



## **ARUCHI (ANOREXIA) AS A SYMPTOM & COMPLICATION OF COVID-19 & ITS MANAGEMENT THROUGH AYURVEDA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Corona Virus Disease-2019 i.e. COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted the population worldwide and designated as the most devastating health issue of the era. As the viral infection caused by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Corona Virus- 2 i.e. SARS-CoV-2 primarily affects the respiratory system, cough, breathlessness, ARDS (Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome) are the most common manifestations observed as symptom and consequences of the infection. COVID-19 also affects the other systems of the body hence give the impression of a multisystem disease. Anorexia i.e. loss of appetite, loss of taste are reported commonly in patients of COVID-19 as symptoms and extra-pulmonary complications. These symptoms are not very much serious or life threatening, but lack of taste & interest in food may cause improper intake of food and compromised nourishment which results in delayed recovery of health in COVID sufferers. In Ayurveda, *Ahara* (food) is the most vital factor to accomplish a healthy body. So it is important to take healthy nutritious diet for fast recovery from any disease. In Ayurveda, condition of loss of appetite, taste and interest in food is compared with *Aruchi*, which is mostly reported as a symptom or complication of various illnesses. In this paper various Ayurvedic literatures, research articles related with COVID-19 & *Aruchi* from PubMed & Google Scholar etc. has been reviewed to understand the *Aruchi* as a symptom and complication of COVID-19. Ayurvedic procedures like *Kavalagraha*, *Gana*, *Dhumapana* & *Mukhadhavana*, *Nasya* eliminates the vitiated *Dosha*, enhances *Jatharagni* and strengthen the sense organs, thus improves the taste & smell perception which ultimately results in improved appetite.

**Key-words:** Ayurveda, *Aruchi* , *Arochaka*, Anorexia, Loss of taste, COVID-19.

**INTRODUCTION:** Corona Virus Disease 2019 i.e. COVID 19 pandemic has been recognized as the most devastating health problem of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Despite worldwide rigorous efforts to minimize the

<sup>1</sup>Being an infection of respiratory system COVID 19 not only affects the lungs and respiratory tract which is responsible for severe and potentially life-threatening acute respiratory syndromes, it also affects other organ systems and causes extra-pulmonary manifestations and complications.<sup>2</sup> These extra-pulmonary manifestations and complications include cardiac injury, acute ischemic or

spread of infection, global containment, quarantine, social distancing etc. the incidences of infection continue to rise and till date affects a large number of populations.

hemorrhagic stroke, neurological deficits, acute kidney injury, liver dysfunction and other gastro-intestinal complications.<sup>3</sup>

Anorexia i.e. loss of appetite, associated with loss of taste and smell has been reported as a common symptom of COVID 19, and in most of the cases persist as post COVID 19 complication.<sup>4,5</sup> Studies accepted that condition of decreased taste, smell, and appetite as

peripheral nervous system's presentations of adverse effects of SARS-CoV-2 infection on the neurological system.<sup>6</sup>

In *Ayurveda* decreased appetite & loss of taste is elaborated as *Arochaka* or *Aruchi*. *Ayurveda* places special emphasis on *Ahara* (diet) and *Anna* (food) and believes that healthy diet nourishes the mind, body and soul.<sup>7</sup> So it is important to take food properly in appropriate quantity for proper nourishment and to accomplish a healthy body which is the most important mean to achieve all the desires. These factors are also supported by the ancient literatures. *Padmpurana* stated that vigor of *Buddhi* (intellect), *Mana* (mind) and *Indriya* (sense organs) is considered as complete health, and a healthy body is the only source to achieve *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama*, *Moksha*.<sup>8</sup>

*Acharya Charak* explained the importance of a healthy body in his verse of *Shosha Nidana* in context of *Sandharanajanya Shosha* and said leaving everything aside, one should maintain, protect and nourish the body, as in absence of the body, all the bodily entities also become totally absent.<sup>9</sup> *Ahara* is a vital ingredient needed for the existence of an individual, but if it is taken in absence of appetite, or without desire it will be unable to impart its estimated nutritious effect and results in various diseased conditions.

#### AIMS & OBJECTIVES:

This review article is emphasized on the concept of *Arochaka* with special reference to loss of appetite and taste as a symptom and complication of COVID 19. An attempt had been made to elaborate the treatment modalities with *Ayurveda* perspective.

#### MATERIAL & METHODS:

Various *Ayurvedic Samhitas* such as *Charaka Samhita*, *Shushruta Samhita*,

*Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Madhava Nidana*, *Chakradutta*, *Bhavaprakash Samhita*, *Yogaratnakara* etc. modern texts, national & international research articles from PubMed & Google Scholar and websites related to COVID 19, Anorexia, *Aruchi* and other relevant topics have been reviewed to understand the concept of *Aruchi* as a symptom and complication of COVID 19 infection.

#### Ayurvedic aspect of Aruchi:

*Arochaka* is defined as a state, where the patient cannot cherish the food even if the food is kept inside the mouth.<sup>10</sup> If the patient develops aversion towards food even with a thought of food, look, smell or touch of food, that condition is known as *Bhaktadvesha*. If loss of interest to consume food is due to grief or fear or aversion, that condition is known as *Abhaktachanda*.<sup>11</sup>

According to *Acharya Sushruta* loss of interest in food is known as *Bhaktopaghata*.<sup>12</sup> *Acharya Charaka* described it in *Trimarmiya Chikitsa Adhyaya*. It is mostly observed as a symptom of *Annavaha Strotodushti*<sup>13</sup> & counted as *Rasa Pradoshaja Vikara*.<sup>14</sup>

In modern medicine this condition is compared with Anorexia. According to Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary "Anorexia [Gr. An-, not, + orexis, appetite] means loss of appetite. Anorexia is seen in depression, malaise, commencement of fears and illnesses, disorders of alimentary tract (especially the stomach), alcoholism and drug addiction (especially cocaine). Many medicines and medical procedures have the undesired side effect of causing malaise with concurrent anorexia".<sup>15,16</sup>

#### Nidana (etiological factors) of Aruchi:<sup>17</sup>

According to *Ayurveda*, anorexia is caused by an individual aggravation of *Vata*, *Pitta*

and *Kapha Doshas* or in combination of three results in *Sharirika doshajanya arochaka*, whereas psychological factors such as fear, anger, grief, greed and stress are responsible for *Manasika doshajanya* or *Agantuja arochaka*. It is also seen as a symptom or complication of various disease, some of them are as following:

In various types of *Jvara* such as *Ama Jvara*, *Kaphaja Jvara*, *Vatapitta Jvara*, *Rasa Dhatugata Jvara*, *Medogata Jvara*, *Kamaja Jvara*, *Vishaja Jvara*, *Sannipatika Jvara*, *Jirna Jvara* etc. *Atisara*, *Pratishyaya*, *Kasa*, *Rajayakshma*, *Amlapitta*, *Chardi*, *Grahani*, *Vibhinna*, *Udara Roga*, *Gulma*, *Krimi Roga*, *Amavata*, *Pandu*, *Kamala*, *Unmada*, *Cittavasada* etc. mostly *Kapha Dosha* predominant illnesses shows loss of taste & appetite as a symptom or complication of the disease, thus can be considered as *Nidanarthakara Roga* for *Aruchi*.<sup>18</sup>

#### **Samprapti (pathogenesis) of Aruchi:**

In case of COVID 19, the symptom of loss of taste and appetite can be considered due All the Acharya described five types of *Arochaka* as following:

- 1. *Vatika Arochaka*,
- 2. *Paittika Arochaka*,
- 3. *Shlaishmika Arochaka*,
- 4. *Sannipatika Arochaka*,
- 5. *Agantuja Arochaka*.

→ **Manasika Doshajanya**

#### **Sharirika Doshajanya**

Broadly it can be divided into two types, on the basis of etiological factors i.e.

1) *Sharirika Doshajanya* includes *Vatika Paittika*, *Shlaishmika*, *Sannipatika*

1) ***Vatika Arochaka***: If the loss of taste is due to *vata dosha* the teeth tingle and taste of mouth become astringent, Acharya Sushruta stated that patient of *Vatika arochaka* feels pain in cardiac reason.

2) ***Paittika Arochaka***: If it is due to *Pitta dosha*, it is characterized by severe

to *Vatakapha* predominance, vitiation of *Jatharagni* (digestive capacity), or due to *Manasika kshobha*, as the disease is mentioned as *Agantuja vyadhi* and *Bhutabhisangaja jvara* in various relevant articles.<sup>19</sup>

Due to above etiological factors *Vatadi Doshas* getting vitiated either separately or in combination of all the three *Doshas* or by perversion of mind leading to accumulation of *Doshas* in the seats of taste i.e. *Jihva* & *Hridaya*, then the person does not relish food is known as *Bhaktopaghata* or *Arochaka*.

In order to understand the pathophysiology of loss of taste and appetite in Covid patients, the loss of smell sensation which is one of the common symptom of COVID 19, also play a significant role. Loss of smell sensation hampers the function of salivary glands, therefore affects the perception of taste which further results in loss of interest in food.

#### **Bheda (Type)-<sup>20</sup>**

*Arochaka*, & 2) *Manasika Doshajanya* includes *Agantuja Arochaka*.

**Sign & Symptoms:**<sup>20,21,22,23</sup>

burning sensation, sucking pain in the heart, fainting, thirst, bitter-pungent-sour taste in mouth, hotness and bad taste, with saline feeling in oral cavity.

3) ***Shlaishmika Arochaka***: If it is due to *Kapha dosha*, it is characterized by itching, heaviness, exudation of *kapha*, debility, dizziness, sweet taste in mouth

with feeling of sliminess, coldness and stickiness in the oral cavity.

4) **Sannipatika Arochaka:** if it is *Tridoshaja*, mixed sign and symptoms of all the three *doshas* can be seen with different type of tastes in mouth and discomfort in heart.

5) **Agantuja Arochaka:** *Acharya Caraka* said that if the loss of taste perception is due to extrinsic factors like grief, fear, anger, greediness, unfavorable food, and offensive smell then natural taste is not changed. *Acharya Madhava* stated *manovyakulata*, *moha* and *shunyata* as additional symptoms of *Agantuja arocaka*.

**Treatment:**<sup>24,25,26</sup>

The general line of treatment of *Aruchi* according to *Ayurveda* includes *kavalagraha* (mouthful retentions), *Dhumapana* (medicated smoking), *Mukhadhavana* (oral cleansing), use of desired food & drinks, *Harshana* (causing delight) and *Ashvasana* (assurance).

In order of cleansing therapies in case of *Vatika Arochaka* administration of *Vasti* (enema), in case of *Paittika Arochaka* administration of *virechana karma* (purgation), and in case of *Shlaishmika Arocaka*, *vamana karma* (emesis) is advised to administer.

In case of loss of appetite & taste in COVID -19 infection, these cleansing procedures should not be advised as the patient is already emaciated and debilitated, will supposed to unable to tolerate these procedures. Therefore the line of treatment of *Aruchi* in case of COVID 19 should be based on *Kavalagraha* (mouthful retentions), *Dhumapana* (medicated smoking), etc. Some additional formulations are also described in context of *Aruchi* which can be used to improve taste and appetite.

• **Kavalagraha (Mouthful Retentions):**<sup>27,28</sup>

- *Kutha, Sauvarchala, Ajaji, Sharkara, Maricha and Vida Lavana*
- *Amalaki, Ela, Padmaka, Ushira, Pippali, Utpala and Chandana;*
- *Lodhra, Tejovati, Haritaki, Tryushana and Yavakshara*
- *Dadima, Ajaji and Sharkara*

These four *Kavalagraha* (mouthful retentions) mixed with oil and honey can be effectively used for the treatment of *Aruchi* caused by *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* and *Tridosha* respectively.

• *Kavalagraha* (mouthful retentions) of *Dadima Swarasa* mixed with *Vida Lavana* and honey can be used for any type of incurable *Aruchi*.

• **Dhumapana (Medicated smoke):** According to *Acharya Charaka* proper use of medicated smoke reduces heaviness of head and pacifies diseases of supra clavicular region caused by *Vatashlaishmika Dosha*. It is beneficial in headache, rhinitis, cough, hiccup, dyspnea, choking of throat, anorexia, drowsiness, lack of functioning of intellect etc. These symptoms are very much common in COVID 19 patients, whereas various *Ayurvedic* review on covid pathogenesis accepted it as a *Vatashlaishmika Dosha* predominant disease.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, a medicated smoke can be advised to improve taste, smell and appetite instead the person is not emaciated due to disease.<sup>30</sup>

• **Use of Takra (Butter milk):** *Takra* (butter milk) made by *Godadhi* seasoned with fried *Rajika* (mustard seeds), *Jiraka* (Cumin seed), *Hingu* (asafetida) *Shunthi* (dry ginger) and *Saindhava* (rock salt), promotes taste and appetite.<sup>31</sup>

❖ **Shikharini:** Well boiled milk and well sieved curd are mixed well in equal proportions along with sugar, *Ela* (cardamom), *Lavanga* (clove), *Karpura* (camphor) and *Maricha* (pepper) which is known as *Shikharini* is very much palatable and can promote taste. It is also beneficial in *Pratishyaya* (flue).<sup>32,33</sup>

• **Amlika Panaka Gandusha(Gargling of Tamarind Syrup):** Juice of ripe tamarind mixed with cold water and sugar, well sieved through a cloth with a dash of powder of *Ela* (cardamom), *Lavanga* (clove), *Karpura* (camphor) and *Maricha* (pepper) may be used for frequent gargling to relieve loss of taste and pacify *Pitta dosha*.<sup>34</sup>

• **Nimbupanaka (Syrup of lemon):** One part *Nimbu Swarasa* (lemon juice) mixed with six part of sugar added with *Lavanga* (clove), and *Maricha* (pepper) powder should be advised to use as *Panaka* in *Aruchi* helps to improve taste and appetite.<sup>35</sup>

• **Gandusha(Gargling):** *Saindhava lavana* (rock salt) mixed with *Kanji* (fermented gruel) should be advised to use for gargling in loss of taste.<sup>36</sup>

• **Mukhadhavana :**<sup>37,38</sup>

• Powder of *Jira*, *Maricha*, *Kutha*, *Vida Lavana*, *Sauvarchala Lavana* & *Madhuyashti* in equal amount, mixed with sugar and oil should be advised for cleansing of mouth.

• Powder of *Trikatu*, *Triphala*, *Haridra*, *Daruharidra* along with *Yavakshara* & Honey can be advised for cleansing of mouth.

• One should use *Katurasa pradhana aushadha* for *dantadhavana*, & *karaaja* for *datauna*.

• 1. *Dalchini*, *Musta*, *Ela* and *Dhanyaka*, 2. *Musta*, *Amalaki* and *Dalchini*, 3.

*Dalchini*, *Haridra* and *Yavani*, 4. *Pippali* and *Tejovati*, 5. *Yavani* and *Amlika*. Any of combination out of these 5, causes cleansing of mouth and improves taste perception and appetite.

• According to Acharya *Vaghbata*, *Tambula Sevana* is very useful to cure many ailments including; *Aruchi*, *Mukhavaishadya* and *Mukhadaurgandhy*. *Tambul* normalize oral pH and offer antimicrobial property, hence *Tambula* maintain oral health.<sup>39</sup>

• **Avaleha**<sup>40</sup>: *Matulungavaleha*, *Khanda-ardaraka Yoga*, *Matulungakeshara Yoga*.

• **Ghrita:** *Jirakadya*  
*Ghrita*.(*Yogaratnakar Arochaka Prakaran/52*)

• **Rasa Aushadhi:** *Sutadi Guṭika*.  
(*Yogaratnakar Arochaka Prakaran/53*)

• **Dipaniya Mahakashaya:** 1) *Pippali* (Long pepper, *Piper longum*), 2) *Pippalimula* (Root of long pepper), 3) *Chavya* (Java long pepper, *Piper retrofractum* ), 4) *Chitraka* (White Leadwort, *Plumbago zeylanica*), 5) *Shunṭhi* (Dry Ginger, *Zingiber officinale*), 6) *Amlavetasa* (Bor thekera, *Garcinia pedunculata* ), 7) *Maricha* (Black pepper, *Piper nigrum*), 8) *Ajamoda* (Celery fruit, *Carum roxburghianum*), 9) *Bhallatakasthi* (Seed of Marking nut, *Semecarpus anacardium*) 10) *Hinguniryasa* (*Asafoetida*, *Ferula narthex*) are described as *Dipaniya Mahakashaya* by Acharya *Charaka* can be used to enhance the appetite by means of improving *Jatharagni*. Most of the drugs of *Dipaniya Mahakashaya* possess anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, antiasthmatic, anti-diabetic, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, Immunomodulatory, central nervous system stimulatory activities etc. Some of the drugs such as *Pippali* also enhance the

bioavailability of food and drugs, thus these drugs can be used promptly in case of loss of appetite as symptom or complications of any disease especially in case of COVID 19.<sup>41,42</sup>

• **Use of Ginger:** According to *Bhavaprakasha* it is ideal to consume ginger with salt prior to food consumption which promotes taste, act as an appetizer and clears the tongue and throat from excess mucous.<sup>43,44</sup> He also stated that juice of fresh ginger with honey cures distaste, dyspnea, cough, cold and obstructing can be seen in case of COVID 19 infection.

• **Aruchinashaka Yoga:**

- *Tryushanadi Churna* (*Ch. Arochaka Chi./12*),
- *Yavanishadava Churna* (*Yogaratnakar Arochaka Prakaran/25-29, Bh.P.Chi.16/21-24*),
- *Kalahansaka Yoga* (*Ch. Arochaka Chi./18-19*),
- *Dadimadi Churna* (*Bh.P.S. Chi. 16/16-17*),
- *Lavangadi Churna* (*Bh.P.S. Chi. 16/18-20*),
- *Karvyadi Gutika* (*Yogaratnakar Arochaka Prakaran/23*),
- *Sitadi Gutika* (*Yogaratnakar Arochaka Prakaran/24*),
- *Khandava Churna* (*Yogaratnakar Arochaka Prakaran/30*),
- *Amlakyadi Churna* (*Yogaratnakar Arochaka Prakaran/31*),
- *Karpuradi Churna* (*Yogaratnakar Arochaka Prakaran/32-33*),
- *Talishadi Churna* (*Yogaratnakar Arochaka Prakaran/34-37*).

***Pathya- Apathya in Aruchi (Do's & Don't's):***

Wheat, *Mudga Raktashali*, meet of goat, deer, hare, fishes, melon, *Vetagra*

(shoots of cane), *Mulaka* (radish), *Vatarka* (brinjal), *Shobhanjana* (drumstick), *Kadaliphala* (banana), *Dadima*, *Patola*, *Ruchaka Lavana* (black salt), *Goghrita*, *Godugdha*, *Rasona*, *Draksha*, *Amra*, *Ushira*, *Kanji*, *Dadhi*, *Takra*, *Rasala*, *Ardraka* etc. are indicated as beneficial food ingredients, whereas *Snana* and *Hastapada Prakshalana* also enhances the appetite.

Consumption of *Ahridya Ahara* (uncherished food), suppression of urges hunger, thirst, tears, mental status such as anger, fright, shock etc. are contraindicated in case of *Aruchi*.<sup>45</sup>

**DISCUSSION:** COVID 19 has been still presenting with new symptoms, acute loss of smell (anosmia) and taste (ageusia) which ultimately responsible for loss of interest in food apart from the common clinical manifestations including fever, cough, sore throat, dyspnea, headache, fatigue, myalgia and conjunctivitis etc. are also reported in large number of COVID 19 patients. Although these symptoms are not causing serious illness, but by hampering the nutritional status of the patient becomes responsible for delayed recovery. In Ayurveda proper intake of food has been mentioned as the base of healthy body, and for this interest in food and proper appetite is must. A number of treatment aspects are described in *Samhitas* to improve the perception of smell & taste by clearing the vitiated *doshas*, and improves appetite by enhancing *Jatharagni*. Medicinal formulations are also mentioned to treat the condition of Anorexia. Another aspect of psychosomatic causes of anorexia is also mentioned as *Agantuja aruchi*, and for this *Harshana*, *Ashvasana* and *Sattvavajaya* treatment is described in Ayurveda.

**CONCLUSION:** COVID 19 infection is still spreading worldwide, and had an overwhelming impact on public health. Although it primarily affects the lungs, it has been found to damage several other organ systems, resulting in various extra-pulmonary symptoms and complications. Loss of taste and appetite are commonly seen which can be compared with *Aruchi* in *Ayurveda*. *Aruchi* results in improper and insufficient intake of food which results in compromised nourishment of the body leads to delayed recovery. *Ayurvedic* treatment modalities discussed above,

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enhance the *jatharagni* which is one of the basic principle of treatment in a *Ayurveda* for ailments. These measures improve appetite By improving *Jatharagni*. Procedures like *Kavalagraha*, *Gandusha*, *Dhumapana* & *Mukhadhavana*, *Nasya* eliminates the vitiated *Dosha* and strengthen the sense organs, thus improves the taste & smell perception. Regular *Yoga*, *Pranayama*, and Physical Exercises also maintain the Psychosomatic health which may help to prevent *Aruchi* caused by mental disturbances.

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