



PHYSIOLOGICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL ROLE OF DOSHAS TOWARDS DIGESTIVE SYSTEM: AN AYURVEDA REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda described physiological and physiological role of *Doshas* and it is stated that balancing state of *Doshas* contributes towards the normal functioning of body while imbalance state of *Doshas* considered responsible for disease manifestation. *Doshas* contributes in normal functioning of organs and also involved in pathogenesis when organs functioning becomes abnormal. *Doshas* such as; *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* exerts different types of effect on various systems including digestive system. *Doshas* affects physiological functioning of digestive system and also involved in ailments related to the digestive system. When *Doshas* are in balancing state of *Samagni* observed and physiology of digestive system remain normal while vitiated state of *Doshas* causes state of *Mandagni*, *Teekshnagni* and *Vishamagni*, in such conditions pathological events observed related to the digestive system. This article presented physiological and pathological role of *Doshas* towards digestive system.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, *Doshas*, Physiology, Pathology, Digestive System.

INTRODUCTION

The physiological functioning of digestive system includes process of digestion, absorption, assimilation, circulation and excretion, etc. These all activities greatly affected by states or predominance of *Doshas*. The various physiological and pathological states of *Agni* related to the *Doshas* depicted in Figure 1.

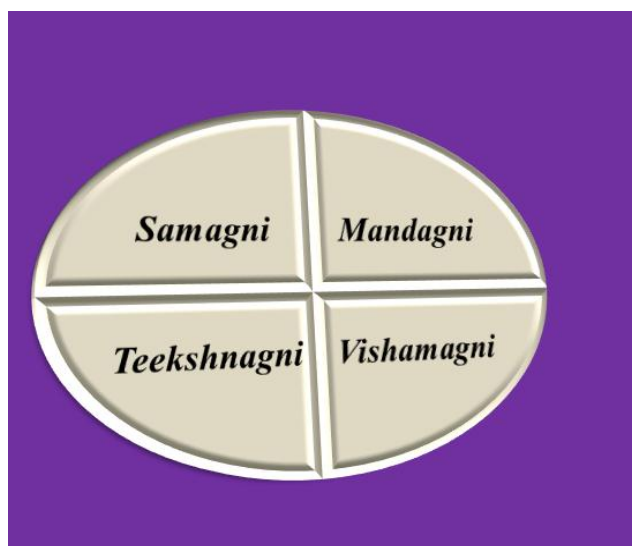


Figure 1: Functioning states of digestive fire.

The various states of digestive fire (*Agni*) associated with predominant states of *Doshas* are as follows

- ❖ The balancing state of *Doshas* helps digestive system to function properly and this harmonize state of digestive fire referred as *Samagni*. There it can state that all *Doshas* must be in equilibrium to maintain normal physiological functioning of digestive system.
- ❖ Predominant state of *Kapha dosha* may decrease physiological functioning of digestion system and leads state of *Mandagni*. In this ways *Kapha dosha* leads pathological events related to the weak functioning of digestive system.
- ❖ Predominant state of *Pitta dosha* may increase functioning of digestive fire and brings state of *Teekshnagni*. Here it can be state that aggravated *Pitta dosha* may speed up physiological functioning of digestive system leading to the condition of obesity and eating disorders, etc.
- ❖ Predominant effect of *Vata Dosha* may bring state of *Vishamagni*, which resembles imbalance in functioning of digestive fire. This conditions witnessed pathological events related to the digestive system like; constipation, diarrhea and dysentery.

Physiological and Pathological role of dosha in mandagni

Mandagni means weakened strength of digestive fire; this may arise under the influence of *Kapha Dosha*. *Kapha* as we know that rich in water and earth elements, on other hand digestive strength is predominant to fire elements. Therefore when *Kapha* gets aggravated then due to its water element which is opposite to fire the digestive strength becomes weak; in this condition digestive power remain so weak to digest food properly.

Mandagni arises due to the pathological involvement of *Kapha Dosha* in digestive functioning. The *Kapha* physiologically produced in stomach regularly during digestion process, when digestions become weak excess *Kapha* get produced and this disproportionate state of *Kapha Dosha* influence digestive functioning greatly. The excess *Kapha* due to its water content causes wetness in stomach and decreases functioning of digestive fire which is opposite to watery nature of *Kapha*. This condition further manifested as indigestion, production of *Ama* and *Amajeerna* may observe along with other pathological events.

Amajeerna is condition of indigestion occurs due to the *Kapha* vitiation, in this condition *Ama* as toxins blocks channels of body and thus affects physiological functioning of affected organs. This condition decreases metabolism, insufficient supply to nutrient and dyspepsia, etc.

The physiological functioning of digestive system affected by *Kapha* leading to the pathological manifestations of digestive disorders and in such types of conditions Ayurveda suggested uses of *Kapha* balancing diets, avoidance of sedentary life style, avoidance of day time and uses of *Kapha* pacifying medicines.

Physiological and Pathological role of dosha in teekshnagni

Teekshnagni means condition of intense digestive fire in which food digested quickly and person feels hungry. Sometimes quick digestion forms inappropriate *Ahara Rasa* leading to the improper nutritional supply to the body organs. This condition mainly arises due to the excessive physiological involvement of *Pitta Dosha* or stimulating effects of *Pitta*. *Pitta* itself represents *Pachaka Pitta* as physiological fire in body. The balanced effects of *Pitta* on physiology of digestive system helps in digestion process this leads proper nourishment of body since digestive system functioning in proper manner under the influence of normal physiology of *Pitta*.

The aggravation of *Pitta* or excessive functioning creates conditions like *Teekshnagni* while on the other hand when *Pitta* gets reduces it leads indigestion, physiologically person feel low and pathogenesis of digestive disorders observed. Excessive functioning of

Pitta initiates symptoms of *Teekshnagni* including thirst, dyspnea, burning sensation, fainting and giddiness, etc.

Physiologically *Pitta* exerts effects by virtue of its fire & water elements, when fire element become predominant then *Pitta* exerts stimulating effects and when water element become predominant then low state of *Pitta* affects digestion process.

Excess functioning of *Pitta* responsible for abnormal physiology of digestive system including excess production of acid, burnouts, corrosion and ulcers, etc. Ayurveda suggested uses of *Pitta* balancing remedies along with purgation therapy to manage such types of conditions.

Physiological and Pathological role of dosha in vishamagni

Vishamagni means inconsistent & irregular state of digestive fire, this state influenced by *Vata*. The condition is characterized with unpredictable states of digestive fire, digestive system work properly sometimes while sometimes it works improperly. *Vishamagni* associated with effect of *Vata* on fire.

Physiologically *Vata* is formed at the end of digestion process, the formation of *Vata* take places during absorption process in colon, *Vata* acts as controlling force of body, the physiological effects of *Pitta* and *Kapha* on digestive system influenced by activity of *Vata*. Vitiation of *Vata* associated with deranged state of *Vayu* imparts many digestive trouble including gas trouble and pain in stomach.

Samana vata is one of the states of *Vata* and it is believed that *Samana Vata* located in intestine where digestion process takes places. The balancing state of *Vata* increases digestive fire, if *Samana Vata* remains in balancing state then digestive fire acts properly. The normal physiological functioning of *Samana Vata* contributes towards proper digestion, absorption, assimilation and utilization of food and nutrients. The excess elements of *Vata* increases *Pitta* leads burnout of food, low state of *Vata* may be responsible for improper digestion of food materials.

Panchamahabhuta & Tridosha towards Physiology and Pathology of digestive system

Vata is predominate to *Vayu* and *Aakash Mahabhuta*, if *Vayu* element of *Vata* increases then digestive increases.

Pitta is predominate to *Agni* and *Jala Mahabhuta*, here we can state *Pitta* as digestive fire itself, means excess of *Pitta* predominate to *Agni* stimulates digestive fire while *Jala Mahabhuta* being opposite nature keep low level of digestive fire and contributes towards the improper physiology of digestive system.

Kapha is predominates to *Jala* and *Prithvi Mahabhuta*, the excess of *Kapha* means high state of *Jala Mahabhuta*

which decreases functioning of digestive system. Moreover *Prithvi Mahabhuta* can be considered responsible for feeling of heaviness.

CONCLUSION

This article suggested that imbalance state of *Pitta* and *Kapha* causes disturbed physiological functioning of digestive system. Diminish state of *Vata* related to the lower digestive fire, *Vata* constitution or disturbance of *Vata* may also lead misbalancing of digestive fire referred as *Vishamagni*. The disturbance of digestive system associated with *Vata* may be correct using *Vata* balancing foods, ayurveda suggested use of digestible foods, massages therapy to relieve *Vata* and *Shirodhara*. When *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* remains in equilibrium then pathological events of digestive system rarely observed. When *Doshas* contribute physiologically with their normal state towards digestive fire then digestion process occurs properly without any pathological manifestation of digestive system.

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