

AGNI: THE BASIC CONCEPT

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ABSTRACT

Agni refers to fire which has its role inside and outside the body^[1], it's ushna, tikshna, laghu,^[2] saraadi guna assist for dahana and pachanaadi^[3] action along with it aids to move everywhere including in minute channels of the body. It maintains the luster and complexion of the skin, energy, work capacity, strength, nutritional process and growth of the body.^[4] The body is flaming fire and it only refers to the phenomenon of heat which is associated with fire. Agni has the capacity to convert the substance in any form because of its occult power. Maintenance of physiological actions in equilibrium state or heal pathological conditions depends on the normal state of Agni, while the abnormal state of Agni contributes to pathological changes, and absence of Agni results in death of the living being therefore maintenance of human life itself is dependent on Agni.^[4] Agni is one of the basic constituents which is helpful in the maintenance and growth of the human body.

KEYWORDS: Agni, Dipana, Fire, Mahabhuta, Pachana.

INTRODUCTION

Since ancient days, the Agni has the unique perceptive. The term Agni or Teja implies fire that have tendency to move upward direction. It moves everywhere and it carries everything and acts as burning, assimilation, digestion etc. Agni is emphasized in two contexts i.e. externally and internally. 1) External fire (outside the body) lokasthavayu and 2) internal fire (inside the body) sharirasthavayu as mentioned in vatakalakaliya adhyaya.^[1] External fire is cooking in home, atmospheric fire, sacrificial fire, the celestial fire in sun, cremation fire etc. and jataragni comes under internal fire. Both the actions are same but sthana is varies.

The nature and functions of Agni elucidate the implications of the terms vanhi, taijasa, anala, pavaka, vaishvanara, dhananjaya, vitihotra etc. For example Taijas is luster, sharpness this indicates ushna, tikshna, Sara, laghu guna of Agni that supports the digestion. Pavaka implies movement because of its Sara, tikshnaguna it moves very quickly and enters into minute channels easily. Vaishvanara is compared to sun because of its ushna, tikshna guna and these gunas of Agni are responsible for digestion of food and metabolism etc. In dravyaguna, Chitraka and Bhallataka dravyas are comprehends same synonym i.e. Agnika and Agnimukhi respectively because both dravyas have ushna in nature and stimulates the digestion power.

Agni Mahabhuta

Agni is one among the panchamahabhuta, its origination takes place with the help of rajasika and tamasika ahankara in srushti utpatti or creation of universe.^[5] So Agni is pertaining to one of the mahabhuta i.e. Agni mahabhuta or Tejomahabhuta.

The qualities of Agni mahabhuta are rupa (darshana).^[6] and more dominant in chakshu, with the help of chakshu only people see the things and it possesses the tejo guna excessively. Colour, texture, digestion, sharpness, burning, braveness are the other qualities of Agni mahabhuta. Agni is engendered to both health and disease.

Relation of Agni with Sharira

The place of Agni in sharira is vamaparshvashraya of nabhi i.e. Grahani so it is called as agnashaya.^[7,8,9] In the context of functioning of a living organism, which maintains its integrity and performs its vital activities, by converting in pakadi karmas or biophysical and biochemical processes. The food consumed in various ways-licked, masticated, drunk etc. not only into its various structural and functional constituents but also to provide the energy necessary for proceeding with its innumerable vital activities. In this sequence, the term Agni comprehends various factors which participate in and direct the course of digestion and metabolism, in living organism.^[10,8] Agni is usually employed to cook food and render it fit for digestion. For example rice and fire, with the help of fire only odana preparation is possible like that sharirika agni supports the pachana in grahani. In chemical laboratories, employed of heat to decompose, disintegrate, separate or break down of substances and also to accelerate different kinds of chemical reactions. Likewise, the digestion of food in the amashaya and pachyamanashaya, corresponding to the stomach and small intestine, involving the splitting of complex food substances into their simpler components. It shows that the idea underlying digestion and metabolism as whole.

Agni Karya

After digestion of food, separated into two forms - Saara and Kitta, Saara portion of Anna rasa provides Uttarottara dhatuposhana that helps into further longevity, strength, colour, texture, ojas etc., of the person.^[10,8] Improper function of Agni leads to agnimandhyajanya vikaras and death if not treated properly.

Relation of Agni mahabhuta with Indriyaswarupa

Chakshu is considered as main indriya of Agni mahabhuta as most part of the chakshu is formed by Agni mahabhuta only. In chakshu, vartma mandala, shukla mandala and drushtipatala these parts are accumulated with Agni mahabhuta.

Relation of Agni mahabhuta with Manoguna^[11,12]

Satva, Rajas and Tamas are the manogunas. Happiness which comes from the self is in Satvaguna that which comes from sense objects is in Rajoguna, that which comes from delusion and depravity is in Tamoguna. Satva is free from defects and is endowed with auspiciousness. Rajas is the principle of activity and motion and Tamas manifests as opposition, heaviness and resistance to motion and activity. All panchamahabhutas are having manogunas either individually or combined. Pruthvi mahabhuta possess tamo guna because it has aavarana guna, apmahabhuta possess satva and tamoguna because satvaguna having prakashakatva and tamoguna having the guru guna but Agni mahabhuta having Satva and Rajoguna in it. Satvaguna is showing Prakashakaguna and Rajoguna is Chanchalatva swabhava, by considering these gunas Agni mahabhuta also possess the same gunas like satva and rajoguna. In Vayu mahabhuta shows its chanchalyata swabhava because of rajoguna and akashaguna possess satvaguna because it is having prakashakaguna.

Panchamahabhuta	Mano guna
Pruthvi	Tamas
Ap	Satva and Tamas
Agni	Satva and Rajas
Vayu	Rajas
Akasha	Satva

Relation of Agni mahabhuta with Shadrasa^[13,14,15]

Madhura, amla, lavana, katu, tikta and kashaya are shadrasas, these are having own panchamahabhuta qualities.

Rasas	Panchamahabhuta
Madhura	Pruthvi+Ap
Amla	Pruthvi+Agni
Lavana	Jala+Agni
Katu	Vayu+Agni
Tikta	Akasha+Vayu
Kashaya	Pruthvi+Vayu

Madhura rasa- it possesses the pruthvimahabhuta because of its soma guna, not involving in agnidipana and pachana karma.

Amla rasa-it possesses the pruthvi and agnimahabhuta because of its laghu, ushnaguna of Agni mahabhuta acts as Agni dipana, jarana, vatanulomana and kaphavilayana.

Lavana rasa-it possesses the ap and agnimahabhuta, naatiushna, tikshna, and saraguna of Agni mahabhuta acts as pachana(amapaka), kledana, dipana, chedana(kaphachedana), bhedana(baddha mala bhedana) and daha.

Katu rasa-it possesses the vayu and agnimahabhuta because of laghu and ushnaguna of Agni mahabhuta acts as jataragnidipana, kaphasrava and chakshuVirechana(increases the secretion of lacrimal gland).

Tikta rasa-it possesses the vayu and aakash mahabhuta, because of its vayuguna supports the dipana and pachana in sharira.

Kashaya rasa-it possesses the vayu and pruthvimahabhuta, itself involving in sharira kledana karma so there is no agnidipana and pachana takesplace.

So in these rasas Agni mahabhuta has its own importance.

Relation of Agni mahabhuta with Raktadhatu^[16]

As per literature 'sarvadravyampanchabhoutikavam' this rule is applicable in dhatu also, mainly in raktadhatu.

Panchamahabhuta	Karma
Pruthvi	Visrata
Ap	Dravata
Agni	Ragata
Vayu	Spandana
Aakasha	Laghuta

In Raktadhatu, Pruthvimahabhuta possess the visrata i.e. amagandha, Apmahabhuta possess the dravataguna (liquid in nature), Agni mahabhuta possess ragata (ranjana karma), Ranjana karma of Agni mahabhuta helps to differentiate the rasa dhatu and raktadhatu because it gives raktavarna to rasa dhatu. Vayumahabhuta possess the spandana (movement) and Aakashamahabhuta possess the laghuguna.

Ranjana karma bestows the agnimahabhuta in rakta dhatu.

Importance of agnimahabhuta in sharira

With the help of Agni anna provides nourishment to deha-dhatu and it is the saara of ojas and gives bala, varna to sharira. Agni is responsible for dhatuposhana not for diseases so apakva rasa manifests the diseases.

DISCUSSION

Agni is one of the basic entities. Without Agni there is no dipana and pacana. It is one rupa of tejasa. At the time of shrusti utpatti Agni mahabhuta origination takes place with other mahabhuta so it is considered as one of the Agni mahabhuta or Tejomahabhuta. Grahani is the sthana of Agni in sharira because of its ushna, tikshna, laghu, sara etc. guna acts as dipana and pachana. Chakshu is having the pradhana indriya of Agni mahabhuta because major part of the chakshu covered with Agni mahabhuta only. Similar properties of satva and rajoguna of manas present in Agni mahabhuta. Amla, lavana and katu rasa having the Agni mahabhuta along with other mahabhutas. In raktadhatu Agni mahabhuta acts as ranjana karma. Proper function of Agni is the result of ayu, varna, bala, oja and tejavruddhi in sharira.

CONCLUSION

Agni is considered as one of the mahabhuta. Agni is responsible for both health and diseases. Agni helps to determine the Jaranashakti in rogipareeksha. Based on Agni, matra of aahara and oushadha elucidation takes place in diseases as well as in healthy condition.

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