

REVIEW ARTICLE

Conceptual Study of *Karshya* in *Vataja Grahani*

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a traditional science that refers to the understanding of life. In ancient science, it is mentioned that proper function of *Agni* helps a person to live a long life. *Agni* is an important sustaining factor of living beings. *Grahani* has been mentioned as an *Agni Adhishthana* (Place of Digestive fire). In the Ayurvedic medical system, the relation between *Grahani* and *Agni* (the digestive fire) is known as *Adhara-Adheya-Sambandha*. Malfunctioning of the *Agni* (digestive-fire) leads to *Grahani Roga*. With regard to *Karshya*, we are typically associated with undernutrition. People who consume fewer nutrient-dense foods may experience undernutrition. Nevertheless, *Karshya* due to *Vataja Grahani* can affect a person even if they eat a healthy diet. Where malabsorption plays a greater role. Therefore, *Karshya* does not only occur in cases of malnutrition but also in cases of malabsorption. The purpose of this study is to prove that *Vataja Grahani* causes *Karshya*.

Key Words *Karshya*, *Vataja Grahani*, *Malabsorption Syndrome*

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INTRODUCTION

While some Acharyas classified *Grahani* based on its functional aspects and a few others on its anatomical peculiarities, practically all Ayurvedic classics refer to *Grahani* as an organ of the digestive system. These descriptions of different Acharyas are predicated on distinct standards. Since Acharya Charaka mentioned digestive enzymes or *Agni*, are situated in *Grahani*, and *Grahani* is also known as *Grahanat* means it is responsible for absorption of nutrients from foods. It is situated above the umbilical region (Nabhi), it receives support and nourishment from *Agni's* vigour. Normally, it restricts the downward passage of undigested food and

releases it through the lumen's sidewalls once digestion has taken place. When it becomes vitiated in the abnormal state due to a deficit in *Agni* (the faculty of digestion), it merely discharges the food in its undigested form¹. According to Acharya Sushruta, the sixth Kala described as *Pitta Dhara Kala* is situated between *Amashaya* and *Pakwashaya*, and it is stated to be *Grahani*². In *Ashtanga Hridaya*, it is quoted that *Grahani* is the organ of *Mahasrotasa (Kostha)*, which is a seat of *Agni* and it receives and retains food. Acharya Sushruta mentions *shraira sthana*, among seven kalas, the sixth one *Pittadhara Kala* which is *Grahani*, situated between *Amashaya*

REVIEW ARTICLE

and Pakwashya. Where most of digestion, absorption take place³.

In Madhukosha, the organ *Grahani* is defined as *Agni Adhithana*. In Vaidyaka Shabda Shindu, *Grahani* is defined as *Agnivaha Dhamanis*. In Sarangadhara Samhita Purva Khanda the organ *Grahani* is defined as *Pitta Dhara Kala*, which lies between organ *Amashaya* and *Pakwashaya*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Literature review of *Grahani* and *Karsya* are collected from Ayurvedic samhita, Journals, Articles on the google and from study of literature from Institute of Postgraduate Ayurvedic Education & Research At Shyamadas Vaidya Shastra Pith Hospital library, similarly modern view of Under nutrition from modern pathology, medicine, books.

ROLE OF DOSHAS IN GRAHANI:

Ayurveda is based on the principle of *Tridosha Sidhanta*. This is a *Sar Vatantra Sidhanta* or general principle accepted in all the treatise of Ayurveda. *Tridosha* include *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*⁴.

Grahani is the site of digestion. Hence, the types of *Tridosha* involved in the digestion process are *Samana Vayu*, *Pachaka Pitta*, *Kledaka Kapha*⁵.

CLASSIFICATION OF GRAHANI

In Caraka Samita, the disease *Ajeerna* has been introduced as “*Nidanarthakar roga*” of *Grahani*. The disease has been enumerated as 4 types as - *Vataja*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja*, *Sannipataja*⁶.

In *Susruta Samhita*, during classification of *Grahani*, *Susruta* had been followed the concept of *alike Caraka* as he had depicted that *Grahani* has 4 types⁷.

Madhavkar had followed the concept of *Brihatrayi* as showing best regards to his *Aptas*. Apart from 4 types of *Grahani* *Madhavkar* has enumerated other 2 types -that is 1. *SamGrahani* 2. *Ghatyantra Grahani*. These 2 types of *Grahani* express the chronicity of the disease⁸.

VATAJA GRAHANI

A. NIDANA (Causative factor)⁹:

Aharaja (Dietary)

Ati Kutu, Tiktu, Kasaya Bhojana-Excessive consumption of pungent, bitter, astringent, *Atiruksha, Atisital Bhojana* -Excessively unctuous & cold food substances.

Samdusta Bhojana- Intake of food unhygienic food.

Pramitam-Irregular dietary habit.

Anasana-fasting too much.

Biharaja (Physical)

Attadhavan- travelling on foot

Vegvidharana- suppression of natural urges.

Ati moithun- excessive sexual intercourse.

B. PURVARUPA (PREMONITORY SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS)¹⁰:

Purvarupa refers to the symptoms and indicators that indicate a forthcoming illness. It is therefore seen as a premonitory sign. *Purvarupa* symptoms could remain when the illness fully appears, or they might not.

REVIEW ARTICLE

In the context of *Vataja Grahani* there Purvarupa are not Mention separately. Author describe Purvarupa commonly as *Grahani Purvarupa*.

Trishna-Thirst, *Alasya*- Laziness, *Balakshya*-diminution of strength, *Vidagdha Anna*- Burning sensation during digestion of food, *Chirapaka*-delayed digestion, *Kayasya Gouraba*- Heaviness in body, *Kloma*- General malaise, *Aruchi*-anorexia, *Kasa*- cough, *Karna kshveda*-Ringing inside the ears and *Antra kujanam*- Gurgling noise in the abdomen.

C. RUPA¹¹:

In *Vataja Grahani* the sign and symptom accordingly Charaka are .

Annam Pachate Dukham- Food digested with difficulty, *Shukta Paka*- hyperacidity, *Kharangata*- roughness in body, *Kanth Ashya Shosha*, *Talu sosa*- dryness of throat & mouth, *Kshut Trishna*- hunger, thirst, *Timir*- blurred vision, *Karnayo Swanaha*- tinnitus, *Parshva*, *Uru*, *Vankshana*, *Griva Ruja*- frequent pain in sides of chest, thighs, pelvic region and neck, *Visuchika* - In this condition when that undigested vitiated product not expelled out as vomitus neither gets downwards to produce stool. *Hridpira*- pain in cardiac region, ***Karshya*** - emaciation, *Daurbalya*- weakness, *Vairashya*-distaste in mouth, *Parikartika*- cutting pain in abdomen, *Sarveshu Raseshu Grudhi*- desire to take all taste food items, *Manasa sadana*-lassitude, *Jirnejajjati Cha Adhmanam*- flatulence after & during the process of digestion, *Bhukte Swasthyam*- temporary relief after taking food, *Gulma Hrid roga pliha Asanki*- patient suspects

as if he is suffering from *Vātagulma*, *Hrdroga* or *Plīhā roga*. *Puna Puna srejet varcha Chirata Drava Shushka Mala Ama Yukta, Sashabda, Phena Yukta- Mala-* Patient passes stool frequently with difficulty, which is liquid mixed with hard stool, thin, *Ama* associated with sound & frothiness. *Swas, Kasa*- Patient also suffers from cough & dyspnoea.

D. SAMPRAPTI (Pathogenesis of *Vataja Grahani*)¹¹:

Nidana sevana-Vitiation of *Vata dosa*-Vitiated *Vayu* farther vitiated *Pachak Agni*-Diminished the power of Digestive enzyme (*Agni*)- Digestion process become slow down -which causes *Ama* formation (Undigested material) - *Suktibhva* (organic acid formation) leads to *Improper Sar-Kitta Vibhajan* (assimilation) leads to *Annvisha* (toxic substance)-*Dhatu Apusti* and *Dhatu Kshaya* -*Vataja Grahani*.

SAMPRAAPTI GHATAK:-

- *Dosa - Vata*
- *Dushya - Anna rasa, Rasa dhatu*
- *Srota - Annavaha, Purishvaha*
- *Adhistan - Grahani*
- *Srota Dushti - Atipravritti & Sanga*
- *Swavab - Darun*
- *Agni - MandAgni*
- *Sadhyasadhyata - Kricchasadhya*
- *Ama - JatharAgni mandya janya ama*
- *Roga marga – Aabhyantar*

MALABSORPTION¹² :

Diarrhoea and weight loss in patients with a normal diet are likely to be caused by

REVIEW ARTICLE

malabsorption. The symptoms are diverse in nature and variable in severity. A few patients have apparently normal bowel habit, but diarrhoea usually occurs and may be watery and voluminous. Bulky, pale and offensive stools that float in the toilet (steatorrhea) signify fat malabsorption. Abdominal distension, borborygmi, cramps, weight loss and undigested food in the stool may be present. Some patients complain only of malaise and lethargy. In others, symptoms related to deficiencies of specific vitamins, trace elements and minerals may occur

Pathophysiology

Malabsorption results from abnormalities of the three processes that are essential to normal digestion:

- Intraluminal maldigestion occurs when deficiency of bile or pancreatic enzymes results in inadequate solubilisation and hydrolysis of nutrients. Fat and protein malabsorption results. This may also occur with small bowel bacterial overgrowth.
- Mucosal malabsorption results from small bowel resection or conditions that damage the small intestinal epithelium, thereby diminishing the surface area for absorption and depleting brush border enzyme activity.
- 'Post-mucosal' lymphatic obstruction prevents the uptake and transport of absorbed lipids into lymphatic vessels. Increased pressure in these vessels results in leakage into the intestinal lumen, leading to protein-losing enteropathy.

Due to above causes, the food is not digested and absorbed properly. So, if there is any disturbance in the function of Grahani, proper digestion and absorption can't take place. Therefore, this type of Malabsorption may be considered as Grahani disease.

CONCEPT OF KARSHYA:

Karshya or Undernutrition is a state characterized by insufficient food intake, inadequate nutrient absorption, or excessive loss of nutrients. *Karshya* is a condition or disease in which the body of a person becomes emaciated, having less quantity of Rasa Dhatu causing further a status of Mamsahinata or Mamsakshaya. It happens when the body experiences an excess of demand, inadequate consumption, poor absorption, or excessive loss of nutrients.

The extent of *Karshya* will be measured by help of BMI (Body mass index) and MUAC (Mid upper arm circumference). BMI < 18.5 and MUAC will be < 23.4 cm to < 25.5 cm, that the indicator of *Karshya* or Undernutrition¹³.

In Ayurvedic point of view

Those who eat *Vatala* i.e. *Vata* dominated diet and absorbed by excessive exercise, excessive sex, excessive study, fear, sorrow, meditation, night awakening, thirst, hunger, alkalinity, eating less, etc, for that reason the body of a person becomes emaciated, having less quantity of Rasa Dhatu causing further a status of Mamsahinata or Mamsakshaya.

It may be said that "*krisha* is condition in which the person becomes thin and lean. That extremely emaciated person becomes intolerant of hunger,

REVIEW ARTICLE

thirst, cold, heat, wind, rain, lifting weight. He often develops *Vata* disease and gets less energy in doing activities. He dies by getting any one of the diseases like asthma, cough, atrophy, spleen, abdominal disease, *Agnisad* (low digestion), *Gulma*, *RaktaPitta*. Due to less energy, all the diseases of this person become strong¹⁴.

symptoms of *karshya*¹⁵:

- (i) *Sushka Sphiga* - Wasting buttocks
- (ii) *Sustuka Udar*- Wasting Abdomen
- (iii) *Sushka Griba* - Wasting neck
- (iv) *Dhamani Jala Santata* – Prominent vein
- (v) *Tvak Asthi shesha Ati Krisha* - Skin bone appearance
- (vi) *Sthula Parva* - Prominent joint and bone

DISCUSSION

According to Ayurveda *Agni* is an essential component of life. *Agni* is believed to be a symbol of a body in good health¹⁶. Diminution of *Agni* is life-threatening. Longevity is caused by the *Agni* operating normally. The state of *Agni* in the body affects many bodily functions, including life support, complexion, strength, health, sustenance, lustre, ojas, teja (energy), and prana (life energy). *Agni* determines how much food to eat. The state of the *Agni* affects food digestion, metabolism, tissue transformation, and nutrition. This *Agni* can be divided into three parts- 1. *JathrAgni*, 2. *BhutaAgni*, 3. *DhaatvAgni*.

JathrAgni is more important in all of these; because it nourishes the other two *Agni* as well, its loss also weakens the other two fires. Due to the weakening of these fires, various disorders arise. Due to the weakness of *JathrAgni*, diseases like indigestion, dysentery, *Vilambika*, *Alaska*, *Grahani* and *Anulomakshaya* etc. occur. Due to the deterioration of *BhutaAgni*, intestinal loss and *Anulomakshaya* occur. Due to the destruction of *DhaatvAgni*, diseases like *Pratilomakshaya* or diabetes mainly arise. The importance of *JathrAgni*(gastric fire) is clear from the above discussion, and its main base is *Grahani*. Hence, the damage to gastric fire is important in the origin of *Grahani*.

In *Vataja Grahani* food digested with difficulty¹⁷. Therefore, the food comes out in a semi-ripe state and due to late digestion, the food comes out in a completely unripe state. This semi-ripe or ignited juice is not absorbed, so the work of *BhutaAgnis* gets blocked. For some time, *DhaatvAgnis* do their work and digest the stored nutrients, as a result, the body becomes more and more emaciated due to the gradual loss of *Dhatu* and it will lead to *Karshya*. Pathogenesis of *Karshya* has been mentioned in Chart-1.

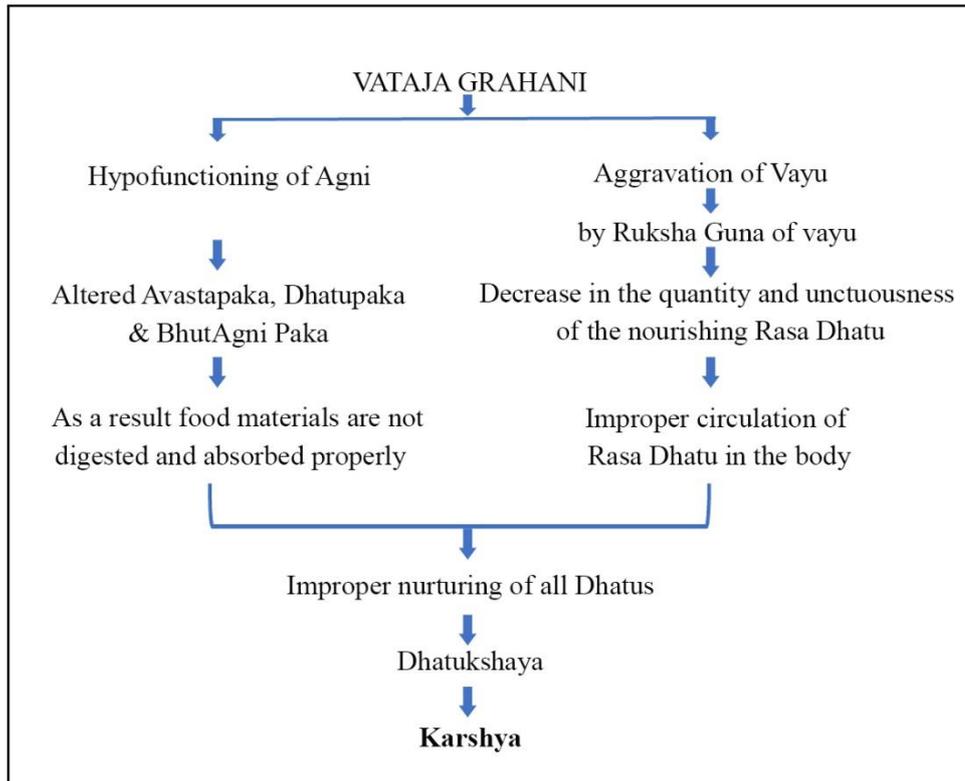
Susruta and Vagabhata have clearly mentioned that vitiated *Vatadosha* leads to *Krishta* as per quotation^{18,19}.

REVIEW ARTICLE

Also, Charak Acharya in Vimana Sthana chapter 8, while describing the person of *Vataprakriti* says ²⁰ *Vatadosha* is responsible for the *Apachitasharira* i.e. *Karshya* of the body.

into account the Ayurvedic concept of *Agni* and uses the medicines *Deepana*, *Pachana*.

Chart 1: Pathogenesis of Karshya



Sharangadhara enumerated *Karshya* as one of the Nanatmaja disease of *Vata* that means produced absolutely by *Vata* Dosha.

CONCLUSION

Grahani roga, which is related to food digestion and absorption, is more common than it used to be because of our poor eating habits and way of life, which are addressed under *Grahani* Dosha. *Vataja Grahani's* *Karsya* (under nourishment) is one of its key characteristics. They receive more intense treatment that takes

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REVIEW ARTICLE

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REVIEW ARTICLE

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