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**Published paper's title : Concept of
agni in ayurveda**

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Research Paper

CONCEPT OF AGNI IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT : In Ayurveda, Agni maximally represents digestive & metabolic fire in the body .It is the substance in the secretions of the body which are directly responsible for chemical changes in the body. It consist digestive (pak) and different kinds of hormones, enzyme and co enzymes activities etc. which participate in these digestive & metabolic functions. Due to increased activity of pitta in yuva vastava (young stage) digestive & metabolic rate are higher. Vigor & vitality of human being is also maintained by balanced activity of Agni. It is necessary for proper growth & development of the body & their parts. Due to advancement in age, depletion of Agni is taking place (in old age) which cause instability in Agni, ultimately leads to decrease decay, atrophy, decay due to defective digestion in metabolism that's why vigor and vitality id decreased."



INTRODUCTION

The term of *Agni*, in common language, means fire. However, in the context of the functioning of a living organism, which maintains its integrity and performs its vital activities, by converting in *Pakadi-Karmas* or bio-physical and bio-chemical processes, the foods consumed in various ways – licked, masticated, drunk, etc. not only into its various structural and functional constituents but also to provide the *Shakti* or energy necessary for processing with its innumerable vital activities, this term does not actually mean fire. In these sequences, the term *Agni* comprehends various factors which participate in and direct the course of digestion and metabolism in living organism.¹

TYPES OF AGNI

Agni, by name of *Agni-vyapar* is an agent that helps in the digestion and metabolism of food stuffs and drugs. There are many types of *Agni* in the body. There may be specific types of *Agni's* for specific type of Para going on in the body at different level. But it has been classified into three broad headings² –

(i) JATHARAGNI (ii) DHATWAGNI (iii) BHUTAGNI

Further they may be classified as one, seven and five types respectively. First is *jatharagni*. It is related with the gastro-intestinal digestion and absorption. In addition it has been considered to influence the *Agni* situated elsewhere.

The concept of dhatwagni and bhutagni refers to the intermediary tissue metabolism. The dhatwagni are

seven (*Rasagni, raktagni, mansagni, medoagni, asthiagni, mazzagni, and shukragni*) and *bhutagni* are five (*prathivagni, apyagni, agneyaagni, vayavaagni, and nabhasagni*)³

JATHARAGNI

It converts the gross food particles into smaller particles which are then able to be absorbed. It is related to the gastro-intestinal tract. (*Jathar* means Gastrium)

The *Ayu* (life span), *Varna* (complexion), *Bal* (vitality), *Swasthya* (good health), *Utsaha* (enthusiasm), *Sharir Vridhi, Prabha* (glow), *Oja* (vital essence), *Tej* (lusture), *Agnis* and the *Pran* (life breaths) are derived from the *Agni* in the body.⁴

When the *Agni* is extinguished man dies, when a man is induced with it adequately, he lives long in good health, when it is de-arranged, he begins to ail. Therefore the function of *Agni* is said to be the main stay of life. The food which is considered the nourishing factor of the *Sharir, Dhatu, Ojas, Bal, Varna* and other things, that very food too, is dependent for its nutrient action on the *jatharagni* as from the undigested food, the *sharir dhatu* cannot be formed.⁵

BHUTAGNI

There are five kinds of *Agni* innate in each of the *maha-bhuta* of the body – *prithvi, apya, agneya, vayava* and *nabhasa*, every *bhutagni* digests its own corresponding component mahabhuta, in the ingested food which is a compound of the *mahabhutas*. Just as a quality in the substances nourishes individually its corresponding quality in the body as for example, the *mahabhuta* of *prithvi*



in the body is nourished by the *mahabhutas* nourish their corresponding qualities, thus making for complete nourishment.⁶

DHATWAGNI

The body sustaining *Dhatu*, which are seven, undergo combustion by their *Dhatwagni* and each of them gets transformed into products namely *Prasad* (vital substances) and *Kitta* (excretory substances).⁷

The very causative factor of *amavata*, the *ama* is resultant of hypo functioning of *Agni*. Accordingly, as to the *Dosha* or *Doshas* which may influence *Jatharagni*, there are three types of *Agni disorders*.⁸

(i) VISHMAGNI (ii) TIKSHNAGNI (iii) MANDAGNI

[I] VISHMAGNI

It is caused by vitiation of *Vata* and results in *Vishtabdha-Jirna*. It manifests with *Shoola* (pain in abdomen), *adhaman* (digestion of abdomen), *todabheda* (pricking like pain), *apravriti* of *adhovayu* and *malas* (non movement of flatus and excreta), *stabdhata* (stiffness), *murchha* (fainting) and *angamarda* etc. symptoms of *vata* (*vrodhhi*).⁹

[II] TIKSHNAGNI

It is caused by vitiation of *pitta* and results in *vidag-dha-jirna*. It manifests with *bhrama* (giddiness), *trishna* (thirst), *Murchha* and *osha* (heating), *choshha* (scorching), *Sweda* (perspiration), *amlodgara* (belching), *daha* (burning sensation) and other symptoms of *pitta*.¹⁰

[III] MANDAGNI

It is caused by vitiation of *kapha* which is the main cause in formation of *Ama* and results in *amajirna*. It produces *gaurava* (heaviness of abdomen / or of whole body), *utklesh* (nausea), *shotha* on *kapola* (cheeks) and *akshikuta* (eye orbit) and *avidagdha udagara* (belching), occurring soon after and according to meals.¹¹

RELATION OF AGNI WITH PRAKRITI -

Agni have strong relation with different types of *Prakrities* (personalities)^{12,13,14}. In *Vata Prakriti* individual *Vismagni* (unstable digestive & metabolic power) is very common. In person having *Pitta Prakriti*, *Agni* is very potent. *Mandagni* is common in *Kapha Prakriti* individuals. Homeostasis¹⁵ is also maintained by the proper functioning of the *agni*. Seasonal variation¹⁵ also affect the functioning of *agni*.

Thus disorder of *kapha* is the root cause in the genesis of *Ama* and this disease. *Ama* is also of the nature of *Kapha*, its physical properties are quite similar to *Kapha*.

If all the 13 *Agnis* are not in normal state and remain untreated, several types of disease may develop due to accumulation of *Ama*. The *Dhatwagni* and *Bhutagni* may be vitiated in the same way as *Jatharagni* by the *tridosha*. Thus if *Dhatwagni* and *bhutagni* are depressed it will result in the production of "*Ama*".

CONCLUSION-

Agni may be correlated with digestive & metabolic fire in the body. It is the substance secreted in our body, which is directly responsible for chemical changes in the body. It consist



digestive (*pak*) enzymes and different kinds of hormones, and co-enzymes activities etc. which participate in these digestive & metabolic functions. It is a logical conclusion that *Ama* is produced due to hypo-functioning of Agni. At any level of the three *Pakas* (digestion and metabolism i.e. *Madhur*, *Amla* & *Katu avastha paka* & *vipaka*) due to hypo-functioning of the agni concerned unwanted chemical substances are produced known as *Ama*. Hypo-functioning of any Agni specially of *Jatharagni* is likely to affect the function of other too, leading to formation of *Ama* in the different stage of *Paka-karma*. Lastly we can say that *Agni* plays very important role in growth, development & maintenance of the body.

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