



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### AGNI AND ITS IMPORTANT ROLE ON HUMAN BODY-A REVIEW STUDY

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Sunitatemhunna <sup>2</sup>Dr. Rashmi Tiwari and <sup>3</sup>Dr. Kamna singh

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer, Department of Samhitasiddhant, Rajiv lochanayurvedic Medical College, Durg (C.G.), India

<sup>2</sup>Lecturer, Department of Sharirrachna, Rajiv lochanayurvedic Medical College, Durg (C.G.), India

<sup>3</sup>Lecturer, Department of Rognidanavamvrikritivigyan, Rajiv lochanayurvedic Medical College, Durg (C.G.), India

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##### \*Corresponding author:

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#### ABSTRACT

Agni is defined as Nayteparin 'aamayateeti' means agni is the one which brings about transformation of consumed AahaaraVihaaradiDravya of Vijaateeya (incompatible) origin to Sajaateeya (homogenous) nature. External (sun) & internal (pitta) agni is the basis of life. Acharyacharak says about agni extinguishing the Agni is Death it means life is directly proportional to Agni. According to acharyaSushrutaagni in the body is Pitta. The pitta expressions of heat & digestion sustain the life. According to fundamental principal of Ayurveda Agnis has important role in the physiological functioning of body. In modern era life becomes fast & mechanical. This is the reason why can't give proper attention to daily & seasonal regimes, exercise and diet. This change in lifestyle is responsible for replacement of Shad-rasatmakAhara by preserved & fast food, bakery products, shift duties (i.e. ratreejagaranevamdivaswapn), stress & strain full lifestyle. All these factors causes Agnimandhya & making them more and more susceptible for disease. According to AcharyaCharakmandagni is root cause of every disease. If jatharagni is weak it will result into improper formation of Rasdhatu and consequently uttarotardhatu formation hampers. This is the reason why AyurvedicSamhitas has given a lots of importance to agni.

#### INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda Agni has an important role. According to Ayurveda the condition of the agni determines the health of our entire being. Primary aim of Ayurveda is to maintain healthy status of an individual and to cure the disease of diseased one. Agni is innumerable because of its presence in each and every paramanu of the body. AcharyaCharak has mentioned about 13 Agnis. jatharagni-1, Bhutagni-5, Dhatvagni-7. Acharya Sushruta - According to AcharyaSushruta, five types of agni are illustrated named Pachakagni, Ranjakagni, Alochakagni, Sadhakagni, Bhrajakagni. AcharyaVagbhata-Vagbhata has described about 23 agnis Viz. 5 pittas, 5 Bhutagnis, 7 Dhatvagnis, 3 Dhosagni, 3 Malagni. Sharangdhara - has recognized five pittas only. Bhavamishra - has followed AcharyaCharak and Vagbhata. However Agni is basically divided into three categories:

- Jatharagni (Kayagni)
- Bhutagni
- 3. Dhatvagni.

**Kayagni (jatharagni):** Jatharagni or "Kayagni" or "Agni of the living body". is also named as kosthagni, AudaryaTejas or

Pachkagni. In all 13 agnijatharagni is very important because It maintains life and comprehends various biophysical and biochemical factors which participate in the course of digestion and metabolism. These factors either normal or abnormal are derived from and are dependant upon any increase or decrease of Jatharagni. Jatharagni is most important as it influences other agnis inside a living body. Location of jatharagni - Location is considered between Amashaya & Pakvashaya. Constitution - It is Panchabhautik containing Apa and Agni Mahabhutamainly. Whenever, Apa portion is minimized, then it is metaphorically termed as Agni and functions of Agni are manifested with full capacity. Bhela has described Agni with Surya Mandal covered by Som Mandal in nabhi (27). Nature- Nature of Kayagni, is mostly in the form of pittoshma. The word "Pittoshma" is comprising of two words- Pitta and Ushma which means ushma contained in Pitta. Pitta acts as substratum for Kayagni. AcharyaSushruta also says that Agni is never found without Pitta. According to AcharyaVagbhata Pachakagni located between Amashaya and Pakvashaya contributes parts of itself to dhatu and than Moities of Pachkagni present in dhatus when hyperactive leads to wasting and when hypoactive leads to hypertrophy. So there is parallel to the functioning of Kayagni in the Dhatus or in other words, it may be said that hyperactivity of agni tending to consume.

### The main function of jatharagni is;

- Regional control over digestion of food and separation of sara from kittabhaga
- Systemic control over general metabolism.
- So, improper functioning of Kayagni leads to various G.I. disorders as well as various metabolic disturbances.
- As per influence of doshas, four functional states of agni has been envisaged.
- Mandagni – Due to dominance of kapha out of tridoshas, when agni is unable to metabolise even a small quantity of easily digestible food can be taken as mandagni.
- Tikshnagni- This state of agni is influenced predominantly by pitta dosha, Here, even a very heavily diet is digested with in short span of time again causing hunger. It can also be referred as atyagni
- Vishmagagni- When action of agni is erratic and irregular due to predominance of vata dosha, can be called as vishmagagni. Sometimes, it completely digests food and sometimes causes distension of abdomen, colicky pain etc.
- Samagni- State of equilibrium of three doshas can be stated as samagni. Here, digestion of food (taken timely) occurs completely without any irregularity and keeps health in hands (44).

**Bhutagni:** Agni is present in every macro and micro particle of the universe. Each and every paramanu or cell in our body is composed of the five mahabhutas or five basic elements, it can be named as parthiva or Apayagni etc. Bhutagni present in molecules transform them and regularly cause transition. These transformations are done by bhutagnis by themselves or after ignition from other sources. e.g. Grains like rice acquire laghaguna after particular time period by the action of bhutagni on their own. Raw food along with water and other contents is converted into delicious and assimilable form by bhutagnis with the help of external heat. Each and every cell in our body is composed of the five mahabhutas or five basic elements. Each cell (dhatuparamanu) consists of these five Bhutagni also. All the nutrients in this world that we eat also consist of the same five basic elements with their respective Agni or bioenergy. Thus, they are completely similar with respect to the five basic elements with their Bhutagni in our body cells as well in the entire outside nutrient that we ingest for the nutrition of our body. Acharya Charaka has mentioned that the five Bhutagnis digest their own part of the element present in the food materials. After the digestion of food by the Bhutagni, digested materials containing the elements and qualities similar to each bhutas nourish their own specific bhautika elements of the body. These Bhutagnis act after the Jatharagni present in the stomach and duodenum, acting on the food and causing their disintegration. In the modern physiological perspective, the action of Jatharagni can be equated with the digestion in the stomach and duodenum, and the action of the Bhutagni can be equated with the conversion of digested materials in the liver.

**Dhatvagni:** All the seven Dhatus (seven element tissues of the body) contain their own Agni to metabolize the nutrient materials supplied to them through their own Srotas. Acharya Vagbhata stated that Dhatvagni is Sukshmaansh of Jatharagni which is situated in Dhatu. Each of the seven types of Dhatu viz. Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda,

Asthi, Majja and Shukra have their own Agni known as Dhatvagni. Each Dhatvagni present in each Dhatu synthesizes and transforms the essential Dhatu nutrients required for that particular Dhatu from the basic nutrients present in the Anna Rasa. It's Sada (diminished power) and Dipti (increased power) causes Dhatuvruddhi and Dhatukshaya respectively

- Rasagni present in the Rasa Dhatu.
- Raktagni present in the Rakta Dhatu.
- Mamsagni present in the Mamsa Dhatu.
- Medagni present in the Meda Dhatu.
- Asthyagni present in the Asthi Dhatu.
- Majjagni present in the Majja Dhatu.
- Shukragagni present in the Shukra Dhatu.

Each Dhatvagni or the bioenergy present in each Dhatu synthesizes and transforms the essential Rasa Dhatu required for that particular Dhatu or cell from the basic nutrients present in the Anna Rasa or essence of the diet that we consume. Each Dhatvagni has got a speciality to synthesize and transform the constituents suitable to its particular Dhatu. This action is a sort of selective action. Acharya Charaka has mentioned the fact that the seven dhatus that are a support of the body contain their own Agni, and by their own Agni they digest and transform the materials supplied to them to make the substances alike to them for assimilation and nourishment.

**Agni and pitta:** According to Maharshi Suśruta there is no other substance like Agni except Pitta. Maharshi Charaka also says that Agni performs its work through Pitta, Vāgbhata in his text clearly says that only Pācaka Pitta can be correlated with Agni and all other types of Pitta are different than Agni,

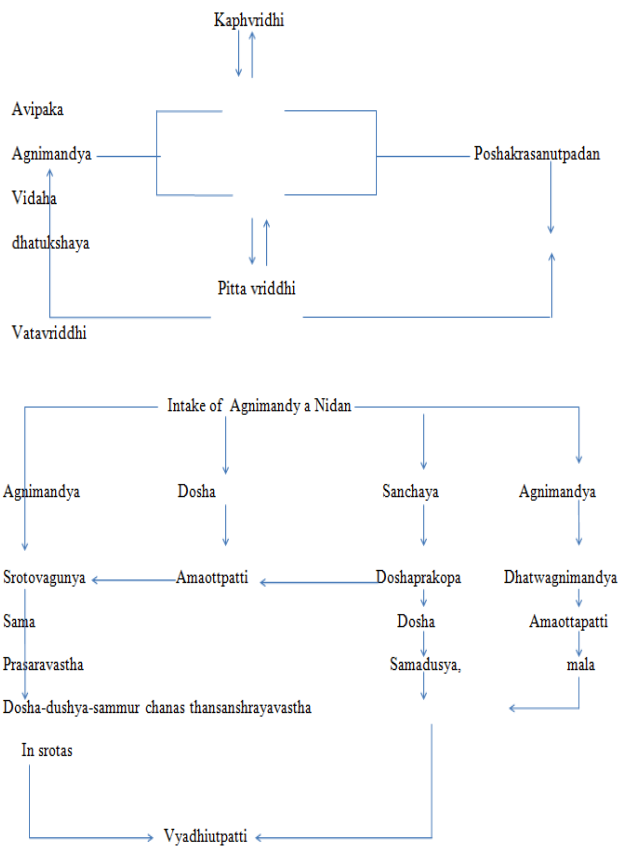
The term Pitta is derived from the root “Tap” which means to heat or to burn. This term is seen to have two meanings viz.

- “Tap Dahe”- meaning to burn
- “Tap Santāpe”- to heat

**Role of Agni:** According to Acharya Vagbhata, a healthy digestive system is revered in Ayurveda as a cornerstone of wellbeing and every disease is believed to arise from inefficient digestion. In fact, we can even distill the science of Ayurveda down to the simple idea that total health resides in the state of our digestive powers, and that restoring health must originate with a focus on our digestive system. The state of agni simply refers to our body's metabolism—the process of turning nutrients from food into energy for cells to sustain life, which of course is commandeered by your digestion, a complex combination of biological and chemical interactions. Acharya Charaka says that when Agni stops its normal functioning, the individual dies. When Agni of an individual is in Samyavastha (balanced), then person remains healthy and would lead a long, happy and healthy life. Agni of a person when vitiated, the whole metabolism will be disturbed, resulting in ill health and various diseases. Hence, Agni is said to be the base of life. Types of various Agni have been discussed above in which Jatharagni is the chief because function of Bhutagni and Dhatvagni depends on it. Our Bala, Varṇa, Sukhayu all these are depended upon Agni, by nourishing it properly, one can get strength, complexion, longevity of life, vice versa may get couple of diseases by ignoring it.

By seeing an importance of Agni, Maharṣi Susrutaenlisted equilibrium of Agni as a Characteristic feature of health. Importance of Agni has been seen in both the healthy and diseased condition. In healthy condition it is necessary for maintenance of health while in diseased condition it is important for diagnosis as well as treatment of the particular disease. Agni is important in all types of treatment like Śamana, Śodhana and Śāstrakarma. It is said that in the condition of Ama-jirṇa, a person is not able to take even food so, he should not be prescribed medicine at that time. Thus prevention and preservation of Jāṭharāgni is one of the most important part of the treatment. acarya Vagbhata in Aṣṭanga Samgraha says that epitome of all the managements is nothing but preservation of Agni.

**Tridoshaprakop by Agnimandya:** So, due to Mandagni or agnimandya improper digestion of food, produce toxic substance in our body and also tridosh will increase. Imbalance in tridosha may produce various diseases.



**Ama:** Agnimandya will cause Ama formation which results in Strotodusti and vitiation of all Doshas. According to Acharyavagbhata, agnidushti is an important factor in the pathogenesis of most of the diseases. Due to Agni Dushti, Jāṭharāgni Mandya and Dhatwagni Mandya both may occur. Atimatrashana (excessive intake of diet), Viruddhashana (intake of food having opposite properties) and Adhyashana (eating before the digestion of previously consumed diet) are the factors which cause Agnimandya. Strotorodha (obstruction in micro circulatory channels), BalaBhransha (loss of body strength), Gaurava (heaviness), Anil Mudhata (abnormal movement of Vata Doshā), Aalasya (laziness), Apakti (indigestion), Nisthiva (excessive dribbling of saliva), Mala Sanga (obstruction to Mala eg. Purisha, etc.), Aruchi (anorexia), Klama (lethargy) these are the signs of presence of Ama in body.

## Conclusion

The concept of Agni is a basic concept of Ayurveda. This concept has its own importance for maintenance of the health of a healthy person as well as for curing the various diseases. One should always be careful for normal status of the all Agnis for maintenance of health. In the disease state vitiated Doṣa, Dhatu or Mala can be corrected with treatment of respective Agni. These transformations may be of biochemical or bio physical or any other type. Observing these entire factors one should take meal according to the main principles mentioned in our Ayurvedic literature i.e. Ahara-vidhivisesayatanas and Ahara Vidhividhana, in order to increase the longevity of life. Everybody should be careful for their dietary and life style management in case of derangements of Agni in any form. In healthy condition it is necessary for maintenance of health while in diseased condition it is important for diagnosis as well as treatment of the particular disease. Therefore we conclude that one should understand the concept of Agni and care should be taken for proper functioning Agni as it is the one which is responsible for healthy body and healthy life.

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