

# Pathological States of Agni and their Role in Disease Production

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## ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is integrated science that works for happy, healthy and wealthy life. In living body two processes are going on i.e., anabolism and catabolism and their balance keeps dhatus in equilibrium and diseases aside. For this continuous action of change either yielding energy or synthesizing tissues a component exists termed as Agni. Agni is divided into 13 types based on locality of action & various functions it performs i.e., 1 *Jatharagni*, 5 *bhutagni* and 7 *dhatvagni*. According to the performance of digestion as per influence of *tridoshas*, 4 states of Agni described as *mandagni*, *tikshagni*, *vishmagni*, *samagni*. (ch. vi. 6/12) Only *samagni* is the functional state while remaining three are abnormal states leading to diseases.

The aim of this review article is to understand the consequences and significant role of agni to manage healthy and furthermore to interpret the disease process and planning the line of management of diseases. Therefore, the main principal of treatment the disease according to ayurveda is to rejuvenate and build up the Agni. Hence, conservation and promotion of Agni is the first step to be taken.

**Key Words** *Agni, Dhatus, Disease, Jatharagni*

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## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the antique literature of India in which one acknowledges to be same as universe. Whatever is found in the universe is present in human body also. According to Ayurveda an individual is made up of panchmahabhuta (five fundamental categories of matter) that always undergo *chaya* and *apchaya* process. Agni assists to retain this action in equilibrium and is responsible for this continuous process going in our body so, life span, complexion, strength, health, enthusiasm, corpulence, luster immunity, energy, heat processes and vital breath depends

on *dehaagni*. Agni is very important for carrying out all the metabolic and digestive processes taking place in body and this needs energy which comes from food, so when we eat something undergoes agni and converted into energy. Therefore, Ayurveda consider that *dehagani* is responsible for *ayu*, *varna*, *bala*, *swasthya*, *upsthaba*, *utsaha*, *prabha*, *oja*, *teja*, and *prana*. (ch. chi. 15/3-4)

Regarding the significance of Agni, Acharya charaka has considered that when Agni become neutral the individual dies and when the Agni of an individual is *Sama*, then that person has a

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long, happy, healthy life. But if Agni of a person is vitiated the whole metabolism in his body would be agitate, resulting in ill health and disease. As a consequence, Agni is said to be the mool of life.

### TYPES OF AGNI:

**JATHARAGNI:** - It is the agni located in gastrointestinal tract and makes the digestion of food taken followed by absorption of sarabhaga through intestinal villi and mucosa to enter into lymph or blood, and elimination of kitta bhaga in the process<sup>4</sup>. It is important for better functioning of the other Agni in the body. As stated in charak Samhita the nutritive part of body, dhatus, ojas, bala and varna depends on the function of jatharagni. (ch. chi. 15/5)

According to its performance of digestion as per influence of tridoshas, four functional states of Agni have been insinuate: -

1. Mandagni - when Agni is unable to digest even a small quantity of food due to dominance of kapha.
2. Tikshagni - State of Agni influenced by pitta dosha, even a very heavy diet is digested in a short span of time again leading to hunger.
3. Vishmagani - When action of Agni is departing from what is usual and irregular due to predominance of Vata dosha.
4. Samagni - State of Agni due to equilibrium of three doshas. It constitute normal functional state of Agni.

Only samagni is the physiological state while remaining three are the abnormal states of agni leading to various diseases. (ch. vi. 6/12)

2. Bhutagni -It is related to 5 basic elements (panchmahanhuta) of creation. Each bhuta have fire of its own. Each bhutagni help in digestion and assimilation of their own building blocks from nutritive food into the tissues. (ch. chi. 15/13-14)

3. Dhatvagni - Fire which is located inside the dhatus. This fire act on the nutritive part they receive and convert them into finer components formed after the action of dhatvagni on the food help in formation of the same tissues and nourishes the next one in sequence, produces energy and tissues toxins or waste components which are meant to be expelled out. To motivate the formation of respective tissues and depended tissues are major function of each dhatvagni. It also contains the necessary supplements to subsequent tissues to enhance their imitating. Thus, Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Asthi, Majja and Shukra dhatus develop subsequently and nourish further dhatus. (ch.chi.15/16-17)

So, all the functions accredited to the agni can be gathered into two aspects – dhatu nirmana (tissue formation) and dhatu karma (tissue function).

### FACTORS CAUSING VITIATION OF AGNI: -

1. Dietetic indiscretions and incompatibilities – immense fasting, over eating, irregular eating, heavy, cold, dry, dehydrated, excess liquid intake. Diet not compatible to surroundings, climate, body, construction, digestive capacity etc.
2. Improper administration of shodhana therapies i.e, vamana, virechan etc.
3. Sedentary lifestyles.

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4. Psychological factors – mental tensions, emotional instabilities like anger, anxiety, fear, lust, greed, jealousy, depression.
5. Unhygienic conditions and emaciations as a result of chronic disease affliction.
6. Contenance of natural urges.
7. Incompatible activities – exercise or sexual indulgence during indigestion.

### ORIGIN OF DISEASES RELATION WITH AGNI: -

Normalcy of all the digestive and metabolism mechanisms of the body depend upon the normal functioning of Agni. Origin of disease starts when agni get vitiated and by this vitiation unwanted byproducts of digestion and metabolism i.e., ama formation starts and accumulates in body at different levels and vitiated doshas and leads to increased impermeability and sluggishness of srotas i.e., body channels this is called srotorodha and it is the commonest manifestation of any diseases. These pathological events lead to various gastrointestinal disorders like chardi (vomiting), amalapitta (acidic peptic ulcer), atisara, visuchika (gastroenteritis), alsaka (intestinal obstruction due to acute indigestion).

As I mentioned above all the disease is due to the result of mandagni like arsha (hemorrhoids), atisara (diarrhea), udara rog (diseases causing abdominal distension), grahani rog (enteropathy) etc.

Normal mechanism work as by the digestion and assimilation ahaarasa formed which crosses the intestinal villi and enters the circulation but due

to vitiation of agni ama ahaarasa crosses the circulation which disrupts the bhutagni and reduces its functioning which leads to stop the formation of sajatiya ahaar (homogenous) and act as antigens, causing anaphylactic reactions and allergic disorders like urticaria, allergic rhinitis, hay fever.

Due to the hypo functioning of bhutagni and dhatvagni, the byproducts like lactic acid, ketones which does not attain the finality leads to disorders like madhumeha (DM), vatarakta (gout), amavata (rheumatoid disease), medoroga (obesity and dyslipidemia).

Ama substances which remain in circulation consider to be free radicals which causes damage to vitamins, proteins and lipids. All hormonal and enzymatic deficiencies like hypothyroidism may also consider to occur due to hypo functioning of dhatvagni.

## DISCUSSION

The basic theory of ayurveda is based on balanced state of tridoshas, saptadhatu and trimala. An individual is considered to be healthy when dosha, dhatu, mala and agni of his body are in balanced state and indriya, atma, mann are all functioning properly. Among all these factors agni is the important one. According to Ayurveda, agni can be correlated with the digestive fire of the body and described as an important factor of paka i.e, digestive and metabolic processes of the body. All (tridoshas, saptadhatu and trimala) these are nourished well

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initially by the influence of potency of individual jatharagni after consuming food. The four types of food after ingestion goes through the further digestive processes and gets transformed into sarabhaga and kittabhaga and this process of digestion is carried out by jatharagni. Saman vayu also increasing the digestive power of agni. Then the productive nutrients are handed into each level of dhatus for nourishment. Essential nutrients for the formation and development of all tissues are supplied by one stream of pool. This event take place by the help of dhatvagni. Ayurveda states that vitiation of agni produces all disease. That's why agni should be focused primarily in the treatment of each and every disease.

### CONCLUSION

Agni is the digestive and metabolic fire in the body. Improper functioning of Agni leads to various gastrointestinal disorders as well as various metabolic disturbances. Knowledge of Agni is essential and inevitable. Therefore, the main principal as per Ayurveda is to rebuild and strengthen the Agni. Hence preservation and promotion of Agni is the first step to be taken in every therapeutic and management of a patient. So, it is important to understand the concept of Agni to manage healthy individual as well as to interpret the disease process and planning the line of management of diseases.

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