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

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/WTUKQ

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.

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.

Figure 1: Functioning states of digestive fire.
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 Ahar Rasas 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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