

APPLIED ASPECT OF AMAVATA CHIKITSA SUTRA

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ABSTRACT

Context: In ayurveda, most of the diseases are named taking into consideration either the vitiated *dosha*, *dushya*, *avayava*, *marga*, *lakshan* and *karma*. In the same way *amavata* has been named, taking into account two predominant pathological factors i.e. *ama* and *vata* having their important place in *chikitsa* and *nidana* of this disease. **Aim:** To understand applied aspect of the *chikitsa sutra* of *Amavata*. **Material & method:** All the references are taken from the *Ayurvedic* scriptures, Researches, journals of the *Ayurveda*. *Special* emphasis should be put into the correct application of *Amavata chikitsa sutra* described in our classics for a holistic approach with diet, life style intervention and continuous use of drugs to have a good control of the disease and to achieve improvement in quality of life. **Conclusion:** As *Amavata* is one of the common debilitating disease by virtue of its chronicity and implication and *ama* and *vata* have the properties on opposite pole of each other so these things come in across while treating it, because any measure adopted will principally Oppose one another. So a very careful approach can only benefit the patient. In this paper an attempt is being made to substantiate these principles scientifically.

KEYWORDS: *Ama*, *Amavata*, *Chikitsa Sutra*, *Chikitsa*.

INTRODUCTION

In *ayurveda*, most of the diseases are named taking into consideration either the vitiated *dosha*, *dushya*, *avayava*, *marga*, *lakshana* or *karma*. In the same way *amavata* has been named, taking into account two predominant pathological factors i.e. *ama* and *vata* having their important place in *chikitsa* and *nidana* of this disease. The *ama* is caused due to malfunction of the digestive and metabolic mechanism. The disease is initiated by the consumption of *virudhahara* in the pre-existence of *mandagni*. In it, vitiated *vayu* circulates the *ama* all over the body through *dhamani*; takes shelters in the *sleshma sthana* (*amashyas*; *sandhi* etc.) producing symptoms such as stiffness, swelling and tenderness in the small and large joints, making a person lame.^[1]

Chikitsa Sidhanta of Amavata^[2]

Acharya Chakrapani was the pioneer who said down the principle and line of treatment of *amavata*. He has described following measured in his text *Chakradatta*. Later *Bhavaprakasha* and *Yogaratanakar* added *rukshasweda* and *upnaha* to the above said measured by Chakrapani. The line of treatment described for the disease as “*Langhanam Swedanam Tiktham...*” can be summarized under following captions-

1. Measure to bring *agni* to normal state.

2. Measure to digest *ama*.
3. Measure to eliminate vitiated *vata* and *ama*.

Ama and *vata* are the two chief pathognomic factors in production of *amavata*. *Ama* is *guru*, *snigdha*, *sthira*, *sthula* and *pichhila* while the *vata* have the properties like *laghu*, *ruksha*, *chala*, *sukshama* and *vishada*. The properties of both are on opposite pole of each other. Only the *sheeta guna* is common to both. These are the things, which come in across while treating the *amavata*, because any measure adopted will principally oppose one another. So a very careful approach can only benefit the patient. The line of treatment laid down by *chakrapani* denotes firstly the *pachana* of *ama*, then restoration of *agni* and finally control of *vata dosha*. Here an attempt is being made to substantiate these principles.

1. *Langhana*^[3]

Any measure, which brings in *laghuta* in the body, is known as *langhana*. Ten types of *langhana* have been said in *charaka* viz. *suddhi* of four types (*vamana*, *virechana*, *asthapana* and *shirovirechana*), *pipasa*, *maruta*, *atapa*, *pachana*, *upavasa* and *vyayama*. Acharya Vagbhata in *ashtanga hridaya* has considered *langhana* similar to *apatarpana* and has described under the heading *shodhana* and *shamana*. According to *acharya*

Charaka those who are suffering from excessive vitiation of *kapha*, *pitta*, blood and waste products, are afflicted with obstructed *vata* and who have bulky and strong bodies should be treated using *shodhana* (purificatory) procedures of *Langhana*. Those who are suffering from diseases caused by moderate increase of *kapha* and *pitta* such as *vamana*, *atisara*, *hridya roga*, *visuchika*, *alaska*, *jwara*, *vibandha*, *gaurav*, *udgara*, *hrillasa*, *arochaka* and similar conditions should first be treated with application of *pachana*. Above mentioned diseases, with mild intensity, should be mitigated by the *upvasa* and *pipasa nigraha* (fasting and control of thirst). In a strong person with diseases of mild and moderate intensity, any treatment measure should include *vyayama* and *atapa maruta* (physical exercise and exposure to sunlight and the wind). Those who are suffering from skin disorders, urinary disorders, those consuming excess of unctuous food, with excess discharges in the body and undergone excess nourishing therapy should be treated with *Langhana* therapy. In a season of *shishira* (winter), *Langhana* is suitable for patients with *vata*-dominant disorders. The use of substances, which possess the properties like *laghu*, *ushna*, *tikshana*, *ruksha*, *vishada*, *sukshama*, *khara*, *sara* and *kathina*, causes *langhana*. Main type of *langhana* useful in case of *amavata* is *upavasa* (no consumption of food materials).

It is the first measure that has been advised for the management of *amavata*, which is considered to be an *amasayothavyadhi* and also *rasaja vikara*, *langhana* is the first line of treatment in such conditions. The pathology originates in *amashaya* due to poor digestion in presence of *mandagni*, ultimately resulting in formation of *ama*. So the starvation will further stop the production of *ama*. In addition it helps in digestion of *ama*. Along with *upavasa* the use of drugs having the *langhana* properties will also benefit in *pachana* of *ama* and correct the *mandagni*. Once the *ama* is cured, and the strength of the *agni* is restored the measure to control the *vata* can be instituted. While doing the *langhana* foremost care should be taken as these measures can further vitiate the *vata dosha*. So *langhana* should be stopped as soon as the *nirama vata* condition is achieved.

Benefits^[4]

- **Dosha Kshaya** - The *sama dosha* are stagnant (*stimita* and *abaddha*) in the body. Due to starvation, these are metabolised.
 - **Agnisandhukshana** - The unprocessed materials undergo digestion and no fuel from outside is provided to the hypofunctioning *jatharagni*. So the *agni* is excited gradually.
 - **Vijaratva** - Due to cleaning of *srotomagra vatanulomana* occurs and *usma* is restored to its normal function
 - **Laghuta** - Due to *pachana* of *guru* and *pichchila ama*.
 - **Kshut** - Due to *pachana* of *ama*.
- Langhana* also create hunger reflex in the patients resulting indirectly in enhanced production of internal

corticosteroids which provide beneficial effect by reducing the inflammation.

Limitation

In *Nirama Avastha* this measure may increase the *vata dosha*. So *langhana* should be stopped immediately after achieving the *nirama lakshana*.

2. Swedana

The process, which causes perspiration, destroys stiffness, heaviness of the body and cold.^[5] In *ayurveda* different varieties of *swedana* have been said viz. *sagnisweda*, *niragnisweda*, *rukshasweda*, *snigdhasweda*, of which *rukshasweda* has performed with *baluka* (Hot sand). *Snigdhasweda* with some oil preparation will surely aggravate the symptoms because *snigdha* is a very conducive condition for *Ama*. So *rukshasweda* has been advocated. It is beneficial because of its *ushana guna* that digests (*pachana*) the *ama* present in affected area and also dilates the channel. Thus obstruction of channels (*srotorodha*) is removed. Relief in obstruction results in perspiration. Other type of *swedana*, which is good in case of *amavata*, is internal administration of *ushana jala* (hot water). *Ushana jala* is *dipana*, *pachana*, *srotoshodhana*, *jvaraghna*, *balya*, *ruchikara* and *swedakara*.^[6]

In chronic stage of *amavata* when *rukshata* is increased, *snigdhasweda* should also be employed. *Swedana* has been specially advocated in case of *stambha*, *gaurava*, *jadya*, *sheeta*, and *shoola*, which are the predominant features of *amavata*. Among others *atapasevana*, and *ushana jala* (processed in *vataghna dravyas*) *snana* are also helpful *swedana* in *amavata*.

3. Tikta-Katu and Deepana Dravyas^[7]

- **Tikta dravyas** are *ama* and *pitta pachaka* and *srotomukhvisodhanam*.
- **Katu rasa** is *chedaka*, *margavivaraka* and *kapha shamaka*.
- **Tikta&katu rasa** is *laghu ushana* and *tikshana* in properties, which are very useful for *ama pachana*. These are also *deepana* and *pachana*, so by means of these properties digestion of *ama*, restoration of *agni (deepana)* removal of excessive *kledaka kapha* and bringing of the *pakva dosha* to the *kostha* from the *shakha* takes place.
- **Tikta rasa** is *vishaghna* and *lekhana*.
- Both are *kleda* and *meda nashaka*.
- Totally they bring about *deepana*. *Pachana*. *Rochana* and *laghuta* in the body. *Katu dravya* like *shunti*, *panchakola*, *chitraka*, etc. & *tikta dravya* like *guduchi*, *sudarshana* etc.
- But care should be taken in monitoring the extent of vitiation of *vata dosha* because the *tikta-katu rasa dravya* increases the *vata dosha*. The drugs selected with *tikta* and *katu rasa* should also possess the *vataghna* properties “*shunthi*” has such properties. Because of its *snigdha guna* and *madhura vipaka* it inhibits more vitiation of *vata*.

4. Virechana

Virechana is a therapy, which is indicated in *shodhana* purpose. By virtue of it the *dosha* are eliminated by *adhomarga*.^[8]

It has been advocated that *dosha* remain *leena* in the *srotasa* and if *shodhana* is not performed *dosha* can aggravate again. So proper elimination of *doshas* is very essential.

After the *langhana*, *swedana*, *deepana* and *Pachana* *doshas* come in *nirama* state and from *shakha* to the *kostha*; so *virechana* with suitable drug should be performed.

Reasons for the administration of *virechana* are as follows:

- Production of *ama* is the result of involvement of *pittasthana* & *kledaka kapha*. *Virechana* removes the *kledaka kapha* from the *pitta sthana*.
- It is the most suitable therapy for the *sthanika pitta dosha*.
- Symptoms of *amavata* like *anaha*, *vibandha*, *antrakujana* and *katisula* are indicative of *pratiloma gati* of *vayu*. *Virechana* does *anulomana* of *vata*.

Eranda taila is the drug of choice for the purpose of *virechana* in the *amavata*. The reason behind this are,

1. *Eranda taila* removes the *avarana* of *vata* by *kapha*, *meda*, *rakta* & *pitta*. And also beneficial in *samsarga* of *kapha*, *meda* & *rakta* to *vata*.^[9]
2. It is said to be best *vrishya* and *vatahara* drug.^[10]
3. It not only performs *virechana* action but also control the *vata dosha* by its *snigdha guna*.

5. Snehapana

Snehapana is the process by which *snigdhatata*; *vishyandata*, *mriduta* and *kledana* in body are achieved.^[11] The properties of *sneha* are *drava*, *sukshama*, *sara*, *snigdha*, *pichhila*, *guru*, *sheet*, *manda* and *mridu snehapana* is of two types *achha snehapana* and *sidha snehapana*. These can be used as per the condition (*samavastha* & *niramavstha*) and *bala* of the patients. *Shamana* or *brimhana* type of *snehapana* is indicated in *nirama* stage or chronic condition of the disease.

The therapeutic measures so far employed are likely to cause *rukshata* in the *dhatu* and provocation of *vata*,

Pathya – Apathya^[14]

Pathya

Anna varga	Yava, Kulatha, Raktashali, Shayamaka, Kodrava, Purana Shashtishali,
Shaka Varga	Vastuka, Shigru, Karvelaka, Patola
Dugdha varga	Adraka Ksheer paka
Mansa Varga	Jangala Mans
Drava	Ushna Jala, Purana Madya, Gomutra, Takra & Kanji with Shunthichurana
Dravya	Katu-Tikta Dravya-, Shunthi, Bhallataka, Vridhadaruka, Varuna,
Pathya Vihara	Rukshasveda with Baluka Potali

which may result in further aggravation of disease process. This can be well controlled by administration of *sneha*. A medicated *sneha* processed in *ushana*, *katu*, and *tikta rasa* drugs is very effective both for *ama* and *vata*. Due to chronic nature of the disease tremendous *dhatukshaya* and weakness develops in the body. Hence *brimhana snehapana* is recommended at this stage.

Shamana snehapana-snehana has been stated to augment the *agni*, as it influences the digestion by softening food and stimulating the *agni*. *Snehapana* is also prescribed in case of *asthi majjagata vata*. As the *asthi* and *majjadhatu*s are quite involved in *amavata snehapana* will surely help the patients.^[12]

Limitations

- This should not be employed in case of *samavata* as *sneha* increases the condition.
- Administration of only *sneha* for a longer duration may once again precipitate the *ama* formation. So, the *sneha* processed with *ushna*, *katu*, etc. *dravyas* like *pippalyadi ghrita*, *triushanadi ghrita*, *shunthyadi ghrita*, *lashunadi ghrita*, and *bhrihatsaindhavadi taila* are to be advised.

6. Basti

The procedure of administration of medicated liquid materials through anus (*adhomarga*) is known as *basti*. In *ayurvedic* classics, *basti* is advocated as *ardha chikitsa*, which is the best procedure to control vitiated *vata dosha*.^[13]

Vata is the second important pathognomic factor of *amavata*; so *basti* is very helpful in *amavata*. As the disease attains chronicity the *vata* becomes more *pravridha*, *basti* is very useful in this stage. In *amavata* both *anuvastana* as well as *asthapana (niruha) basti* are recommended. *Anuvastana basti* removes the *rukshata* of the body caused by *deepana* and *pachana* measures to remove the *ama* and control the *vata* by *snehana guna*. It maintains the function of *agni* and nourishes the body.

Asthapana basti eliminates the *dosha* brought to the *kostha* by *deepana* and *pachana*. Besides these it also strengthen the local function of the *kostha* and remove the *anaha*, *vibanadha* etc. *Chakrapani* has recommended *saindhavadi taila* for *anuvastana basti* and *kshara basti*, *vaitarana* for *asthapana (niruha) basti*.

Apathya

Ahara	Dadhi, Kshira, Matsya, Guda, Mansapishtaka, Viruddhahara, Sheeta Jala
Vihara	Viruddha Chesta, Snigdha Abhyanga, Purvavata, Vegarodha and Jagarana

CONCLUSION

In spite of the description of the multiple drug therapy in different classics of Ayurveda potential and durable results are not found due to non-removal of the basic cause. Hence Special emphasis should be put into by the correct application of chikitsa sutra described in our classics for a holistic approach with diet, life style intervention and continuous use of drugs to have a good control of the disease and to achieve improvement in quality of life. As *Amavata* is one of the common debilitating disease by virtue of its chronicity and implication and *ama* and *vata* have the properties on opposite pole of each other so these things come in across while treating it, because any measure adopted will principally oppose one another. So a very careful approach can only benefit the patient. In this paper an attempt is being made to substantiate these principles scientifically.

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