

COMPREHENSIVE INSIGHTS INTO AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF *AHIPUTANA*  
IN CHILDREN: A LITERATURE REVIEWVd. Namrata Dilip Pawar<sup>1\*</sup>, Vd. Jayprakash Khairnar<sup>2</sup>, Vd. Vikram Shelavale<sup>3</sup>, Vd. Nilam Hande<sup>4</sup><sup>1</sup>MD Scholar, Dept. of Kaumarbhritya, Ashwin Rural Ayurved College, Manchi Hill, Sangamner, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra India.<sup>2</sup>Professor and HOD, Dept. of Kaumarbhritya, Ashwin Rural Ayurved College, Manchi Hill, Sangamner, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra India.<sup>3</sup>Associate Professor, Dept. of Kaumarbhritya, Ashwin Rural Ayurved College, Manchi Hill, Sangamner, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra India.<sup>4</sup>Associate Professor, Dept. of Kaumarbhritya, Ashwin Rural Ayurved College, Manchi Hill, Sangamner, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra India.

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Article Received on 22/10/2024

Article Revised on 12/11/2024

Article Accepted on 02/12/2024

## ABSTRACT

*Ahiputana* (commonly referred to as napkin rash) is classified as a *Kshudraroga* in Ayurvedic texts and is extensively described in all major *Samhitas*. This condition, characterized by *Kapha* and *Rakta Dosha* predominance, is frequently observed in infants and young children, with a prevalence rate ranging from 4-35% in children up to 2 years of age. *Ahiputana* primarily arises due to inadequate hygienic practices, prolonged sweat retention, and the subsequent formation of ammonia, which causes burning rashes and inflammation in the anal region. One of the critical causative factors, as per Ayurvedic principles, is *Stanyadushti* (vitiation of breast milk). The *Samhitas* advocate a dual approach to management: treatment of the mother to address *Stanyadushti* through *Nidana Parivarjana* (eliminating the root cause) and corrective measures, coupled with direct therapeutic interventions for the child. This comprehensive strategy ensures both symptom relief and long-term prevention.

## Ayurvedic management involves

- *Bahya Chikitsa* (external treatments): Application of herbal pastes and medicated oils to soothe and heal the affected skin.

## INTRODUCTION

*Ahiputana* is a prevalent issue frequently encountered in pediatric outpatient departments (OPD). References to *Ahiputana* in Ayurveda are found in Sushruta *Samhita*, where it is categorized under *Kshudraroga*.<sup>[1]</sup> In Ashtanga *Hridaya*, the condition is described using various terms such as *Gudakuttaka*, *Mathrukadosha*, *Ahipoothana*, *Prishtaru*, and *Anamaka*, each highlighting distinct characteristics of the disease.<sup>[2]</sup> A comprehensive understanding of *Ahiputana* is crucial to developing effective management protocols, providing significant relief to affected infants and their caregivers. This paper aims to present a detailed review of *Ahiputana*.

Derivation of *Ahiputana* and Its Synonyms

Understanding the synonyms of *Ahiputana* offers valuable insights into the nature and nuances of the disease.

1. *Ahiputana*<sup>[3]</sup>: The term in Sanskrit translates to "sores on the posterior part of the body." Acharya Indu associates *Ahiputana* with *Putana-graha*, emphasizing its affliction and severity.

2. *Mathrukadosha*: This term signifies a disorder arising from maternal causes. *Matruka* refers to "mother" or "maternal," and *Dosha* indicates "flaw" or "disorder." It suggests that the condition may result from improper maternal care or vitiated breast milk.

3. *Gudakuttaka*: The term implies "a condition that causes cuts or afflictions in the anal region" (*Guda* = anal region; *Kuttaka* = cutting or inflicting damage).<sup>[4]</sup>

4. *Prishtaru*: Derived from *Arus*<sup>[5]</sup> (sore or lesion) and *Prishta*<sup>[6]</sup> (back), this term denotes sores or lesions on the posterior or back region.

5. *Anamaka*<sup>[7]</sup>: This term translates to "unspecified," "unknown," or "enigmatic," indicating a condition with ambiguous or less defined characteristics.

6. *Durnama*: Often used as a reference to hemorrhoids, it reflects a condition involving discomfort and lesions in the anal or surrounding region.

This exploration of terms provides deeper insights into the multifaceted nature of *Ahiputana*, aiding in better

understanding and clinical application of Ayurvedic concepts.

### Etiology and Pathology of *Ahiputana*<sup>[8][9]</sup>

The primary causes of *Ahiputana* are as follows

1. **Lack of cleanliness:** Failure to clean the diaper area of the infant immediately after the passage of stools and urine, often due to negligence by the mother (*Matrukadosha*).
2. **Infrequent bathing:** Irregular bathing practices contribute to poor hygiene.
3. **Sweating:** Excessive sweating in infants, especially in warm climates, aggravates skin irritation.
4. **Vitiated breast milk<sup>[10]</sup>:** The consumption of *Dushta Stanya* (vitiated breast milk) is a significant cause.
5. **Putana-Graha:** *Ahiputana* is linked to *Putana-Graha*, described in Ayurveda as an infectious diarrheal condition associated with *Graha Rogas* (infections and sepsis).<sup>[11]</sup>
6. **Tender infant skin:** Acharya Kashyapa highlights the delicate nature of an infant's skin, which is prone to damage due to friction from clothing, contact with feces and urine, exposure to warm climates, excessive sweating, and improper cleansing. Overuse of powders or harsh cleansing can further irritate the skin.<sup>[12]</sup>

### Doshas and Dushyas Involved in *Ahiputana*<sup>[13][14]</sup>

*Ahiputana* primarily arises from the vitiation of *Rakta* (blood) and *Kapha Dosh*, as elaborated by Acharya Sushruta and Vagbhata. Dalhana, in the *Nibandhasangraha*, states: "*Ahiputanam kapha-raktajam jneyam*", emphasizing the role of these two *Doshas*.

In the management of *Ahiputana*, Acharya Vagbhata describes the involvement of *Kapha* and *Pitta Doshas* in both the mother and child as key contributors to the disease. He recommends treatments that pacify *Kapha* and *Pitta* in breastfeeding mothers. The role of *Pitta Vrana Chikitsa* (wound management for *Pitta* vitiation) and *Raktamoksha* (bloodletting) highlights the importance of addressing *Pitta* and *Rakta* in treating the condition. The *Dhatu* involved is primarily *Twak* (skin), which corresponds to *Rasa Dhatu* (the first tissue formed after digestion). The involvement of *Malas* (excretory wastes like feces, urine, and sweat) is attributed not only to the *Upalepa* (local accumulation) around the perianal region but also to the vitiation of *Mala* (feces) caused by *Kapha-Pitta* vitiated breast milk and the influence of *Putana-Graha*.

### Pathogenesis of *Ahiputana*<sup>[15][16]</sup>

*Ahiputana* develops primarily due to inadequate cleansing of the anal region following defecation and insufficient bathing of a sweating child. The smearing of *Mutra* (urine), *Mala* (fecal matter), and *Sweda* (sweat) over the perianal region leads to *Utkleda*<sup>[17]</sup> (excessive moisture or fermentation), which subsequently vitiates *Rakta* (blood) and *Kapha Dosh* in the skin. The

vitiation of *Rakta* and *Kapha* doshas initially manifests as *Kandu* (pruritus) in the anal region. Persistent itching and scratching result in *Pitaka* (pustules) or *Sphota* (papules) with *Srava* (discharge). These eruptions evolve into *Vrana* (ulcers) or wounds, which merge to form a severe and extensive rash characteristic of *Ahiputana*. This large, inflamed ulcer, referred to as *Ghora Vrana*, is associated with *Bhuri-Upadrava* (multiple complications). The condition is described as being the opposite of *Sanniruddha-Guda*, where anal stricture occurs. Instead, *Ahiputana* involves gaping of the *Guda* (anal opening) due to frequent stools, ulceration, and inflammation. *Gayadasa*, in his commentary, supports this distinction, noting that *Ahiputana* is described after *Sanniruddha-Guda* in Sushruta's *Kshudraroga Nidana*.

### Clinical Features of *Ahiputana*<sup>[18][19][20]</sup>

#### Signs and Symptoms

1. *Kandu*: Pruritus around the *Guda* (anal region).
2. *Daha*: Burning sensation.
3. *Sphota/Pitaka*: Appearance of papules or pustules.
4. *Ruja*: Pain in the affected area.
5. *Tamra-Vrana*: Ulcers with a coppery-red hue.
6. *Srava*: Discharge from the ulcers.
7. *Ekibhuta-Vrana*: Merged or blended ulcers.
8. *Ghora*: Horrible and severe appearance of the lesions.
9. *Bhuri Upadrava*: Accompanied by multiple complications, including *Jwara* (fever).

### Types of *Ahiputana*<sup>[21]</sup>

While Vagbhata and Sushruta do not mention specific types, Bhoja categorizes *Ahiputana* based on the predominance of doshas and their severity:

1. **Vata-predominant:** Dryness, severe pain, and hard lesions.
2. **Pitta-predominant:** Red, inflamed, and burning lesions with discharge.
3. **Kapha-predominant:** Thick, pale, and slow-healing lesions with itching.
4. **Dwidoshaja:** Involvement of two *Doshas*, with mixed symptoms.
5. **Sannipataja:** Severe form involving all three *Doshas*.

These classifications offer insights into the varying presentations of *Ahiputana* and guide dosha-specific management strategies.

### Management of *Ahiputana*<sup>[22][23]</sup>

*Stanyasodhana* (Purification of Breast Milk): The initial step in managing *Ahiputana* is the purification of *Stanya* (breast milk). Drugs pacifying *Pitta* and *Kapha Doshas* are recommended for this purpose. *Sushruta* emphasizes that *Ahiputana* in infants becomes *Sadhya* (curable) only when breast milk is purified. A medicated *Ghrita* prepared with *Patolapatra*, *Triphala*, and *Rasanjana* is suggested for *Pana* (oral intake), as it can effectively address even *Krichrasadhya* (difficult-to-treat) *Ahiputana*.

1. **Use of Medicated *Ghrta*:** Dalhana explains that the above-mentioned *Ghrta* purifies the breastfeeding mother's *Dhatu*. This medicated ghee can also be applied to the ulcers after proper *Kshalana* (cleansing). Administering *Stanyasodhana* drugs not only purifies breast milk but also delivers therapeutic benefits to the breastfed child by carrying the drug via the milk. This promotes the purification of *Rasa Dhatu* (the first tissue formed after digestion) in both mother and infant, resulting in healthy skin.
2. **Decoctions for Oral Intake:** Vagbhata advises a cooling drink prepared with boiled and cooled water for the mother to pacify *Pitta Dosha*. Indu and Chandra recommend *Panaka* prepared with *Sita-seeta*<sup>[24]</sup> (white sandalwood).
3. **Tarkshya *Antarapanaka*:** Ashtanga Sangraha mentions *Tarkshya Antarapanaka* as a remedy for *Anamaka*, *Sthoulya*, *Pittasra*, *Kandu*, *Gandagalamaya*, *Udaraatyunnati*, and related conditions.<sup>[25]</sup>
4. **Makshika *Rasanjana Yoga*:** Indu highlights the use of *Makshika* (honey-based formulation) and *Rasanjana* internally and externally. These can be applied as a paste or used in therapeutic formulations.<sup>[26]</sup>
5. **External Applications**
  - *Swetachandana* with honey and *Tarkshyasaila* for ulcer application.
  - Sushruta suggests *Badari twak lepa* with *Saindhava* and *Amla* (acidic mediums like *kanchika*) to restore the skin's natural pH.
  - Cleansing with decoctions such as *Triphala*, *Badari Plakshatwak Kashaya*, or *Triphala* alone is beneficial in cases of severely oozing ulcers.
6. **Dusting Powders and *Lepas***
  - Powders made of *Kaseesa*, *Gorochana*, *Tutha*, *Manohwa*, *Haritala*, and *Rasanjana*, mixed with *Amlakanchika*, can be used for *Lepa* or dusting due to their antiseptic and antimicrobial properties.
  - *Yashtimadhu* and *Shankha Churna* or *Asanatwak Churna* are also useful for dusting.
  - *Kapalatuthaja Churna* is recommended for *Avachurnana* (dusting).
7. **Raktasrava (Bloodletting):** In severe cases of redness and itching, *Raktasrava* is advised. *Jalouka avacharana* (leech therapy) is preferred for infants, as it is painless and avoids complications.
8. **Taila and *Ghrta* Applications**
  - *Panchavalkala taila*, *Jatyadighrita*, *Kera*, *Kaseesadi Taila*, *Durvadi Ghrta*, and *Shatadhouta Ghrta* can be applied depending on the dosha involvement and the condition of the ulcer.
  - Procedures like *Pradeha* (poultice), *Parisheka* (sprinkling), *Sarpipana* (ghee intake), and *Virechana* (purgation) are mentioned in Charaka's *Pittavrana Chikitsa* for managing ulcers.
9. **Dietary Recommendations:** The mother and infant should adhere to a light diet including *Manda*, *Peya*, *Vilepi*, *Simbidhanya*, *Shaka*, and *Ghrta* for maintaining balance.<sup>[27]</sup>

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*Ahiputana* is primarily caused by *Stanyadushti* (vitiated breast milk), which is a significant etiological factor along with poor hygiene in the anal region post-defecation and urination. *Nidana Parivarjana* (avoiding causative factors) and *Stanyasodhana* (breast milk purification) form the cornerstone of *Ahiputana* treatment. The use of *Stanyasodhana Gana* drugs, medicated decoctions, dusting powders, *Vranahara Tailas*, *Ghrtas*, and *Jalouka Avacharana* are pivotal. External applications like *Swetachandana*, *Tarkshyasaila*, *Kaseesadi Churna*, *Kapalatuthaja Churna*, and therapies with acidic mediums help restore the normal pH of the infant's skin. Despite the detailed guidelines in Ayurveda, the therapeutic measures for *Ahiputana*, particularly *Lepas* and *Stanyasodhana*, remain underutilized in the Kaumarabhritya OPD. Their application could significantly improve patient outcomes.

## CONCLUSION

*Ahiputana* is predominantly caused by *Stanyadushti*, along with unhygienic practices in the care of the infant's perianal region. A comprehensive understanding of its etiology, pathogenesis, and management provides *Kaumarabhrityakas* (pediatric Ayurveda practitioners) with effective tools for treating *Ahiputana*. By incorporating Ayurvedic principles into clinical practice, a holistic and dosha-specific approach can ensure optimal care for affected infants.

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