

## CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF PACHANA CHIKITSA FROM CHARAKA SAMHITA

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**ABSTRACT:** Nowadays, due to fast lifestyle, most of people are following bad diet and behavior habits along with suppression of natural urges. It affects the digestion which produces *ama* (toxins). It leads to *samata* (undigested stage of *dosha / dhatu*). Hence for breakdown of pathogenesis (*samprapti-bhanga*), *pachana chikitsa* has vital role in *Ayurvedic* management. As *Charaka samhita* has well explained all the details regarding Ayurveda management, an attempt is made to review conceptual study of *pachana chikitsa* from this well known classic. Vitiating doshas causes vitiation of dhatus and ultimately diseases are produced, hence *Ayurveda* has guided *dosha-pachana* as first line of treatment. *Pachana* drugs digest *ama* but usually do not cause *agni-deepana* (stimulation of digestive power). Many forms of formulations are prescribed by *Charaka*. He has mentioned use of salty, sour, bitter tastes for *pachana chikitsa*. Clinical symptoms for diagnosis of *samata* are well explained by *Charaka*. He has mentioned *samata* for the formation of *madhyabala rogas*. There is predominance of *vayu* and *agni mahabhuta*. *Charaka* has quoted *pachana* as *apatarpana* (depletion) as well in *saptavidha shaman chikitsa* and in ten types of *langhanas* also. Mainly diseases of *kapha* and *pitta* origin are treated with *pachana*. *Bhutagnis* have great role in the process of digestion, transformation of not only the food but formation of *dhatus*. In the stage of morbid vitiated *doshas*, *pachana* has prime role to diminish the disease. Hence physician should always focus on *pachana chikitsa* while doing *Ayurvedic* treatment.

**KEY WORDS:** *Pachana chikitsa, Ama, Agnimandya, Charaka Samhita*

### Introduction:

In the present era, human beings have become very irregular in their lifestyle. Most of the people have irregular and bad habits of diet and behavior with suppression of natural urges like

hunger etc. which affects the healthy working of all systems in our body. *Ayurveda* has fundamental principle that *doshas* are the only reason for the formation of any disease. Vitiating *doshas* causes vitiation of *dhatus* and

ultimately diseases are produced. In such condition, Ayurveda has guided pachana of *doshas* as first line of treatment.<sup>1</sup>

There are various ways of causing *samata* (undigested stage of *dosha* / *dhatu*) in person to person. *Pachana* includes the different methods of digesting toxic wastes called *ama*. *Agnimandya* (weak digestive power) is the main source for the formation of *ama*. Hence for breakdown of pathogenesis (*samprapti-bhanga*), *pachana* has vital role in Ayurveda treatment.

*Pachana* drugs digest *ama* but usually do not cause *agnideepana* (stimulation of digestive power). There are different herbal combinations prescribed in *Charaka samhita* in the form of *kashayas* (decoctions), *choornas* (powders) and *lehas* (leakables).

#### **A. Rasa (tastes) as Pachana:**

*Charaka* has also explained use of *rasas* (tastes) like *lavana* (salty), *amla* (sour), *tikta* (bitter) that help in *pachana* (digesting undigested toxins).

##### **a. Lavana rasa (salty/saline taste)**

– *Lavana rasa* (salty / saline taste)

helps to reduce rigidity of tissues. When consumed in required quantities it helps to remove blockages in *srotasa* or minute internal body channels. The digestive activity increases when salty foods are consumed. Salt in proper quantity causes sweating. It penetrates deep tissues and increases taste of food. As per *Charaka* and *Vaghabhata*, saline taste is made up of water and fire element. According to *Sushruta*, the earth and fire element comprise the saline taste. In either case fire element is combining with one heavy element namely water or earth.

*Lavaṇō rasaḥ pācanaḥklēdanō  
dīpanaścyāvanaśchēdanō* |<sup>2</sup>

*Tata rōcana*

*pācanōpklēdanavisansranārthamupyuj  
yatē* |<sup>3</sup>

**b. Amla rasa (sour taste)** – It is predominant of *Prithvi* and *Agni Bhutas*.<sup>4</sup> In some other classics it is mentioned that it is *Jala* and *Agni Bhutas* and is responsible for formation of *Amla Rasa*.<sup>5</sup> It is *Vyavayi*, *Laghu* and *Snigdha*.<sup>6</sup> It has digestive and appetizing which gives rise to an acid (digestive) reaction in the

stomach, it is cold to touch and originates a slimy or mucous secretion., it pacifies *Vata* by acting as carminative (*Anulomana*), creates burning sensation in stomach (*Koshthvidahi*) and increases *Pitta* and *Raktha Dosh*. It is hot in potency but cold to touch, nourishes sense organs, produces interest in foods (*Rochana*) and acts as a digestive and appetizer. It increases and nourishes body (*Brimhana*, *Tarpana* and *Prinana*) promote secretion like digestive juice (*Kledana*) and cardiac tonic (*Hridya*).<sup>7</sup> Balanced use of *Amlarasa* in the diet stimulates digestion (*Pachayati*) and appetite (*Agni Dipayati*), increases salivation (*Asyam Sravayati*), improves the taste (*Rochayati*), is good for heart (*Hridayam Tarpayati*), sharpens the mind (*Mano Bodhayati*) and strengthens the sense organ (*Indriyani Dradhikaroti*).<sup>8</sup> Sour taste pacifies *vata* and aggravates *pitta* and *kapha*.

*Amlō agnidiptīkṛtsnigdadha hṛdyyaḥ  
pācanarōcanaḥ* |<sup>9</sup>

**c. Tikta rasa (bitter taste)** – Bitter taste is made up of air and ether element. Both these elements are light

in nature and by virtue of this, pacify *kapha dosha* which is heavy in nature. Air is cool in nature; therefore the bitter taste pacifies *pitta dosha* which is hot in nature. Bitter taste is light in nature which is similar to the qualities of *vata*. Bitter taste increases the *vata guna* in body. It also tends to be fairly dry. Bitter taste provides an excellent balance for the heavy, moistening qualities of salty, sour and sweet tastes.

*....Jvaraghnō dīpanaḥ pācanaḥ  
stan'yaśōdhanō lēkhanaḥ..* |<sup>10</sup>

*Lañghana svēdanaṁ kālō  
yavāgvastiktakō rasaḥ |  
Pācānān'yavipakvānām dōṣāṇām  
taruṇē javarē* |<sup>11</sup>

*Agnisanadīpanārtham ca  
raktasaṅgrahaṇāya ca |  
Dōṣāṇām pācanārtham ca param  
tiktairupācārēta* |<sup>12</sup>

**d. Katu rasa (pungent/ chilly/spicy taste)** – The pungent taste is made up of air and fire element. Air element is light and fire element is hot. Both these attributes are opposite to that of *kapha*. So by virtue of opposite qualities, the pungent taste pacifies the vitiated

*kapha*. Pitta is hot in nature and pungent taste being hot, increases *pitta dosha* in the body. *Vata* is light in nature and pungent taste has predominance of air element which is light. Hence pungent taste increases *vata dosha* in body. In short, the pungent taste vitiates *vata* and *pitta* but reduces *kapha dosha*. Pungent taste is made up of the elements air and fire. It is the hottest of all the tastes and most stimulating to digestion.

*Dīpanaḥ pācanō rucyaḥ sōdhanō  
annasa sōṣaṇa:*<sup>13</sup>

### **B. Symptoms of *samata*:**

At the present time, *samata* is commonly seen in many patients. These symptoms are as listed below<sup>14</sup>

- 
- 1. *Srotorodha* (congestion of doshas in body channels)
- 2. *Balbransha* (weakness in forms of physical strength)
- 3. *Gaurava* (heaviness of body)
- 4. *Anilmoodhta* (vayu indolence)
- 5. *Aalasya* (loss of enthusiasm)
- 6. *Apakti* (loss of digestion)
- 7. *Nishthiva* (excess spitting)
- 8. *Malsanga* (constipation)

9. *Aruchi* (dis-likeness of taste)

10. *Klama* (psychological tiredness)

### **C. *Madhyabala roga and samata*:**

*Charaka* has mentioned *madhyabala rogas* i.e diseases having moderate kind of strength are very frequently seen in day to day life. The root cause of all these diseases is same i.e *samata*.<sup>15</sup>

### **D. *Panchamahabhuta and pachana*:**

*Pachana* drugs contain predominantly *vayu* and *agni mahabhuta*.

*Yat pacayati tat pācanama, tat ca  
vāyavagnī guṇa bhūyistam* |<sup>16</sup>

### **E. *Pachana as apatarpana***

#### **(depletion):**

*Charaka* has mentioned *pachana* as *apatarpana* (depletion) in *janpadadhvansaniya* chapter. *Pachana* is one of *saptavidha shaman chikitsa*. *Charaka* has described *saptavidha shamana* viz., *pachana, deepana, swedana, trishna, vyayama, atapa-sevana, maruta-sevana*.

*Śamanam tacca saptadhā | pācanam  
dīpanam kṣuta tṛta vyāyāmātāpa  
mārutāh* |<sup>17</sup>

### **F. *Pachana as langhana*:**

*Charaka* has mentioned ten types of *langhanas* as follows –

- a. Four purification therapies - *vamana* (emesis), *virechana* (purgation), *niruha* (non unctuous enema) and *nasya* (nasal drug administration).
- b. Six other procedures - *pipasa* (control of thirst), *maruta* (exposure to wind/breathing exercises), *atapa* (exposure to sunlight), *pachana* (applications of digestive measures), *upavasa* (fasting) and *vyayama* (exercise).

*Catuṣprakāra sanśudadhi  
pīpāsāmārutēpau |  
Pācanānupavāsaśca vyāyāmscētī  
lañghanāma ||*<sup>18</sup>

### G. *Pachana* for diseases having *kapha-pitta* origin:

Diseases caused by moderate increase of *kapha* and *pitta*, should first be treated with applications of *pachana* (digestive measures).

*Pācanaistān bhaśaka  
prājñāḥprāyanādāvupācarēta |*<sup>19</sup>

### H. *Bhutagnis*:

There are five types of *bhutagnis* viz., *bhaumya*, *apya*, *agneya*, *vayavya*, and *nabhasa*. These five *bhutagni* are one of each *mahabhuta* transform or

metabolize those components of the food that are homologous to them in their composition of structure of human body. They possess great importance in the process of digestion, transformation of not only the food but the components also which are essential for life.

*Bhaumāpyāganēyavāyavēḥ*

*pañcōṣmāṇaḥ sanābhasāḥ |*

*Pañcāharaguṇānsvānas'svānpārthivādī  
mpacantī hi ||*<sup>20</sup>

### I. *Pachana* according to *avastha* (state) of disease:

*Charaka* has stated that *langhan pachana chikitsa* is a kind of *apatarpana* (depletion) and it is indicated in disorders of moderate morbidity.

*Vagaḷaṇē pācanē tū  
madhyabadōdanā..*<sup>21</sup>

If *ama* is in *pakvashaya* and in *anutklishta* (stuck, not ready to come out) form then *sravana* (increasing secretion) with *deepana dravyas* should be administered; whereas if *ama* gets absorbed along with *rasa dhatu* and if it pervades throughout the body then *langhana* and *pachana* should be advised. If there is

diminished state of stool and blood, then alternate use of sweet and sour ingredients should be given by means of digestion.

*Līnaṁ pakvāsāyastham vā pyāmaṁ  
srāvyam sadīpanaiḥ*

*śārīrānugatē sāmē rasē vagagaṇē  
pācanama ||*<sup>22</sup>

*vyatyāsāt madhurāmlama viṭa*

*śōnitasankṣē dēya |*<sup>23</sup>

### Conclusion:

Today's lifestyle affects the digestion which produces *ama* (toxins). It leads to *samata* (undigested stage of *dosha* / *dhatu*). Hence for breakdown of pathogenesis (*samprapti-bhanga*), *pachana chikitsa* has vital role in *Ayurvedic* management. *Charaka samhita* has well explained all the details regarding *pachana chikitsa* like options of drugs, useful tastes diagnosis of *samata*, predominance of *Mahabhuta* in those drugs, etc. *Charaka* has quoted *pachana* as *apatarpana*, *saptavidha shaman chikitsa* and in ten types of *langhanas* also. Mainly diseases of *kapha* and *pitta* origin are treated with *pachana*. Hence physician should always focus

on *pachana chikitsa* while doing *Ayurvedic* treatment.

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