

## A Review On Relation Between Prakruti And Agni

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### Abstract

Ayurveda takes into account an individual in his entirety and advises to follow daily regimen and adopt acharasayan (fixed rules conduct in life) accordingly. But today's irregular and fast lifestyle, irregularities in diet, sleep, high stress levels at the workplace and emotional factors can lead to indigestion. It occurs due to deficiency in quality and quantity of digestive juices, which is termed asmandagni (deficient digestive fire).

Prakruti means neutrality or habits or condition. Ayurvedic treatment emphasizes on examining the prakruti or the natural states of an individual's before proceeding.

In Ayurvedic compendia, relation between prakruti and agni is not quoted directly except tikshnagni (intense digestive fire) in pitta prakruti, if it is quoted indirectly (anukta) elsewhere in Ayurvedic texts then it should be enlightened. Hence the concept of agni, prakruti & its inter-relation are vital factors which are to be studied in detail for wellbeing of a person. Hence aim is conceptual study of prakruti, agni and their inter relation. For this, Ayurvedic literature regarding prakruti and agni is reviewed.

Summing up all literature regarding prakruti and agni, study shows that not only influence offactors like dosha, kaala (season), aahar (diet), desha (habitat) are but also jati, kula, panchmahabhuta (five elements) etc. plays important role in formation of prakruti and it should be determined by all aspects and not by the influence of dosha only. Likewise, agni also should not only judged by prakruti but also by considering other factors like influence of dosha, age, season, work pattern, yoga, quality and quantity food habit, mental states, desha, effect of treatment etc.

**Keywords:** Agni, Mandaagni, Prakruti, Tikshnagni

### Introduction:

Ayurvedic treatment differs from the majority of conventional cures because of its unique approach towards healing. The principle of Ayurvedic treatment is curing the sick, and not the sickness. Rather than trying to cure a disease in isolation, Ayurveda takes into account an individual in his entirety and advises to follow daily regimen and adopt acharrasayan accordingly. In today's irregular and fast lifestyle skipping regular meals, excessive psychological disturbances. It occurs due to deficiency in quality and quantity of digestive juices, which is termed asmandagni (deficient digestive fire). (1)

Agni is one of the ten factors which is to be examined before initiating, the treatment of patient. The role of agni in body is very much emphasized for example, having a balanced state of doshas, agni (digestive fire), dhatus (tissues) normal functioning of mala (waste products), cheerful state of atman (soul), sensory organs and mind are the symptoms of healthy life. (2)

It is stated that all internal disease are caused by vitiation of this agni, another meaning of agni is kaya, and kaya (agni) chikita is included in Ashtang Ayurved. (3)

Prakruti means neutrality or habits or condition. (4) In Ayurveda, prakruti concept has been given much importance. Ayurvedic treatment also emphasize on examining the prakruti or the natural states of an individual before proceeding. The prakruti or the physical constitution, Susceptibility to diseases, mental make-up and lifestyle of an individual is ascertained in accordance to the elemental constitution of the universe. Hence the concept of agni, prakruti & its interrelation are vital factors which are to be studied in detail for wellbeing of a person.

### Aim & objectives

1. To study concept of prakruti
2. To study concept of agni.
3. To re-establish relation in between prakruti and agni with help of tantraukti, except tikshnagni in pitta prakruti.

### Material and Methods

- Review of Ayurvedic literature will be taken regarding the prakruti and agni.
- Review of research work related to agni and prakruti will be considered.

### The concept of prakruti

The word prakruti means "nature" or natural form of the build and constitution of the human body. Pra means the "beginning", "commencement" or "source of origin" and kruti means "to perform" or

"to form". Put together, prakruti means "natural form" or "original form" or "original source". Disease occurs when there is a change in this original form at the psychological or physiological level.

Ayurveda lays emphasis on examining the prakruti or the natural state of an individual first. The disease vikruti is examined later. However, in terms of the functioning of living beings, Ayurveda sees all actions based on three basic functions called doshas - namely vata, pitta and kapha. Before a detailed description of each prakruti type, the qualities of each of the doshas are given. These qualities are manifested in the individual's personality.

#### **Vataprakruti**

Vata is dry, light, mobile, expansible, quick, cold, rough, clear and astringent in taste. So, dry quality of vata is manifested in the body as dry skin and thin structure i.e. lean body. The hair, nails, teeth and eyes appear dry. The voice is weak, low, crackling and hoarse. These individuals require little sleep and are hyperactive. The movements of the individuals - especially of the eyebrows, chin, lips, tongue and limbs are quick and unsteady. The expansive nature is manifest in prominent blood vessels. Due to quick action, the individual shows early initiative in work but because of the dry quality he loses strength and becomes tired. Their memory is weak but they have a quick grasp. Due to the cold nature, the body temperature is low and body stiff. The natural desires and craving for food and environment are opposite to the qualities of vata. They have meager seminal fluid and have only a few children. They tend to have a short life span. (6)

#### **Pitta prakruti**

Pitta is hot, penetrating, slightly foul smelling, liquid, sour and pungent in taste. So

Due to the inherent hot quality of pitta, these individuals have a high metabolic rate, a tendency to eat and drink a lot and are often thirsty. They develop moles and skin eruptions. They possess soft and scanty hair and tend to be prematurely grey and bald. They are unable to bear even minimum heat. They are brave and courageous but cannot tolerate exertion. They get easily provoked and upset. The fluid quality makes the body parts, muscles and joints soft and flabby. The high metabolic rate leads to excessive perspiration and excretion. The foul smell of the pitta tends to give them a strong body odour. The quality of heat and pungent taste leads to limited sexual urge, scanty semen and limited progeny. Due to the sharp and quick action, they have a very good intellect, grasping power, memory and are of moderate strength and the life span is medium. (7)

#### **Kaphaprakruti**

Kapha is unctuous, smooth, soft, and sweet in taste, stable, dense, slow, rigid, cold and clear. Kaphaprakruti individuals tend to have soft limbs, slow gait and are slow to understand. .

Due to the unctuous nature of kapha, the individuals of kaphaprakruti possess unctuous and oily skin. The soft quality of kapha makes the face soft, the looks gentle and clear. The sweet quality gives them a large quantity of semen and they have a strong sexual urge. The stable and steady quality endows them with a well-built and steady body. The dense nature provides fullness to the body and organs. The slow quality of kapha makes the individuals slow in their activities but they have strong perseverance and are emotionally very mild. They have steady and slow body movements. The cold quality results in poor appetite and low body temperature. The steady and dense quality gives them steady joints and ligaments. The clear quality gives rise to a pleasant appearance, colour and voice. All the qualities of kapha endow the individual with strength, wealth and energy and also a long life. (8)

Most people are a combination of two doshas i.e. dwandvajaprakruti. They possess characteristics of both doshas involved depending on the percentage of the combination. A balanced constitution is ideal and extremely rare in which the balanced state of all the three doshas neutralizes the bad or unwanted qualities, support and bring out good qualities of the other.

#### **The concept of Agni**

The term "Agni" generally means fire. In Ayurvedic perspective this term does not actually mean fire. In this context, it comprehends various factors which participate in and direct the course of digestion and metabolism in living and physiologically functioning organism.

#### **Etymology**

The word, agni is the root verb of "anga" in the broad sense agni. That which is present in each and every cell of human body is called agni. (9)

#### **Historical Review - Dharshanshastra and Upanishada**

Agni is represented by different types like, Teja, Pitta, etc. This agni only causes the regeneration and destruction of the Universe, continuation of this cycle is only due to agni. The cycle is maintained by agni.

Agni is in heat and Aura of sun, light of moon, Gold, Silver, pearls, the glow of eyes, nails, skin etc. The shining of different colours, flowers. Heat or energy located in live human being causes

transformation or digestion (pakaprinaman). All these are different forms of agni.

### **Swarupa (properties) and Guna (Qualities)**

Agni described in terms of panchabhutas may go a long way in the clarification of the Tejomahabhuta. According to Charak, Sushrut & Vagbhat the composition of pitta is dominated by agnimahabhut. Vagbhat has clearly stated that pitta is panchabhautic & it is drava inconsistency, in spite of which, it performs action, similar to Anal (fire) – in the course of the process of digestion, largely due to the activation of its tejas component (discarding its liquidity -tyaktadratva). This pachak pitta is known as jatharagi, kosthagni, antaragni, pachakagni & dehagni etc. It is located in an area between amashaya & pakwashaya. It directly participates in the digestion of food. (10)

### **Types**

It would be seen from the foregoing that the Ayurvedic concept of agni includes, not only kinds of pittas but also the dhatwaagnis (tissue fire) & bhutaagnis (elemental fire). It is clear from the classical Ayurvedic texts. That the enumeration of number of agnis (which include pitta) varies from author to author.

According to Charaksamhita, read together with its main Commentary by Chakrapani Datta, the number of agnis enumerated are over 13 as one antaragni, fivebhutagni seven dhatwagni.

On the other hand, Sushruta is seen to have described five agni viz. pachakagni, ranjakagni, alochakani, sadhakagni and bhrajakagni. In Ashtanghrudya, it is seen to have reckoned five pittas, fivebhutagnis, seven dhatwaagnis, three doshagnis, three malagnis, in all 23 agnis. In Sharangdhara, it is seen to have recognized five pittas only. On the other hand, Bhavprakashit is seen to have accepted types of agni as stated in Charka and Vagbhat. Whereas Arundatta the commentator has stated in Ashtanghrudya, that there are seven hundred agnis of sira and five hundred agnis of mansapeshi. This is all about agni healthy individual.

This agni changes due to vishamaaahar, vihar, kaala (visarga, aadan) etc; this turns to vridhhi or kshysya of agni. It has been prescribed as vikrutagni which changes due to predominance of doshas. If particular dosha is aggravated, means mandagni is due to aggravation of kaphadosha. Attyagni is due to aggravation of pittadosha. Vishamaagnis due to aggravation of vatadosha & Samagni due to equal state of tridoshas, which leads to healthy body. (11)

### **Discussion**

Superficially it may appear that some prakritis are better than others. Each type has its positive and negative aspects. We need to understand where we

stand and accept it. Then we need to plan intelligently to attain the healthiest state by realizing our potential. The Ayurvedic understanding of prakriti provides a way to do both these - to analyze and assess where we stand and to provide guidance to attain perfect health.

The Ayurvedic system of diagnosing prakriti offers unique insights in understanding and assessing one's health. It is comprehensive in scope, spanning both physical and mental aspects. It is not merely a diagnostic device but also a guide to action for good health. But diagnosing our prakriti should not become a rationalization for better health. It provides detailed guidelines to adapt one's food and behavior to suit one's prakriti.

As per the Ayurvedic view, food is digested by agni within us - just as it is cooked by agni outside. According to Ayurveda, there is a "stimulus-response" relation between the agni within us and the outside agni - namely the sun. When the agni outside is strong (i.e. in summer) the agni inside us (our digestion) is weak and vice-versa. This is reflected in the way in which our food customs have been adapted to seasonal changes. Knowledge regarding changes in our digestive power with the varying seasons has been well understood in society. To understand, in which direction we should move and how we should act to improve our physical and mental well-being relation between prakriti and agni discussed here.

All available editions of the the main Ayurvedic compendia have described four states of jatharagi viz. sama, vishama, tikshna, and manda. Depending upon their intensity, agni (factor responsible for digestion and metabolism) located in body human being can be classified under four categories; viz sharp, mild, regular, and irregular. The sharp type is capable to tolerate all types of irregularities where as the mild types are of the opposite functioning. The regular or balance type of agni gets impaired even by minor irregularities and maintains its normalcy so long as there is no irregularity. The irregular type of agni is opposed to that of regular and balanced type of in nature. Sometimes it gets impaired and sometimes irregularities do not get impair it. (12)

These four types of agni occur in the four types of individuals. Individuals having vatadosha, pittadosha, and kaphadosha in their balanced and normal state, agnis are regular or balanced. In case of individuals having the dominance of pittadosha in their constitution; the agnis are sharp due to affliction of the site of agni by pittadosha, similarly in case of individuals having the dominance of kaphadosha in their constitution, the agnis are mild due to affliction of the site of agni by kaphadosha. In

case of individuals having the dominance of vatadosha in their constitution; the agnis are irregular due to affliction of the site of agni by vatadosha. In CharakSamhitaVimansthan sixth chapter four types of agniviztikshana (sharp); manda (mild); vishama(irregular) and sama (regular) are spelt. The first three (excluding sama or normal type of agni) are types of disorders of agni which constitute grahanidosha(disorders of duodenum and small intestine. (13, 14, 15, 16)

Agni (digestive fire); which digests food, is of four types .the three types are irregular, intense and mild by dominance of vatadoshapittadoshakaphadosh respectively and the fourth one is sama (normal) due to equilibrium of all doshas, this samaagni digests the ingested food properly and in time. But, if the agni is irregular the symptoms will be flatulence; colic upward movement of vayu, diarrhea, heaviness and gurgling sound in abdomen and tenesmus; The agni, which digests the food taken in large quantity in short time is intense, the same in advanced stage is known as attyagni (excessive digestive capacity) this agni digests the food taken even in large quantity and frequently in shorter duration and also produces dryness of throat, palate and lips, burning sensation and pyrexia at the end .and the agni, which digests even little food in longer duration producing heaviness in abdomen and head, cough, dyspnoea, salivation vomiting malaise is mild. All these three are abnormal and give rise to many diseases of the causative doshas. (17)

Jatharagi is sama (normal) when samanvayu is in normal seat or in normal condition. It becomes vishama (erratic) when samanvayu in wrong path or increased. Vishamaagni due to dominance of vatadosha; it would mean either tiksnaagni or mandaagni because yogavahi(catalyst) is one of the properties of vatadosha. It means when vatadosha associated with pitta dosha, along tiksna (sharp), ushna (warm) properties the symptoms of tiksnaagni will be present, if more intense then symptoms of attyagni will be present. If vatadosh associated with kaphadosha along sheet (cold) property, symptoms of mandaagni will be present. It is tiksna (very powerful) when samanvayu is associated with pittadosh and it is manda (weak) associated with kaphadosha. The strength of the grahani is due to agni and strength of agni is due to grahani when the agni undergoes vitiation and grahani also gets altered and produces diseases. Irregular, intense and agni produces diseases of vatadosha, pittadosha, and kaphadosha respectively.

It is also necessary to take into account the sign and symptoms of the normal and abnormal states of jatharagi according to age, season, aharvihar etc. Among these agni, normal agni should be

preserved. Vishamaagni (irregular) should be treated with unctuous, sour, salty substances and other specific measures. (Intense) should be treated with sweet, unctuous, cold substances as well as purgatives should be applied. Attyagni (More intense agni) should be treated with buffalo's milk curd and ghee. While mild agni should be treated with pungent, bitter, astringent substances as well as emetics.

Agni should be preserved with great efforts by the proper use of suitable foods and drinks on its normalcy depends the life span condition of depends the life span and condition of strength of the persons. Such diet and regimen, as stand in the dosha responsible for the particular prakruti (body constitution) are prescribed for the maintenance of positive health for individuals have equipoise state of dosha in proportionate quantity is prescribed.

This type of agni helps in proper nourishment and promotion of health as well as strength.

To understand the relation between prakruti and agni, tantrayukti will be helpful. tantrayukti i.e. the basic knowledge to learn science; which provides knowledge of vakya yojana ( technique of writing) and arthayojana (explains hidden meanings).

It would be incorrect to say that to avoid ativyapti(excess explanation of literature) of granthas, Acharya quoted vishamaagni and mandaagni belong to vataprakruti and pitta prakruti respectively according to madhyalopa and aadimadhyantaarthashrayatantrayukti. Instead of which it would be more correct that vishamaagni, mandaagni are disorders of grahani as per prakarnaadhikartaantrayukti.

Hence mild, sharp (attyagni) and irregular types of agni come in context of disorder of grahani. It is observed that, tiksnaagni is quoted in individual having pitta prakruti, because there is ashrayaashryee relation in pitta dosha and agni. Dominance of pitta dosha in pitta prakruti as well as tiksnaagni with the tiksna, ushna properties of pitta dosha are similar to the properties of agni. Hence all these literature would be justified in context with pitta prakruti and tiksnaagni according to samanyavisheshsiddhant.

Summing up all literature regarding prakruti and agni, study shows that not only influence of dosha, kala, aahar, desha are the factors but also jati, kula, panchmahabhuta etc. plays an important role in formation of prakruti. Hence it should be determined by all aspects and not only by the influence of dosha. Likewise, agni also should not only be judged by prakruti but also by considering other factors like dosha, age, season, work pattern, yoga practice,

quality and quantity food, habit, mental states, desha, effect of treatment etc.

### Conclusion

By reviewing literature, it can be concluded that there is no relation between prakruti and agni except pitta prakruti and tikshnaagni. Because it varies with external environmental factors like seasons, diurnal change etc. It also depends upon age, aaharmatra (quantity of food), aahar swarup (quality of food), and not on prakruti except pittaprakruti. Jatharagi cannot be comprehended directly due to subtlety. It is located in interior of the body remains in equilibrium state if there is equilibrium amongst the dosha; but it should be preserved in all ways by staying three types of vayu, i.e. prana, apana, and saman in their respective positions.

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