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An ayurvedic review on Amavata

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Abstract

In Ayurveda even a smallest part of the disease is taken into consideration, whether it is about treatment or naming the disease. Here each disease shows its character and tells about itself merely by its name. The various patterns have been adopted regarding the nomenclature of the disease in Ayurveda. Things often taken into consideration for naming the disease by and large are vitiated Dosha, involved Dushyas, Vedana, Adhithana, Avayava, Gati, Marga and specific symptoms etc. Similarly Amavata has been named keeping view two predominant pathological factors viz., Ama and Vata.

Keywords: ama, vata, amavata etc

Introduction

When Ama and Vata simultaneously get vitiated and enters the Trika and Sandhi finally leading to stabdhatata (stiffness) of the body, the condition is known as Amavata. According to Madhukosa the term yugapata⁵ means simultaneously vitiation of Vata and kapha doshas, thus implementing these two doshas as pathogenic factor of disease.

Classification of amavata

A. Classification according to Doshanubandha

1. Anubandha of one Dosha

- i. Vatanuga Amavata
- ii. Pittanuga Amavata
- iii. Kaphanuga Amavata

2. Anubandha of two Dosha

- i. Vata Pittanuga Amavata
- ii. Pitta Kaphanuga Amavata
- iii. Kapha Vatanuga Amavata

3. Anubandha of all Dosha

i. Tridoshaja amavata

These varieties of Amavata can be differentiated on the basis of characteristic symptoms of dosha involved.

B. Classification according to severity

Amavata can be classified according to severity in following Amavata

1. Samanya Amavata
2. Pravridhdha Amavata

In Samanya Amavata, the symptoms are more or less general, less severe and not associated with complication in comparison to Pravridhdha Amavata.

C. Classification according to chronicity

On the basis of chronicity Amavata can be divided into the following types:

1. Navina Amavata
2. Jirna Amavata

Upto one year of onset it is said to be Navina Amavata and after than one year it is called Jirna Amavata.

(1) Vedica period (5000 B.C.)

Amavata is not found in all four Vedas. However the term Ama and Vata has been described separately. Concept of Vata, Pitta and Balasa is found in a scattered manner as the basic

pathogenic factor of this disease. The term 'Balasa' of Veda is denoted by historian as 'Kapha Dosha' Ama' or 'Ama-kapha'. Some authors correlate 'Visha' noted in Veda with Ama concept of Ayurveda.

Ayurveda has a close relation especially with Atharvaveda. In Atharvaveda Sandhi Vikriti is described. Which is said to be caused by Sleshma Vikriti and claimed to cure with prayers. The word Ama has been used in various terminologies like 'Amayatham' or 'Amayama'.

(2) Samhita Kala (800 B.C.)

The period in which the Ayurvedic samhitas had been written, is named as Samhita Kala. The main classical texts of this era are Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, as well as others like - Kashyap Samhita, Bhela Samhita and Harita Samhita.

Charak Samhita ^[1]: Charak Samhita is the main Ayurvedic texts on medicine. Amavata is not described in Charaka Samhita in a complete chapter form however features of Amavata is described in chapter called "Vata Vyadhi". In this chapter symptoms of kaphavritta vyan has similarity with Amavata. The chief pathogenic factor causing the disease i.e. Ama and Vata has been described in scientific ways in a various chapters of the Samhita.

- The treatment of sharigata Ama explained by Charak in Grahani Chikitsa is almost similar to that of Amavata Chikitsa described by Chakrapani in Chakradatta (Ch. Chi. 15/75).
- The elaborate description of aetiology, pathology, clinical manifestation and chikitsa regarding Ama Pradoshaja Vikara gives a proper guideline to approach the disease Amavata in clinical aspect in Charaka Viman sthana
- According to the Charaka's description of Vata Vyadhi when Vata affects the Asthi Sandhi there is painful swelling in the joint and immobility.

Besides these –

- In C.Chi 15/42 and C.Vi 2/9 – the explanation of aetiopathology of Ama is found.
- In C.Vi 2/7-13 – The elaborate description of aetiology, pathology, clinical manifestation and Chikitsa regarding Ama Pradoshaja Vikara gives a proper guide line to approach the disease Amavata in clinical aspect.

Sushruta Samhita ^[2]: Sushruta Samhita mainly based on surgery. Here Amavata is not described as a chapter form.

- In Sushruta Nidan 1 while concerning Vata Vikara he added that – along with inflammation, immobility and pain, the joints in Vata vyadhi eventually become deformed and destroyed.
- No direct reference of Amavata is found in this text. But the commentary on this text "Ayurveda Rahasya Deepika" by Dr. Bhashkar Govinda Ghanekara deals with Amavata disease.
- Acharya Sushruta has given a short description about Ama in Sushruta Uttartantra 56/10.

Harita Samhita ^[3]: Harita Samhita contains a full chapter on Amavata in which Nidana, Rupa, Bheda, Sadhyata-Asadhyata has been described in detail and the description is totally different to that of mentioned in Madhava Nidana. Here Angavaikalya is given as lakshana.

Bhela Samhita: No direct reference of the disease Amavata is found in Bhela Samhita. But like Charak and Sushruta the

concept of chief pathogenic factor, Ama and Vata, is described exclusively. In 10th chapter of Sutra Sthana chapter named – "Atha Amapradosiya" some text is found similarity to that of disease Amavata (B.S.Su. 10/1-21).

Kashyapa Samhita: Amavata has not been mentioned in Kashyapa Samhita, but the term Amadosha, Amajirna etc. are used in this text (K.S. - 24th Chapter)

6. Anjana Nidana

In Anjana Nidana there is a detailed description of Amavata including Nidana, Purva rupa, Rupa etc. (A.Ni.)

3. Samgraha Kala (600 A.D. - 1600 A.D.)

- Astanga Samgraha**: There is no reference of Amavata in Astanga Samgraha.
- Astanga Hridaya**: Though there is no reference of Amavata as a separate disease entity in Astanga Hridaya but word Amavata has been used, while discussing the therapeutic use of 'Vyosadi Yoga'.³

4. Medual Period (600 A.D. - 1600 A.D.)

Madhava Nidana ^[4]: Madhavakara is the first author who has described Amavata as a separate disease entity in his text, 'Roga Vinischaya' which is later known as 'Madhava Nidana'. There is a complete chapter containing detailed description regarding aetiopathogenesis, clinical manifestations, complications and prognosis of Amavata.

Gada Nigraha: (1200 A.D)

The description of Amavata and its treatment is explained in this treatise.

'Vikunchana' is explained as lakshana of Amavata.

Vanga Sena: (1300 A.D)

Amavata description is found in this text. Author specially mentioned that "takra tulya mutra" is lakshana in Amavata.

Vijayarakshita: (1300 A.D)

In his Madhukosha commentary on Madhava Nidana, has mentioned sankocha, khanjatwa etc as the upadravas of Amavata.

Rasa Ratna Sammurchaya

Author Rasa Vagbhata has mentioned different yoga for Amavata.

Sharangadhara samhita ^[5]: (1300 A.D)

In his treatise description about classification about Amavata is available and he suggested the use of 'naga' in this disease.

Basavarajji ^[6]: (1400 A.D)

Author has specially explained the 'pitamutrata' as lakshana of Amavata.

Bhavaprakasa ^[7]: (1500 A.D)

Author Bhavamishra has described Amavata in detail. Indication of 'Erandabhija' is mentioned in this text.

Yogaratanakara: (1600 A.D)

In this text the complete description of Amavata is available. Many aushada yogas for this are also mentioned in this treatise.

Bhaisajya Ratnavali ^[8]: (1800 A.D.)

Author Govindadasa explained nidana and elaborately discussed about varieties of cikitsa also.

5. Adhunika Kala (1600 A.D. Onwards)

In the modern era, Acharya Gananatha Sena (1943) has coined the term *Rasavata* for Amavata. The clinician of modern era Prof. Yadunandan Upadhyaya (1953) and other eminent scholars has equated the Amavata with Rheumatoid arthritis.

Conclusion

The disease Amavata seems to be not found in vedic and samhita period. After medieval period it started dominating and nowadays it is very common dreadful disease. Chakrapani introduced first time the line of treatment and effective drugs for the Amavata. Amavata has been named keeping view two predominant pathological factors viz. Ama and Vata. Ama means unripe, uncooked, immature and undigested material, as a consequence of the impaired functioning of Agni. Description of Amavata seen in different ancient Ayurvedic textbook as above.

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