



Review Article

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CRITICAL STUDY OF MADHUMEHA IN AYURVEDA: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The disease "Prameha" is known to mankind since Vedic Period, the meaning of which is to pass excessive urine. Ayurvedic texts describes Prameha of 20 types, these are compared to various urinary disorders. Madhumeha or Kshaudrameha is a Vataj Prameha having the features of sweet and turbid urine like that of honey. These symptoms along with other manifestations are similar to Diabetes mellitus. The incidence of Diabetes mellitus is increasing because of faulty dietary habits and lifestyle. Understanding of Madhumeha in Ayurveda may help in management and prevention of the various complications of Madhumeha. The global increase in the prevalence of diabetes is due to increase population, aging, urbanization and increasing incidence of obesity and physical inactivity.

Keywords: Madhumeha, Vataj Prameha, Diabetes Mellitus**INTRODUCTION**

The incidence in Asian population is high in young to middle-aged adults which has adverse effects on national health and also the economy. Out of total diabetic population in developing countries, 80% is in India.¹

In Atharva-Veda Kaushika Sutra there is reference of 'Prameha' where two terms 'Asrava' and 'Prameha' are mentioned, Aa + Sar means to flow. Sayana and Kesava (Vedic commentators) have described 'Mutratrisara' or excessive urination.

Charaka (1000 BC) has considered 'Prameha' as Santarpan jani² (Nourishing treatment) disease, caused by overeating of sweets, starchy, fatty, slimy food stuffs, new grains, excessive intake of milk, curd, ghee and meat of aquatic animals and people having sedentary life style. 'Prameha' is included in Dushitmedoja roga³ (Disturbance in adipose tissue metabolism). He has mentioned Prameha and Madhumeha of 'Jata' type (~hereditary) occurs because of 'Bija dosh'. Charaka has described 20 types of 'Prameha' and 7 types of 'Prameha pidika' as complication of Prameha⁴ and the aetiopathogenesis, subtypes, clinical features etc. are discussed⁶. The detail description of 'Madhumeha' is in Sutra Sthana⁷. In Chikitsa sthana there is a chapter for the treatment of Prameha and he has mentioned the difference between 'Raktapitta' and 'Prameha'⁸.

Sushruta (1000-1500 BC) classified 'Prameha' into two types - Sahaja (Hereditary) and 'Apathya nimittaja'⁹ (Acquired), according to body constitution - Sthula (obese) and Krisha (Asthenic) prameha¹⁰. Sushruta discussed aetiopathogenesis, clinical features, complications and manifestation of 10 types of 'Prameha Pidika,' which arise due to uncontrolled Prameha¹¹. Sushruta has written separate chapters for the treatment of Prameha, Prameka Pidika (~Carbuncle) and Madhumeha also mentioned 'Prameha Nivriti Lakshana'¹²(free from Diabetes).

Kashyap Samhita (1000 BC) describes the clinical features of Prameha in 'Pramehi Balaka' (children) which indicates the childhood diabetes¹³, its types¹⁴, differentiated 'Mutrakriccha' and 'Prameha' (Mutrakriccha chikitsita adhyay). He has mentioned 8 types of Pidika¹⁵.

Mythological Aspect

Acharya Charaka has mentioned the origin of Prameha, when there was disruption of Yagnaya organised by Daksha-Prajapati by the Ganas of Lord Shiva. Prameha is caused by consuming special type of food 'Havisa' prepared from rice, milk & sugar for offering in the Yagnaya¹⁶.

Etymology: The word 'Prameha' is made up of Upsarga (prefix) 'Pra' and 'Meha' Dhātu. Meha is from 'Mihasechane'.

Prameha = Pra + meha

Pra = Excessive

Meha = To make water, to pass urine

Nirukti: Prakarshen Prabhutam- Prachuram varamvaram va mehati mutratyaga karoti yasmin roge sa pramehah¹⁷ |

The disease in which there is increased in quantity and frequency of urination is Prameha.

Classification of Nidan: Various causes of Prameha described by various Acharyas can be categorized as follows:

1. Sahaja or Kulaja: (a) Matruja – Pitruja, (b) Bija bhaga dosaj - bijabhagavayava dosaj
2. Garbhaja: (a) Annarasaja
3. Apathya: (a) Ahara, (b) Vihara
4. Manasika karana
5. Anya karan: Pancakarmatiyoga etc.

Sahaja or Kulaja: When one of the parents or both or grand parents does Prameha Apathya, they will develop Prameha, Dosha will develop in their 'Bija' (~germ cells), it is of two types¹⁸.

- (a) *Bija - Bhaga Dosa*
 (b) *Bija - Bhaga - Avyaya Dosha*.

The offspring born with *Bija Doshas*, from either of parent or both, will be born with *Prameha*. *Bija Dosas* from the parents are of two types.

- (a) *Matruja* i.e. *Bijadosa* from mother's side.
 (b) *Pitruja* i.e. *Bija Dosa* from fathers side.

When the '*Bijansha*' of the specific '*Anga-Pratyanga*' is deformed the organ formed from that '*Bijansha*' will also be deformed or ill formed¹⁹. *Bhel Samhita* has described this type as '*Prakriti Prabhava*' *Prameha*²⁰.

Garbhaja: These types of diseases are caused by improper food and activities by the mother during her pregnancy and child will get affected by the disease in future²¹.

(a) **Annarasaja:** *Prameha* is caused by indulgence of mother in sweet foods during pregnancy²². *Charaka* has mentioned

consumption of *Madhura Ahara* during pregnancy by mother, the child will develop *Prameha* in future²³.

Apathya: Indulgence in food and activities leading to '*Dosa Prakopa*' and '*Dhatu dusti*' causing *Prameha*. *Bhel Samhita* has mentioned this type of *Prameha* as '*Swakritija Prameha*²⁴'. *Apathya* can be of following types.

- (a) *Ahara* (food habits)
 (b) *Vihara* (Activities)

MANAS (Psychological): Psychological factors such as stress, anxiety also plays role in *Prameha*.

Shatkriyakala in Prameha

Shatkriyakala has been described by *Sushruta*²⁵. It is the division of the pathological stage of disease in view of its treatment. *Shatkriyakala* with respect to *Prameha* can be explained as follows:

Table 1: Various Stages of Shatkriyakala

| Stages of Shatkriyakala | Features |
|-------------------------|---|
| Sanchaya | All the three <i>Doshas</i> get aggravated in their own, producing symptoms of vitiated <i>Doshas</i> . |
| Prakopa | <i>Doshas</i> increase in quantity as well as quality, <i>Kapha</i> is predominantly vitiated in <i>Prameha</i> . |
| Prasara | Vitiated <i>Doshas</i> circulate all over the body. <i>Meda</i> (becomes excessively liquid), <i>Mansa</i> , <i>kleda</i> , <i>Rakta</i> , <i>Sukra</i> , <i>Rasa</i> , <i>Vasa</i> , <i>Majja</i> , <i>Lasika</i> and finally the <i>Ojas</i> is also vitiated by the vitiated <i>Doshas</i> . |
| Sthana Sansraya | Vitiated <i>Doshas</i> along with vitiated <i>Dushyas</i> enter the <i>Mutra vaha Srotas</i> (urinary system) get localised in <i>Vasti Mukha</i> causing the <i>Purva rupa</i> or the premonitory symptoms. |
| Vyakti | Increase quantity and frequency of urine, turbid urine, which is excessively sweet and astringent in taste, other manifestations. |
| Bheda | Various complications along with <i>Prameha Pidika</i> |

Purvarupa (Premonitory Symptoms)

The symptoms appearing after the *Dosha-Dushya Sammurchana* of the disease, while initiating the process of manifestation of various types of *Prameha*, produce the following premonitory symptoms²⁶.

- *Kesa Jatilabhava* (matting of hairs)
- *Madhura Asaya* (sweet taste in mouth)
- *Kara-Pada Suptata* and *Daha* (Numbness and burning sensation in hands and feet)
- *Mukha, Talu, kamtha Sosa* (dryness of mouth, palate, throat)
- *Pipasa* (thirst)
- *Alaysa* (lazziness)
- *Malam kaya* (increase quantity of waste products from the body)
- *Kaya chidra Upadeha* (accumulation of waste products on teeth, palate, tongue, ears, nose etc.)
- *Paridaha-Supatata* (burning sensation and numbness all over the body organs).
- *Pipilika-Bhisaran* (attraction of ants towards the body and urine).
- *Mutra-Dosa* (abnormalities in the urine)
- *Vistra Sarirgandha* (body odour).
- *Nidra* (excessive sleep)
- *Tandra* (drowsiness)

Madhumeha

Madhumeha is one of the four types of *Vataja Prameha*. *Caraka* has mentioned '*Madhumeha*' in *Nidansthana* and in *Sutrasthana* he has separately described the *Nidan Samprapti* of '*Madhumeha*'.²⁷ *Sushruta* has written separate chapter for the treatment of '*Madhumeha*'.

Nirukti

Madhumeha: The disease in which urine becomes sweet like *Madhu* or honey and the body of the patient also becomes *Sweet*²⁸.

Madhumeha - Dushya is '*Ojas*' which is *Sara* or essence of all the *Dhatus*. The vitiated *Vata* vitiates the *Madhura Ojas*, turns it into *kasaya Rasa*. The *Dosha-Dushya* enter the *Vasti* get localised in *Vasti-Mukta* manifesting *Madhumeha*.

The urine in *Madhumeha* is excessively sweet and astringent in taste, whitish, rough to touch. *Susruta* has named this as '*Kshaudrameha*'²⁹.

Madhumeha Nidan

Indulgence in food and activities mentioned below are susceptible for '*Madhumeha*'³⁰.

Ahara

- *Guru Ahara* (heavy foods)
- *Snigdha Ahara* (fatty foods)
- *Amla Lavana Ahara* (salty and sour foods)
- *Nava Anna* (new grains)
- *Nava Madya* (fresh wines)

Vihara

- *Ati Nidra* (excessive sleep)
- *Asyasukham* (sedentary habits)
- *Avyayama* (lack of exercise)

Manas Karana

Achintana (lack of mental exercise)

Anya Karana

Sansodhan Akurvantam (not doing body purification by *vamana virechana* etc.)

Santarpanjanya

Disease caused by over indulgence in *Madhura, Sita, Guru, Picchala Ahara* etc. and *Divasvapna, Sayya Sukha* etc. i.e. food and activities which increase the *Kapha Dosha* and *Medo Dhatus* predominantly³¹.

Under the heading ‘*Garbhopghatkarabhava*’, *Charaka* has mentioned that when a pregnant women is indulged in excessive intake of *Madhura Ahara*, the offspring will develop *Prameha* in future life³².

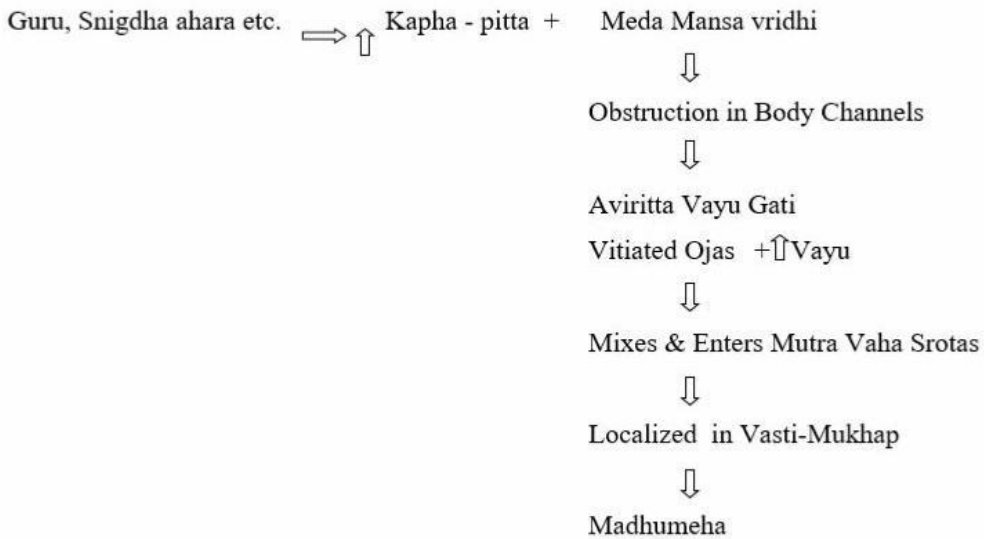
Types of Madhumeha

On the basis of *Samprapti Madhumeha* can be divided as³³

- *Dhatu-Ksya Vataprakopaja (krisa)*
- *Dosha Avritta Patha (Sthula)*

Samprapti of Avrutta vata madhumeha

By doing above said *Prameha Nidan Sevana* there is *Kapha-Pitta Prakopa*. Due to the *Samana Guna* of *Kapha* and *Meda-Mansa* are vitiated. The vitiated *Kapha Pitta* and *Meda-Mansa Dhātu* cause obstruction in channels and *Vayu-Gati Avrodha*. The *Vayu* is having *Rukhsa Guna*, turns *Madhura ojas* in *Kasya* rasa, mixes and enters into the *Mutra Vaha Srotas* (urinary system). This admixture gets localised or there is *Sthansansraya* in *Vasti-Mukha*, causing excessive, frequent and *Madhura Ksaya* urination like honey or *Madhu*. The *Prameha* is known as *Madhumeha*. This is difficult to treat. In this type symptoms of vitiated *Vata, Pitta, Kapha* are seen frequently. Sometimes these symptoms appear to be decreased but later on there is increase in the symptoms³⁴

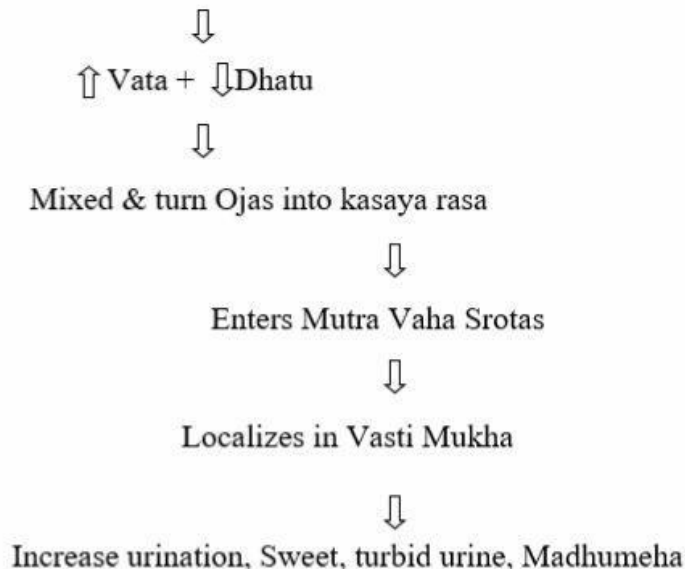


Samprapti of Vata prakopa madhumeha

Exposure to the factors causing vata vitiation leads to early vata prokopa, this vitiated vata having ruksa properties leads to visamagni. Vishamagni causes dhatu ksaya, because of ksaya of

all the dhatus, Vata turns the Ojas in the body to ksaya rasa. These get mixed and enter the mutra-vaha-srotas, get localised at vasti-mukha manifesting madhumeha. The urine is sweet as honey, whitish, sheeta and ruksa. This is incurable³⁵. This type of patient is krisa.

Apathya Ahara- Vihara+ Vamana – Virecana Atiyoga



Clinical features

The urine of *Madhumehi* person has following characters³⁶.

- *Ksaya - madhura* rasa (Astringent, sweet taste)
- *Pandu varna* (whitish in colour)
- *Ruksa sparsa* (rough)

Madhumehi prefers to stand still than walking, sitting than standing, lying down than sitting and sleeping than lying down³⁷.

Vataja Prameha Upadrava

*Sushrut*³⁸

- *Hrid-graha* (heaviness in chest)
- *Laulam* (desire for overeating)
- *Anidra* (sleeplessness)
- *Kampa* (tremors)
- *Sthambha* (stiffness)
- *Sula* (pain)
- *Badha Purisha* (constipation)

Incurable stage

When *Pramehi* develops *Prameha Pidika* in acute condition, along with other complications of *Prameha* then it is incurable³⁹.

Prameha Chikitsa

The treatment of the disease is based on

- Avoiding the causative factors or '*Nidana Parivarjana*'.
- Purification of the body by '*Sansodhana*'.
- By achieving the equilibrium of the remaining vitiated *Doshas* by '*Sansaman*'.

Nidana Parivarjan

The factor responsible for causing *Prameha* i.e. *Madhura*, *Sita*, *Snigdha*, *Guru Ahara* etc., activities like lack of exercise, laziness, sedentary habits must be avoided⁴⁰.

In *Prameha* all the three *Doshas* are involved in different quantity along with the *Doshas* i.e. *Meda*, *Mansa*, *Rakta*, *Sukra*, *Ambu*, *Vasa*, *Majja*, *Lasika*, *Rasa*, *Ojas*⁴¹.

Depending on the body constitution, *Pramehi* are of two types⁴²

- *Sthula* and powerful.
- *Krisha* and weak

The treatment of choice in *Krisha Pramehi* is '*Brihana*' or '*Santarpana*⁴³', food and activities that increase the body strength. In this type of patients *Sansodhan Chikitsa* is not done.

The *Sthula Pramehi* are first given *Sansodhan* therapy or biological purification of the body *Dosha* followed by maintaining their equilibrium. Initially *Snehana*' is done and when the body becomes '*Snigdha*' then *Shodhana* is done by *Vamana Virecana* etc.⁴⁴

Sushruta has also mentioned the treatment regimen, but he has separately discussed the treatment for *Prameha*, *Prameha Pidika* and *Madhumeha*. He has mentioned about the use of *Silajatu* in treating '*Madhumeha*⁴⁵'.

CONCLUSION

In today's health scenario it is our necessity to understand disease like *Prameha (Madhumeha)* which is huge burden on our society health wise and economically. If we understand *madhumeha* better from our old *Vedic* period description which is in rudimentary form but it is beautifully described in *Ayurvedic* texts like *Charaka samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*,

Astanga Hridya etc. Taking the knowledge from past and implementation of that in present time will be beneficial

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