



## Review Article

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### REVIEW ON THE CONCEPT OF ETIOPATHOGENESIS OF *AMAVATA* AND ITS MANAGEMENT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO *VIRUDDHA AHARA*

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#### ABSTRACT

*Ayurveda* is one of the ancient medical sciences which is potential and effective in current scenario. Unlike other medical sciences instead of focusing on treatment of any particular disease, *Ayurveda* focuses more on the healthy living and wellbeing of the person. For healthy living, *Ayurveda* has given a prime importance to *ahara* in *trayopastambha*. *Ahara* should be wholesome in accordance with *desha*, *kala*, *prakriti* and *vaya*. It plays an important role in healthy life. By its opposite *guna*, *veerya*, *vipaka*, *matra*, *samyoga*, is considered as *viruddha ahara* the regular indulgence in it leads to many autoimmune disorders. In our classics it is clearly mentioned *viruddha ahara* as prime *Nidana* in *Amavata*. Hence *viruddha ahara* plays an important role in *Samprapti* of *Amavata*.

**Keywords:** *Agni*, *Ama*, *Viruddha Ahara*, *Amavata*.

#### INTRODUCTION

In the present era due to the technical advancement, increased stress and reduction in manual work people become adjusted for sedentary life style. Also due to ignorance regarding dietetics people has started consuming incompatible foods. This unhealthy combination called as *Viruddha* is a unique concept explained in *Ayurveda*. This initiates the basis for development of diseases due to formation of *Ama*. The present lifestyle of the human being is more inclined to such dietary habits leading to many serious ailments.

*Amavata* is a disease characterized by *Sandhi Shoola*, *shopha* and *Stabdhata* which is correlated with the disease Rheumatoid arthritis having similar features with multiple joint involvements. The prevalence of Rheumatoid arthritis is approximately 1% of the population (range 0.3-2.1%); women are affected approximately 3 times more often than men. *Acharya Sushruta* have emphasized that *Ahara* is responsible for the nourishment of the body. It produces instant strength, increases the lifespan, luster, happiness as well as normal mental activities like memory power<sup>1</sup>. All *Acharyas* have accepted a role of *Viruddha Ahara* in the manifestation of many diseases. In present scenario the increasing complexity of modern industrial society and the wide-ranging nature of the International food trade, it has increased the risk of contamination of food by chemical and biological agents, in the form of changing *Veerya*, *Guna*, *Rasa* and *Swabhava* of that food item which in turn leads to Incompatibility. The *ahara dravyas* and *Aushadhi's* which are opposite to *dhatu*s (*Deha dhatu pratyanyika*) causes *dosha utklesha* but do not have the capacity to eliminate those *doshas* out of the body are considered as *viruddha*.

The drugs which are antagonistic to body and *dhatu*s are called as *viruddha*.<sup>2</sup> The drugs and diets which dislodge the *doshas* from

their original site, but do not expel them out of the body and they vitiate the *Rasadi dhatus*. They do not help in the nourishment of *dhatu*, but instead they vitiate *dhatu*s and produce many diseases, are known as *viruddha*.<sup>3</sup>

As mentioned by our *Acharyas*, *Viruddha Ahara* is responsible for disease formation such as *Kushtha*, *Amavata*, *Amlapitta*, *Atisara*, *Pandu*, *Visarpa*, *Vatarakta*, *Grahani* etc. So *Viruddha Ahara* is one of the main potential factors for many diseases. With above point in mind and to search out cause and effect relationship between *Viruddha Ahara* and *Amavata* disease, an attempt is made in this paper to understand the role of *Viruddha ahara* in manifestation of *Amavata*.

#### Concept of *Viruddha Ahara*

*Viruddha* literary means contrast or opposition in particular. *Charaka* has defined *viruddha ahara* as a certain food which is wrong in combination, has undergone wrong processing, consumed in incorrect dose or consumed in incorrect time of the day and in wrong season can be termed as *Viruddha Aahara*.<sup>3</sup> *Acharya Charaka* coined term *ahita* for *viruddha ahara*. There are 18 types of *viruddha ahara* (both drug and diet) mentioned by *Acharya Charaka*.<sup>4</sup>

1. **Desha Viruddha (place):** Use of *Snigdha*, *Sheeta*, *Guru* and other substances of similar quantities to *Anoopa Desha* (marshy region) can cause disturbances in the *Agni* and may leads to autoimmune diseases.
2. **Kaal Viruddha (Time):** The consumption of diet or food with properties similar to the particular season can lead to various diseases. The uses of *Ruksha ahara Ati sevana* in *Sheeta Kala*, *Katu* and *Ushna* items in *Ushna Kala*. E.g., Cold and

dry substance in winter is incompatible with reference to *Kala*.

3. **Agni viruddha (digestion power):** One should take diet or food after considering the status of *Agni*. i.e., *Mandagni*, *tikshna agni*, *vishamagni*, *samagni*; If food has not been taken in accordance to the *Jatharagni Bala* then it will become *Agni Viruddha*.
4. **Matra Viruddha (appropriate dose):** If one does not take *Matravat Ahara* than it is called *Matra Viruddha*. Some food items become poisonous when taken together. For example, intake of honey and ghee in equal quantity.
5. **Satmya Viruddha (suitability):** Intake of sweet and cold substance by persons accustomed to pungent and hot substance. *Satmya Viruddha Ahara* will cause manifestation of different metabolic disorders.
6. **Dosha Viruddha (against of Dosha):** Utilization of drugs, diets and regimen having similar qualities with doshas but at variance with the habit of the individual.
7. **Samskara Viruddha (processing):** Drugs and diets which when prepared in a particular way produce poisonous effects, For example, meat of peacock roasted on a castor spit.
8. **Veerya Viruddha (Active principles):** Substances having cold potency in combination with those of hot potency. If consumed or practiced can lead to *Veerya Viruddha*.
9. **Koshtha Viruddha (bowels):** Administration of *Mridu Virya* drugs to *Krura Kosta* patient. E.g., Intake of milk by *Mridu Koshta* person.
10. **Avastha Viruddha:** Intake of *vata* aggravating food by a person after exhaustion, sexual act and physical exercise or intake of *kapha* aggravating food by a person having laxated bowel. Our diet should be in accordance to our energy expenditure through physical and mental activities. Such things can be considered due *Avastha Viruddha Ahara*.
11. **Krama Viruddha (order):** If a person takes food before his bowel and urinary bladder are clear or when he does not have appetite or after his hunger has been aggravated.
12. **Parihara Viruddha (contra indication):** Person takes hot substance after a meal of the flesh of a boar and similar animals. The flesh of boar is *Ushna Veerya*, consumption of hot substance after consumption of boar flesh can lead to increase in the *Ushna Guna* in the body leading to *Dhatu Kshaya*. This type of *Viruddha Ahara* is called *Parihar Viruddha*.
13. **Upachara Viruddha (Prescription):** After the consumption of Ghee intake of cold water or cold food items is called as *Upachara Viruddha*.
14. **Paka Viruddha (cooking):** Preparation of food with bad or rotten fuel and under cooking over cooking or burning during the process of preparation.
15. **Samyoga Viruddha (combination):** Intake of sour substance with milk. Milk is cold in potency and sweet in taste, whereas the sour substance is having hot potency; so, combination of these leads to improper metabolism and production of toxins in the body.

16. **Hrita Viruddha (palatability):** Any substance which is not pleasant in taste.

17. **Sampat Viruddha (richness of quality):** Intake of substance that are not matured, over matured or putrefied.

18. **Vidhi Viruddha (rules of eating):** It is antagonism in rules if the food is not taken in privacy.

#### Diseases caused due to consumption of *Viruddha ahara*

*Acharya Charaka* has mentioned that such types of *viruddha ahara* is responsible for the causation of sterility, blindness, *Visarpa*, ascites, eruptions, insanity, fistula, fainting, intoxication, tympanitis, spasmodic obstruction in throat, anemia, poisoning due to *ama*, *kilasa*, type of skin disease, obstinate skin diseases including leprosy, sprue, oedema, acid dyspepsia, fever, rhinitis, foetal diseases and even death.<sup>5</sup>

#### Mode of action of *Viruddha ahara*

*Viruddha Ahara* taken regularly could induce inflammation at a molecular level, disturbing the eicosanoid pathway creating more arachidonic acid leading to increased prostaglandin-2 and thromboxane. This inflammatory effect is an important effect as these are all the basic pathologies that create *Agni Mandya*, *Ama*, and a number of metabolic disorders.

*Ama* combining with vitiated *Vata dosha* becomes more virulent and reaches *Dhamanis*. This *Ama* combines with *Tridoshas* and consequently attains different *Varnas* (colours) with *Guruta* (heaviness) and *Picchilata* (sliminess). This morbid then *Ama* circulates throughout the body with the help of vitiated *Vata dosha*, moves towards the *Shleshma Sthana*. Thus, producing *Sroto abhishyandata* causing *Sroto avarodha* and facilitates *Sihanamsraya* at the site of *Khavaigunya* particularly in *Trikadi Sandhi Pradesh*. It also produces different symptoms as per the part it gets lodged. Due to *viruddha veerya* of *ahara* it further leads to *rakta pradooshana* causing *maha abhishyandata*. If *alpa doshas* are vitiated it produces disease with less symptoms like *tilakalaka*, if moderate vitiation of *doshas* then it leads to diseases like *kushta*, if more vitiation of *doshas* is involved it induces diseases like *Visarpa*.

#### Chikitsa Siddhanta

Diseases caused by the intake of *Viruddha ahara* can be cured by *Vamana* (therapeutic emesis) and *Virechana* (therapeutic purgation) or administration of antidotes and by taking prophylactic measures. *Shamana* (pacifying) therapy depending upon the *Doshik* vitiation with drugs which are qualitatively opposite to such *Viruddha ahara*<sup>6</sup>.

#### Amotpatti

*Dusyatyagnih sa dusto annam na tat pachati laghvapi |*  
*Apacyamanam suktatvam yaatyannam visarupatam |*  
(*cha. chi* 15/44)

*Apakwa ahara rasa* is different from *amarasa*, which makes the difference between *Ajirna* and *ama* conditions. The *Apakwa ahara rasa* which is situated in *amashaya* gets *suktatwa* after passage of some time, that *Sukta bhava* of *Apakwa ahara rasa* is called *ama* during further course of time the *ama* interacts with *doshas* and becomes pathogenic which is known as *Amadosha*. This *Amadosha* on further stasis, gets more *suktatwa* there by attains and acquires 'visha' qualities, this toxic condition is known as *amavisha*.<sup>7</sup>

### Modern concept of ama

*Ama* is the product of improper cellular metabolism. Cellular metabolism can be either anabolism or catabolism which can correlate to *dhatu nirmana* and *dhatu vyapara*. Thus, *ama* is the intermediary products of metabolism of protein, fats and the carbohydrate.

In modern parameters, *Ama* is supposed to be deadly Free radical, Free radical is an atom/molecule that contains one or more unpaired electron which requires neutralization by free radical scavengers. *Ama* is not a single entity but is a generalized term, which can be applied to many malformed substances in the body. This *Ama* is responsible for the production of various diseases in the same way, free radicals are also found to be the root cause of many diseases. There are some views suggesting those free radicals are pathologically correlated with *Ama*. In this regard, it is said that property and manifestation of free radical are similar to those of *Ama*. Free radicals are atoms, ions or molecules that contain an unpaired electron. Thus, they become electrically charged because number of negatively charged electron does not match with positively charged protons When a molecule loses or gains a single electron in its outer orbit it becomes free radical. Infact a free radical is defined as "A molecule that can exist independently for a period of time with one or more unpaired electrons" Free radical are unstable chemicals formed in the body during normal metabolism or exposure to environmental toxins such as air food and water pollution. Free radical helps our body to generate energy and fight infection but when we have too many free radicals, they attack healthy cells causing them to age prematurely. These free radicals and other reactive oxygen species such as Super oxides hydrogen peroxide and hydroxyl radicals are molecular species capable of independent existence that contain an unpaired electron in an atomic orbital. They are unstable chemical formed in the body and can cause degenerative changes and other diseases.<sup>8</sup>

### Nidana for Amavata

*Rogah sarve api mandagnau sutaraam udarani thu |*  
(A. H. Ni 12/1)

The causative factor of all the diseases is *Mandagni*. According to *Madhavakara*, when a person with *Mandagni* (hypo functioning of digestive mechanism), *Nischala* (sedentary habits) indulges in *Viruddha ahara* (incompatible food) and *Viruddha cheshta* (erroneous habits) or perform *Vyayama* (physical exercise) after intake of *Snigdha Ahara* (unctuous food) leads to the formation of improperly digested food material called *Amarasa*. This *Amarasa* causes disease called *Amavata*.<sup>9</sup> As per *Harita*, consumption of *Guru Anna* (heavy food) during *Mandagni* and indulgence in *Vyavaya* (Sexual copulation), excessive intake of *Kandashaka* (tuberous root) causes disease *Amavata*. The *Nidanas* which produces *Ama* like *Abhrojana*, *Ajeerna*, *Ati bhojana*, *Vishamashana*, *Asatmya*, *Guru*, *Sheeta*, *Ati ruksha*, *Dushta bhojana*<sup>10</sup> can also be considered as the cause for the manifestation of *Amavata*. The above two references can be grouped into *Aharaja* and *Viharaja Karanas*.

### Viruddha ahara

The *Ahara* (diet), which vitiates the *Dosha*, but does not eliminate them out of the body, becomes harmful and they are called as *Ahitahara*.<sup>11</sup> Even *Vagbhata* in *Annarakshadhyaya* defines that anything which causes aggravation of the *Doshas*, but does not expel them out of the body is termed as *Viruddha Ahara* (incompatible food).<sup>12</sup> In the same chapter he states that *viruddha ahara* is equal to *Garavisha*.

While explaining about *viruddha*, *Acharya Vagbhata* gives an example stating, fish should not be taken together with milk as both are sweet in taste, but due to the contradiction in their *veerya* (potency) they vitiate the blood and obstruct the *srotas* of circulation. Intake of *viruddha ahara* is responsible for the causation of various types of diseases along with *Amavisha*, *Shotha* and *Jwara*.<sup>13</sup> and eight other factors are also considered as *Viruddha* if they are not followed are '*Ashta ahara Vidhi Viseshayatanani*' (eight specific factors of method of dieting). If food consumed against the below mentioned eight factors.

They become *viruddha* to the body. They are *Prakriti* (nature), *Karana* (processing), *Samyoga* (combination), *Rashi* (quantity), *Desha* (place), *Kala* (time), *Upayoga Samstha*, (rules of use) and *Upayokta* (consumer).<sup>14</sup> Apart from above said *Nidanas*, other *Nidanas* which does *Amotpatti* can also be considered as *Nidanas* of *Amavata*.

### Viruddha Cheshta

When food is undigested, person indulges in *vyayama*, *vyavaya*, and *jala pratarana* etc., is considered as *viruddha* and *Viruddha cheshta* according to *madhavakara*.<sup>15</sup> Here, *jala prataranadi* can be considered as working in cold water, cold weather.

### Mandagni

*Mandagni* plays a central role in the manifestation of the disease as it is considered as the root cause of many diseases and also leads to the decrease in the *Dhatwagni*.

### Nischalata

Physical inactivity is responsible for increase of *Kapha*, which results in *Agnimandya* and consequently leads to the formation of *Ama*.

### Snigdha bhuktavato vyayamam kurvartah

Though exercise just after any type of meal is unhealthy, but exercise after taking unctuous meal (*Snigdha Ahara*) has been specially mentioned as the causative factor of *Amavata*. Normally a good blood supply is very essential in gastro-intestinal tract for the digestion of heavy meal. But, when a person indulges in any type of physical activity just after consuming meal, blood circulation to the skeletal muscle increases resulting in a relative decrease of blood supply to the gastro-intestinal tract. By this act, the process of digestion and absorption get hampered. Therefore, improper digestion leads to formation of *Ama*, which is the foremost pathological factor of *Amavata*.

### Samprapti of Amavata

The production of *Ama* takes place due to the factors mentioned in *Nidana*. The *Amarasa* is carried to *Shleshma Sthanas* by vitiated *vata* (*yugapat kupita vanta trika sandhi praveshaka*) i.e., to *amashaya*, *sandhi*, *hridaya*, *uras* etc. In *shleshma Sthanas* *Ama* again gets *vidagdha* by *prakupita vata*, and it enters into the circulation through *dhamanis*. At this stage, the *annarasa* gets *nanavarna*, *ati picchilata* by virtue of vitiation by *tridoshas* and produces *abhishyanatwa*, which is able to cause *Sroto avarodha* that leads to *ashu dourbalya* and *hridaya gaurava* along with stiffness in different body parts (*stabdham cha kurute gatram*) causing *Amavata*.

### Chikitsa

The general line of treatments suggested for *Amavata* mentioned according to *Yogaratanakara* and other others is listed as follows

- *Langhana*
- *Swedana*
- *Tikta and katu deepana*
- *Virechana*
- *Snehapana*
- *Basti*

Emphasizing on the further details of treatment *Yogaratanakara* added *Ruksha Sweda* with *Valuka* and *Snehavivarjita upanaha sweda*. *Chakradutta* indicated *Saindhavadhya Anuvasana basti* and *Kshara basti* along with the other treatment modalities. The treatment for *Amavata* listed by *Chakradutta* can be listed in three sub-headings, administered in the following order.

- *Langhana - Langhana* and *Swedana*.
- *Langhana Pachana - Tikta, Dipana, Katu Dravyas*.
- *Doshavasechana – Snehapana, Virechana* and *Basti*.

By considering above *Langhana* in this context *Laghu Ashana* or *Anashana* along with some *Agni deepaka dravyas* (e.g., *Panchakola choorna*) to be given and once the stage of *Ama* crossed other treatment modalities are adapted.

### Amapachana

The first step in the management of all *Amapradoshaja vikaras* is *Amapachana*, applicable even to the diseases caused due to *Ama* viz., *Amavata*.

### Langhana

That which brings Lightness of body is called as *Langhana*. Further *Langhana* can be classified into three, according to their action and usage.

- **Langhana**  
Includes *Pipasa, Maruta, Atapa sevana, upavasa* and *vyayama*. This is adopted in *Avara rogi bala* and the *Alpa dosha* vitiation.
- **Langhana Pachana**  
Includes *Pachana* and *deepana dravyas*. It is used when there is *Madhyama doshas* are vitiated in a *Madhyama Rogibala* Patient.
- **Doshavasechana**  
It Includes *Chatushprakara Samshuddhi*, which is adapted when *doshas* vitiation is *Pravara*, but not in *Amavastha*.

### Swedana

That which removes *Stambha, Gaurava* and *Shita* and produces *sweda* is called as *Swedana*. Since it is antagonistic to the qualities of *Kapha* and *Ama*, has an important role to play in the treatment of *Amavata*.

### Tikta and Katu Dipana

*Tikta rasa* has the properties like *deepana, pachana, kleda* and *kapha shoshana, ruksha, laghu, lekhana* and *vishaghna gunas*. *Katu rasa* has properties like *agnideepana, kledamupahanti, Bandhachedana, Margavivarana, Shleshma Shaman*.

### Virechana

Among the *Shodhana* therapies *Virechana* is the first line of treatment adopted for *Amavata* and also for the diseases caused due to *Viruddha*. But in *Amavata* as the *doshas* are associated with *Ama* and in *Leenavastha, Shodhana* cannot be adopted instantly. If *shodhana* is done without considering the *Samavastha* of the disease it will destroy the body like the unripen fruit when taken juice out of it.

### Basti

*Basti* forms the second method of *panchakarma* adopted. Both *Niruha* and *Anuvasana Basti*'s should be employed here. The *Niruha Basti* does the *Shodhana* of the *Doshas* brought to *Pakvashaya* and the *Anuvasana Basti* alleviates *Prakupita vata* as a consequence of *Niruha Basti*. *Kshara basti* is specially mentioned in *Amavata*.

### DISCUSSION

The food habits of society are varying or fluctuating due to busy schedule, competitiveness, lack of time, care and also due to negligence. In the present scenario, due to changing life, urbanization and fascination towards the 'so called' modernized culture it is observed that, people have forgotten the code and conduct of dietetics. Food is a substance which when taken in the body, is able to build up or repair tissue, protects against ill health as supply materials for the production of health and energy. Wholesome diet is responsible for the growth and development of the body, on the contrary, unwholesome diet causes several diseases.<sup>17</sup>

*Viruddha Ahara* leads to *Dosha* aggravation and *Dhatu* aggravation because *Viruddha Ahara* are nothing but those articles of food, which dislodge the morbid humors, but do not eliminate them from the body. So continuous intake of *Viruddha Ahara* lead to vitiation of *Agni*, which is root (main) cause of every disease. Because *Agni* is responsible for bio transformation of different materials. So, vitiation of *Jatharagni* leads to vitiation of *Dhatwagni* and *Bhutagni*. This vitiated *Jatharagni* does not digest even the lightest of food substances, resulting in indigestion (*Ajirna*). This undigested food material turns sour and acts like a poison, which is called *Ama Visha*. It (undigested poisonous food) leads eventually to the breakdown of immune system. *Tridosha* gets provoked by this type of ingestion<sup>16</sup>. Intake of incompatible Diet vitiates *Srotas* as mentioned that general food substances and activities which are similar in quality to body humors and deleterious to the body elements vitiate the body channel.<sup>18</sup> and Therefore *Srotovarodha* or *Sanga* or obstruction in channels is occurs which leads to several diseases of acute to severe nature. Preventing the intake of *Viruddha Ahara* i.e., *Nidana Parivarjana* is always the best preliminary measure to prevent onset of diseases.

### CONCLUSION

*Amavata* is a condition where *Stabdhatu* of the body occurs due to lodging of vitiated *Ama* and *Vata* in *Trika Sandhi*. It is caused due to *Viruddha ahara, Viruddha cheshta, Mandagni, Snigdham Bhuktvat annam Vyayamam* etc. *Nidan*as are mainly responsible for vitiation of *Ama* and *Vata* which are major culprits in causing *Amavata*. Among all *Nidan*as prime role is been taken by *viruddha ahara* in manifesting disease, now a days the knowledge regarding *viruddha ahara* is limited to people due to urbanization and fast-moving life. People are unaware of the *viruddha ahara* concept which is leading to dreadful disease like *Amavata, Psoriasis, autoimmune diseases* etc. *Ayurveda* has a lot of scope

in educating people regarding *viruddha ahara* concept and in helping them out in preventing diseases. *Viruddha Ahara* (incompatible diet) is a very important concept of *Ayurveda*, ignoring it results in the manifestation of various diseases and as we know Prevention is better than cure, it is very essential to follow guidelines given by *Ayurvedic Acharyas* to lead a healthy life. As an *Ayurvedic* Physician it's our prime duty to spread alarming health hazards of *Viruddha Ahara* (incompatible diet).

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