

## A REVIEW ON ETIOPATHOLOGICAL STUDY OF ATISARA

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Article Received on 13/05/2018

Article Revised on 03/06/2018

Article Accepted on 23/06/2018

**ABSTRACT**

At present time, *Atisara* is the most common health problem which is caused by irregular and unhealthy dietary habits and lifestyle. In Ayurvedic texts, the causative factors of *Atisara* are classified as *Aharaja Nidana*, *Viharaja Nidana* and *Manasika Nidana*. *Atisara* means excessive flow (*Sarnam*) of watery stool (*Bahu Drava Mala*) through anus (*Gudamarga*). Nowadays the incidence of *Atisara* is increasing because people do not follow dietary regimens like *Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana*, *Dwadash Ashana Vichara* and also daily regimen like *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya* as explained in Ayurveda. The present article deals with *Nidana Panchatmaka* study of *Atisara* as described in literature and in order to cure the disease, it is important to understand the *Nidana Panchaka* of *Atisara*.

**KEYWORDS:** *Atisara*, *Aharaja Nidana*, *Viharaja Nidana*, *Manasika Nidana*, Ayurveda, *Nidana Panchaka*.**INTRODUCTION**

*Atisara* is a condition, wherein watery stools are passed many times a day. The essential factor in this condition is the abnormally rapid passage of food materials through the *Mahasrotasa*. In *Chikitsa Sthana*, Acharya Charaka has given mythological description about the origin of the *Atisara*. In initial age, the sacrificial animals were actually released soon after the recitation of the sacrificial quotations, and these animals were not actually killed during the course of sacrifice, but after the period of Daksha Prajapati, when sacrificial rites were performed by the sons of Manu such as *Narishyana*, *Nabhaga*, *Ikshwaku*, *Nriga*, and *Sharyati*, the animals to be sacrificed during the performance of *Yagya*, with their own permission. Still later *Prishadhra* started sacrificing cows and bulls when other animals were not available for his long term sacrificial rites. On seeing this, the creatures went shocked and when in this afflicted mental state and consequent loss of *Agni* they ingested they killed cows and bulls, it caused *Atisara* due to heaviness, hotness, unsuitability and use of inauspicious substances. It can be concluded that *Atisara* originated initially from the sacrifice performed by *Prishadhra*. Most important factor in the pathogenesis of *Atisara* is *Mandagni*. *Atisara* is described as Diarrhoea in modern medical science, wherein watery stools passed in excess. The general symptoms associated with diarrhea include abdominal pain especially cramping, bloating, thirst, dehydration, fatigue and weakness etc. The World Health

Organization (WHO) estimates that there are more than 1000 million cases of acute diarrhea annually in developing countries, with 3–4 million deaths, half of these in infants and children. In developed countries, diarrhoea remains an important problem and the elderly are most vulnerable.

**Nidana (Etiology)**

*Nidana* is the factor which disturbs the normal physiological functions of the body and is capable of manifesting diseases. The following factors are responsible for the causation of *Atisara*: -

***Aharaja Nidana* (Dietetic Factors)**

- Indulgence of food which are *Guru* (difficult to digest), *Ati Snigdha* (very fatty), *Ruksha* (dry), *Ushna* (hot), *Drava* (watery), *Sthula* (very hard), *Sheetal* (cold in potency),
- *Viruddhashana* (excessive consumption of food which contains in compatibles),
- *Adhyashana* (frequently taken of food in large quantities),
- *Ajeerna* (food which are not properly cooked),
- *Vishamashana* (eating more or less, or before or after proper time),
- *Asatmya Bhojana* (unaccustomed),
- Consumption of *Visha* (poison)
- *Dushtambu Pana* (drinking of polluted water),
- *Ati Madya Pana* (excess intake of alcoholic drinks).

**Viharaja Nidana (Behavioral Factors)**

- Excess or improper administration of therapies like *Snehana* (oleation), *Swedana* (fomentation) etc.
- Changes in accustomed habits (*Satmya Viparyaya*) and seasonal features (*Ritu Viparyaya*),
- *Ati Jala Krida* (indulging too much in water sports),
- *Vega Vighata* (suppression of natural urges),

- *Krimi Dosha* (infestation of worms).

**Manasika Nidana (Psychological Factors)**

- *Bhaya* (fear),
- *Shoka* (sorrow).

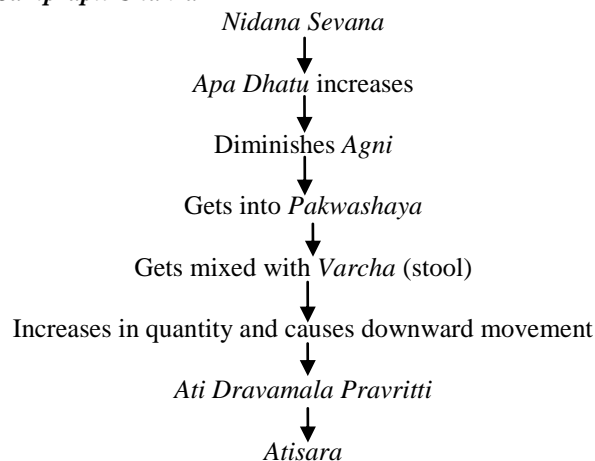
By these above causes *Atisara* develops in men.

**Vishishta Nidana according to Dosha**

<b>Vataja Atisara</b>		
<b>Aharaja Nidana</b>	<b>Viharaja Nidana</b>	<b>Manasika Nidana</b>
<i>Ruksha</i> (rough), <i>Alpa</i> (little), <i>Pramita</i> (deficient) <i>Bhojana</i> , <i>Tikshna Madya Pana</i> (strong alcohol).	Excessively exposure to <i>Vata</i> (strong wind) and <i>Atapa</i> (sun), <i>Ati Vyayam</i> (excessive physical exercise), <i>Ati Vyavaya</i> (excessive sexual intercourse), <i>Vegavarodha</i> (suppression of natural urges).	–
<b>PITTAJA ATISARA</b>		
<b>Aharaja Nidana</b>	<b>Viharaja Nidana</b>	<b>Manasika Nidana</b>
<i>Amla</i> (sour), <i>Lavana</i> (salty), <i>Katu</i> (pungent), <i>Kshara</i> (alkaline), <i>Ushna</i> (hot) and <i>Tikshna</i> (irritant) <i>Ahara Sevana</i> .	Constant exposure to <i>Agni</i> (fire), <i>Surya Santapa</i> (scorching sun) and <i>Ushna Marutopahata</i> (hot winds).	Psychological stressed with <i>Krodha</i> (anger) and <i>Irshya</i> (envy).
<b>KAPHAJA ATISARA</b>		
<b>Aharaja Nidana</b>	<b>Viharaja Nidana</b>	<b>Manasika Nidana</b>
<i>Guru</i> (heavy), <i>Madhura</i> (sweet), <i>Sheeta</i> (cold), <i>Snigdha</i> (unctuous) <i>Ahara Sevana</i> and over saturation himself.	Indulge in <i>Diva Swapna</i> (day sleep) and <i>Alasya</i> (sitting idle).	<i>Achintayato</i> (free from physical and mental tension).
<b>SANNIPATAJA ATISARA</b>		
<b>Aharaja Nidana</b>	<b>Viharaja Nidana</b>	<b>Manasika Nidana</b>
<i>Ati Sheetta</i> (Too Cold), <i>Snigdha</i> (Unctuous), <i>Ruksha</i> (rough), <i>Ushna</i> (hot), <i>Guru</i> (heavy), <i>Khara</i> (coarse), <i>Kathina</i> (hard), <i>Bhojana</i> , <i>Vishama Bhojana</i> (irregular meals), <i>Viruddha</i> and <i>Asatmya Bhojana</i> (intake of incompatible and unsuitable things), <i>Abhojana</i> (fasting), <i>Kalatita Bhojana</i> (delayed meals), <i>Pradushta Madya &amp; Jala pana</i> (drinking of polluted alcohol & water), <i>Ati Madyapana</i> (over drinking of alcohol).	<i>Samshodhana Pratikarmana</i> (not undergoing elimination therapies as per seasons), <i>Vishama Gamanat Upcharat</i> (inappropriate administration of therapeutics), excessive exposure to <i>Agni</i> (fire), <i>Aditya</i> (sun), <i>Pavana</i> (strong wind) and <i>Salila</i> (water), <i>Aswapna</i> (no sleep) or <i>Atiswapna</i> (oversleep), <i>Vega Dharana</i> (suppression of urges), <i>Ritu Viparyaya</i> (seasonal perversations), <i>Ayatha Bala Arambha</i> (excessive physical exercise beyond once own physical strength), <i>Vyadhi Karshanat</i> (emaciation due to <i>Krimi</i> , <i>Shosha</i> , <i>Jwara</i> , <i>Arsha</i> & derangement of <i>Agni</i> ).	Excessive exposure to <i>Bhaya</i> (fear), <i>Shoka</i> (grief) and <i>Chittodwega</i> (anxiety).
<b>SHOKAJA ATISARA</b>		
<b>Aharaja Nidana</b>	<b>Viharaja Nidana</b>	<b>Manasika Nidana</b>
Less quantity of food ( <i>Alpa Ashana</i> ) is eaten due to grief ( <i>Shoka</i> ).	–	<i>Shoka</i> (grief)
<b>AMAJA ATISARA</b>		
<b>Aharaja Nidana</b>	<b>Viharaja Nidana</b>	<b>Manasika Nidana</b>
Due to <i>Amajirna</i>	–	–

**Samprapti (Pathogenesis)****Samanya Samprapti**

Due to consumption of above etiological factors *Apa Dhatu* (body fluids) greatly increases, diminishes the strength of *Agni* (digestive fire), gets mixed with *Varcha* (stool), and increase in quantity, causes downward movement (out of the body through the rectum) by the action of *Vata* leading to development of excess watery stool is known as *Atisara*.

**Samprapti Chakra**

**Samprapti Ghataka****Dosha** - Vata Pradhana Tridosha**Dushya** - Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Mutra, Purisha**Adhishthana** - Mahasrotasa**Srotasa** - Annavaha, Purishavaha, Udakavaha**Sroto Dushti** - Atipravritti, Vimarga Gamana**Doshanusara Vishishta Samprapti**

- Vataja Atisara** - Due to *Nidana Sevana*, Vata gets aggravated and *Agni* (digestive fire) is diminished. In this state, the vitiated Vata carrying *Mutra* (urine) and *Sweda* (sweat) to the *Purishashaya* (colon), liquefies the *Mala* (stool) and thus causes *Vataja Atisara*.
- Pittaja Atisara** - Due to *Nidana Sevana*, Pitta gets aggravated and suppresses the functions of *Agni* (digestive fire) because of *Dravatwa Guna* (fluidity) of Pitta and reaches the *Purishashaya* (colon) then breaks the stool due to *Ushnatwa* (heat), *Dravatwa* (fluidity) and *Saratwa* (mobility) and thus causes *Pittaja Atisara*.

The patient of *Pittaja Atisara* who is avoiding the treatment of *Atisara*, and indulges in the intake of *Pitta* vitiated foods and drinks, his *Pitta* gets aggravated severely, as a result *Rakta* gets vitiated quickly and manifests *Raktatisara*.

- Kaphaja Atisara** - Due to *Nidana Sevana*, *Kapha* gets aggravated, diminishes the *Agni* (digestive fire) by its *Guru* (heavy), *Madhura* (sweet), *Sheeta* (cold) and *Snigdha* (unctuous) nature, makes downward movement and reaches the *Purishashaya* (colon) and

further due to its *Soumya Swabhava* (watery nature), it affects the colon with excessive fluid and thus causes *Kaphaja Atisara*.

- Sannipataja Atisara** - Due to above etiological factors all the three *Doshas* get vitiated and bring affliction in *Agni* which reach *Pakwashaya* (colon) and cause *Sannipataja Atisara* with signs and symptoms of all the three *Doshas*.
- Shokaja Atisara** - In a person who is affected by grief of many kinds and eat less quantity of food, the force of the tears vitiates the digestive power of man and reaches the gastrointestinal tract which vitiates his *Rakta* (blood); then the blood mixes with the faeces and begins to move in the downward direction and passes the stool mixed with *Rakta*; thus *Shokaja Atisara* occurs.
- Amaja Atisara** - In persons whose food is not properly digested, the *Doshas* get increased by combining with undigested food, travel in wrong channels, vitiate the *Dhatus* and *Malas* and gives rise to *Amaja Atisara*.

**Purvarupa (Premonitory Symptoms)**

*Purvarupa* of *Atisara* are as follows:

- Pricking pain in the area of *Hridaya* (heart), *Nabhi* (umbilicus), *Payu* (rectum), *Udara* (lower abdomen) and *Kukshi* (flanks),
- Gatrasvada* (debility of the body),
- Anila Sannirodha* (non-elimination of flatus),
- Vit Sanga* (constipation),
- Adhmana* (flatulence),
- Avipaka* (indigestion).

**Bheda (Types)**

In *Ayurvedic* literature *Atisara* is classified into six types, are as follow:

C.C.	S.S.	A.H.	M.N.
Vataja	Vataja	Vataja	Vataja
Pittaja	Pittaja	Pittaja	Pittaja
Kaphaja	Kaphaja	Kaphaja	Kaphaja
Sannipataja	Sannipataja	Sannipataja	Sannipataja
Bhayaja	Shokaja	Bhayaja	Shokaja
Shokaja	Amaja	Shokaja	Amaja

According to Acharya Charaka *Vataja*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja* and *Sannipataja* are *Nija* types of *Atisara* and *Bhayaja* and *Shokaja* are *Agantuja* type of *Atisara*. Further he has classified *Vataja Atisara* into two types- *Vataja Amatisara* and *Vataja Pakwatisara*. Acharya Vagbhata has separately classified *Atisara* into two types i.e. *Sama* and *Nirama*. Acharya Sushruta has mentioned *Amaja* type of *Atisara* (diarrhea) instead of *Bhayaja* variety.

**Rupa (Clinical Features)****1. Vataja Atisara**

No.	Rupa	C.S.	S.S.	A.H.	M.N.
	<b>Symptoms of Mala (stool)</b>				
1.	<i>Ama Mala</i> (undigested)- <i>Vijjala</i> (slimy), <i>Vipluta</i> (spreading), <i>Avasadi</i> (precipitating), painful with fishy odour and retention of urine and flatus etc.	+	-	-	-
2.	<i>Pakwa Mala – Vibaddha</i> (constipated), pain in waist, thigh, sacral region, knee back and sides, increased respiration etc.	+	-	-	-
3.	<i>Shyava Varna</i> (blackish in colour)	-	+	-	-
4.	<i>Dagdha Gudabhasa</i> (colour like burnt jaggery)	-	-	+	-
5.	<i>Aruna Varna</i> (slightly brown in colour)	-	-	-	+
6.	Frequently passes small amount of faeces ( <i>Alpa Varcha</i> ) often mixed with froth ( <i>Phena</i> ), dry in nature ( <i>Ruksha</i> ) and accompanied with pain ( <i>Shula</i> ) and sound ( <i>Sashabda</i> ).	+	+	+	+
7.	<i>Mala</i> is <i>Grathit</i> (nodular), <i>Pichhila</i> (slimy) and associated with <i>Parikartika</i> (cutting pain in anus)	+	-	+	-
	<b>Other Symptoms</b>				
8.	<i>Udara Shula</i> (pain in the abdomen)	+	+	+	+
9.	<i>Sakta Mutra</i> (retention of urine)	+	+	-	-
10.	<i>Antra Kujana</i> (intestinal gurglings)	-	+	-	-
11.	<i>Strastapana</i> (loss of tone in the anorectal regions)	+	+	-	-
12.	Feeling of tiredness in the <i>Kati</i> (waist), <i>Uru</i> (thigh) and <i>Jangh</i> (calf region)	+	+	-	-
13.	<i>Shushkasya</i> (dryness in mouth)	+	-	+	-
14.	<i>Bhrashta Payu</i> (anal prolapse)	+	+	+	-
15.	<i>Hrishtaroma</i> (horripilation)	+	-	+	-

**2. Pitaja Atisara**

No.	Rupa	C.S.	S.S.	A.H.	M.N.
	<b>Symptoms of Mala (stool)</b>				
1.	<i>Haridra</i> , <i>Harita</i> and <i>Krishna</i> or <i>Asita Varna</i> (yellow, green and blackish in colour)	+	-	+	-
2.	<i>Nila Varna</i> (bluish in colour)	+	+	-	+
5.	<i>Lohita Varna</i> (slightly red in colour)	-	+	-	+
6.	<i>Peeta Varna</i> (yellowish in colour)	-	+	+	+
7.	Associated with <i>Rakta</i> (blood) and <i>Pitta</i>	+	-	+	-
8.	<i>Durgandhit</i> (bad smell)	+	+	+	-
9.	<i>Drava Rupa</i> (liquid)	+	+	+	+
10.	<i>Ushna</i> (hot), Comes out with <i>Vega</i> (force), <i>Mamsa Dhovan Vata</i> (resembles mutton wash) and <i>Bhinna</i> (broken)	-	+	-	-
	<b>Other Symptoms</b>				
11.	<i>Trishna</i> (thirst)	+	+	+	+
12.	<i>Daha</i> (burning sensation)	+	+	+	+
13.	<i>Sweda</i> (sweating)	+	-	+	-
14.	<i>Murchha</i> (fainting)	+	+	+	+
15.	<i>Udar Shula</i> (pain in abdomen)	+	-	+	-
16.	<i>Guda Santapa &amp; Paka</i> (inflammation and suppuration in anus)	+	+	+	+
17.	<i>Jwara</i> (fever)	-	+	-	-

In *Raktatisara*, which is the forward stage of *Pittatisara*, patient suffers from *Trishna* (thirst), *Shula* (colic pain), *Vidaha* (burning sensation) and *Guda Paka* (inflammation of the ano-rectal region).

3. *Kaphaja Atisara*

No.	Rupa	C.S.	S.S.	A.H.	M.N.
	<b>Symptoms of Mala (stool)</b>				
1.	<i>Sweta Varna</i> (white in colour)	+	+	+	+
2.	<i>Snigdha</i> (unctuous), <i>Pichhila</i> (slimy) and <i>Tantuvata</i> (thready)	+	-	+	-
3.	<i>Ama</i> (undigested) and <i>Guru</i> (heavy) in nature	+	-	+	-
4.	<i>Durgandhita</i> or <i>Visra Gandhi</i> (bad smell)	+	-	+	+
5.	Mixed with <i>Sleshma</i> (mucous)	+	+	+	+
6.	<i>Alpa</i> & <i>Muhurmuhu Pravritti</i>	+	-	+	-
7.	Associated with <i>Shula</i> (pain) and <i>Pravahika</i>	+	-	+	-
8.	<i>Sandra</i> or <i>Ghana</i> (thick)	+	+	+	+
9.	<i>Sheetal</i> (cold)	-	-	-	+
10.	<i>Krite Api Akrite Sangya</i> or <i>Vega Shanki</i> (even after passing stools, he feels he has not evacuated stools)	+	+	+	-
11.	<i>Ni-swana</i> (without any sound)	-	+	-	-
	<b>Other Symptoms</b>				
12.	Heaviness in <i>Udara</i> (abdomen), <i>Guda</i> (anus), <i>Basti</i> (bladder) and <i>Vankshana</i> (groin region)	+	-	-	-
13.	<i>Lomaharsha</i> (horripilation)	+	+	+	+
14.	<i>Utklesha</i> (nausea)	+	+	+	-
15.	<i>Nidra</i> (over sleep)	+	+	+	-
16.	<i>Alasya</i> (idleness)	+	-	+	-
17.	<i>Sadana</i> (lassitude)	+	+	-	-
18.	<i>Annadweshi</i> (aversion of food)	+	+	+	-
19.	<i>Tandra</i> (stupor)	-	+	-	-
20.	<i>Gaurava</i> (feeling heaviness in body)	-	+	-	-

4. *Sannipatik Atisara* – It is characterized by *Tandra* (stupor), *Moha* (delusion), *Sada* (debility), *Mukha Shosha* (dryness of mouth), *Vividha Varna Varcha* (eliminates faeces of all colours), *Trishna* (thirst) and has the appearance of specific symptoms of all the *Doshas*.
5. *Shokaja Atisara* – The stool passes in *Shokaja Atisara* is accompanied with *Rakta* (blood), the *Rakta* resembles *Kakananti* (Gunja - *Abrus precatorius*) in colour (bright red) either mixed with stool or without stool, either with bad smell or without smell and faeces is eliminated with difficulty.
6. *Amaja Atisara*- In *Amaja Atisara* elimination of faeces of various colours, many times passes with difficulty.

Acharya Charaka has described two types of *Agantuja Atisara* viz. *Bhayaja* and *Shokaja*, which manifest due to mental factors like fear and anxiety. Their signs and symptoms are similar to those of *Vataja Atisara*.

**Upashaya-Anupashaya**

*Upashaya* means which gives pleasure to the person by the use of *Aushadha* (medicine), *Ahara* (diet) and *Vihara* (regimens). Their action may be directly against the cause, or to the disease itself or to both. Opposite to the *Upashaya* is called *Anupashaya*. The concept of *Upashaya-Anupashaya* is same as the concept of *Pathya-Apathya* because both deal with wholesome and unwholesome.

Type	Upashaya	Anupashaya
<i>Aushadha</i>	<i>Kutaja</i> (Holarrhena antidysenterica), <i>Patha</i> (Cissampelos pareira), <i>Mustadi Yoga</i> , <i>Kalingadi Yoga</i> etc.	<i>Triphala Churnai</i> , <i>Pancha Sakara Churna</i> , <i>Ichha Bhedi Rasa</i>
<i>Ahara</i>	Old variety of <i>Shali</i> and <i>Sathi</i> rice Pulses of <i>Masoor</i> (red lentils), <i>Arahara</i> (split pigeon pea), <i>Jamun</i> (plum), <i>Madhu</i> (honey), <i>Yusha</i> (vegetable soup), <i>Bilwa Phala Majja</i> etc.	<i>Godhuma</i> (wheat), <i>Urada</i> (split black gram), <i>Yava</i> (barley), <i>Kushmanda</i> (Pumpkin), <i>Ikshu</i> (sugarcane), <i>Draksha</i> ( <i>Vitis vinifera</i> )
<i>Vihara</i>	<i>Vamana</i> (vomiting), <i>Langhana</i> (fasting), <i>Nidra</i> (sleeping)	<i>Swedana</i> (fomentation), <i>Rakta Mokshana</i> (blood letting), <i>Ratrijagaran</i> (night awakening), <i>Vega Dharan</i> (suppression of natural urges)

**Sadhya-Asadhyata (Prognosis)****Krichha Sadhya Lakshana**

- Amaja Atisara* is *Krichha Sadhya* in nature.

- Atisara* (diarrhea) is said to be *Krichha Sadhya* when it is devoid of any complications and *dhatudushti*.

**Asadhya Lakshana**

- *Sannipataja Atisara* is *Asadhya* in *Bala* (young) and *Vridhdha* (old persons).
- *Shokaja Atisara* is very difficult to treat.
- Patient passes stool appears like *Dadhi* (curd), *Ghrta* (ghee) etc. which is *Nila* (blue), *Ati Rakta* (red) etc. in colour, *Pichhila* (slimy) and *Tantuvata* (fibrous) in nature, passing little or no stool associated with *Trishna* (thirst), *Daha* (burning sensation), *Jwara* (fever), *Strasta Pakwa Guda* (prolapsed and suppuration of anus) etc. *Sannipataja Atisara* associated with all these symptoms is *Asadhya* (incurable) in nature.
- The patient whose anal orifice does not close at all (*Asamvritta Guda*), who is emaciated (*Ksheena*), having severe flatulence (*Adhmana*), ulcer in the anus (*Guda Paka*) and who has lost his body heat (*Gatoshma*) should be rejected.

**Atisara Nivritti Lakshana (Signs of Cure of Diarrhoea)**

Proper elimination of *Mutra* (urine) and *Vayu* (flatus), independently of *Mala* (faeces), along with *Deeptagni* (enhancement of digestive fire) and feeling of *Laghuta* (lightness) in the *Koshtha* (gastro-intestinal tract), these indicate the cure of *Atisara*.

**CONCLUSION**

*Nidana*, *Purvarupa*, *Rupa*, *Upashaya*, and *Samprapti* of *Atisara* have been widely described in Ayurveda Literature. Exhaustive knowledge of *Nidana Panchaka* is essential for the diagnosis of diseases. *Nidana* is the leading factor for causation of disease, so avoiding the causative factor is the primary step in the management of *Atisara*. *Purvarupa* and *Rupa* help in diagnosis of diseases directly, give knowledge about involvement of *Doshas* and indicate the site of manifestation of disease. *Upashaya* helps to diagnose a complicated and untraced disease. *Samprapti* helps to diagnose the contributory factors of disease. *Atisara* (diarrhoea) is an important health problem in all the age groups and is a major cause of death in socio-economically backward class of people. Therefore early diagnosis of *Atisara* on the basis of its *Nidana Panchaka*, is important for *Samprapti Vighatana* and to cure the disease successfully without much discomfort in planning treatment.

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