



CONCEPT OF AMA IN AYURVEDA

Dr.Basavarajeshwari Patil¹, Dr.Sunilkumar.M.Chabanur², Dr.S.S Kalyani³

1.PG Scholar, Department of PG Studies in Kayachikitsa

2.Professor and HOD, Department of PG Studies in Kayachikitsa

3.Professor, Department of PG Studies in Kayachikitsa

Abstract : *Ama* is a Sanskrit word which literally means undigested or uncooked food materials. The concept of *Ama* is the most important and fundamental principle in understanding the physio-pathology of the diseases. *Ama* is the substance, which is not digested properly and need further digestion. Many factor play important role in the production of *Ama*. In *Ayurvedic* classic *Ama* which is the product of metabolic defect formed due to improperly metabolized by product of food at *Jathragni* level (macrolevel), *Bhutagni* level (microlevel) and due to accumulation of *Mala*, which considered as *Pratham Doshdushti*, condition of mental stress like *Kama*, *Krodh*, *Shoka Bhaya*, *Chinta*, are the responsible factor for production of *Ama* in the body. *Ama* vitiates the *Doshas* and disturb *Dhatu Samyata* which lead to production of a disease. So the concept *Ama* is the most important and fundamental principal in understand the pathophysiology of the diseases. Nearly all diseases as per the *Ayurvedic* view have their origin from *Ama Dosh*. Even one of the synonyms of *Vyadhi Amaya* reiterates this. So the topic is entitle as the concept of *Ama* in *Ayurveda*.

KEYWORDS : *Ama*, *Kama*, *Krodh*, *Shoka Bhaya*, *Chinta*.

CONCEPT OF AMA : In *Ayurvedic* classics the concept of *Ama* is the most important and fundamental principle in understanding the physio-pathology of the diseases. *Ama* is the product of metabolic defect. It is formed due to improperly metabolized by product of food at *Jatharagni* level (macro level), *Bhutagni* level (micro level) and *Dhatavagni* level. Its importance is also reflected by the word *Amya*, which is the synonym given to *Vyadhi*. Its action is like that of toxic substances that is called *Amavisha*. *Ama* is a generalised term, which can be applied to many malformed substances in the body like free radicals which causes many diseases. Any substance which is remained stable without any *Paka* or remained as residual during improper metabolism can be considered as *Ama*, such as ketone, uric acid, cholesterols etc. The role of these factors is already established fact in certain auto immune disorders. So in *Ayurveda* it is considered as a root cause of all disorders.[1]

Nirukti :The word „*Ama*“ is, the combination of „*Am*“ *dhatu* with „*Nich*“ *pratyaya* forms the word *Ama*, which is subjected to digestion i.e. undigested or unprocessed matter.[2]

Definition : Due to poor strength of *Agni* (*Jatharagni*), initial *Rasa dhatu* becomes immature and improperly metabolised and this unmetabolised substance i.e. *Annarasa* is still left in stomach is known as *Ama*. This *Annarasa* undergoes fermentation (*Dushtata*) being retained in the *Amashaya* (stomach and small intestine) called *Ama rasa*. [3] It has been described as sticky, foul smelling toxin substance within the body.

Relationship between *Ama* and *Agni*: *Jatharagni*, *Panchabhutagni* and *Dhatuagni* are main three *Agnis* in the body. Then *Bhutagni* have been enumerated, *bhuta* means the physicomaterial classification of food and body elements. There after *Dhatvagni* have been expounded, *dhatu* here means the basic elements of the body. The functions of *Dhatvagni* refer to tissue metabolism. *Jatharagni* is the *Agni* present in *Mahakostha* and its function is to digest food ingested food. *Jatharagni* is considered as *Pradhanagni* and it supports rest of *Agnis* in the body. Also other *Agnis* of body are directly affected by its *Mandata* or *Samyata*. The division of food into *Sara* and *Kitta* is its main function. When the function of *Jatharagni* is impaired, the ingested food is not digested properly and *Ama* is produced.

Causes of *Ama*:

There are different causes of *Ama*, which can be listed as follows–

1. *Agnimandya*
2. *Dhatvagnimandya*
3. *Mala sanchaya*
4. *Dosha sammurchana*
5. *Krimivisha*

1. *Agnimandya*: It is considered as main cause of *ama*. It is also mentioned in the definition of *ama*, *agnimandya* leads to the formation of *ama*. *Dhatvagni* also plays important role in the formation of *ama*, but the power of *dhatvagni* also corresponds to the *jatharagni*. Hence there is a lot of importance to the *jatharagni* and *agnimandya* plays key role in the formation of *ama*. [4] According to the *Madhava*, the power or intensity of *jatharagni* is which results into the formation of undigested *ahararasa*. This undigested *ahara rasa* causes harmful effects to the body leading many diseases. Hence it is the root cause of many diseases. *Charaka* has listed causes of *agnimandya* [5] like fasting, eating during indigestion, over eating, irregular eating, and intake of unsuitable, heavy, cold, too rough and contaminated food, improper administration of *virechana*, *vamana* and *snehana*, emaciation due to some diseases, faulty adaptation to place, time and seasons and suppression of natural urges. Due to which *agnis* deranged and becomes unable to digest even the light food, being undigested gets fermented and becomes toxic.

2. *Dhatvagnimandya*: From *ahararasa*, the nutrient substances undergo the process of formation of *dhatu*s with the help of metabolic factors. Therefore, when the *dhatvagnis* deranged, the process of formation of *dhatu*s is also decreased which leads to the formation of incomplete and improper substances (*ama*). This type of pathology leads to various diseases. This also leads hampering of normal functions and activities of *dhatu*. [6] The power of *dhatvagni* depends upon the *jatharagni*. *Dhatvagni* is nothing but the part of *jatharagni* which is present inside all the seven *dhatu*s. This is also a factor responsible for the increase or decrease of *dhatu*s due to debility and intensity of the *dhatvagni* respectively.

3. *Mala sanchaya*: According to *Madhava*, *ama* is the *ahararasa* which is formed after incomplete or improper digestion due to *agnimandya*. Also, *ama* is the unwanted substance which are formed due to retention of *mala*. Due to retention of *mala* harmful and unwanted substances produced. Hence *mala* should be expelled out timely. *Malas* also have their own functions, retention leads to the disturbance in their functions and abnormal actions in the body. [7]

4. *Dosha Sammurchana*: *Mala* denotes not only *purisha*, *mootra* and *sweda* but also *dhatu malas*. *Dhatu malas* are *kapha*, *pitta*, *kha-mala*, sweat, nails etc. [8] Some *acharyas* opine that *ama* gets formed from mixing of vitiated doshas with one another just as the poison is formed from mixing of different kinds of *kodrava*.

5. *Krimivisha*: If the immunity of body is good, not producing any harmful effects even after affection of *krimi* (worms). But low immunity leads to *krimi* affect body and produce a toxic substance, which is considered as *ama*. Not only excessive eating but also other factors cause production of *ama*. *Charaka* has explained it in *vimana sthana*. When food is taken in excessive amount according to hunger; causes indigestion which further leads to formation of *ama*. These other factors are physical and psychological, they mainly cause *agnimandya* and further produces *ama*. They are –Eating food with properties such as *guru* (heavy to digest), *ruksha* (rough or not smooth), *sheeta* (cold), *shushka* (dry), *vidahi* (producing burning sensation), *vishtambhi* (constipating). Intake of unhygienic food, irregularity in the food timing, Psychological factors also affect the *agni* such as *kama*, *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (griddiness), *moha*, *irsha*, *shoka* (sorrow) etc. [9]

Symptoms of *Ama* : General characteristic of *Ama* are, *Srotorodha* (obstruction of channels), *Balabhransha* (loss of strength), *Gaurava* (feeling of heaviness), *Anilmudhata* (obstruction of *vayu*), *Alasya* (laziness), *Apakti* (indigestion), *Nisthiva* (excessive salivation), *Malasanga* (constipation), *Aruchi* (anorexia), and *Klama* (fatigueness).

FORMATION OF AMA :

Etiological factors

Nidan sevana

Dosha prakopa

Disturbance in Agni (Hypo functioning of *agni* at *jatharagni* level)

Dhatavagni daurbalya

Unmetabolism of *Rasa dhatu*

Collection of *annarasa*

Sanchaya of *Ama*

Prakopa of *Ama*

Sthanasanshraya of *Ama* in *Kha-vigunya*

Manifestation of disease

Disease

Adverse effects of *ama*:

When this *ama* hampers other body contents disturbs their properties and functions. They may affect *doshas*, *dhatu*s or *malas*. When *ama* combines with or affected with these ones they are termed as 'sama'. For example –*ama* affects *vata dosha* then considered as *sama vata dosha*. [10] The symptoms of *samadoshā* are given as –

Sama vata: When *ama* affects the *vata dosha* leading to the *sama vata* conditions. *Sama vata* produces symptoms like *vibandha*, *agnimandya*, *tandra*, *antrakoojana*, *vedana*, *shotha* etc. while travelling or passing through body, it produces obstruction by adhering walls of the lumens of channels. It affects that places where it goes causing variety of symptoms. Symptoms aggravate more due to situations like sunrise, cloudy seasons, night or anointing body both externally and internally. [11]

Sama pitta: When *ama* affects *pitta dosha* symptoms of *sama pitta* produced which are *durgandha* (foul smell), *harit* (green), *shyava varna* (bluish black), *amla rasa* (sour), *sthira* (stable/immobile), *guru* (heaviness), *amlika* (sour eruptions), *daha* (burning sensation) of *kantha* (throat) and *hrut* (cardiac region). [12]

1. **Durgandha** – when *ama* affects vitiated *pittadosha* the properties of *ama* and *pitta* concile together producing foul smell.

2. **Harit shyava varna** – in *sama pitta*, natural colour of *pitta* get affected due to *ama* producing green or bluish black colour.

3. **Amla –pitta** is also of *amla* taste but sourness is increased in sour much more amount due to the partial or incomplete digestion and retention leads fermentation which is not favorable.

4. **Sthira** and **guru** – naturally *pitta* is not stable it is *drava* (liquid) but *ama* with properties *picchila*, *guru* etc. leads to immobile state of *sama pitta*.

5. **Amlika** – this *amla sama pitta* and fermentative products leads to the sour eruptions. This *sama pitta* further leads to *amlapitta* if not treated and continuously following causes of it.

6. **Kantha-hrut daha** – *ushna* (hotness) is one of the natural properties of *pitta*. In *sama pitta*, *pitta* affects the body contents wherever it goes. It affects throat or cardiac region when retain at that places producing burning sensation.

Sama kapha: *Ama* affects *kapha dosha* produces symptoms of *sama kapha* which are *avila*(increased turbidity), *tantula*(thread or filamentous), *styana*(thick and dense) *kapha* which stagnates in the throat. It produces *durgandha*(foul smell), *kshuda vighat*(complete lack of appetite), *udgar vighat*(obstructed eruptions). Appearance of *kapha* becomes turbid, thread or filamentous, thick, dense because of properties of *ama*(such as *guru*, *picchila* etc.) which affect *kapha*. [13]

Role of *Ama* in development of disease: *Ama* is identified as unripe or unprocessed entity in *Ayurveda*. The normally digested food is easily absorbed in the gut and take its final outcome. But it is slippery, heavier and sticky in nature. When the *Ama* is absorbed in to the gut it produce obstruction in different channel or *Srotas* of the body and play an important role in the *Samprapti* of various diseases. *Charaka* tell us about role of *Ama* in the *Samprapti* of *Alasaka* and *Visuchika*. Due to *Agnimandya* *Alasaka* and *Visuchika* are produce but *Ama* act as a precursor.

Ama in *Grahni Roga*: According to *Ayurveda* *Grahni* is *Agni Adhishtana*. Diseases affecting *Grahni* is named as *Grahni Roga*. *Amadosha* is the main causative factor. It is said that *Mithyahaaravihar* leads to *Agnidushti* which inturn cause *Amadosha*. In present era, diseases of G.I track which is caused by Indiscipline life style • Excessive consumption of fast food • Over indulgence of *Guru*, *Sheet*, *Atiruksh*, *Malin* • *Aahar* Improper administration of *Vamana*, *Virechna* • *Divaswapna*, *Vegavidharana* etc. • The above said *Nidana*'s causes vitiation of *Agni* and ultimately form of *Ama*. This *Ama* when moves out downwards in *Ama/Pakkva* stage is called *Grahani*.

Ayurvedic management of *Ama Dosha*

Depending upon the type and severity of the *Ama*, main three approaches has been advised to treat *Ama dosha* i.e.,

1. *Langhana*
2. *Langhana pachana*
3. *Shodhana*

Langhana means the restriction of diet

intake or fasting to rest the digestive and metabolic apparatuses of our body. *Langhana Pachana* means prescribing active medications along with the fasting. It is helpful in digesting the *Ama*. *Shodhana* means purification process or detoxification. It helps in removing the *Ama dosha* from the body altogether.

Other *Acharyas* had also described the measures to tackle with the *Ama Dosha* that are as follows:

- *Nidana Parivarjana*
- *Langhana*
- *Swedana*
- *Ama pachana*
- *Agni deepana*
- *Panchakarma* i.e. *vamana*, *virechana*.....
- *Yoga*
- Sour fruits and vegetables ginger, mustard oil etc. are beneficial.

Processed and starchy food items, dairy products, salty stuffs are not beneficial and are *Apathya*. [14,15]

CONCLUSION :

Ama is generated at various levels in the body, which is at *Jatharagni* level, *Bhutagni* level, *Dhatwagni* level and also at the cellular level. *Ama* can be classified in various ways depending upon its action, *Agni*, site of production etc. *Ama* has no direct correlation in modern science but can be described as toxins or antigens which can trigger diseases pathogenesis. A definite line of treatment of *Ama* can be drawn after considering the causes, symptoms and severity of the condition.

REFERENCES :

- 1. Bhojraj Arun Chaudhari Critical Evaluation Of Ama; International Ayurvedic Medical Journal; L Issn: 2320 5091.
- 2. Amarkosha, Shri. Pandit Hargovinda Shashri, Chaukahmbha Sanskrit Series, Seventh Edi.2005, II kand, IV Varga, Verse no 16, Page no.519.
- 3. Bhojraj Arun Chaudhari Critical Evaluation Of Ama ;International Ayurvedic Medical Journal;L Issn:2320 5091
- 4. Bhojraj Arun Chaudhari Critical Evaluation Of Ama ;International Ayurvedic Medical Journal;L Issn:2320 5091.
- 5. G.K.Gadre, Sarth Madhava nidhana,2017, chapter 25, verse 5, p. 573.
- 6. Ravidatta Tripathi, Vidhydhar Shukla, Charakasamhita, Chaukhamba SanskritPratishthan 2012, Chikitsasthana, Chapter 15,verse 3-4, p. 512.
- 7. Anna Moreshwar kunte, Krishna Shastri Navare,Ashtanga hridayam, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan 2015, Sutrashtan,Chapter 12,verse 1,p.513.
- 8. Narendranath Shastri, Madhava nidana, 2017, Chapter25,verse5, p.574.
- 9. Anna Moreshwar kunte, Krishna Shastri Navare,Ashtanga hridayam, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan 2015, Sutrashtan,Chapter 13,verse 26,p.216.
- 10. Ravidatta Tripathi, Vidhydhar Shukla, Charakasamhita, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan 2012, Vimanasthana, chapter 2, verse 8, p 238.
- 11. Anna Moreshwar kunte, Krishna Shastri Navare,Ashtanga hridayam, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan 2015, Sutrashtan,Chapter 13,verse 27, p.216.
- 12. Narendranath Shastri, Madhava nidana, 2017, Chapter25,verse5, p.574.
- 13. Narendranath Shastri, Madhava nidana, Chapter25,verse5, p.574.
- 14. Review Article on Medical Perspective on Ama as per Ayurveda and Modern Consideration by Parag Vasudev Yadav (ISSN: 2250-1177), Journal of Drug Delivery and Therapeutics, 15 Feb 2020.
- 15. Review Article on Critical Review and Validation of the Concept of Ama by P.Ram Manohar. PMID:24167329, PMCID:PMC3807959

