



UNDERSTANDING AAM AS THE ROOT CAUSE OF ALL THE DISEASES

Review Article

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda classics have explained *Aam* as the disease-causing factor which will turn the *Dhatu Samyavastha* (balanced state of tissues) into the *Dhatu Vaishmya* or *Vikrit Avastha* (imbalanced state of tissues). *Dhatu Vaishmya* is termed as *Vikara* (diseases) which makes the person's life miserable. The article is aimed to explain the concept of *Aam* and various opinion on this topic by the scholars of Ayurveda. The information was mainly collected from the *Brihattryee* (Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Ashtanga Hridaya) and collected opinion from the scholars of Ayurveda. The *Agni* (digestive capacity) which is responsible for all kinds of transformation in the body when gets impaired will not be able to do the *Samyak Pachana* (proper digestion) of food which is consumed and due to that *Saar-Kitta Vibhajana* (separation in nutritive and non-nutritive part) will not take place properly. This becomes the key factors in the formation of *Aam*, which will further lead to the *Dhatu Vaishmya* and manifestation of *Vikara*.

Keywords: *Agni, Aam, Dhatu, Vikara*

INTRODUCTION: All the important Ayurveda texts have explained *Aam* as the primary causative factor for the disease. Moving from the *Swastha* (healthy) state to illness is due to the formation of *Aam* in the body. Impaired *Agni* is the key factor of formation of *Aam*. The main function of *Agni* is to digest and metabolize the various components of the ingested food and to help in succeeding tissue nourishment¹. The *Ahara* which is consumed undergoes transformation by the action of *Agni*, this process helps in the nourishment of all the bodily tissues and thus the *Samya Avastha* (balanced state) of the *Dhatu* is maintained. The status of *Agni* depends upon the quality

and quantity of *Ahara* which is consumed. Not only this, but our unwholesome contact with the nature and psychological factors can also disturb the status of *Agni*. Formation of *Aam* hampers the whole process of nourishments of *Dhatus* and this *Dhatu Vaishmya* will further lead to *Vikriti Utpatti* (manifestation of disease).

Understanding the process of Basic Pathogenesis

There are mainly three stages which required to be understood to know the whole process of this pathogenesis –

1. *Prakriti- Purusha Sambandha* (Nature and Human relationship) - Our life depends upon the nature and we receive all

our basic need of survival such as food, water etc. from the nature only. So, it is important to know how the balanced state of *Dhatu* can be maintained by following the *Ahara vidhi* (dietary rules), by knowing the properties and functions of substances of the nature.

2. *Agni Vaishamya* (impairment of *Agni*) - How the *Agni* gets impaired by the intake of *Vikrit Prana Rupi Urja* (disturbed form of life energy) which act as *Hetu* (causative factor) and the process of formation of *Aam* after that.

3. *Vikriti Utpatti* (manifestation of disease) – When *Samyak Pachana* (proper digestion) did not take place at the level of *Darvya* (substances), *Guna* (properties) and *Karma* (functions) of the ingested food, how it will lead to manifestation of disease.

Here it will be explained in detail –

Prakriti- Purusha Sambandha – It is the *Kayagni* which transforms the nature's 24 *Tatvas* (basic factors) homogeneous to the human body, the process of transformation of matter into energy. There are two ways through which we connect to the nature to receive the energy one is through *Antah Karana* (inner senses) and *Bahya Karana* (external senses). The *Srotas* (channels) which is the inner transport system of the body take and circulates the nutrients to each and every part of the cell and the non-useful things are finally eliminated from the body. Acharya Sushruta has explained the *Dwadasha Prana* (twelve life energies) which are *Agni*, *Soma*, *Vayu*, *Satva*, *Raja*, *Tama*, *Panchendriya* and *Bhutatma*². As we receive the *Prana* (life energy) from the

Loka (outer world) we are termed *Prani* (living entity). Among these twelve the first three are connected mainly with our *Ahara* and the rest nine are connected with *Nidra* (sleep) and *Brahmacharya* (regulated behavior with surroundings – celibacy etc.), thus the *Trayaupastambha*³ which are the three sub-pillars of our life and are maintained through the *Dwadash Prana*.

The *Chaturvidha Ahara* (four types of food viz. *Ashit* - eaten, *Pita*- drunk, *Lidha* - licked and *Khadita* – devoured) which we obtained from the nature with the help of *Pranavaha*, *Udakavaha* and *Annavaha Srotas* to make it homogeneous to the body by the action of *Agni* enter in to the *Koshta* (alimentary tract). Initially the *Jatharagni* which can be understood as bioenergy present in the *Jathara* (stomach and duodenum)⁴ acts on the food and further by the action *Bhutagni* and *Dhatvagni* all the *Dhatu* gets nourishments. This process helps to maintain all the structural components and physiological functions of the body. When *Ahara* is consumed following the dietary rules, the *Dhatu Sarata* (best form of body tissue) is achieved and that will boost the immunological function of the body. The essence of the *Dhatu* will form the *Oja*, which is vital for the life and characterized by *Bala* (immunity). This is the normalcy and when *Agni* is impaired and *Aam* is formed this may create obstruction at any level and make the person susceptible for the disease.

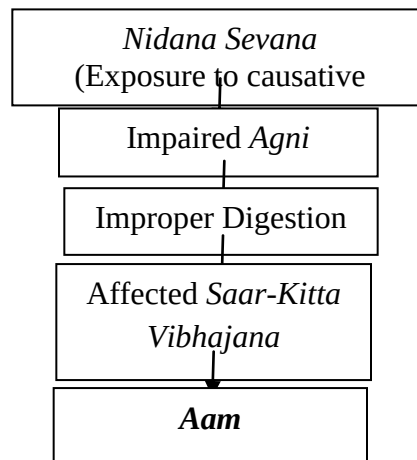
Vikara Utpatti

'*Anirvedo Vaartalakshanaam*'⁵ means in the state of health there is no pain. This is

possible only when the thing obtained from the nature is completely becomes homogeneous to the body. Aam creates obstacle in the process of homogeneity.

Process of *Aam* formation explained here below in the fig.1.

Fig.1 – Process of formation of Aam



Process of *Aam* formation as per Acharya Vagbhata -

Ushmano Alpa Balatven (decreased strength of heat - digestive capacity): Due to decreased strength of *Ushma* which is nothing but the *Pitta*, the digestion process of the food will be hampered and the product of this will not be suitable for our bodily tissues.

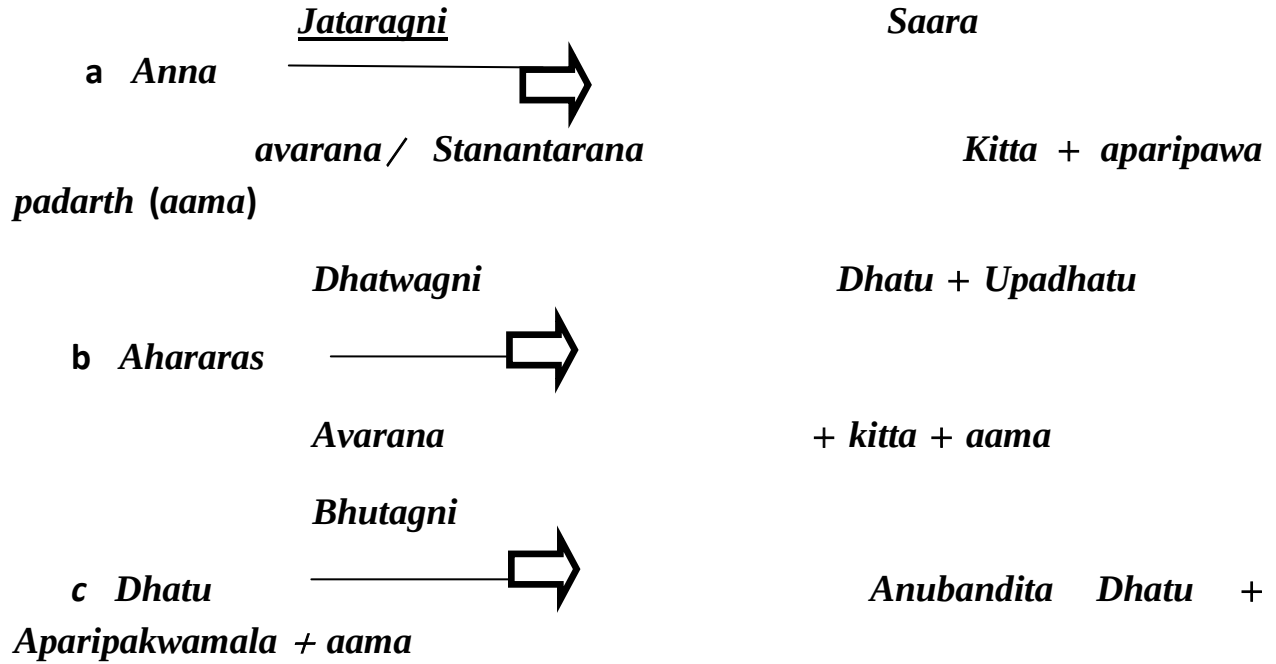
Dhatumadyam Apachitam (improperly formed primary *Dhatu*): As the *Saar- Kitta Vibhajan* will not take place and the *Ahara*

Rasa which is precursor of *Rasa Dhatu* will be ill formed.

Dushtam Amashaya Gatam (Vitiated *Dhatu* in *Amashaya*): *Amashaya* means the place in between *Naabhi* (naval) and *Stana* (breast)⁶, here the ill formed vitiating *Rasa* will reach. *Rasa* is continuously circulating in the body and responsible for nourishment of all the *Dhatus*.

So, the *Aam* is formed due to the weak digestive capacity in which there will be improper digestion of the ingested food.

Fig. 2. – Depicting the Aam in different levels of Agni



Vikara Utpatti (manifestation of disease)

In the manifestation of *Nija Rogas* (indigenous disease), the *Aam* which is formed due to weak digestive strength shows its ten *Lakshana* (symptoms) which are explained here further⁷ –

1. *Srotorodha* (obstruction in the channels): Due to *Srotorodha*, the *Prasad Bhaga* (nutritive part) of food will not reach to the *Dhatus* which will lead to *Shithilata* (debility).
2. *Balabhransha* (loss of strength) – Decreased nutrition and increase accumulation of *Mala* will lead to loss of strength.
3. *Gaurav* (Heaviness) – Excess accumulation of *Mala* will cause quantitatively increase and this will lead to heaviness.
4. *Anila Moodhata* (unpredictable movement of *Vata*): Due to obstructions in

the pathways of *Vata*, it will not be able to perform its *Prakrit Karma* (normal function) and becomes *Moodh*.

5. *Alasya* (laziness) : The *Utsaha* is the normal function of *Vata*, when *Vata* is unable to perform its normal functions *Alasya* will appear.

6. *Apakti* (loss of digestive capacity): Due to presence of *Aam* the *Agni* will not be able to digest the ingested food this will lead to *Apakti*.

7. *Nistheev* (spitting frequently): The person will spit frequently because of increase *Dravata* (liquidity).

8. *Mala Sanga* (adhering of *Mala* in the *Dhatu*) – The increased *mala* starts adhering in the *Dhatus*.

9. *Aruchi* (anorexia) – Due to accumulation of *Ama*, weak digestion, *Aruchi* will develop.

10. *Klama* (exhaustion) – Person will feel exhausted even without doing any work. By these above ten *Lakshana*, *Aam*, depending upon its *Adhishtan* (abode) will

create specific *Vikriti*. This is shown in table no.1.

Table no.1. Showing the location of *Aam* and the specific type of *Vikriti* it creates

Sl.No.	Location of <i>Ama</i>	<i>Vikriti</i>
1.	<i>Koshtagata</i> (alimentary tract)	<i>Alasaka</i> (kind of indigestion), <i>Visuchika</i> (vomiting and diarrhea), <i>Udavarta</i> (upward course of <i>Vata</i>)
2.	<i>Margastha Rasagata</i> (in transforming <i>Rasa</i>)	<i>Jvara</i> (fever)
3.	<i>Sthanstha Rasa</i> (actual <i>Rasa</i>)	<i>Pandu</i> (anaemia)
4.	<i>Raktagata</i> (in the blood)	<i>Kushta</i> (skin disease), <i>Visarpa</i> (erysipelas), <i>Raktapitta</i> (hemorrhagic disorder), <i>Kamala</i> (jaundice)
5.	<i>Mamsagata</i> (in the muscle tissue)	<i>Adhimamsa</i> (excess growth of muscle tissue), <i>Granthi</i> (nodular growth), <i>Arbuda</i> (tumor)
6.	<i>Medogata</i> (in the adipose tissue)	<i>Prameha Purvaroop</i> (prodromal symptoms of urinary syndrome including diabetes), <i>Medodushti</i> (lipidaemia)
7.	<i>Asthigata</i> (in the bone tissue)	<i>Adhyasthi</i> (excess bony tissue), ,
8.	<i>Majjagata</i> (in the bone marrow)	<i>Parvaruk</i> (pain in phalanges), <i>Arunshi</i> (pimples having deep root)
9.	<i>Shukragata</i> (in the semen)	<i>Kleebata</i> (impotency), <i>Gabhasrava</i> (miscarriage), <i>Garbhapata</i> (abortion)
10.	<i>Marmasthi Sandhigata</i> (in the vital body parts and joints)	<i>Pakshaghata</i> (paralysis), <i>Vata</i> disorders

CONCLUSION: *Aam* is originated mainly due to our unwholesome relationship with the nature. The *Vikrita Prana Urja* will become the cause of impairment of *Agni* and this will initiate the formation of *Aam* and pathogenesis of *Nija vyadhi* in the body. *Aam* will create obstruction at different level and may affect any one *Dhatu* or multiple *Dhatus* simultaneously. Depending upon the involvement of the *Dhatus* the disease will manifest accordingly.

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