

HOLISTIC APPROACH FOR THE PREVENTION OF AMLAPITTA

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ABSTRACT

Amlapitta (Acid Peptic Disorder) is a very common emerging which is an abnormal pathological condition of *pitta* occurring due to indulgence in *aahara*, *vihara* and *manasika bhava* which are of incompatible combination, faulty dietary habit, persistent intense stress, excess alcohol consumption, spicy and oily food and sedentary life style. The condition can be cured using medication but the condition may relapse as soon as *nidana sevana* is done. So the holistic approach is a must to tackle this problem like intake of *pathyahara*, *sodhana kriya* (*vamana*, *virechana* etc), *yogic kriya* (*Jala Dhauti*), *yogasana* (*vajrasana*, *shavasana*, *salabhasana*, and *yoga nidra*), *pranayama* (*Shitali*, *Shitkari*), life style modification (avoidance of unwholesome diet, tobacco chewing, and alcohol intake), etc. By the use of these approaches the condition can be treated to its root. Moreover, *amlapitta* can be prevented by the use of *pathyahara* and practice of good lifestyle habits (*Vihara*), following the *charya traya* (*dinacharya*, *rutucharya* and *ratricharya*) and avoidance of *nidana*. The present paper focuses on the holistic approach for the prevention (primary, secondary and tertiary) of *amlapitta* Thus preventing disease from gaining a foothold in the system.

KEYWORDS: *Amlapitta*, holistic, *pathya-apathya*.

INTRODUCTION

Amlapitta is a common disease now-days due to changing diet habits, social structure, lifestyle, environmental and mental stress and strain. The word *amlapitta* is derived from अम् + क्ल् + अच् प्रत्यय which means sour or *amla*. अम्लम् च पित्तम् अम्ल पित्तम् । The condition in which *pitta* becomes *amla* is called *amlapitta*. अम्लम् वदग्धम् च तत् पित्तम्, अम्ल पित्तम् । (मधुकोश) The condition in which *pitta* becomes *vidagdha* and cause *amlata* is called *amlapitta*. Normally *pitta* has *katu rasa* but when converted to *amla rasa* cause *amlapitta*.

We do not get direct reference of *Amlapitta* in *Samhita*. In *Madhava Nidana* it has been described in a separate chapter. In *Kashyapa Samhita* it has been described as *shuktaka*. In *Caraka Samhita*, in *grahani adhyaya*.^[1] among the diseases caused due to *aama*, *amlapitta* has been described. In the pathogenesis of *Grahani roga*, the pathogenesis of *Amlapitta* has been explained. *Nidana sevana*^[2] (*viruddha*, *dushta aahara*, *atyamla aaharaa*, *vidahi aahara*, *pittala aahara*) creates *mandagni* and it further leads to *ajirna* which leads to *amavisha*

production. This *amavisha* mixed with *pittadi dosha* and lodges in *amashaya* and produce *amlapitta*.^[3] And produces the symptoms like *avipaka*, *klama*, *utklesha*, *tiktaalodgara*, *kritkantha daha*, *aruchi*, etc.

The *amlapitta* has been classified as *urdhvaga* and *adhoga*^[4] according to *gati bheda* and *vaataadhika*, *vata-kaphadhika* and *kaphadhika* according to the predominance of *dosha* along with *pitta*.^[5]

The *navina* or acute *amlapitta* is *sadhya*, whereas the chronic or *chira amlapitta* is *yapya* and if the person is following the proper *aahara* and *vihara* the *kashtrasadhya* also becomes *sadhya*.^[6]

According to modern concept we can correlate *amlapitta* with hyperacidity or acid peptic disorder. In this condition the Hydrochloric acid in the stomach is increased, which causes inflammation of the gastric mucosa leading to hyperacidity, causing symptoms like heart burn, nausea, pain in epigastrium, vomiting, anorexia and hiccough.

Prevention is defined as an action which is aimed at eradicating, eliminating or minimizing the impact of

disease and disability, or if none of these are possible, retarding the process of the disease and disability. The dictionary meaning of prevention is the act of stopping something from happening or arising. In the context of health, prevention plays major role in halting disease process as well as stop the disease from emerging. In modern days, the concept of prevention has become broad-based. Prevention not only means stopping the disease from occurring but also to intercept the disease cause and disease process. This was rightly described in *Ayurveda* as aim of *Ayurveda* which is to promote health of healthy and cure disease of diseased person.

According to the state of disease the levels of prevention differ and also the modes of intervention.^[7] *Amlapitta* is one of the fast emerging diseases in the present era; all the levels of prevention can be applied according to the stage of pathogenesis of the disease.

Hollistic measure for the prevention of *Amlapitta*

Modern era changing lifestyle along with changing food culture and also depending upon ones body constitution *amlapitta* is one of the most common symptoms seen in the society. Although it can be managed efficiently with proper medication and following wholesome *aahara* and *vihara*, it has high chances of remission if one of the *nidana sevana* (*aaharaj, vihaaraj or manasika bhava*) is done. So, it will be better to apply holistic measures for the prevention of *amlapitta*.

The goal of medicine is to promote health, to preserve health, to restore health when it is impaired and to minimize suffering and distress. These goals are embodied in the word prevention.^[8] The holistic prevention of *amlapitta* can be described according to the four levels of prevention. The four levels of prevention are primordial, primary, secondary and tertiary prevention. Normally, if we discuss about the word prevention, we think it as stopping something from happening. But it also means stopping from aggravation of the condition. Even giving treatment is also a part of prevention. Each and every action taken from birth to death all are embodied under prevention.

Primordial Prevention

Primordial prevention is the prevention of emergence of risk factors in population groups that have not yet appeared^[9] In this stage, the *amlapitta* can be prevented by giving proper health education about the do's and do not's for the disease. And encouraging the people from adopting healthful lifestyle and habits the concept of *sadvritta, achara rasayana, aapta sevana* can be taken under this level of prevention. As no action is taken in this level of prevention, the main mode of intervention in this level is to give proper education about the prevention modalities of *amlapitta* to the mass as well as individual and encourage to adopt healthy habits in the family and community.

Primary Prevention

Primary prevention is described as "action taken prior to the onset of disease, which removes the possibility that a disease will ever occur"^[10] It signifies the intervention at the prepathogenesis phase of the disease. The main prevention modality for any disease is *nidana parivarjana* or avoidance of causative factors Which holds true for *Amlapitta* also. One should avoid excessive intake of *amla-ushna aahara*, alcoholic beverages, *abhisyandi-pistanna sevana*, doing *adhyashana, viruddahasana*, intaking food during *ajirna*, excessive *sevana* of *kulattha, vegadharana*, junk food, etc. Among the seasons, during *varsha* and *sharada rutu* and in *anupa desha* the *pitta* is aggravated.^[11] So, the *rutucharya* should be followed according to the *rutu*.

The *charya traiye* (*dinacharya, rutucharya and ratricharya*) should be followed properly. If an individual follows these *charyas*, the *dosha-dhatu* in the body will be in equilibrium and the health will be maintained. The regimen which are *hita ubhaya-loka* are the *dinacharya*. For example, *brahimuhurta jagarana*- if an individual do *jagarana* at this time, which is *vata kaala*, all his physiological functions will be normal as *vata* is responsible for all the physiological functions in the body. As for *rutucharya* also, it is told that in particular *rutu* particular *rasa* should be taken as per the *rutu*, to tackle the changes in the *dosha* in the body according to *rutu* so that the disease pertaining to change of *rutu* will not occur.

The *pathya*^[12] or wholesome diet barley, wheat, green gram, old rice, warm water, sugar candy, inflorescence of the plantain, cucumber, matured ashgourd, pomegranate, gooseberry, dry grapes, etc. should be taken. And the *apathy* like *tila, masha, kulatha, milk of goat, dhanyamla*, etc should be avoided.

Similarly, one can practice *yogasana, pranayama, yogic kriya, dhyana and mudra*. These measures improves the well beings and happiness of an individual, also improves all the dimensions of health so that an individual can enjoy positive health.

Secondary Prevention

Secondary prevention can be defined as action which halts the progress of a disease at its incipient stage and prevents complications.^[13] At this stage the disease has already step foot on the body. The general measure for the treatment of any disease is *nidana parivarjana, sanshodhana chikitsa and samshamana chikitsa*.^[14]

As explained by *Acharya Caraka* at this stage of disease we can go for *nidana parivarjana, shodhana and shaman cikitsa*. The main keyfactor for treating *amlapitta* is to improve digestion. *Vamana* is indicated in diseases that are originated from *Amashaya*. *Acharya Kashyapa* says as the disease is developed from *Amashaya* where the *kapha* and *pitta* have *ashraya* so the wise physician should give *vamana* form the very beginning to the one

who have lost his strength and bulk. Vamana is considered as the best modality of treatment in *amlapitta*. It is just like destroying the tree by cutting its roots.

In one study it has been found that *vamana* is effective in the treatment of *urdhwogata amlapitta*.^[15]

For *urdhvoga amlapitta* we can advise *vamana* due to *samsarga* of *kapha* and *virechana* in case of *adhoga amlapitta*.^[16] In *amlapitta* first *vamana* should be done then *mriduvirechana* followed by *anuvasana vasti*.

One has to follow code of dietetics for better health. Appropriate quantity and quality of food consumed helps to prevent and control hyperacidity. One should also take food considering one's own capacity of digestion. With the complaints of *amlapitta* following the dietary do's and don'ts helps to produce soothing effect on the inner layer of the stomach, reverses inflammatory changes and controls the digestive secretions.

The single drugs like *shatavari*, *yastimadhu*, *amalaki*, *shunthi*, etc and compound formulation like *kamdudha rasa*, *sutasekhar rasa*, *prawal pishti*, *prawal panchamrita*, *dhatri lauha*, *shankha bhasma*, *swarnamaksika bhasma*, *avvipattikar churna*, *amalaki rasayana*, *shatavari ghrita*, *dasimadighrita*, etc can be used as *shaman aushadha*.

Yoga is one of the most effective and natural cures for acidity. It is also one of the easiest and quickest way not only to overcome the acidity but also to improve the digestion. For the cure of *amlapitta* we can advise the *yogasana* like *bajrasana*, *pavanamuktasana*, *ushtrasana*, *paschimotasana*, *suryanamaskara*, *shalabhasana*, etc, *pranayama* like *nadishodhana*, *bhramari*, *shitali*, *shitakari*, *Chandrabhedhi pranayama*, etc, *yogic kriya* like *jala dhauti*, *basti*, *neti* etc and *mudras* like *prithivi mudra*, *pranamudra*, etc will also be beneficial in prevention as well as cure of *amlapitta*. The *yogasana* described above will improve the circulation in the gastrointestinal tract and also removes the toxin from the body so that the *agni* will become proper. These *asana* also helps relax the mind. The practice of *pranayama* not only improves physiology of the body but also improves the mental function and well being of the individual. As the psychological factor is one of the cause of *amlapitta*, the practice of *pranayama* is certainly beneficial. Also the *shitali*, *chandrabhedhi* and *shitakari pranayama* are soothing and cooling in nature and balances the aggravated *pitta*. The *prithivi* and *prana mudra* decreases the aggravated *pitta* in the body which will help to tackle the increased *pitta* in the body.

In one study it was found that, marked improvement was found in all the symptoms of *amlapitta* after practicing specified *yogasana* for 21 days.^[17]

Tertiary prevention

When the disease process has advanced beyond its early stages it is still possible to accomplish prevention by what might be called as tertiary prevention.^[18] If the disease is not managed in its early stage it will become *yapya* and complications occurs. Strict adherence with food habits, proper diet, healthy lifestyle and regimen along with medication mostly gives total cure from acid peptic disorder. If not treated timely or if unwholesome diet, regimen and habits continued, it may lead to ulcer, anaemia and various health problems like chronic gastritis, duodenitis, IBS, malabsorption, peptic stenosis.

At this stage, the *nidana sevana varjana* is a must. As the disease is of *pitta* origin, all measures are undertaken to pacify *pitta*; otherwise the medicament should subside the irritation. So, first of all, in worsened conditions, *emesis* is carried so as to take out the accumulated acidic substances from the stomach. After once complete remission of the complaints, *rasayana* are prescribed so as to check the re-manifestation of the similar episode. Along with these treatment modalities the adherence to wholesome *aahara* and *vihara* should be done. In *jirna amlapitta* *asthapana* and *anuvasana vasti* can be carried out.^[19] Similarly, if the *amlapitta* is still persistent after *shodhana kriya*, the *raktamokshana* can be done followed by *shitala dravya lepa* and *shamsarjana karma* with *pittaghna aahara*.

The *yogasana*, *pranayama*, *yogic kriya*, *dhyana* and *mudra* described above can be adopted as adjuvant to the treatment in this level.

DISCUSSION

The goals of preventive medicine are to promote health, to preserve health, to restore health when it is impaired, and to minimize suffering and distress. The objective of preventive medicine is to intercept or oppose the "cause" and thereby the disease process. Often times, removal or elimination of a single known essential cause may be sufficient to prevent a disease. Prevention is not only the process of stopping the cause of disease but also action which halts the progress of a disease at its incipient stage and prevents complications, which is embodied in secondary prevention. So prevention acts in each and every stage of the disease.

It is clear that *amlapitta* is mainly due to aggravation of *pitta* where the *pitta* becomes *amla rasa*. Factors responsible for aggravation of this *pitta dosha* are excessive intake of pungent and sour food items, alcoholic preparations, salt, hot and sharp stuff which cause burning sensations, anger, fear, excessive exposure to sun and fire. Now-a-days due to change in lifestyle and dietary habits has increased the prevalence of this disease worldwide. The irony is that though ample research has been carried out for alleviating the disease, it still remains persistent. As the definition of health goes on as health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well beings and not merely the absence of

disease.^[20] Similarly, the physiological as well as mental and social changes in an individual should be tackled so as to prevent the occurrence of amlapitta.

CONCLUSION

Amlapitta is one of the most common disease seen in the society. It is seen in all ages, all classes, and all community which decreases the quality of life significantly. The stomach normally secretes acid that is essential in the digestive process. When there is excess production of acid in the stomach, it results in the hyperacidity.

Amlapitta has become the burning issue in the present era. It can be cured with the simple medicament but long term medicine use may possess side effects. For prevention and total cure of the disease not only the physiological function of the body should be in balanced state but also the mental function should be well functioning. This can be achieved through the holistic approach. This holistic approach may it be pharmacological or non-pharmacological can be applied in each and every stage of the disease so that the disease will not put foot on the system and if any one suffer from the disease also it will not aggravate and transform from disease to disability. It is like stamping a spark rather than calling fire brigade. And it is rightly called "Prevention is better than cure"

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