



Review Article

www.ijrap.net

(ISSN Online:2229-3566, ISSN Print:2277-4343)



STANYADUSHTI AS PER BRIHATRAYI: A REVIEW

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Received on: 21/8/24 Accepted on: 22/9/24

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DOI: 10.7897/2277-4343.155170

ABSTRACT

Milk secreted from stana for the nourishment of baby is stanya. It is suitable for proper nourishment, growth and strengthening of body constituents in infants. The physical and mental development of baby depends upon stanya. Being formed from rasadhathu, stanya will be easily vitiated by the diet and regimen of the mother. Different types of digestive disorders and all other causes of rasadhathu dushti will afflict the equilibrium of dhathus in mother and thereby the vitiation of stanya will occur. The normal colour, odour, taste and consistency of stanya will change during vitiated condition. The vitiated breast milk is not fit to feed the baby. If it is given, the child will be afflicted by various types of diseases. Acharya Charaka has explained eight types of stanyadushti based on the predominance of doshas. The predominance of Vata dosha will cause virasa, phenasanghata and kshina in stanya and the predominance of pitha causes vaivarnya and dourgandhya and the predominance of Kapha causes paichilya and gourava. Vitiated stanyapana will cause various diseases like emaciation, delayed growth, weakness, anaemia, vomiting, lethargy etc. in child. According to Vagbhata, the breast milk vitiated by the tridoshas causes jvara, kasa and chardi etc. By considering all these facts, it is found that breast milk serves as an elixir for the babies but if vitiated it will be prime cause of diseases. This paper reviews the concepts of stanyadushti as described in the Brihatrayi and the diseases caused by vitiated stanya, highlighting the importance of maintaining the purity of breast milk for the health of the infant.

Keywords: Stanya, Stanyadushti, Rasadhathu, Brihatrayi

INTRODUCTION

Stanya is the primary source of nourishment for a newborn baby. Stanya and stanyadushti (impurities in breast milk) play an important role in child healthcare. The branch of ayurveda dealing with the care of children, diseases affecting children, and their management is known as kaumarabhritya. Kaumarabhritya is a key branch of Ashtanga ayurveda. The term kaumarabhritya is derived from two words: "kaumara," meaning children, and "bhritya," meaning to take care of. This branch of medicine mainly includes four major domains: Kumara Bharanam (care of children), ksheera dosha sodhanakriya of dhathri (cleansing of milk-related disorders), treatment of dushtastanyaja (impure milk) disorders, and treatment of grahaja vyadhis (diseases caused by supernatural entities). Kashyapa Samhita is considered the main textbook of kaumarabhritya, although it is not available in its entirety. The concepts of childcare, their diseases, and management are well explained in the three great treatises known as the Brihatrayi: Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Ashtanga hridaya. In the Charaka Samhita, an authoritative text on kayachikitsa (general medicine) has placed kaumarabhritya as the sixth limb. Acharya Charaka discusses ideas related to childcare in sarirasthana and chikitsasthana. Sushrutacharya, the father of surgery, has positioned kaumarabhritya as the fifth anga. He elaborates on related topics in sutrasthana, nidanasthana, sarirasthana, and uttaratantra. Ashtanga hridaya, a comprehensive textbook of ayurveda, places kaumarabhritya in the second position and discusses related ideas in uttaratantra. The Brihatrayi emphasize the importance of stanya in the growth and maintenance of a child and also highlight stanyadushti as a serious factor affecting the health of a breastfeeding child. This paper aims to review the key points regarding stanyadosha and the diseases caused by stanyadushti as explained by the Brihatrayi.

A Review on Stanyadushti in Brihatrayi

According to Acharya Charaka, stanya (breast milk) is formed from the essence of rasadhathu¹ (nutrient fluid). Since it is derived from rasadhathu, it is easily vitiated by the mother's diet and regimen. Various digestive disorders and other causes of rasadhathu vitiation disturb the equilibrium of the dhatus (body tissues), leading to the vitiation of stanya. Indigestion, the intake of unsuitable, irregular, excessive, or contradictory foods, excessive consumption of salty, sour, pungent, alkaline, or spoiled substances, along with mental and physical stress, insomnia, night waking, anxiety, suppression of natural urges, and forcing urges that do not naturally occur, all contribute to this imbalance. Additionally, the intake of milk pudding, food prepared with jaggery, rice cooked with pulses, curd, and other foods with abhishyandi (obstructive) properties that aggravate kapha dosha, as well as the consumption of meat from domestic, marshy, and aquatic animals, sleeping during the daytime right after meals, excessive wine consumption, lack of exercise, injury, anger, and emaciation due to chronic illness, all cause the vitiation of the tridoshas. These vitiated doshas reach the milk-carrying vessels, vitiate the breast milk, and result in various diseases².

The ideal breast milk for a baby should have a natural color, smell, taste, and texture. When poured into water, it should mix perfectly. Such milk is nourishing and promotes the health of the child. Breast milk that has a syavaruna color, astringent taste, is clear, odorless, dry, watery, frothy, light in texture, unsatisfying, and causes emaciation, leading to vatika disorders, should be considered vata-vitiated breast milk. Breast milk that is black, blue, yellow, or copper-colored, with a bitter, pungent, or sour taste, smells like decomposing flesh or blood, and is very warm, should be considered pitta-vitiated milk. Such milk will lead to

Pittaja disorders in the child. Breast milk that is excessively white, overly sweet with a salty taste, has an odor like ghee, oil, fat, or marrow, is thick and thready, and sinks in water without mixing, should be considered kapha-vitiated milk. This type of breast milk will give rise to kapha-related disorders in the child³. Charaka also explained eight types of abnormalities of breast milk⁴.

Table 1: Eight types of stanyadushti as per Charaka Samhita

Dosha	Type of Stanyadushti	Diseases caused by stanyadushti
Vataja	Virasa	Emaciation, Impairment of growth
	Phenasanghata	Feebleness of voice, Retention of stool, urine ad flatus, Pinasa, Sirsharoga
	Rukshata	Loss of strength
Pithaja	Vaivarnya	Discoloration of body, excessive perspiration and thirst, diarrhoea, constant warmness of the body
	Dourgandhya	Anaemia, jaundice
Kapha	Snigdha	Vomiting, excessive salivation, cough, breathlessness, asthma, sleep, exhaustion
	Pichila	Excessive salivation, swelling of face and eyes, inactivity
	Guru	Hridroga

Vagbhata also stated that infants should be exclusively fed with the mother's breast milk, as it is sufficient for their nourishment⁵. If the mother is unable to breastfeed, a wet nurse should be chosen for feeding the child. The wet nurse should have a loving character, be free of physical deformities, observe celibacy, share the same ethnicity and constitution as the mother, be free of disease, be middle-aged, have a living child, and not be greedy for food and drink⁶. During the breastfeeding period, the mother or wet nurse should follow a wholesome diet and regimen, as breast milk can be easily vitiated by inappropriate foods. Factors such as grief, anger, emaciation, and overexertion can decrease the quantity of breast milk production⁷.

Acharya Vagbhata described seven types of kshiradushti (milk disorders): Vatika, Paithika, Kaphaja, dvidoshaja, and sannipatika.

- Vatikadushta Kshira: When poured into water, it will float. It has astringent taste; its predominant quality is dryness and can cause obstruction of urine and feces in the child⁸.
- Pithadushta Kshira: When poured into water, it produces yellow lines, and its predominant quality is hotness with sour and pungent tastes and can produce a burning sensation in the child⁹.
- Kaphadushta Kshira: When poured into water, it will sink. It has a salty taste, thick and with sticky quality¹⁰.
- Kshira that is vitiated by two doshas or all three doshas will exhibit their respective symptoms.

Breast milk vitiated by the tridoshas can cause kshiralasaka with symptoms such as diarrhea, malaise, fever, anorexia, vomiting, nausea, belching, thirst, convulsions, giddiness, and ulcers in the mouth, eyes, and nose¹¹.

According to Sushruta, stanya (breast milk) produced from the stana (breast) is formed from the essence of food after its digestion. Like sukra dhatu (semen), the presence of stanya is felt throughout the body¹². The development of the breast occurs after menarche, but the mammary glands become active only after delivery. The secretion of stanya begins within three to four days of childbirth and continues until the weaning period. During the

postnatal period, stanya is secreted from the breast due to factors¹³ such as: -Apatya sparsa (touching the child), Apatya darsana (sight of the newborn), Apatya smarana (thinking about the child) and Grahanat sharirasya (holding the newborn close to the mother).

Pure breast milk is white in color, similar to conch, and it becomes homogeneous with water when mixed. It does not produce effervescence or a thread-like appearance, does not precipitate, and never floats on the surface of water¹⁴. Therefore, stanyadushti (impurities in breast milk) can be easily examined by placing drops of milk in clear water. Pure breast milk provides health benefits such as arogya (health), sareeropachaya (bodily nourishment), and balavridhi (growth and strength). Sudhastanya enhances the vitality of the child. The health profile of an infant is largely dependent on the quality of stanya. Additionally, stanya plays a role in providing proper structure and nourishment to the breast.

Sudhastanya (pure breast milk) has a sweet taste. When vitiated, its taste changes according to the dosha involved. If stanya is vitiated by pitta dosha, it becomes pungent and bitter instead of sweet, and it may show bluish and yellowish discolorations with reddish lines. In kaphadushti, there will be a whitish discoloration and an excessively sweet taste¹⁵. Acharya Sushruta described that stanya can be vitiated by Vata, Pitta, Kapha, sannipata, and abhigata (external trauma). It can also be vitiated by consuming heavy, irregular and other foods that disturb the doshas. A child fed with vitiated breast milk may suffer from various diseases. Breastfeeding is contraindicated if the mother or wet nurse is experiencing excessive hunger, depression, or tiredness. Feeding should be avoided in cases of dosha vitiation, pregnancy, fever, emaciation, obesity, vidagdhajirna (improper digestion), and after consuming virudhahara¹⁶ (incompatible foods). Another important abnormality of stanya includes stanyakshaya and stanyavridhi. In stanyakshaya, there is underdevelopment of the breasts, a decrease in the quantity and production of breast milk. In stanyavridhi, there is overgrowth of the breast tissue, intermittent secretion of milk, and pricking pain. Considering the vitiation of doshas, appropriate panchakarma therapies and dietary and lifestyle adjustments should be administered.

DISCUSSION

The substance produced from the stana (breast) is called stanya (breast milk). It is the primary source of nourishment for a newborn baby. The importance of stanya and the concept of stanyadushti (impurities in breast milk) have been recognized since the time period of the Brihatrayi. Stanyadushti is a significant concern as it directly affects the growth and development of infants. According to the Brihatrayi, stanya is formed from the essence of rasadhatu (nutrient fluid). After jatharagni (digestive fire) acts on food, rasadhatvagni (metabolic fire of the nutrient tissue) processes the rasadhatu, producing the sthaya rasadhatu (stable nutrient tissue) and upadhatu (secondary tissues) such as stanya and artava (menstrual fluid). Since stanya is formed from rasadhatu, it is easily influenced by the mother's diet and regimen. Stanya can become vitiated by consuming incompatible foods, undigested food, and other improper dietary practices. Mental factors such as anger, grief, and fear, as well as lifestyle habits like daytime sleep, staying awake at night, and suppressing natural urges, can also cause stanyadushti. Sushrutacharya also emphasized that external injuries can contribute to stanyadushti. Considering these factors, stanyadushti can be classified into two types:

- Stanyapramana Dosha (quantitative abnormality), which includes stanya kshaya (decrease in milk) and stanya vridhi (excess milk).

- Stanyaguna Dosha (qualitative abnormality), which refers to stanyadushti itself.

According to the Brihatrayi, vitiated stanya will exhibit the signs and symptoms associated with the vitiated doshas. Vitiated breast milk will lose its normal characteristics such as taste, smell, color, consistency, foam, and viscosity. Therefore, clinicians should carefully observe these qualities of breast milk, as they provide valuable clues for diagnosing abnormalities in breast milk and the diseases that may affect the child as a result.

CONCLUSION

Stanya is considered an elixir for infants. The physical and mental development of a child depends on the nutrition provided through breast milk. Therefore, it is very necessary to ensure the purity of breast milk. The Brihatrayis of Ayurveda have emphasized this aspect and provided a detailed account of stanya and the consequences of stanyadushti. It has also been emphasized that the lactating mother should follow a wholesome diet and regimen to prevent abnormalities in breast milk. The consumption of dushta stanya can cause various diseases and impair the normal growth and development of the child.

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Cite this article as:

Sonia Raj S and Amit Upasani. Stanyadushti as per Brihatrayi: A Review. Int. J. Res. Ayurveda Pharm. 2024;15(5):127-129
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7897/2277-4343.155170>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

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