



SJÖGREN'S SYNDROME – AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

¹ A S Nagalakshmi,

²Muralidhara,

³S Vijayalakshmi

¹PG scholar, Department of kayachikitsa, SKAMCH&RC, Bengaluru.

²Professor, Department of kayachikitsa, SKAMCH&RC, Bengaluru.

³Lecturer, Department of kayachikitsa, SKAMCH&RC, Bengaluru.

ABSTRACT

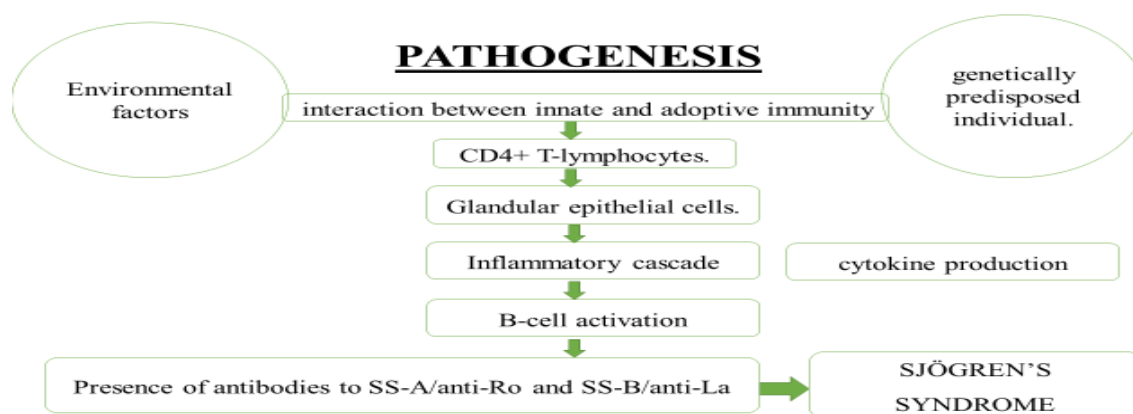
Autoimmunity is a state in which the body's immune system fails to distinguish between 'self' and 'non-self' and reacts by the formation of autoantibodies against one's own tissue antigens. Sjögren syndrome is a chronic autoimmune exocrinopathy distinguished by lymphatic infiltration of lacrimal and salivary glands. Primary Sjögren's syndrome is characterized by Keratoconjunctivitis sicca, Xerostomia and Secondary Sjögren's syndrome is characterized by RA, SLE, Scleroderma, Vasculitis (extraglandular manifestations). In Ayurveda we can understand primary Sjögren's syndrome as *Shuska Akshi Paka* and secondary Sjögren's syndrome as those disorders which can be included under the diseases like *Amavata*, *Vatarakta*, *Kushta*. In this article, attempt is made to understand the Sjögren syndrome and its treatment in Ayurveda by considering the concepts of *Virudha ahara* and *Vyadhikshamatva*.

Keywords: Autoimmune disorders, Sjögren syndrome, *Virudha ahara*, *Vyadhikshamatva*

INTRODUCTION: Sjögren's syndrome is a chronic, slowly progressive autoimmune disease characterized by lymphocytic infiltration of the exocrine glands resulting in xerostomia and dry eyes. It is a systemic disease named after the Swedish ophthalmologist, Henrik Sjögren, who introduced the term 'Keratoconjunctivitis sicca' for dryness of eyes. It has two age peaks with first in the twenties and the second in the fifties. Middle-aged women (female-to-male ratio, 9:1) are primarily affected, although Sjögren's syndrome may occur at any age, including childhood¹.

In Ayurveda, the features of dryness can be understood by the increase in *Ruksha Guna* of *Vata*. This can be managed by *Sneha* and its importance is quoted by Sushruta Acharya as '*Snehasaro Ayam Purushaha*'² and he explains *Prana* as *Sneha Buyishta*. The primary Sjögren's syndrome can be understood by the reduction of *Snehamsa* and *Vataprakopa* whereas extraglandular involvement is seen in secondary Sjögren's syndrome which can be understood with respect to the *Dosha*, *Dhatu* involved and treatment should be planned accordingly.

PATHOGENESIS



AYURVEDA ASPECT OF UNDERSTANDING SJÖGREN'S SYNDROME

As Sjögren's syndrome is an autoimmune disease, understanding of concept of autoimmune disease in Ayurveda is essential. While explaining the cause for the manifestation of disease, it has been explained that consumption of unwholesome food will not suffer from diseases, even consumption of wholesome food (*Hita Ahara*) can also suffer from disease. Apart from unwholesome diet (*Apathya Ahara*), there are other factors for the causation of disease like *Kalaviparyaya*, *Pragnaparada*, *Asatmya Grahana* of *Shabdha*, *Sparsha*, *Rupa*, *Rasa*, *Gandha*. These factors may produce diseases even in individuals accustomed to wholesome food (*Pathya Ahara*). An unwholesome food (*Apathya Ahara*) articles are more harmful depending upon the nature on *Desha*, *Kala*, *Samyoga*, *Veerya*, *Pramana*³. Hence depending upon *Apathya Ahara*, *Dosha* involved, *Sharira Vishesha*, the diseases manifests either in the form of acute or chronic – it depends on involvement of *Dosha* and site of their vitiation. Considering all these factors, Sjögren's syndrome can be understood in Ayurveda to be caused due to:

- *Apathya Ahara* – includes *Virudhahara*.

- *Apathya Vihara* – includes Toxic Chemical Exposure, Bacterial and Viral Infections and Illnesses

- *Sharira Vishesha* – can be understood in terms of *Vikara Vighata Abhava*, *Bija Dosha/ Khavaigunya*. Genetically predisposing (Family History of Autoimmune Disease) factors like HLA gene (Especially HLA-DR3, HLA-B8, HLA DQA1) is the most important region affected in Sjögren's syndrome.

- *Dosha - Vata Pradhana Tridosha*.

CONCEPT OF VIRUDDHA AHARA

Food substances after ingestion which causes *Dosha Utklishta* but does not expel out *Utklishta Dosha* from the body are to be considered as *Virudha Ahara*⁴. Concept of *Virudha Ahara* is considered here as it plays an important role in hampering the functional aspect of *Vyadhikshamatva* (immunity).

Various theories have been postulated for the pathogenesis of autoimmune disease, like processed foods which are loaded with chemicals in the form of preservatives, hormones, steroids, trans-fats and sugars, which promote the creation of free radicals in the body, which in turn damage the cells it can be correlated as *Viruddha Ahara*⁵ as follows,

Desha Viruddha - Environmental toxins responsible for autoimmune disease.

Agni Viruddha - Free radical production is due to *Agni Viruddha* in turn produces *Ama* in our body.

Matra Viruddha – *Atimatra Samskarita Ahara* (processed food) may be taken as *Matra Viruddha* and it leads to formation of *Ama*

Satmya Viruddha - Intake of food items not suitable to a person's body constitution for a longer period may be called as *Satmya Viruddha*.

Paaka Viruddha - In recent era processed food also one of the causative factors of Autoimmune disease.

Samskara Viruddha - Use of preservatives in various food products packed in tinned bottles for longer time can result in formation of toxins leading to manifestation of autoimmune disorders.

Veerya Viruddha - Can be lead to autoimmune diseases, as Acharya Charaka has also stated phrase- "*Viruddha Veerya Ashanam Nindita Vyadhi Karanam*".

Samyoga Viruddha - It is stated by Charaka that taking of milk and fish together can lead to *Kushtha Roga*.

Sampada Viruddha - Intake of such food items which are not having edible qualities like overripe, unripe, putrefied fruits, food items etc. It is seen practically that fruits and vegetables available in market are mostly synthetically made ripe which soon loses its qualities leading to formation of *Ama*.

Vidhi Viruddha - Unwashed fruits or vegetables contaminated with pesticides can also cause autoimmune diseases.

Virudha Ahara can be considered under *Dushi Visha*, which vitiates the *Dhatu* in the body.

Hence, the role of *Virudha ahara* in *Agni Dushana (Mandagni)* and in the formation of *Ama*, which in turn *Mandagni* is

responsible for the causation of many diseases can be understood.

VYADHIKSHAMATVA

Vyadhikshamatva is a broad concept comprising the whole modern understanding of immunology and other gross and subtle factors paying attention to the prevention and progression of disease in human body.

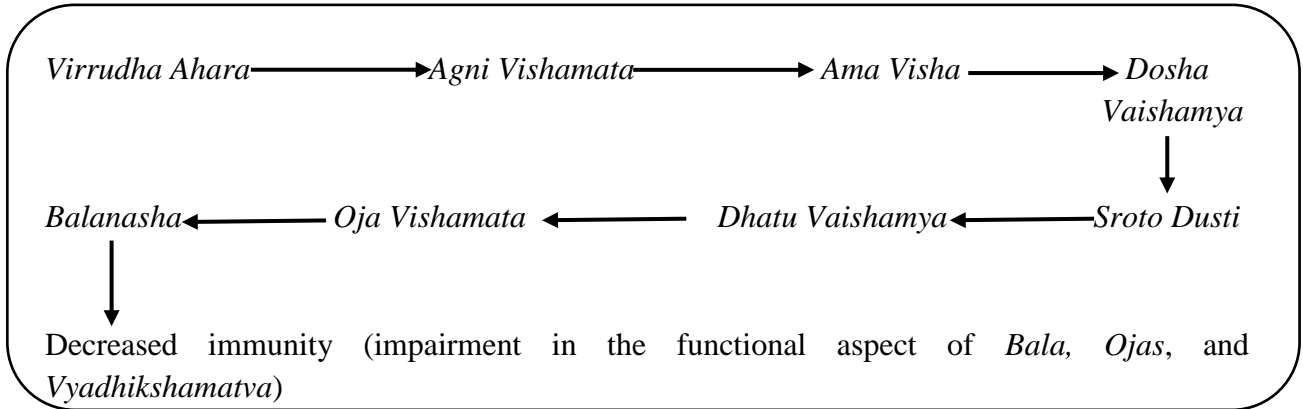
Vyadhikshamatva is defined as "*vyadhikshamatvam*

Vyadhibalavirodhitvam

Vyadhyupadapratibandhakatvamiti

Yaavat"⁶. *Vyadhikshamatva* (resistance to the diseases or immunity) includes both attenuation of the manifested diseases as well as prevention of the unmanifested one.

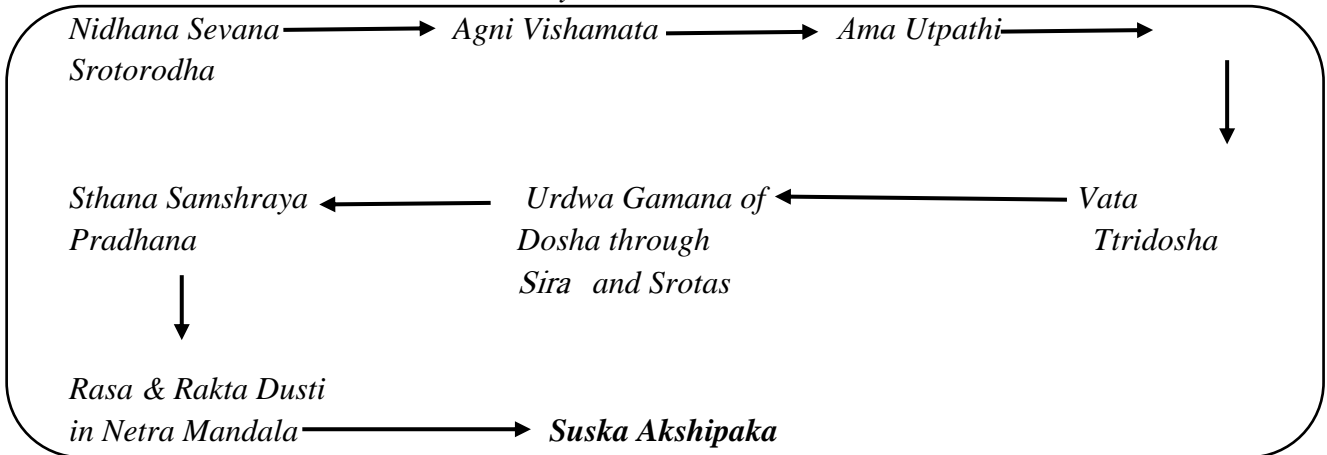
- *Vyadhibalavirodhitvam* – is concerned with the action or process after the disease has manifested in the body. (antagonistic to the strength and virulence of disease).
- *Vyadhyupadapratibandhakatvamiti* – controls the disease during the *Samprapti* stage (capacity to inhibit and prevention of the manifestation of disease).
- *Vyadhikshamatva* is not equal in all individuals, this is due to different nutritional status of the individuals because *Ojas*, *Bala* and *Vyadhikshamatva* are dependent on nutritious food.
- Impairment in the functional aspect of *vyadhikshamatva* at the level of *Sahaja* and *Kalaja Bala* leads to the susceptibility of disease (autoimmune diseases).
- Thus *Vyadhikshamatva* plays an important role in manifestation of autoimmune disease (Sjögren's syndrome).



PRIMARY SJÖGREN'S SYNDROME IN AYURVEDA: Primary Sjögren's syndrome characterized by Keratoconjunctivitis sicca, Xerostomia, Often with extraglandular manifestations but without additional autoimmune diseases.

In Ayurveda, there is no direct reference regarding signs and symptoms of Sjögren's syndrome, we can understand primary Sjögren's syndrome as *Shuska Akshi Paka* where dryness of eyes is seen as a main symptom and it can be considered under *Anukta Vata Vyadi*,

where *Rukshata* is considered as the *Atmarupa* of the *Vata*. *Mukatva Shosha* can be understood as involvement of *Udakavaha Srotas*. Acharya Charaka explains *Pradushta Udakavaha Srotas Lakshana* as '*Jihvataaluostakantakloma Shosham Pipasam Cha Atipravrudham*'.⁷ Hence Symptoms like dryness of mouth, throat, difficulty in swallowing seen in primary Sjögren's syndrome can be included under *Udakavaha Sroto Dusti* and managed in the lines of *Trushna Chikitsa*.



CHIKITSA

VIRECHANA

Shenapana with *Kalyanaka Gritha /Mahatiktaka Grita* followed by *Virechana* with *Trivrut Avalehya*.

NASYA – with *Ksheerabala Taila, Mahamasha Taila, Kalyanaka Gritha, Anu Taila* will be beneficial.

SHIRODHARA- with *Ashwagandha Balalakshadi Taila, Tungadrumadi Taila, Ksheerabala Taila* will be beneficial.

IN SHUSHKA AKSHI

Tarpana with *Jeevanthyadi Gritha*,
Mahatriphala Gritha

Internally *Jeevanthyadi Gritha*,
Mahatriphala Gritha with milk will be
useful.

IN SHUSHKA KANTA

Kavala and *Gandusha* with *Triphala*
Kashaya, *Irimedadi Taila*, *Yastimadhu*
Phanta

Pratisarana with *Sitophaladi Churna*
along with *Navaneeta*.

SECONDARY SJÖGREN'S SYNDROME IN AYURVEDA

In secondary Sjögren's syndrome, mainly RA, SLE, Scleroderma, Vasculitis are associated along with symptoms of primary Sjögren's syndrome. These disorders can be included under the diseases manifested due to *Virudha Ahara* like *Amavata*, *Vatarakta*, *Kushta*. These disorders can also be considered under *Dushi Visha* as Acharya Sushruta says 'Sthitam Rasadishvathava Yathokthaan Karoti Dhatuprabhavan Vikaran'⁸ i.e. wherever *Dushi Visha* involvement is there and takes its *Ashraya* in different *Dhatu* and produces different diseases respective to the *Dosha* and *Dhatu* involvement. *Chikitsa* should be planned based on the involvement of *Dosha Dhatu Ashraya* and following the treatment principles of *Virudha Ahara*.

CHIKITSA

- These diseases don't affect the individual who has strong digestive power, who does the oleation regularly and who has strong physique due to regular physical exercise.
- *Virechana*, *Vamana*, *Shamana*, prophylaxis should be administered in the diseases caused by intake of *Virudha Ahara*.

- *Deepana*, *Pachana* to be given importance in these diseases to correct *Mandagni* and to treat *Ama* (for *Amapachnarth*). Formulations like *Panchakola Churna*, *Trikatu Churna*, *Ajmodadi Churna*, *Vaishvanara Churna*, *Hingvadi Churna*, *Chitrkadi Vati*, *Agnitundi Vati*.

- *Rasayana* which have immunomodulatory activity should be administered after *Shodhana*, like *Pippali Vardhamana Rasayana*, *Bramha Rasayana*, *Shiva Gutika*, *Suvarna Malini Vasantha rasa*.

DISCUSSION

- Sjögren syndrome is a chronic autoimmune exocrinopathy distinguished by lymphatic infiltration of lacrimal and salivary glands. Primary Sjögren's syndrome is characterized by Keratoconjunctivitis sicca, Xerostomia which can be included under *Shuska Akshi Paka*. Secondary Sjögren's syndrome is characterized by RA, SLE, Scleroderma, Vasculitis (extraglandular manifestations) which can be included under the diseases like *Amavata*, *Vatarakta*, *Kushta*.
- In these auto-immune diseases, the partially digested dietary substance accumulated at the level of intestine, part of *Ama* penetrates intestinal mucosa, circulates all over the body and perform the role of Antigen, consequently vitiating the *Dosha* to cause different disorders.
- *Ama* can also be compared to unstable reactive free radicals, which are the main cause of many diseases and degenerative changes in the body and it may be produced due to *Viruddha Ahara*.
- Hence we can assume that *Viruddha Ahara* is one the prime factors responsible causation of autoimmune diseases.

CONCLUSION

- It has been described that majority of diseases are due to uncontrolled or wrong dietary habits, lack of exercise and environmental factors, which in turn causes *Ama* and *Agni Dusti* which play an important role in disease manifestation.
- In Ayurveda, there is no direct reference regarding signs and symptoms of Sjögren's syndrome and it can be understood under the concept of *Vyadhikshamatva* and *Viruddha Ahara*.
- Symptoms of primary Sjögren's syndrome can be included under *Sushka Akshi Paka* and *Udakavaha Sroto Dusti* and symptoms of secondary Sjögren's syndrome can be considered under the diseases manifested due to *Virudha Ahara* like *Amavata*, *Vatarakta*, *Kushta*.

REFERENCES

1. Kasper, Fauci et al, Harrison's principles of internal medicine , 19th edition, chapter: 22, Pp:2770, Pg:2611
2. Sushruta, Sushruta Samhita, Nibandhasangraha Commentary by Dalhanacharya, Nyayachandrika Panjika of Gayadasacharya, Edited by Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi, reprint 2014, Pp: 824, chikitsa sthana, chapter:31, verse:3, Pg:507
3. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Ayurveda Deepika Commentary by Chakrapanidatta, Edited by Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Choukambha Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi, reprint 2014, Pp: 738, sutra sthana, chapter:28, verse:7, Pg:178
4. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Ayurveda Deepika Commentary by Chakrapanidatta, Edited by Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Choukambha Surbharati

- Prakashan, Varanasi, reprint 2014, Pp: 738, sutra sthana, chapter:26, verse:85, Pg:150
5. Charmi S. Mehta, Manisha R. Sharma, Vimal R. Joshi, April - June 2011, 'Viruddha Ahara as a cause of Autoimmune diseases', Indian Journal of Ancient Medicine and Yoga, Volume 4, Issue 2, Pages 45-53.
6. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Ayurveda Deepika Commentary by Chakrapanidatta, Edited by Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Choukambha Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi, reprint 2014, Pp: 738, sutra sthana, chapter:28, verse:7, Pg:178
7. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Ayurveda Deepika Commentary by Chakrapanidatta, Edited by Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Choukambha Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi, reprint 2014, Pp: 738, vimana sthana, chapter:5, verse:8, Pg:250
8. Sushruta, Sushruta Samhita, Nibandhasangraha Commentary by Dalhanacharya, Nyayachandrika Panjika of Gayadasacharya, Edited by Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi, reprint 2014, Pp: 824, kalpa sthana, chapter:2, verse:29, Pg:565

Corresponding Author:

Dr A S Nagalakshmi,
PG scholar, Department of kayachikitsa,
SKAMCH&RC, Bengaluru.
Email: nagalakshmias23492@gmail.com

Source of support: Nil Conflict of interest:
None Declared

Cite this Article as : [A S Nagalakshmi et al :
Sjögren's Syndrome – An Ayurvedic Perspective]
www.ijaar.in : IJAAR VOLUME IV ISSUE IV
SEP – OCT 2019 Page No: 336-341