LITERARY REVIEW OF AMAVATA AND ITS TREATMENT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

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ABSTRACT
Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic inflammatory autoimmune disorder affecting synovial joints mainly. Swelling, pain and stiffness around the joint are the major complaints of the patient suffering from RA which hamper the movement of the joint. Amavata clinically resemble with RA. Amavata mentioned in Ayurvedic texts with detailed signs, symptoms, causative factors, complications and line of treatment directed towards the root of cause of disease is caused due to two predominant factors that are first Ama formed due to disturbed functioning of Agni and second vitiated Vata which later on get accumulated at the joint and forms the disease. Patient suffering from RA in modern medical science is treated with NSAIDS, DMARDS and corticosteroids which only suppress the symptoms of the disease but has many other side effects. Preventive measures described in Ayurveda can treat root of cause of RA and can avoid the side effects of modern medicine.

KEYWORDS: Rheumatoid Arthritis, Amavata, Ama, Vata, Agni.

INTRODUCTION
Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic inflammatory arthritis which mainly affect the synovial joints.¹ The typical clinical feature of RA is the deforming of symmetrically small and large joints polyarthritis², some patients present with mild disease having less joint damage and in others it is most severe. RA occurs throughout the world in all races, females are three times more prone to this disease than males, onset of the disease increases as the age advances.³ RA is
multifactorial disease having genetic susceptibility through monozygotic and dizygotic twins and 1st degree relatives of patient suffering through RA. HLA-DR1, HLA-DR4 is also contributing factor in development of RA, smoking is another risk factor. RA is characterized by persistent cellular activation, autoimmunity and immune complex at sites of articular and extra-articular lesions which leads to joint destruction.[4] Drug used in treatment of RA are DMARDS, corticosteroids, analgesics and NSAIDS.

Disease namely *Amavata* described in Ayurveda has same clinical features compared to RA. *Amavata* is firstly mentioned by Madhavkara s separate disease entity. *Amavata* having two predominant pathological factors *Ama* and *Vata* from which *Ama* is formed due to *Mandagni* along with vitiated *vata* moves towards *Sleshma sthana* including joints then it undergoes *Sthanasanshraya* in the *Sandhis* and causes severe pain.[5] *Amavata* is the disease of *Madhyam Rogmarga* as the *Marma*, *Asthi* and the *Sandhi* are the chief site of presentation of cardinal symptoms like *Sandhishool*, *Sandhigrah* and *Sandhishoth*.[6] Drugs available in modern medicine cannot treat the root cause of this disease and as its long term use has many side effects, there is challenge to Ayurveda to treat rheumatoid arthritis efficiently.

**OBJECTIVES**
1. To have depth knowledge of *Amavata* and the Rheumatoid Arthritis.
2. To understand the progression and complication of the *Amavata*.
3. To find out effective treatment to avoid complications mentioned in Ayurveda by different Acharya's.

**Hetu**
2. *Virudha Chestha* (Improper physical activity) – leads to mandagni.
3. *Mandagni* (week digestive power) – leads to formation of ama and trigger doshaprakopa
4. *Nischalata* (lack of physical exercise).
5. *Snighdham Bhuktavato vyayamam.*[7]

According to modern science exact cause of the disease is unknown.

**Cardinal Symptoms of Amavata**
1. *Sandhishootha* - Swelling in multiple joint
2. *Gattrastabdhatra* - Stiffness in the body
3. *Vrischchik dansha vata vedana* (pain like scorpion bite)
4. Jwara (Fever)  
5. Angamarda (Bodyaches)  
6. Aruchi (Anorexia)  
7. Trishana (Thirst)  
8. Gauravam (Heavyness)  
9. Utsahhani (Lassitude)  
10. Jadta (Stiffness)\(^8\)  
11. Karmahani (Loss of functions)  
12. Bahumuratara (Increased urine frequency)  

When there is predominance of Pitta dosha along with Ama and Vata then inflammatory signs like Raga (redness) and Daha (burning sensation) are observed and heaviness and itching in affected part after involvement of Kapha dosha.\(^9\)

**Samprapti of Amavata**

The Apathy Ahara and Vihara mentioned in Hetu of Amavata leads to Doshprakopa and Amavastha simultaneously or one after other.\(^10\) The Ama so formed is distributed due to vitiated Vata along with other Doshas to Sleshmasthan and leads to Amavata.

**Samprapti Ghataka**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dosha</th>
<th>Vata Pradhan Tridoshas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dooshya</td>
<td>Rasadi dhatu, Asthigat Snayu, Sira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strotasa</td>
<td>Rasavaha, Asthivaha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adhishthan</td>
<td>Asthi, Sandhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogmarga</td>
<td>Madhyamrogmarga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udbhava Sthana</td>
<td>Amashaya</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Rheumatoid Arthritis**

- Pathology of Rheumatoid arthritis
  - Swelling and congestion of Synovial membrane and connective tissue followed by the infiltration with macrophages, lymphocytes and plasma cells.
  - Effusion of synovial fluid into joint space
  - Hypertrophy of synovial membrane
  - Pannus formation over and under articular cartilage
  - Bony erosion, deformity
- Muscle wasting
- Subcutaneous nodules formation\(^\text{[12]}\)

- Criteria for Diagnosing Rheumatoid Arthritis
  - Morning stiffness (>1 hour)
  - Arthritis of 3 or more joints areas
  - Symmetrical arthritis
  - Rheumatic nodules
  - Rheumatic factor
  - Radiological changes
  - Duration of 6 weeks or more\(^\text{[13]}\)

- Clinical feature of Rheumatoid Arthritis
  - Persistent synovitis of small joints of hand, wrist and feet
  - Symmetrical arthralgia
  - Polyarthritis
  - Pitting edema
  - Proximal muscle stiffness
  - Swelling
  - Pain

- Joints mainly involved in Rheumatoid arthritis
  1. Finger joints- MCP and PIP joint – 40%
  2. Wrist joint - 15%
  3. Shoulder joint 20%
  4. Foot joint - 20%

- Other joint deformity in RA
  1. Swan neck deformity – It is a deformity of PIP joint
  2. Boutonniere / Button hole deformity
  3. Z deformity of thumb
  4. Triggering fingers due to nodules in flexor tendon sheath
  5. Cock – up toe deformity – Dorsal subluxation of MTP joint
  6. Calcaneovalgus – Damage to the ankle and subtalar joint.\(^\text{[14]}\)
Prognosis of Amavata

The management of Amavata is very difficult because the Ama and Vata have properties opposite to each other. So, the disease involving single dosha and early onset is easy to cure, disease consisting two Doshas are Yapya and disease reached chronicity with multiple joints involvement and having systemic complication are difficult to treat.\[15\]

Role of Agni and Ama in Amavata

According to Ayurveda Agni is the basic pillar of our life as it convert food in the form of energy with the help of which all vital functions are carried out in our body.\[16\] Agni is the cause of Oja, strength, Bala, Varna and Prana.\[17\] Agni facillate proper digestion of ingested food if there is inadequate Agni then food remain undigested and that leads to formation of toxic material called Ama that initiate the disease process.

Concept of Ama

Ama is toxic, sticky, thick, foul smelling, undigested food in the body. Ama lines the wall of bowel and impair the assimilation and absorption of nutrients.\[18\] Accumulation of Ama at the site of Khavaigunya form various diseases. In RA this Ama accumulate at the Sleshmasthanas mainly in Sandhis and initiate the disease process.

Treatment

Chakradatta firstly mentioned the treatment of Amavata. Management of Amavata mainly include

1. Langhana
2. Shamana Chikitsa
3. Shodhana Chikitsa

Langhana

As Amavata is Rasa dushtijanya disease Langhana is the best first line of treatment for the digestion of Ama and increasing metabolic power.\[19\]

Shaman Chikitsa

Shaman Chikitsa reduces Agnimandya and stops the production of Ama and keeps the Doshas in balance. The drug used in Amavata for Shaman chikitsa are of Katu and Tikta Rasa, the Katu Rasa stimulate the Jatharagni, reduces the aggravation of Kapha and clears the Strotorodha. The Tikta Rasa having property of Kapha, Pitta Shamak, Deepan and Pachan
which improve the digestive power which prevent further formation of Ama and metabolizes Doshas.

**Shodhan Chikitsa**

Shodhan chikitsa is nothing but the Panchakarma, it helps in removal of Ama outside the body so that Vata can circulate through body without obstruction and able to perform it’s proper physiological functions. For the Shodhan chikitsa in Amavata mainly Virechan and Basti Karma are preferred. Prior to Virechan the Snehpana and dry Swedana is given to the patient of Amavata. For Snehpana Ghrita medicated with Dipan, Katu and Tikta guna are used such as Panchtikta ghrita. In Amavastha rukhsa sweda is given and in case of Niramavastha Snighdha sveda can be given. Due to swedana muscular relaxation occurs which relieves pain. For Virechana Eranda taila is used because Erand taila is Ushana and Tikshana in nature due to this Ama get digested. The Sukshama guna suppress the vitiated vata and purges the bowel. Vasti is another Shodhan chikitsa used in this disease are of kshar Vasti or Anuvasan Vasti given by Vatanashak tails like Nirgundi these help in scraping Amadosha and Pacifying Vata Dosha with the help of oily nature.

### Shamanaushadhi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Kwath Yoga</th>
<th>Churna Yoga</th>
<th>Ghrita Yoga</th>
<th>Lepa</th>
<th>Taila</th>
<th>Guggulu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rasna Panchak kwath</td>
<td>Alambushadi Churna</td>
<td>Shunthi Ghrita</td>
<td>Shatapushp adi Lepa</td>
<td>Prasaran Tailam</td>
<td>Simhanada Guggulu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rasnasaptak Kwath</td>
<td>Pimppalyadi Churna</td>
<td>Shringaberad yam Ghrit</td>
<td>Ahimsradi Lepa</td>
<td>Saindhavadyam Tilam</td>
<td>Vatari Guggulu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rasnadi dashmula Kwath</td>
<td>Bhallatakadi Churna</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Panchaguna Tailam</td>
<td>Yograj Guggulu</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Shunthyadi Kwath</td>
<td>Shatapushpadi Churna</td>
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<td>Shiva Guggulu</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**DISCUSSION**

The drug used in modern medicines like NSAIDS have gastrointestinal side effects as well as it causes blood loss and due to which patient suffer from Microcytic anemia, DMARD’s causes Renal, hepatic and marrow suppression. However the use of Ayurvedic medicines can avoid the side effects caused due to modern medicine. Ayurvedic medicine also can treat the root cause of the disease. The drug used in treatment of Amavata like Erand taila has anti-inflammatory property with purgative action, the other drug i.e Guggula suppresses joint swelling, the drug Shunthi with it’s Katu Rasa, Uhana and Vata-Kapha shamak guna has anti-inflammatory and immune-medulatory properties which block the production of...
inflammatory mediators Virechan karma mentioned in the treatment of Amavata mainly responsible for evacuation of Ama which is main culprit of this disease.

CONCLUSION
From the above discussion Ayurvedic principles has a huge potential to treat the Amavata i.e. rheumatoid arthritis without any side effects as compare to modern medicine. The drug mentioned in Ayurveda in the management of Amavata gives promising result and cure the disease by eliminating the root cause of the disease which can not be achieved with the help of modern medicines.

REFERENCES
