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Management of Amlapitta (gastritis) in Ayurveda: A review

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Abstract

Ayurveda is one among the oldest health science. Nowadays due to faulty life style, diet pattern mental stress and strain healthy status of human being is in declining. Due to changing life style, there is tremendous increase in disorder related to mahasrotas (gastrointestinal tract). Amlapitta is one of the major disease which occurs in mahasrotas. Amlapitta is pitta predominance disease which is related to Annavaha srotas & Purishvaha Srotas occurs due to mandagni and ama. When Amla guna of pitta is increased is called

Amlapitta. Various acharyas has explained amlapitta as separate disorders but Samprapti of Amlapitta is clearly mentioned in Grahani chikitsadhyay while describing samprapti of Grahani Dosha. The basic principle of treatment are mainly nidana parivarjana, shodhana, and shamana chikitsa. Vamana and Virechana are mentioned for urdhva gati and adho gati of doshas. In modern science it can be correlated with Gastritis.

Keywords: Amlapitta, Nidaan parivarjan, shodhana, shamana, Gastritis

Introduction

Ayurveda is science of life. Ayurveda mainly deals with physical, mental, social and spiritual wellbeing by any of adopting preventive and promotive approach as well as to treat the diseases with its various curative approaches. A balanced diet and regular exercise are the keys to good digestive health. But today's era, faulty dietary habits, sedentary life and stress are main causative factors for diseases. People eat a lot of processed food with preservative and lack of exercise, etc., helps in vitiation of Annavaha srotas. Amlapitta is one of the Annavaha srotas disorder. Amlapitta is a classic example of the lifestyle disorders common in the present scenario. Around 25-30% of persons are suffering from gastritis in India. Madhukosa explained Amlapitta as "Amlam vidagdham cha tat pittam amlapittam" Amlapitta denotes the vitiated condition of pitta and it imparts Amlatvam and Vidagdathavam to the ingested food. Kasyapa samhita is the first text which explained Amlapitta as a separate entity. In Madhavanidana, Nidana Panchaka of Amlapitta was described.

Definition of Amlapitta

Amlapitta is composed of two words Amla+ Pitta. Also it is said that Amla has been a natural property of pitta along with Katurasa ^[2]. Susruta has enlisted Katu as its original ras and mentioned that when Pitta becomes vidagdhata changes into Amla ^[3].

- The augmented or increased Amla guna of pitta is known as Amlapitta ^[4].
- The pitta which attains amla guna and vidagdhata is called as Amlapitta ^[5].

Nidan of Amlapitta

Aharaj nidan ^[6]: Virudhasana, ajirna, ame purnat, pishtanna, ama apakva madya, goras atisevan, guru bhojan, abhishyandi bhojan, ushnatisevan, snigdhatisevan, rukshatisevan, amlatisevan, drava-tisevan, fanit sevan, ikshu vikar, kultha sevan, bhrisht dhanya, pulak, prithuk sevan.

Viharaj nidan: Bhukva bhukva divaswapnat Ati snana Ati avgahanat,

Mansik nidan-*Acharya charak* mentioned that even the wholesome food also taken in proper quantity, does not get digested due to anxiety, grief, fear, anger, uncomfortable bed and vigil⁷. It produces *ama* and that cause *Amlapitta*.

Considering the samprapti of *Amlapitta*, it can be assessed that administration of "Tikta rasa" pradhana dravyas alleviates the disease. Ayurvedic Classics have indicated several single drugs in the treatment of *Amlapitta*.

Samanya lakshan^[8]

- Avipaka
- Klama
- Utklesh
- Tikta udgar
- Amlaudgar
- Gaurav
- Hrid dah
- Kanth dah
- Aruchi

Classification of Amlapitta

1. Madhavkara classified *Amlapitta* in two ways-

A) According to pravritti^[9]

- Urdhavaga
- Adhoga

B) According to Dosha^[10]

- Vataja
- Vata –kaphaja
- Kaphaja

2. Kashyapa described this disease into three types according to prominent of Dosha^[11]

- Vataja
- Pittaja
- Kaphaja

1. According to *Gatibheda* it is divided into two categories.

1. *Urdhwaga* 2. *Adhoga*

2. According to *Doshas* it is divided into three categories.

1. *Saanila* 2. *Sakapha* 3. *Saanilakapha*

Modern View

Signs and symptoms of *Amlapitta* mentioned in the *Ayurvedic* texts are very similar to hyper acidity. The stomach normally secretes acid that is essential in the digestive process. The acid helps in the breakdown of food during digestion. When there is excess production of the acid by gastric gland of the stomach, it results in the condition known as acidity.

Definition

Hyperacidity simply means an increased level of acid in the stomach. The stomach secretes Hydrochloric acid (HCl), a digestive juice which breaks down food particles into their smallest form to acid digestion. When there is an excessive amount of hydrochloric acid in these factors the stomach, the condition is known as hyperacidity.

Causes: In the present modern era, fast hectic lifestyle, mental stress, incompatible food habits, unhealthy regimens habits like smoking, alcohol etc., which are not suitable for

the physiology of digestion and Willful medications like NSAIDS, steroids, some vitamin supplements, insufficient sleep at night, Irregular meal pattern, Eating too late at night, Spicy, salty and sour foods, suppression of urges are causing gastric irritation and hyper gastric secretions leading to the onset of *Amlapitta*.

Symptoms

Heartburn is the main symptom of acidity. Heartburn is characterized by deeply placed burning pain in the chest behind the sternum. Sour belching with an after of the already eaten food, Stiffness in the stomach, a feeling of restlessness, Feeling of nausea and actual vomiting, Lack of appetite, Indigestion, Constipation, Bloating, Dark or black stools(from internal bleeding), Dysphagia, Burping or hiccups that won't stop.

Complications of hyperacidity: Long-standing hyperacidity may lead to formation of ulcers in the stomach which may again lead to complications like perforation.

Management of hyperacidity

Weight reduction, stopping cigarette smoking, Meals should be of small volume. Alcohol, fatty food and caffeine should be avoided. No snacks to be taken after evening meal to prevent nocturnal regurgitation. Heavy stooping or bending at the waist should be avoided especially after meals. Head in the bed should be elevated by 15 cm.

Chikitsa of amlapitta

According to *Acharya Charak chikitsa* of all disease can be divided in 3 part-

1. *Nidan parivarjan* 2. *Samshodhana* 3. *Shamana*

Nidan parivarjan: Withdrawal of the aetiological factors of the disease is called *nidan parivarjana*. *Acharya shusrut* mentioned *nidana parivarjana* as the first line of treatment of all the diseases^[12].

In *amlapitta* excessive *nidana sevana* leads to *Mandagni* and *Pitta vriddhi*. So *nidan of amlapitta* should be removed in its first treatment.

Sanshodhana chikitsa: *Samshoshana karma* eliminates the vitiated *doshas* from their root cause and thus cures the disease entirely so that there is least probability of recurrence of disease. *Acharya Kashyap* has mentioned *Amlapitta* is developed from *Amashaya* (stomach) and *kapha and pitta dosha* are having *ashrayas*. *Vamana and virechana karma* as the best treatment for *Amlapitta*, for an example as if we cut down the root of any tree, the stem of the tree dies automatically^[13].

Sanshamana chikitsa: *Samshamana karma* or *chikitsa* means *prakruti vighata*. According to *Acharya Kashyap* after *vamana karma* if some of the vitiated *doshas* remains in the body then they should be pacified through *langhana, laghu bhojana, satmya kala, desh and pachana karma* with *Shamana yoga*

Oral medication

1. Avipattikara churna
2. Sutsekhar ras
3. Kamadugha ras
4. Prawal panchamrit

5. Laghusutshekar ras
6. Churnas like Shatavari, Yastimadhu, Sariva, Vasa, Bhringa, Dhamasa, Amla, Chandan, Guduchi satwa, Musta, Parpatak to be considered.
7. Chandanasav, Ushirasav, Bhunimbadi, Abhayarishtha, Amlapitta kadha.
8. Patoladi kashayam
9. Maha Dhanvantari *Gutika*

Pathya & apathya for amlapitta

Pathya ahar

- Puranshali, mudga, masur, harenu
- Goghrit, Godugdha, jangal mansa
- Kalay shak, pautik, vasa pushp, vastuk
- Rason, Haritaki, pippali, puran madira Pathya vihar
- Vamana, Virechana, Basti, shital jalpan

Apathya Ahar

- Til, Urad, kulthi
- Avi dugdha, Dhanyamla
- Lavana, Amla, Katu Rasa dravya
- Guru anna, Dadhi, Madya Apathya Vihar
- Veg dharan
- Atap sevan
- Diwaswap

Discussion

Amlapitta shows its direct impact on *Annavaha Strotas*. *Amlapitta* is a psychosomatic disorder, where psychological factors play an equally important factor along with the dietary indiscretion. Principle of *Asta ahar vidhi visheshayatana and dashvidh ahar vidhi vidhan* mentioned in *Charak Samhita* are most important aspect for preventive and curative aspect of health. They are to be examined before food intake and are to be followed during food intake. The *samprapti of Amlapitta*, the normal function of *amla ras* are basically attributed to *pitta dosa*. *Amla ras and Amla Vipaka* plays important role in the pathogenesis of *Amlapitta*. *Dosha, Dushya, Strotas, Adhistan, Agni, Ama* are basic component of any disease process and also *Amlapitta*. *Urdhva gati Amlapitta* symptoms related to *Annavaha Strotodushti* and *Adho gati* symptoms of *Amlapitta* is related with *Purishvaha strotodushti*. Due to the incidence and importance of *Amlapitta*, Acharya may have given detailed explanation of *Amlapitta* and its way of approach in management. A person living in *Anup desha* is prone for *Amlapitta* and *Anup Desh is Ahita Desha* according to *Acharya Charak* [14]. *Acharya Kashyap* says to “Shift the place” where the all told treatment modalities fails [15].

Conclusion

Amlapitta is most irritating disease due to faulty life style, dietetic indiscriminateness and mental stress. Vitiating of *pitta* is necessary for the clinical manifestation of *Amlapitta*. Vitiating of *Vata and Kapha* may be associated with this disease. If not treat this disease properly it may give various complications in our body like *Jwara, Atisara, Pandu, Shoth, Aruchi, Bhrama*. The basic principle of treatment is *Nidan parivarjana, Sanshodhana, Sanshamana chikitsa*. Along with *Pathya ahar and vihar* also plays an important role of management of *Amlapitta*. “A person by performing appropriate diet and mode of life doing befitting exercise, free from greed, having control upon oneself and also being truthful the disease subsides”.

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