

## CONCEPT OF AGNI IN AYURVEDA: A REVIEW

Dr. Gudiya<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Arun Kumar Tripathi<sup>2</sup> and Dr Gayatri Devi<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup>PG Scholar, PG Department of Kayachikitsa, Gurukul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.<sup>2</sup>Campus Director And Professor PG Department of Kayachikitsa, Gurukul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.<sup>3</sup>PG Scholar, PG Department of Kayachikitsa, Gurukul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.

\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Gudiya

PG Scholar, PG Department of Kayachikitsa, Gurukul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India.

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## ABSTRACT

Health refers to a person's mental and physical well-being. When *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, and *Mala* are in *Samya Awastha*, and *Indriya*, *Aatma*, and *Mann* are all functioning properly, the person is deemed *Swastha*. According to *Ayurveda*, *Agni* should be typical for *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, and *Mala* to be in a condition of proportionality (*Samagni*). *Agni* is made up of digestive (*Paka*) and other hormones, enzyme and co-enzyme activity, and other components that help in digestion and metabolism. Food must be digested, absorbed, and assimilated, which is an unavoidable part of life and is carried out by the *Agni*. Different examples may be found in our classics to show that *Pitta* and *Agni* are the same, yet there is some debate about whether *Pitta* and *Agni* are the same. Because *Agni* is present in each and every *Paramanu* of the body, it has an infinite number of manifestations. According to *Ayurveda* "*Sarvam dravyam Panchabhautikam*, i.e., all creation is made up of five major elements called *Mahabhutas*. Our bodies, like all global stuff, are generated by the *Panchamahabhuta*. However, the number of *Agni* is counted differently in different Ayurvedic scriptures. *Agni* is classified into 13 varieties based on its function and site of action, with one *Jatharagni*, five *Bhutagni*, and seven *Dhatvagni*. The most significant is *Jatharagni*, which digests four different types of food and converts them into *Rasa* and *Mala*. As a result, the entire transformation process is made up of two types of products. *Kitta* (essence) and *Prasad* (excrete). The former is consumed for nutrition, whereas the latter is discarded because it would otherwise pollute the body if it remained in the body for longer.

**KEYWORDS:** agni, mahabhutas, jatharagni, bhutagni, dhatvagni, swastha, parmanu, dosha, dhatu, mala.

## INTRODUCTION

The word *Agni* comes from the Sanskrit word 'Ag' *Dhatu*, which indicates a substance that is widely distributed, progressive, and transformational. In common language, the name *Agni* means fire, but in these sequences, the term *Agni* is used in the sense of digestion of food and metabolic processes. *Agni* turns food into energy, which is responsible for all of our body's vital activities. *Agni*, as stated in *Ayurveda*, has several derivatives, demonstrating the importance of *Agni* as *Ayu*, which indicates that when *Agni* is functioning properly, it improves the human life span. The colour complexion of the body is maintained by *Varna* (complexion). *Agni* maintains the body's strength, *Swasthyam* (health), *Prabha* (lustre) maintains the body's gentle sheen and soft glow, *Ojas* (tissue essence) maintains the body's immunity, it maintains the digestive fires of the body.<sup>[1]</sup> When it comes to the importance of *Agni*, *Acharya Charaka* says that when the function of *Agni* is stopped, an individual dies, but when the *Agni* of an individual is in *samyavastha*, that person is completely healthy and will live a long, happy, and healthy life. However, if a person's *Agni* is vitiated, his entire metabolism would be disrupted, resulting in bad

health and disease. As a result, *Agni* is considered the foundation (*mool*) of life.<sup>[2]</sup> From birth to death, metabolic activities, division, and multiplication occur in all cells (*dhatu paramanu*) in our body, according to modern medicine. The cell is the body's functional unit. According to *Charak*, if the body's basic parts are further separated into atoms, the number of cells or atoms will be incalculable, because cells or atoms are extremely many, very small, and ultra-sensory.<sup>[3]</sup> According to *Charak* and *Sushrut*, the cells above can be classified as *paramanus*.

## AGNI AND PITTA

Different examples can be found in our classics to show that *Pitta* and *Agni* are the same.

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, there is no other *Agni* in the body without *Pitta*, because when the body's digestion and combustion are intensified due to *Ushna guna of pitta*, the therapy is similar to *Agni*.<sup>[4]</sup> According to *Acharya Marichi* when the *Agni* in the *Pitta* is normal or vitiated, it produces beneficial or terrible effects.<sup>[5]</sup> The role of *Pitta* inside the body, according to *Chakrapani's* "*Pittantargatta*," is not combustion, but

rather providing heat for Agni. Apart from that, Acharya Sushruta identified five types of Agnis as *Pitta varieties*.

According to Acharya Bhoja *Pitta*, is also known as *Agni*. *Agni* contains digestive fire, which is specifically designed for various enzymatic functions in the body, such as *pachana*, *deepan*, and *bhedana* etc.<sup>[6]</sup>

According to Hemadri, *pitta* is divided into five divisions that are found in the centre of the *pakvashaya* and *amashaya*, despite the fact that it is made up of *Panchabhutas*. It is devoid of fluidity due to an increase in (predominance feature of) *Tejas bhuta* (although it is a liquid). It is referred to as *agni* because to its *paka* function. It cooks the meal and separates the essence from the waste. Because it is localised there, it bestows grace (assistance) to the other *Pitta* present there, as well as the other *dhatvagni* present in the *dhatu*, by providing strength (functioning power), which is known as "*Pachaka Pitta*".<sup>[7]</sup>

#### TYPES OF AGNI

- Charak has mentioned about 13 Agnis. One *Jatharagni*, five *Bhutagni*, seven *Dhatvagni*.<sup>[8]</sup>
- According to Acharya Sushruta *Pachakagni*, *Ranjakagni*, *Alochakagni*, *Sadhakagni*, and *Bhrajakagni* are the five varieties of Agni. However, the brief description of the transformation of food material contains an indirect reference to five *Bhutagnis*.<sup>[9]</sup>
- Vagbhata classified Agni into five categories: *Bhutagnis* -5, *Dhatvagnis* -7, *Dhoshagni* -3, and *Malagni* -3.
- Sharangadhara has recognized five *pittas* only (*Pachak*, *Bhrajak*, *Ranjak*, *Alochaka* and *Sadhak*).<sup>[10]</sup>

#### JATHARAGNI

This Agni is known as the *Pradhantam* (primary fire) of all the Agni. This Agni is found in *Amashya* because it provides food that stimulates the functions of digestion. *Pittdhara* is the *Kala* that is located at the *Pakvashya's* entrance. *Pittdhara* is essentially a channel for food to enter the stomach. *Jatharagni* is the energy that maintains the *Paka* of *Dhatu* process going, which is mainly present in tissue metabolism. It is control of all the functions and balances of the other twelve Agni in the body, all of which are equally important.<sup>[11]</sup> According to Chakarpani that *Jatharagni* therapy, is considered a body treatment. Its primary function is food digesting and *Ahaar* is transformed into *Ahaar Rasa* by this Agni.<sup>[12]</sup> *Jatharagni* is also divided into four groups based on its ability to digest food, *Vishmaggni*, *Tikshanagni*, *Mandagni*, and *Samagni*.<sup>[13]</sup> According to Harita *Samagni* is determined by whether the *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*) are at a normal stage. *Tikshanagni* is a condition in which the *Pitta* is higher than normal. *Mandgni* is a condition that occurs when *Vata* and *Kapha Dosh* levels are abnormally high.

- Samagni*: The *Samagni* properly digests and assimilates food at the appropriate time. As a result, the *Dhatu's* quality improves (supportive tissues of the body). People that consume *Samagni* are always in good health.
- Vishmaggni*: This type of Agni alternates between fast and slowly digesting food. When the *Vata Dosh* affects this Agni, it produces several varieties of *Udargata roga*.
- Tikshanagni*: *Tikshanagni* is a condition in which food is digested exceedingly quickly, regardless of the type of food consumed. According to Acharya Sushruta, when digestive strength is enhanced from normal to above normal, food digests very quickly, causing hunger or a need for food. When food is digested, the throat, mouth cavity, and lips become dry and painful to the touch. According to Ayurveda, this condition is known as "*Bhasmak Roga*."
- Mandagni*: *Manda* is a word that signifies slow. *Mandagni* means to slow digestive power or digestive capacity. *Mandagni* sufferers consume extremely little and are unable to digest even the tiniest amount of food. Agni, according to *Dhanvantri*, digests the least amount of food in the most time.

#### BHUTAGNI

The Agni, which affects the body at cellular level. The *Panchamahabuta* are *Akasha* (the body's unoccupied spaces), *Vayu* (the air spaces in the tissues), *Agni* (digestive fire), *Jala* (the body's watery stuff such as lymph, blood), and *Prithivi* (solid material in body organs). *Butagni* is divided into five forms of Agni, each of which acts on the *Panchmahabuta*. These Agni, which are made up of *Panchmahabuta*, will only function on the same section of the food element that has the same Agni particle. Even after these elements in the food have been digested, it nourishes its own *Bhutas* in the body. It can now be linked to the enzymatic operations done by the liver in the metabolism of food particles, as the liver has various enzymatic actions on food digestion, such as the metabolism of carbohydrates, proteins, and lipids, which supply energy for the body's biochemical functions.<sup>[14]</sup>

#### DHATVAGNI

*Dhatvagni* is the material that is used to make *Dhatu Utpati Krama*. It is divided into seven types: *Rasagni*, *Raktagni*, *Maansagn*, *Medoagni*, *Ashthyagni*, *Majjagni*, *Shukragni*, which together make up the body's immunity. These Agni keep the functions of the body's organs running smoothly.<sup>[15]</sup>

#### CONCEPT OF AMA

Thus, *Ama* denotes a substance or group of substance which is near to poison or acts like a poison. So, a substance which harms normal healthy state of body or any part of body can be considered as *Ama*.

Due to less function of *Ushma (Agni)*, the food which is not completely digested, yields *Apakva Rasa* in *Amashaya* and due to its accumulation, it undergoes fermentation or putrefaction. (A. H. S. 13/ 25).<sup>[16]</sup>

## DISCUSSION

*Agni* is one of the most important components in achieving optimal health and internal harmony. *Ama*, on the other hand, is a toxin or pathogen that is responsible for the aetiology of all diseases. Deranged of *Agni* is the primary cause of *Ama* production. In *Ayurveda*, *Ama* is defined as harmful, undigested food. It is the dry form of food that is seen as a waste product by the human body. This *Ama* is generated by *Mandhagni*. These undigested food particles begin to *Amas* in the body as a result of *Mandhagni*, forming *Ama Dhosha*. It is further revealed that *Ama* is the undigested form that is generated due to the weakening of *Jhatharagni* and *Dhatvagni*. The first *Avastha* is divided into three *Pakaavasthas*, as follows: Due to the weakening of *Jhatharagni* *Ama* get accumulated in *Amashya* in the first *Avastha* (stomach). *Dhatu*s did not get digested in the second *Avastha* due to *Dhatvagni*'s frailty, and formed *Ama*, which is known as *Amavisha*. In the third *Avastha*, primarily undigested food accumulates and produces *Ama*.

## CONCLUSION

After a brief overview of *Agni*, *Ama*, and *Pitta* and their relationships, this article demonstrates why *Agni* is essential for digestion and metabolism on a cellular level, as well as on physiological and pathological levels. *Agni* is one of thirteen types which maintain the body's metabolism. *Agni*, which is *Samagni* (normal), keeps a person's body and mind healthy. Many digestive enzymes are found in *Agni*, which serve to maintain the body's digestive and metabolic systems. They produce *Ama*, which causes diseases, due to indigestion caused by *Agni* imbalance. This *Ama* can be generated at any degree of the food's *Paka vastha*. As a result, *Agni Dhusti* control can lead to a healthy existence. In this article, it is concluded that if there is an imbalance in *Agni*, diseases would be produced. *Agni* is crucial for the human body and its healthy functioning, according to *Ayurveda*.

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