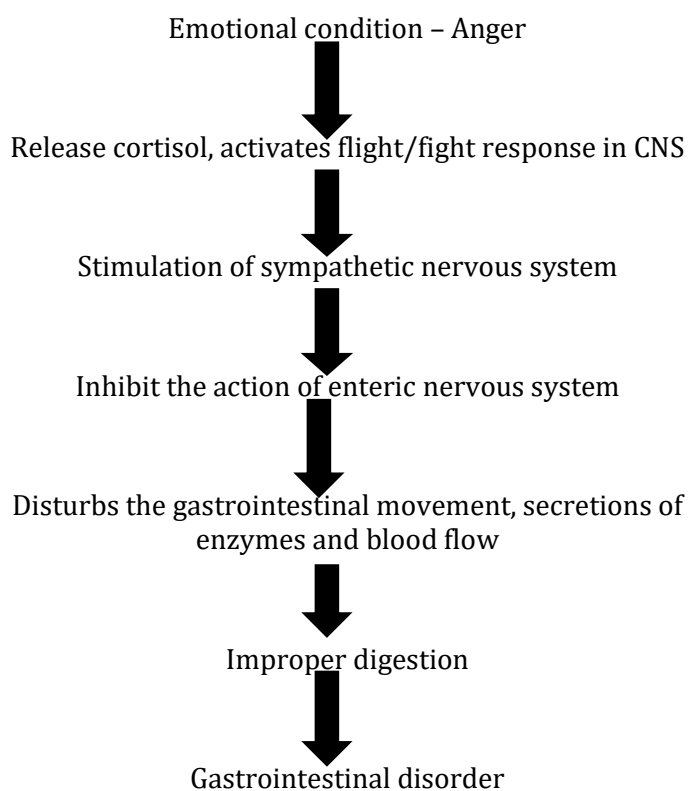


Figure3: Flow Chart No 3 - Influence of Anger on digestion

DISCUSSION

In the present era of fast paced life, *Krodha* is among one of the most important causative factor for ill health. Ayurveda as well as Indian philosophy has explained anger as a *Dharaneeya vega* [17] (suppressible urge) because of its damaging effects on the body. Stress hormones like cortisol which is a glucocorticoid hormone and norepinephrine-epinephrine which are catecholamines which are secreted by adrenal gland during frustration, aggression, fear, rejection etc, which give rise to anger. These hormones are controlled by the hypothalamus, pituitary gland and adrenal gland commonly referred to as the HPA axis. This axis activates the sympathetic nervous system and the stress response. During the response, these hormones trigger the blood flow towards brain, large muscles and limbs rather than towards digestive tract. Therefore functions of digestive system get compromised and food is not properly digested. On the other hand, the parasympathetic nervous system stimulates the digestive response [18].

Activation of sympathetic system during anger can be co-related with *Pitta-Vata vridhhi* as seen in Anger. Involvement of *Prana vayu* may be considered due to its location in head and having its influence on mind. Sympathetic system stimulation leads to inhibition of enteric nervous system. It is the *Samanvayu dushti* as a result of *Krodha*. This *Vayu* has synergistic effect on *Agni* that leads to the exhibition of

the function of *Agni*. It also helps in the movement, digestion and assimilation of *Ahar dravya*[19]. So, proper functioning of *Vata* along with *Agni* plays a very important role in digestion of food.

But, in the state of *Krodha* there is a partial or complete vitiation of *Agni* that results in improper digestion which forms free radicals which could be co-related with *Ama*[20]. Moreover same mechanism is mentioned in Modern system of medicine in which anger inhibits GIT motility, secretion and enzymatic activity which are all parts of enteric nervous system, leading to improper digestion in Anger.

CONCLUSION

In Ayurveda *Ati, Heen* and *Mithya yoga* of *Asatmendriyasamyoga, Pragnyaparadha* and *Parinama* are the main etiological factors of anger. *Agnidushti* and *Samanvayu dushti* occurs in *Krodha*, which can be understood as disturbance in enzymatic activities and motility of GI tract those are necessary for digestion and movement of food in alimentary canal respectively. On the basis of the supportive contemporary views it can be stated that *krodha* is among one of the main reason for impaired digestion. It generates different Gastro-intestinal disorders.

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