

CONCEPT OF HYPOTHYROIDISM IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has considered Agni a very important entity for maintenance of good health. On the basis of Ayurvedic principles, we can understand the pathology of Hypothyroidism as the “Agnimandya” at systemic and cellular level which can be understood as decreased caloric expenditure (Hypometabolism) in modern terminology. The major function of thyroid gland is to act as spark for the maintenance of oxidative metabolism in most tissues. In Ayurveda parlance this is attributed as function of Agni. Hypofunctioning of Jatharagni which in turn Effects Dhatwagni eventually brings out pathological sequence and ultimately the disease condition develop.^[1]

INTRODUCTION

Hypothyroidism means deficiency of thyroid hormone, including hypothalamic or pituitary disease and generalized tissue resistance to thyroid hormone and disorders that affects the thyroid gland directly.

According to principles of modern medicine, Hypothyroidism is the diseased condition where deficiency in the amount of biologically active thyroid hormone at tissue level is there.

There are several causes for chronic hypothyroidism in human beings, the most common being “Hashimoto’s thyroiditis” and radioiodine therapy for hyperthyroidism.^[2]

Functions of thyroid hormones^[3]

- For growth and development
- Helps in controlling normal bowel movements.
- Stimulates BMR, oxygen consumption and heat production.

- Normal skeletal muscle function is regulated.
- Decreases fat storage by mobilizing it and converting into free fatty acid.

Signs

Dry and Coarse Skin, Cool extremities, Myxedema, Bradycardia, Carpel tunnel syndrome, Peripheral Edema etc.

Symptoms

Weakness, Dry skin, Hair loss, Constipation, weight gain, Dyspnea, Hoarseness of voice etc.

Treatment

The modern treatment is hormone replacement therapy by Levothyroxine.

Analysis of Hypothyroidism in Ayurvedic View

In Charaka Samhita, Astha Nindita Purushas have been discussed which can be taken as functional disorders of endocrine gland.

Lakshana

Involvement of Tridosha

Sl. No.	Symptoms	Dosha involved	Reference
1.	Weight gain	Kapha vriddhi, Pitta kshaya	Ch.Su 17/56, Ah.Su 11/7,
2.	Puffiness of body features	Kapha vriddhi	Ch.Su 18, Ah.Su 12/53
3.	Loss of appetite	Kapha vriddhi, Pitta kshaya	A.h.Su 11/7, Ah.Su 11/6
4.	Dry and Coarse skin	Vata vriddhi, Pitta kshaya	Ah.Su 11/7, Ah Su 11/16
5.	Minimal/Absent sweating	Pitta kshaya	A.h.Su. 12/52
6.	Anaemia	Kapha vriddhi, Pitta kshaya, Vata vriddhi.	Ch.Su 17/56
7.	Constipation	Vata vriddhi	A.h.Su 11/6, Su. Su 15/18
8.	Hoarseness of voice	Kapha vriddhi, Vata vriddhi	Ch.Chi 16/24, Su.Su 15/18
9.	Generalised pain	Vata vriddhi	Ch.Su 17/44

10.	Mascular cramps, Stiffness	Vata vriddhi	Ch.Su 17/47 , Su.Su 20/11
11.	Slugginess	Kapha vriddhi	Ch.Su 17/55

Involvement of Agni in Hypothyroidism

The description of hypothyroidism is not found as such in *Ayurvedic* classics.^[4]

The manifestations of the hypothyroidism are basically due to defect of metabolism at tissue and cellular levels which is largely due to imbalance of hormone circulating in the body.

According to principles of *Ayurveda* the human body metabolism is regulated by “*Agni Vayapar*”.

According to Acharya Vagbhata, if *Dhatwagni* gets diminished, it leads to *Dhatu Vriddhi*, on other hand if it gets increased in quantum it leads to *Dhatukshaya*.^[5]

“स्वस्थानस्य कायाग्नेः अंशः धातुषु संश्रिताः ।

तेषां सादातिदीप्तिभ्यां धातुवृद्धि क्षयोद्भवः” ॥ (अ.ह.सू.११)^[6]

The *Dhatu Vriddhi* due to *Dhatwagnimandhya* which is the result of *Jatharagnimandya* is improper (*Sama Vriddhi*).

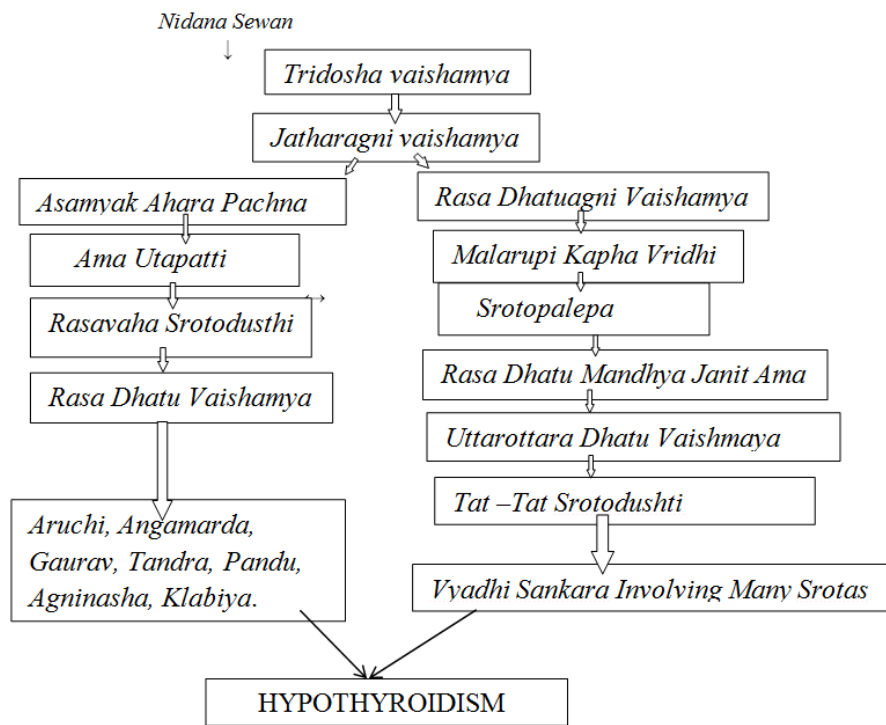
Agni can be considered as enzymes or hormones according to functions it performs in human body.

Due to *Jatharagnimandya*, there is formation of *Ama Dosh* (metabolic toxins), which is responsible for *Srotorodha* and as a result vitiated *Rasa Dhatu* is formed.

This vitiated *Rasa Dhatu* is unable to provide sufficient nutrition to the next *Dhatu*s and thus manifestation occur in the form of various disorders in the body.

Thus it can be said that hypothyroidism is a clinical condition resulting due to diminution of *Jatharagni* and formation of *Ama Dosh*.

Samprapti



Samprapti Ghatak

Dosha	Tridosha predominantly Vata and Kapha
Dushya	All dhatus predominantly Rasa, Meda
Agni	Jatharagni, Dhatvagni
Srotas	All srotas
Srotodusti	Sanga
Adhithana	Sarva Sharira especially Kantha Pradesh
Udbhavastana	Amashaya
Rogmarga	Bahya, Abhyantra
Vyaktisthana	Sampurna Sharira

General principles of treatment of hypothyroidism

- *Nidana Privarjan*: all *Kapha* and *Vata Dosha* aggravating factors, *Agnimandyakar Ahara* and *Vihara* should be avoided in hypothyroidism.^[7]
- The line of treatment with specific target to *Rasavaha*, *Mamsavaha*, *Medovaha*, *Manovaha Srotas* as well as *Vata-Kapha Nashaka*, *Agnideepan*, *Srotoshodhana*, *Vatanuloman*, *Amapachan* treatment should be administered in hypothyroidism.

DISCUSSION

The conceptual analysis of symptomatology of hypothyroidism helps us to identify it as *Kapha Pradhana Tridosha Vyadhi* with *Rasa* and *Medo Dushti* predominantly.

The treatment can be planned based on *Dosha Pratyaneek Chikitsa* than *Vyadhi Pratyaneeka Chikitsa*.

CONCLUSION

Hypothyroidism can be considered as condition which results due to *Agni Dushti*.

Kapha Vata Dosha Vriddhi and *Pitta Kshaya* results due to *Agnimandya*.

Dhatwagnimandya especially *Rasa* and *Medo Dhatuagnimandya* contributes to this condition. when approached hypothyroidism with *Dosha Pratyaneek Chikitsa*, will help to manage the condition better.

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