

PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE OF MANAGEMENT OF MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS: AMAVATA

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Musculoskeletal disorders (*Amavata*) are mainly described as disease of *Rasavahasrotas*. The outcome of *Agnidusti*, *Ama Utpatti* and *Sandhi Vikriti* results in *Amavata*. **Materials and Methods:** Materials and methods are reviewed, including classical Ayurveda texts, contemporary journals, research papers, and relevant articles. **Results:** The Therapy which Regulates the *Vata* and *Agni* will normalize digestive *Agni* and metabolism and prevents *Sandhivikriti* is considered gold standard for *Amavata*. Many therapies and Ayurvedic preparations are mentioned in the classics which are very effective remedy in *Amavata*. **Conclusion:** In Ayurveda, there are multiple treatment modalities for *Amavata*. These all therapies are the best way to treat the disease.

KEYWORDS: *Amavata*, *Ama*, *Agni*, *Vata*, *Sandhi Vikriti*.

INTRODUCTION

Amavata is the most common disease which is produced due to frequent formation of *Ama* in the human body.

Musculoskeletal disease: Injuries or disorders of the muscles, nerves, tendons, joints, cartilage and spinal discs which may result in pain, functional laesia reduced, joint mobility.

Amavata is defined in 1st at MadhavaNidhana and as explained as^[1]

युगपत्कुपितावन्तस्त्रिकसन्धिप्रवेशकौ | स्तब्धं च कुरुतो गात्रमामवातः स उच्यते ॥मा.नि.२५/५ ॥

When *Ama* and *Vatadosha* togetherly get provoked and goes to sandhi that leads to shula and stabdhataa is known as Amavata.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To study the Ayurvedic principles and management of Amavata, various sources were thoroughly reviewed, including classical Ayurveda texts, contemporary journals, research papers, and relevant articles.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Certainly! In Ayurveda, the holistic understanding and treatment of diseases involve thorough consideration of various factors. For *Amavata* (a condition comparable to rheumatoid arthritis in modern medicine), here's a detailed approach encompassing *Nidana* (causative factors), *Samprapti* (pathogenesis), *Samanya* and *VisheshLakshana* (general and specific symptoms), and the treatment protocol.

निदान^[1]:

विरुद्धाहारचेष्टस्य मन्दाग्नेर्निश्चलस्य च | स्निग्धं भुक्तवतो ह्यन्नं व्यायामं कुर्वतस्तथा ||२५०१ ||

It is explained that due to virudhaahara i.e unwholesome diet, poor digestion power, defective metabolism, sedentary lifestyle and consumption of sticky foods after exercise leads to formation of Amavata.

सम्प्राप्ति^[1]:

वायुना प्रेरितो ह्यामः श्लेष्मस्थानं प्रधावति |तेनात्यर्थं विदग्धोऽसौ धमनीः प्रतिपद्यते ||
वातपित्तकफैर्भूयो दूषितः सोऽन्नजो रसः |स्रोतांस्यभिष्यन्दयति नानावर्णोऽतिपिच्छिलः ||
जनयत्याशु दौर्बल्यं गौरवं हृदयस्य च |व्याधीनामाश्रयो ह्येष आमसञ्ज्ञोऽतिदारुणः ||
युगपत्कुपितावन्तस्त्रिकसन्धिप्रवेशकौ |स्तब्धं च कुरुतो गात्रमामवातः स उच्यते ||

Samprapti of amavata

Sanchayaya:

Ahara: Viruddha Ahara, Snigdha Ahara, Guru Ahara

Vihara: Diwa Swapna, Nischalata

Manasika: Chinta, Shoka, Bhaya, Krodha

Prakopa:

Agnimandhya



Amavisha



Samavata



Prasara:

Sleshmasthan



Dhamani



Dusthti by Tridosha



Rasavahasrotas



Trikasandhipravesha

SthanaSamsraya:

Vyakti:

Daurbalya, Sandhi

Sandhisthabdhata

Shohta, Shula

General symptoms of Amavata^[1]

अङ्गमर्दोऽरुचिस्तृष्णा आलस्यं गौरवं ज्वरः । अपाकः शूनताऽङ्गानामामवातस्य लक्षणम् ॥२५/६॥

Clinical features of Amavata include pain all over the body and joints, loss of taste, thirst, lack of enthusiasm, heaviness, fever, indigestion, swelling of joints.

Advanced stage of Amavata^[1]

स कष्टः सर्वरोगाणां यदा प्रकुपितो भवेत् । हस्तपादशिरोगुल्फत्रिकजानूरुसन्धिषु ॥ करोति सरुजं शोथं यत्र दोषः प्रपद्यते । स देशो रुज्यतेऽत्यर्थं व्याविद्ध इव वृश्चिकैः ॥

Painful and swelling of hands, foot, head and ankle, neck lowback and hip joints and pain will be as like of scorpion bite I.e scorpion bite and pain hit by stick.

जनयेत् सोऽग्निदौर्बल्यं प्रसेकारुचिगौरवम् । उत्साहहानिं वैरस्यं दाहं च बहुमूत्रताम् ॥ कुक्षौ कठिनतां शूलं तथा निद्राविपर्ययम् । तृच्छर्दिभ्रममूर्च्छाश्च हृद्ग्रहं विड्विबद्धताम् । जाड्यान्तकूजमानाहं कष्टांश्चान्यानुपद्रवान् ॥

Anorexia and feeling of heaviness in the body, loss of interest and drive, bad taste in the mouth, polyuria and burning micturition, hardness in abdomen, colicky pain, reversal of normal sleeping habit, thirst, vomiting, giddiness, vomiting pericardial discomfort, constipation, stiffness, gurgling intestinal sounds.

According to Yogaratnakar among the above complications: Grahani is also added as complications. Specific feature of Amavata when it is associated with doshic feature:

Pitta: Daha and Raga

Vata: shoola

Kapha: Stimita, Shita and Tama

On prognosis:

Ekadoshaj: Sadhya

Two Dosha involved: *Yapya*

All dosha involved and if inflammation is all over the body: *Asadhya*

Principle of Treatment of Amavata^[2]

लङ्घनं स्वेदनं तिक्तं दीपनानि कटूनि च । विरेचनं स्नेहपानं वस्तयश्चाममारुते ॥ सैन्धवाद्येनानुवास्यः क्षारवस्तिः प्रशस्यते । आमवाते पञ्चकोलसिद्धं पानान्नमिष्यते । रूक्षः स्वेदो विधातव्यो बालुकापुटकैस्तथा ॥२॥

Therapies

Langhana, Swedana, Tiktarasadavyas, Dipaniyadravyas, Katu rasa dravyas, Virechana Therapy, Snehapana and Administration of Vasti are prescribed in the treatment of Amavata.

SaindhavadiAnuvasanaVasti followed by *ksharaVasti* is also recommended in Amavata.

Diet: Food and drinks processed with pancakola are beneficial in Amavata.

Fomentation *RuksaSweda* (dry/rough fomentation) should be applied with sand pouches in amavata.^[3]

Interpretation of Above Chikitsa sutra

The treatment for *amavata* involves a careful and sequential approach due to the opposing properties of *ama* and *vata*. *Ama* is characterized by heaviness, oiliness, stability, and thickness, while *vata* is light, dry, mobile, subtle, and clear; both share the cold property. The therapeutic process begins with measures to normalize *agni* (digestive fire) and digest

ama, followed by steps to eliminate vitiated *vata* and *ama*. According to *Chakrapani*, the treatment should start with *pachana* (digestion) of *ama*, then restore *agni*, and finally control *vata*dosha. This methodical approach is essential for effectively managing amavata, ensuring each treatment phase does not counteract the other.

1. *Langhana*^[2,3,7,8]

Langhana, a treatment to bring lightness (*laghuta*) to the body, is recommended for managing amavata, a disease caused by *ama* and *vata*. Charaka identifies ten types of *langhana*, including purificatory procedures, fasting, physical exercise, and exposure to sunlight and wind. The primary method for amavata is *upavasa* (fasting), which stops *ama* production and aids its digestion. This helps restore *agni* (digestive fire) and allows for the control of *vata*dosha. Care is needed as *langhana* can worsen *vata* if overdone. Benefits include reducing doshas, stimulating *agni*, relieving fever, and creating hunger reflexes, which can enhance internal corticosteroid production and reduce inflammation. *Langhana* should be discontinued once the *nirama* (absence of *ama*) state is achieved to prevent *vata* aggravation.

2. *Swedana*^[5,6]

A process inducing perspiration, is used in Ayurveda to relieve stiffness, heaviness, and cold in the body. For amavata, *rukshasweda* (dry sweating) with hot sand is preferred over *snigdhasweda* (oil sweating), as the latter can worsen symptoms due to its oily nature. *Rukshasweda*, with its hot property, helps digest *ama* and clear blocked channels, alleviating obstruction and inducing perspiration. Hot water (*ushanajala*) is also beneficial internally for its digestive and cleansing properties. In chronic amavata with increased dryness, *snigdhasweda* can be used. *Swedana* is particularly effective against symptoms like stiffness, heaviness, numbness, cold, and pain. Other helpful methods include sun exposure and hot water baths processed with *vataghna* (*vata*-reducing) substances.

3. *Tikta – Katu Rasa and Deepandravyas*^[7,8,9]

Tikta (bitter) and *katu* (pungent) dravyas are effective in treating amavata due to their specific properties. *Tiktadravyas* aid in digesting *ama* and *pitta* and purifying channels, while *katudravyas* cut through obstructions, open pathways, and reduce *kapha*. Both are light, hot, and sharp, making them excellent for *ama* digestion and *agni* restoration. They also help remove excessive *kledakakapha* and transport the processed doshas from the tissues to the digestive tract. *Tiktadravyas* are detoxifying and scraping, and both types reduce moisture and fat. They promote digestion, appetite, and lightness in the body. Examples include *shunti* (ginger), *panchakola*, *chitraka* for *katu*, and *guduchi*, *sudarshana* for *tikta*. However, since these dravyas can increase *vata* dosha, it is important to use those that also have *vata*-pacifying properties, like *shunthi*, which has oily qualities and sweet post-digestive effect to balance *vata*.

4. *Virechana*^[10]

A purifying therapy eliminates doshas through the lower pathways and is essential after initial treatments like *langhana*, *swedana*, *deepana*, and *pachana*, which bring doshas to a manageable state. It ensures doshas are fully expelled to prevent re-aggravation. *Virechana* is particularly effective for removing *kledakakapha* from *pitta* sthana, addressing amavata symptoms like bloating, constipation, abdominal sounds, and lower back pain by normalizing *vata* movement. *Erandaitala* (castor oil) is the preferred *virechana* drug for amavata because it clears *vata* obstructions caused by *kapha*, fat, blood, and *pitta*, and it is also nourishing and *vata*-pacifying due to its oily properties.

5. *Snehapana*^[11]

The process of ingesting medicated oils or ghee to achieve lubrication, softness, and moisture in the body. It has two types: achha (pure) and sidha (medicated). It is used according to the patient's condition and strength. In the chronic stage of amavata, when tissues are dry and vata is provoked, snehapana helps by providing necessary lubrication and nourishment. Medicated oils processed with hot, pungent, and bitter herbs are effective for both ama and vata. This treatment also supports digestion by enhancing agni and is particularly beneficial for bone and marrow health. However, snehapana should not be used in the acute (samavata) stage, as it can worsen the condition. To prevent the formation of ama, oils processed with herbs like pippalyadighrita, triushanadighrita, and others are recommended.

6. *Basti*^[3]

The administration of medicated liquids through the anus, is considered half of all treatments in Ayurveda and is highly effective for controlling vitiated vatadosha, a key factor in amavata. As amavata progresses, vata increases, making basti particularly useful in chronic stages. Both types of basti are recommended: anuvasana (oil-based) basti, which alleviates dryness from other treatments and nourishes the body, and asthapana (decoction) basti, which eliminates doshas and strengthens digestive functions. Chakrapani suggests using saindhavaditaila for anuvasanabasti and ksharabasti or vaitarana for asthapanabasti. These treatments help maintain agni, remove blockages, and support overall health.

Mode of action of Vaitarana Vasti

It is a therapeutic enema, is effective due to its multifaceted mode of action targeting various aspects of health. It acts through Amapachana, Srotosodhana, and Vatakaphahara.

The key ingredients of Vaitarana Vasti contribute to its therapeutic efficacy:

1. *Saindhavalavana* (Rock salt): Facilitates the expulsion of doshas from the intestines and balances all three doshas.
2. *Chincha* (Tamarind): Enhances digestion (Deepana) and pacifies Vata and Pitta doshas.
3. *Guda* (Jaggery): Balances Vata and Kapha doshas.
4. *Gomutra* (Cow urine): Balances Vata and Kapha doshas, enhances digestive fire (Agni deepaka), and alleviates pain (Shoolahara).

These ingredients collectively contribute to the effectiveness of Vaitarana Vasti, particularly beneficial in patients suffering from Amavata.

Saindhavaditail^[5]: Saindhavadi Taila from BhaisajyaRatnawali's Amavata Chikitsa Adhyaya contains 32 medicinal ingredients grouped for specific purposes.

Deepana Pachanadravyas: Shunthi, Shatpushpa, Maricha, Ajmoda, Pipali, Pipalimula

Vata-Kaphaharadravyas: Shatpushpa, Meda, Katphala, Kachoor, Chavya, Vidanga, Renuka Beeja, Nilivriksha, Danti

Vedanasthapana and **Shothaharadravyas**: Rasna, Erandamoola, RenukaBeeja, Nilivriksha, Mulethi

Together, these ingredients make *Saindhavadi Taila* effective for managing *Amavata*, highlighting its significance in Ayurvedic treatments.

Panchakolchurna^[8]

It acts as *Deepan - Pachana* drug as *Amapachana* is mentioned as the first line of treatment for *Ama*. *PanchakolChurna* having *Laghu*, *Ruksha*, *Sukshma Guna* and being *UshnaVriya* helps in *Pachana* and *Agnideepana* thus corrects the *Agnimandhya* and maintains the *Dhatwagni* too.

Baluka Sweda^[3]

Baluka Sweda, with its *Ruksha* and *Ushna Guna*, liquefies *Dosha* and *Ama*, promoting blood circulation and reducing inflammation and joint pain (*Sandhisotha* and *Sandhishoola*)

Similarly, some formulations are explained in *Amavata chikitsa* in *Chakradutta* are:

Shatyadikwath, *Satyadikalka*, *Rasnadi Mulamkwatha*, *Eranda oil*, *Rasnapanchaka*, *RasnaSaptaka*, *Shunthyadikwath*, *Haritakichurna*, *Nagarchurnam*, *Panchakola Churna*, *vaiswanarchurna*, *Alambusadyachurna*, *Pathyadya Churna*, *Satapuspadyachurna*, *Hingvadyachurna* *Yograj Guggulu*, *Singhanada Guggulu*, *Brihat Singhanadaguggulu*, *Ajamodadi Vati*, *Nagara Ghrita*, *Amrita Ghrita*, *RasonaPinda*, *Prasarinisandhana*, *RasonaSura*, *Sindaki*, *Sidhmala*

Medicines Mentioned in <i>Bhaisajya Ratnawali</i> ^[5]	
<i>Lepa:</i>	<i>Himsradi Lepa</i> , <i>Satapuspadi Lepa</i>
<i>Kwatha:</i>	<i>Rasnadi Dasmool</i> , <i>Rasna Saptakam</i> , <i>Rasna Pachkam</i> , <i>Satyadi Kwatham</i> <i>Rasnadi Kwatham</i> , <i>Maharasnadi Kwatham</i> , <i>Rasonadi Kwatham</i>
<i>Churna:</i>	<i>Amrutadi Churnam</i> , <i>Satpuspadhya Churnam</i> , <i>Hingwadya Churnam</i> <i>Vaishvanar Churnam</i> , <i>Punarnavadi Churnam</i> , <i>Pushpadhya Churnam</i> <i>Aabhadya Churnam</i> , <i>Alambhuadya Churnam</i>
<i>Modaka and Pinda</i> (Big size tablet):	<i>Ajmodadi Modak</i> , <i>Aamvatagajasimhomodaka</i> <i>Rasona Pinda</i> , <i>Maha rasona pinda</i>
<i>Guggulu:</i>	<i>Vatariguggulu</i> , <i>Yogarajaguggulu</i> , <i>Vrut Yoga raj Guggulu</i> <i>Simhanada Guggulu</i> , <i>AparaSimhanadaGuggulu</i> , <i>Shiva Guggulu</i>
<i>Ghrita and Taila:</i>	<i>Shunthi Ghritam</i> , <i>Shrungaveradya Ghritam</i> , <i>Kanjikastapala Ghritam</i> <i>Prasarinitailam</i> , <i>Dwipanchamuladyatailam</i> , <i>Vijayabhairavatailam</i> <i>Maha Vijayabhairavatailam</i> , <i>Vrutsaindhavatailam</i> , <i>Mahasaindhavatailam</i>

Pathya and Apathya Mentioned in Classical texts**Pathya^[3]**

वास्तूकशाकं सारिष्टं शाकं पौनर्नवं हितम् पटोलं लशुनञ्चैव वार्ताकुं कारवेल्लकम्
यवान्नं कोरदूषान्नं पुराणं शालिषष्टिकम् लावकानां तथा मांसं हितं तद्रेण संस्कृतम्
सितं च यूषं कौलथं कालायं चणकस्य च रुच्यं दद्याद्यथासात्म्यमामवातहितञ्च यत्

Ahara:^[3] *Vastukasaka*, *Sunthi*, *Aristha*, *Adhrak*, *Ajawayan*, *Maricha*, *Saindhav*, *Hingu*, *Lasun*, *Jeerak*, *Sahijan*,
Parwar, *karvellaka*, *Yava*, *Kodrum*, *Takra*, *Kulathha*, *Gomutra*, *Usnodak*, *Eradataila*

Bihar: *Rukshyan Swedan*, *Langhan*, *Chakraman*, *Mridu Byayam*, *Ushna Bastra*

Apathya^[3]

दधि मत्स्यो गुडः क्षीरं दुष्टनीरमुपोदिका विरुद्धमशनं पूर्वं वायुवेगस्य रोधनम् |निशायां जागरः शीततोयस्य परिषेवणम् | न हितान्यनिले
सामे व्यवायातिशयोपि च॥

Curd, *Fish*, *Gaggary*, *Milk*, *Viruddhaahara*, *Purvivayusewan*, *Vega dharan*, *Ratrijagaran*, *Bathing with cold water*,
Ati Byabaya.

CONCLUSION

The term “*Amavata*” originates from the combination of two key factors: *Ama* (representing unripe, undigested material) and *Vata*. *Ama* results from impaired digestion due to *Agni* dysfunction, leading to immature substances in the body. This condition is associated with pain and stiffness, resembling modern-day rheumatoid arthritis.

In various ancient Ayurvedic texts, the description of *Amavata* was present. However, during the medieval period, it gained prominence, and nowadays, it is a prevalent and serious disease.

The pathogenesis of *Amavata* begins after the formation of *Ama*. Autoimmune diseases occur due to the immune system’s harmful response, where it attacks body tissues as an anticipated reaction against antigens or toxins. In autoimmune disorders triggered by *Ama* or antigens at the cellular level, an inflammatory response occurs. These antigens or *Ama* modulate cellular signaling, leading to an incompatible autoimmune response that damages tissues.

In the present context, where allopathic medicine does not offer a complete cure, following the principles outlined in classical Ayurvedic texts and applying these practices has shown promising and successful treatment results.

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