

AN AYURVEDIC REVIEW ON CONCEPT OF *DUSHIVISHA* IN AGADTANTRADr. Swati M. Nikam<sup>1\*</sup>

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**ABSTRACT**

*Agadatantra* is a significant branch of *Ayurveda*, has a particular focus on managing toxic bites, poisonous combinations, food poisoning, and drug toxicity. In today's rapidly industrializing world, the increased exposure to toxins due to industrialization, lifestyle changes, and modern food production methods has made this ancient concept even more pertinent. This branch considers several conditions to be equivalent to poison: **Viruddha Ahar**: Food items, when combined inappropriately, can act as a poison within the body. **Ama Dosha**: Food that is not adequately digested and metabolized leads to the accumulation of toxins in the body. **Dushivisha**: Artificial and concocted poisons, such as those found in pollution and in food additives, are considered as toxins according to *Ayurveda*. In this article we are going to review this *Dushivisha* concept of *Agadatantra* subject in the view of *Ayurveda* science.

**KEYWORDS:** Agadatantra, Ayurveda, Fetus, *Dushivisha*.**INTRODUCTION**

*Agadatantra* specifically addresses the clinical management of toxic incidents, including bites from venomous creatures like snakes, insects and spiders as well as accidental ingestion of poisons, both artificial and concocted. These toxic substances do not undergo normal metabolism within the body, and their effects may lead to various diseases associated with imbalances in *Pitta* and *Rakta* (blood) or manifest as skin diseases.

Detoxification and treatment involve various therapies, notably the *Panchakarma* procedures. *Ayurveda* emphasizes how toxins are not merely external, such as from poisons ingested or inhaled, but also internally produced, like endotoxins generated within the body.

*Sushruta*, an ancient *Ayurvedic* scholar, highlighted the potential for contracting poison through everyday items like massage oils or cosmetics. Specific formulations were recommended to counteract such potential poisoning situations.

The branch of *Agadatantra* also recognizes the causes of allergy and various iatrogenic (physician-induced) diseases as a result of incompatible medicines, cumulative toxicity of metallic preparations and unscrupulous use of chemical drugs. It sheds light on the iatrogenic diseases resulting from modern medical practices and their implications.

Overall, *Agadatantra* delves into the study and treatment of various toxic conditions from diverse sources such as food, drugs, pollution and iatrogenic causes, providing insights into the detoxification and management of these poisons.

*Ayurveda* studies problems caused by food, drug and pollution under inanimate poisons and artificial poisons and treats them accordingly.<sup>[1]</sup> *Dushivisha* is one of the most important and unique concepts of *Agadatantra*.

**AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

1. To collect information regarding *Dushivisha* in *Agadatantra*.
2. To understand the clinical importance of *Dushivisha*, as described in ancient treatise & its utility in today's context.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS****3.3.1 Etymology**

"*Dushi- Dush dhatu + nich pratyaya*".

The term "*Dushivisha*" is a compound word composed of "*Dushi*" and "*Visha*." "*Dushi*" signifies altered, denaturated, latent, vitiated, attenuated and "*Visha*" means poison.<sup>[2]</sup>

The word is derived from "*Dush*", which means polluting or defiling.

The term "*dushi*" is formed from the root word "*dush*" combined with suffixes "nich" and "inn". It essentially denotes something that is impure and has the inherent ability to cause impurity or spoilage.

#### **Paribhasha (Definition)**<sup>[3,4,5]</sup>

*Dushivisha* refers to a poison with low potency compared to the natural ten properties of *Visha*. It is incapable of producing symptoms of poisoning.

Origin and Characteristics: *Dushivisha* can originate from inanimate or animate sources or any artificial poison (*Kritrima Visha*). It remains in the body after partial expulsion or provisional detoxification. Detoxification can occur through antipoisonous drugs, forest fire, wind or sunlight.

#### **Factors Contributing to *Dushivisha*: Constant exposure to specific conditions such as**

Cloudy, windy days, and rainy seasons.

*Anupa Desha*, rainy areas.

Consumption of wine, *kulatha*, pulse.

Regular daytime sleep.

#### **Characteristics of *Garavisha* and *Dushivisha***

*Gara Visha*: Slow-acting in nature. Severity varies based on the combination of poisonous drugs.

*Dushivisha*: Always slow in nature. Covered by *Kapha*, which allows it to remain in the body for a longer duration, causing discomfort.

#### **Transformation of *Visha* into *Dushivisha***<sup>[6]</sup>

##### **1. *Jeernam* (partially metabolized)**

Any type of *Visha* (*Jangam*, *Sthavaram*, *Kritrim*) which is not completely removed from the body or partially detoxified remains in the body at various *Dhatu*, producing cumulative effects. *Visha* capable of producing acute ill effects but remaining in the body for a longer time undergoes a reduction in some of its properties, leading to the formation of *Dushivisha*.

##### **2. *Vishagha*oshadibhir *Hatam* (Incomplete Metabolism)**

Partial detoxification by antidotes retains some properties of the poison.

##### **3. *Davagni* (exposure to heat and fire)**

Exposing *Visha* to intense heat and fire alters its properties, resulting in lower potency, thus transforming it into *Dushivisha*.

##### **4. Exposure to *Vata* (wind)**

Exposure to *Sheetal Vata* reduces properties like *Tikshna* and *Ushna* making the *Visha* less potent.

##### **5. Exposure to *Aatapa* (sunlight)**

Sunlight disinfects air, water and even poisonous substances, accelerating the detoxification process and reducing the potency of the poison.

#### **6. *Swabhavata va Swagunir na Yuktam Visham* (natural properties)**

Naturally, all *Visha* possess classical properties like *Tikshna*, *Ushna* and *Ruksha*. When some of these properties are absent or reduced in the *Visha*, it becomes less potent, causing *Dushivisha*. For example, *Acharya Charak* classified *Keeta Visha* into *Pranahar Visha* and *Dushivisha Keeta* based on their potency.

"*Dshivisha* is known as any poison which, lacking all ten natural properties of *Visha*, only produces chronic symptoms."<sup>[7]</sup>

#### ***Avyaktavastha* (State of Existence)**<sup>[8,9]</sup>

*Dushivisha* is not separately classified in Ayurveda, but it is described as *Sthavara*, *Jangama* or *Kritrima Visha*. After treatment, when the poison becomes less potent and its effects are not completely nullified, the residual less potent part is termed *Dushivisha*. When a poison, whether *Sthavara*, *Jangama* or *Kritrima* is not fully eliminated and is attenuated by antipoisonous remedies or dried up by factors like *davagni*, *vata* or *tapa*, it transforms into *Dushivisha*.

Exposure to specific conditions, such as cloudy and windy days or rainy days, in extensive windy, cold, and rainy places, along with specific dietary habits, can vitiate the *dhatu*s over an extended period. Despite having a less potent *Veerya*, *Dushivisha* does not immediately manifest fatality; instead, it transforms into *Avritta Vata*, influenced by *Kapha* and persists in that state for years. The symptoms of *Dushivisha* arise rapidly under favorable conditions.

#### ***Vyaktata of Dushivisha***

Unfavourable environment, food, time. Over exertion, mental dilemma, excessive sex, anger etc. reduce the immunity of a person. In such circumstances the clouds, rain, eastern winds, sunlight, indigestion, *aam visha* etc. play a great role.

#### ***Poorvarupa***<sup>[10]</sup>

When *Dushivisha* is about to flare up, it produces some *purvarooopa* specific for each individual.

Feels the following symptoms so can take preventive measures –

*Nidra* (Sleep disturbances)

*Gurutwa* (Heaviness)

*Jrumbha* (Giddiness)

*Harsha* (Happiness)

*Angamarda* (Body pain)

#### ***Rupa***<sup>[11]</sup>

*Dushivisha* a type of artificial poisons vitiates blood and produces symptoms like *aru*, *kitibha*, psoriasis and *kotha*. This type of poisons afflicts each one of the *doshas* and cause death of the patients.

**Dhatugata Dushivisha Lakshanas<sup>[12]</sup>****Table no. 1. Dhatugata Dushivisha Lakshanas**

Sr. No.	Dhatu	Lakshanas
1.	Rasa	Ajirna
2.	Rakta	Kushtha, Visarpa
3.	Mamsa	Mansarbuda
4.	Meda	Medogranthi
5.	Asthi	Adhidanta vikara
6.	Majja	Tamodarshan
7.	Shukra	Klaibya

**Prakopa kala<sup>[13]</sup>**

Acharyas have emphasized that the aggravation of *Dushivisha* in the body occurs on cloudy days and due to exposure to cold and wind.

*Dushivisha* is a condition described by the *Acharyas* and they have identified *Dushita ahitkara ahara* (improper intake of food) as one of its causative factors. The role of *Ahara* (diet) in maintaining health is crucial and improper consumption can lead to the formation of *Dushivisha* in the body.

According to ancient teachings, *Dushivisha* refers to the intake of less potent toxic substances that remain dormant within the body for extended periods without causing immediate harm. In the modern world, people are exposed to various toxins through different means, contributing to the accumulation of *Dushivisha*.

When explaining *Dhatugata lakshanas* (symptoms related to tissues), the *Acharyas* have outlined that when *Dushivisha* affects the *Rakta dhatu* (blood tissue), it can result in diseases such as *Kushtha* (skin disorders) and *Visarpa* (a type of skin disease). This underscores the importance of understanding and addressing the impact of dietary choices on overall health.

**Rupa**

*Dushivisha* is a type of chronic toxicity resulting from the accumulation of inanimate, animate or artificial poisons within the living body over a prolonged period. These poisons, characterized by their potency and lipophilic nature, afflict each of the doshas, leading to severe symptoms such as *aru*, *kitibha*, psoriasis and *kotha*, ultimately causing the death of the patients.

*Sushruta*, in his explanation of the second state, mentioned that *Dushivisha* creates toxicity of food, indigestion, loss of taste and the appearance of round patches and rashes on the skin. This chronic toxicity persists within the body due to the less potency of the poisons and their encapsulation within lipophilic tissues, giving rise to both serious and non-serious complications when influenced by suitable factors.

Metals, metallic compounds, pesticides and certain food additives are identified as contributors to *Dushivisha*, as they tend to accumulate within the living body when exposed for prolonged periods. The prevalence of

elevated levels of toxic metals and metalloids in the environment has affected over one billion humans, highlighting the widespread impact of this chronic toxicity.

**Chikitsa<sup>[14]</sup>**

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, Patient suffering from *Dushivisha* should be first done *Swedana* and follow the *Vamana* and *Virechana Karma* according to *Dosha* predominance. After *Deha Shodhana* daily *Agadapana* with *Dushi vishari agada* is to be done. Contain of *Dushivishari Agad* is *Pippali*, *Dhyamak*, *Jatamansi*, *Lodhra*, *Musta*, *Suvarchal*, *Ela*, *Ushira* and *Suvarnagairika* with *anupan Madhu*.

- 1) *Acharya Charaka* mentions that *Dushivisha* in *Rakta* (blood) should be treated with *Raktamokshana* by *Shira*. (*ch.chi.23/63*)<sup>[15]</sup>
- 2) *Acharya Charaka* has given details of persons not fit for *Snehan*, stating that those suffering from *Visha* are not suitable for *Snehana*. (*ch.su.13/54-56*)<sup>[16]</sup>
- 3) Persons suffering from *Visha* are considered not fit for *Swedana*, as per *Acharya Charaka*. (*ch.su.14/17*)<sup>[17]</sup>
- 4) *Acharya Charaka* indicates the use of *Ikshvaku Kalpam* in patients suffering from *Visha* (*Dushivisha*), suggesting that the *yoga* from this should be given as the site of settlement made by the *Visha*. (*ch.ka.3/4*)<sup>[18]</sup>
- 5) *Acharya Charaka* gives an indication of *Sudha Kalpam* use in patients suffering from *Visha* (*Dushivisha*), recommending the use of *yoga* from this as the site of settlement made by the *Visha*. (*ch.ka.10/5*)<sup>[19]</sup>

**CONCLUSION**

*Dushivisha* is one of the most important and unique concept of *Agadtantra*. "Dushi" signifies altered, denaturated, latent, vitiated, attenuated and "Visha" means poison. *Dushivisha* refers to a poison with low potency compared to the natural ten properties of *Visha*. It is incapable of producing symptoms of poisoning. Ancient acharyas had told different types, *vyaktaavastha*, *avyaktaavastha*, symptoms and treatment principles of *Dushivisha* which is useful in today's era.

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