

AYURVEDA CONCEPT OF SAMANA VAYU, ITS PHYSIOLOGICAL ROLE IN BODY  
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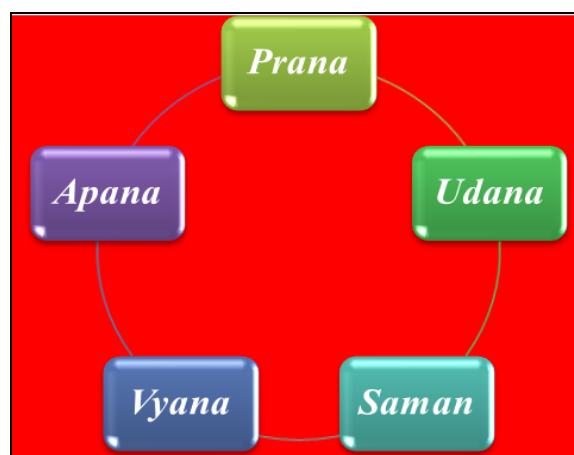
## ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the science that deals with well being of mankind and connects people with nature and spiritual power. Ayurveda mentioned several theories related to the health and diseases; Tridosha theory is one of them. This theory explains biological role of three Doshas and Vata Dosha is one among them which play pivotal role in good health and also responsible for pathological manifestations of diseases. There are five subdivision of Vata dosha i.e. Prana, Udana, Samana, Vyana and Apana. The Samana vayu is one of the subdivisions of Vata dosha which is present around digestive fire (Jatharagni) and moves over the gastrointestinal tract. This Samana vayu perform many functions in body like stimulation of Agni thus helps in digestion process. Samana vayu facilitates division of essence of Ahara and waste product thus governs movement of gastrointestinal products. Samana vayu with the help of Pranavayu receives food and with the help of Apana vayu removes waste product from the body. It is stated that Samana vayu contributed greatly towards the physiology of digestive system, considering this aspect present article summarizes Ayurveda concept of Samana Vayu, its physiological role and effects on Agnibala.

**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, Samana vayu, Agnibala, Digestion, Physiology.

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda encompasses great culture of Indian heritage which also enriched by traditional Indian theories and philosophies presented by ancient *Acharyas*. Ayurveda explains concepts of *Dosha* (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*) as chief theory related to the health and disease. The *Vata Dosha* is important *Dosha* which govern all type of movements, mental functions, brings compactness to the body, promotes speech, sensation and responsible for many other physiological functioning. There are different types of *Vata Dosha* as depicted in **Figure 1**, and *Samana* is one of them which help to maintain homeostasis of body, control metabolic activities and stimulates *Agni*.<sup>[1-5]</sup>

**Figure 1: Sub-division of Vata.**

*Pranavata* resides in *Murdha* and responsible for functions like; *Sthivana*, *Nisvasa* and *Annapravesha*. *Vyanavayu* spreads all over the body and perform functions of movement and contraction of muscle, etc. *Apana Vayu* resides in *Pakvadhana* and helps in the elimination of *Samirana*, *Sakrit* and *Mutra*, etc. *Samanavayu* involves in process food ingestion, secretion of digestive juice, formation and separation of nutrients from consumed *Ahara*, gastrointestinal motility and elimination of wastes, etc.<sup>[4-7]</sup>

### **Saman Vayu**

*Saman vayu* performs its function alone as well as with the help of *Vyana Vayu*, *Prana Vayu* and *Apana Vayu*. The proper coordination of these *Vayus* is essential for normal physiological functioning of body. Normally *Samana Vayu* potentiates digestion, helps in metabolism, break down materials into intestine, helps in disintegration and control movement of essence of *Ahara*. *Saman vayu* has vital role in *Anna grahana* and *Anna paachana* and facilitate *Anna vivechana*. *Saman vayu* control motion in *Amashaya*, *Pakvashaya*, *Malavaha srotasa*, *Shukravaha srotas*, *Artava vaha srotasa* and *Ambu vaha srotasa*.

The term *Samana* itself indicates to equalize thus *Samana vayu* balances process of digestion and assimilation of foods. Thus normal state of *Samana vata* resembles seat of *Jatharagni* as *Samagni* and this condition is prerequisite for digestive and metabolic activities, on other hands *Vimargaami* causes *Vishmagni* which may result weakness, anorexia, indigestion and diarrhea, etc.

### **Samanvayu Sthana**

*Saman vayu* present in sweat channels and around to the seat of *Agni*. It resides near the metabolic fire; which support digestion and division of food materials into nutrient and waste products. This is the site where absorption and distribution of *Ahara rasa* take places after digestion of food. *Samana Vayu* helps to kindle fire since it located in the proximity of *Agni*. It is circulated thorough the body mainly around the digestive tract.

### **Major Functions of Samana Vayu**

- It gives strength to the *Agni* and maintains normal functioning of digestive fire.
- It helps to digests food and separates it into nutrient and waste products.
- It liberates essence of *Ahara* to their respective pathways and helps in the circulation of food materials.
- Support *Srotas* to perform their functions. *Samana Vayu* controls movement of *Dosha Vaha Srotas* thus helps in holding and circulating *Doshas*.
- *Samana Vayu* helps to retain food in alimentary tract so to facilitate digestion and separation of food materials.

### **Role in Agnibala**

*Samana Vayu* at the level of *Annam Grihnati* performs function of *Anna Dharana* and permits the entry of the food since located in the stomach. Therefore reception of food is the function of *Samana Vayu* at initial level. *Samana Vayu* sometimes perform its functions with *Prana Vayu* and *Udana Vayu*.

The *Pachati* effects of *Samana Vayu* support functioning of *Pitta* in digestion and metabolic process. *Samana Vayu* work in coordination with others, coordination of *Samana Vayu* with localized *Doshas* is required to

facilitate digestion and separation of food. *Pachaka Pitta* and *Kledaka Kapha* are other *Doshas* which coordinates with *Samana Vayu* during digestion of food. *Pachaka Pitta* localized in stomach and intestine while *Kledaka Kapha* resides in the stomach, these are the site of digestion and separation of food. Therefore assimilation of food takes places at appropriate place with the support of *Samana Vayu*, *Pachaka Pitta* and *Kledaka Kapha*.<sup>[5-8]</sup>

### **Mechanism of Samana Vayu in Digestion**

*Samana* acts like air which boost up fire, *Samana* gives air to the digestive fire facilitate combustion of food into nutrients separate from wastes, the good state of *Samana* provides combustion of good quantity and quality. *Pachaka Pitta* seeks accompany of *Samana Vayu* during this process since alone *Pachaka Pitta* not able to carry digestion and metabolic process appropriately. The digestion and separation of food is long process which takes some times and during this period it is required to hold *Ahara* at place of digestion; *Samana* not only retain food for that particular period but also circulates its appropriately. *Samana Vayu* provides strength to the digestive fire by potentiating *Dhatu agnis* and *Bhutagnis*. Therefore *Samana Vayu* nourished and rejuvenated whole body. *Saman Vayu* breaks foods into *Parthiv*, *Aagneya*, *Aapya*, *Vayavya* and *Nabhas* form.

### **Role in Saara and Kitta bhag Separation**

*Samana vayu* first imparts *Agnisandhukshan* effects and stimulates digestive juices, after digestion of food; it gets divided into two main parts; *Saara bhag* and *Kitta bhag*. The digested part (*Annarasa*) transported to the *Hridaya* by *Saman vayu* while *Kitta bhag* forms *Mutra* and *Purish* which are retained by *Saman vayu* to the lower portion of body from where they get excreted out.

### **Role in Excretion**

*Mala Dharana* is another important functions of *Samana Vayu* through which it keeps wastes in lower extremities, that after these waste products eliminates from the body under the influence of *Apan Vayu*. *Samana Vayu* support process of elimination of urine, feces and sweat. *Samana Vayu* pushes urine towards the urinary bladder for excretion purpose. *Samana Vayu* holds *Mala* until they get excreted with the help of *Apana Vayu*. *Samana Vayu* controls formation and movement of sweat to the skin roots for periphery elimination. These all action of *Samana Vayu* can be attributed to its *Anna vivechana* property. Thus it can be stated that *Samana Vayu* detoxifies body and maintain good health status.

### **Association of Samana vayu**

- *Samana vayu* helps to brings food into GIT with help of *Prana vayu*.
- *Samana vayu* with accompanying *Vyana vayu* controls movement of GI products by regulating contraction of muscles.
- *Samana vayu* along with *Apana vayu* helps in movement of waste products.

- Association of *Samana vayu* with *Pitta* causes *Tikshnagni*
- Associated with *Kapha* causes *Manadagni*.

### Modern perspective on Physiology of *Samanavayu*

The functions of *Samana vayu* can be compared with the functioning of cranial nerve as per modern science. This involves control of the movement of hypoglossal muscle, swallowing center of medulla, peristaltic movement of GIT, stimulating hormones and chemicals which stimulate secretion of digestive enzyme. The function of *Samana vayu* can also be compared with diffusion and osmosis process of body that deals with transpiration of materials, the process of active absorption is similar to that functioning of *Samana vayu*. The physiology of *Samanavayu* is similar to the functioning of parasympathetic system and stretch reflex.<sup>[8-10]</sup>

### CONCLUSION

*Samanavayu* mainly responsible for stimulation of *Agni* thus initiates process of digestion and absorption of food, *Samanavayu* also involves in separation of essence and waste material after metabolic process. It maintains homeostasis and equilibrium of the body. *Samanavayu* locates in the umbilical region of body thus control activities of digestive system, these functions of *Samana vayu* accompanying with *Prana vayu*, *Apana vayu*, *Vyana vayu* and *Pachaka pitta*, etc. The ingestion of food to the esophagus by *Samana vayu* performs in coordination with *Prana vayu*. *Samana vayu* helps in gastrointestinal motility by initiating contraction of muscle and this function is coordinated by *Vyana vayu*. *Samana vayu* helps in digestion with the help of *Pachaka pitta* and it perform expulsion of waste material with the help of *Apana vayu*. The physiology of *Samana vayu* can be correlated with sympathetic & parasympathetic system, enteric nervous system and some hormonal activities of body as per the modern sciences.

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