

## IMPORTANCE OF AGNI IN PANDU: AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

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## ABSTRACT

*Pandu* is a *Ras Pradoshaj Vikar*, that means in this disease *Ras* gets vitiated primarily and because of that other *Dhatus* also gets affected that eventually causes pale complexion, fatigue, and weakness. In modern medicine Anemia can be considered as a counterpart of *Pandu*. Anemia is a condition in which the number of red blood cells or the hemoglobin concentration within them is lower than normal. *Ayurveda* has described an important factor of digestion and metabolism in our body as *Agni*. Equilibrium state of *Dehagni* is responsible for life, as well as maintenance of complexion, strength, health, nourishment, *Oja*, *Teja* etc. It is considered that in pathogenesis of every disease *Agni* plays a major and significant role. So, this composition explores the significance of *Agni* in the context of *Pandu Roga*.

**KEYWORDS:** *Pandu*, *Agni*, *Ras*, Anemia.

## INTRODUCTION

*Ayurveda*, an ancient medical system with roots spanning epochs, embodies a comprehensive methodology. Embracing a holistic paradigm, it integrates lifestyle modification (*Dincharya-Ritucharya*), dietary principles (*Aahara*), yogic practices (*Pranayama-Aasana*), and therapeutic interventions (herbal-*Rasaushdhi*, etc.). Anchored in preventive, promotive, and remedial dimensions, *Ayurvedic* clinical approaches encompass multifaceted evaluations alongside treatment modalities. Among these, *Ayurvedic* scholars have delineated *Pandu*,

characterized by corporeal pallor skin to the hue of *Pandanus odoratissimus* pollen (*Ketaki Dhuli Sannibham*).

In *Pandu*, due to *nidan sewan* mainly *Pitta* predominant *Tridosha prakopa*, vitiates *Rasa* and *Rakta*. vitiated *rasa and rakta* circulates throughout the body leading to *Dhatu Shithilta* (debility in body tissue) ultimately resulting as well as loss of *sara* (essence of *dhatu*) and debility in *indriyas* (sense organ) to excessive intake of faulty diets (*Pitta vardhak Aahara vihar*). This process induces *Shithilta* (debility) across all *Dhatu* (bodily tissues), resulting ultimately in a reduction of *Rakta* and *Meda Dhatu*. Concomitant with this decline, there is a decrease in *Sneha*, *Rupa* (complexion), *Oja* (vitality), *Varna* (colour), and *Bala* (strength). Various types of *Pandu* are delineated by ancient scholars based on the involvement of *Dosha* i.e. *Vataj*, *Pittaj*, *Kaphaj* and *Sannipataja*. Additionally, *Acharya Charak* has separately identified *Mritikabhakshanjanya Pandu*, while *Acharya Sushruta* has described it distinctly as well.

### NIRUKTI

The word *Pandu* has been derived from "*Padi Nashne Dhatu*" by adding "*Ku*" *Pratyaya* in it, the meaning of which is always taken in sense of "*Nashan*" i.e., the loss. As *Pandu* has been kept under the group which is classified and named according to the change of color, therefore "*Nashan*" should be considered in the sense of "*Varna*" or color.

**NIDANA**-*Nidana* of *Pandu* are divided into:

<i>Aaharaja</i> :	excessive intake of <i>Kshar</i> , <i>Amla Rasa</i> , <i>Lavan Rasa</i> , <i>Ati-Ushana</i> , <i>Viruddha</i> , <i>Asatamya Aahar</i> , <i>Nishpav (Sem-Phali)</i> , <i>Urad</i> , <i>Pinyak</i> , <i>Til tail</i>
<i>Viharaja</i> :	<i>Diwaswapna</i> , <i>Ati-Vyayam</i> , <i>Ati-Maithuna</i> , uses of <i>Panchkarma</i> therapy in <i>Visham Ritu</i> , <i>Vega Vidharan</i>
<i>Mansika</i> :	<i>Kama</i> , <i>Chinta</i> , <i>Bhaya</i> , <i>Shoka</i> , <i>Krodha</i>

### TYPES OF PANDU

*Acharya Charak* have described 5 types of *Pandu* – *Vataj*, *Pittaj*, *Kaphaj*, *Sannipataj*, *Mritikabhakshanjanya*.

### SYMPTOMS (SAMANYA ROOP)

*Karnanada* (Tinnitus), *Hatanala* (low digestion), *Daurbalya* (Weakness), *Annadwesha* (No desire of food), *Shrama* (Fatigue), *Bhrama* (Giddiness), *Gatrashool* (Body ache), *Jwara*

(Fever), *Shwasa* (Dyspnea), *Gaurav* (Heaviness), *Aruchi* (Anorexia), *Akshikootshoth* (Periorbital swelling), *Hataprabha* (Loss of body lusture), *Nidralu* (Drowsiness), *Pindikodweshtana* (Pain in calf muscles), *Arohanaayasa* (Difficulty in climbing).

## ROLE OF AGNI IN SAMPRAPTI OF PANDU

### Mainly *Agni* is of 3 types

- *Jatharagni*
- *Bhootagni* : *Bhootagni* is further divided into 5 types
- *Dhatvagni* : *Dhatvagni* is further divided into 7 types

Out of these *Jatharagni* is the most important one as it regulates the other *Agni* and eventually is responsible for the normal functioning of the body. The pathogenesis of *Pandu* involves a series of steps that begin with the disturbance of *Agni*. The role of *Agni* can be outlined as follows:

*Dhatwagni* refers to the metabolic fires present in each of the body's seven tissues (*Dhatus*): *Rasa* (plasma), *Rakta* (blood), *Mamsa* (muscle), *Meda* (fat), *Asthi* (bone), *Majja* (marrow), and *Shukra* (reproductive tissue). Each tissue is nourished and maintained by the corresponding *Dhatwagni*, which governs the transformation of nutrients into each tissue. In *Pandu Roga*, there is often an impairment in the *Rakta Dhatu* (blood tissue) due to a weakened or deranged *Rakta Dhatwagni*. When this digestive fire is weak or dysfunctional, it leads to improper transformation and digestion of nutrients necessary for healthy blood formation, thus resulting in a deficiency of *Rakta* (blood). This is why one of the primary symptoms of *Pandu Roga* is pallor due to qualitative and quantitative loss of blood. Weak *Rakta Dhatwagni* leads to poor formation of *Rakta Dhatu*, which results in anemic conditions. The *Rakta* (blood) is the most directly affected *Dhatu* in *Pandu Roga*.

*Bhootagni* refers to the *Agni* that governs the five elements (*Pancha Mahabhutas*: earth, water, fire, air, and ether) within the body. Each element has an associated *agni* that helps digest and transform substances in the body. In the context of *Pandu Roga*, the *Apana Vayu* and *Tejas* (the fire element) play critical roles in digestion and metabolic functions, especially in relation to *Rakta Dhatu* formation. Proper function of *Bhootagni* ensures the correct processing of food and nutrients. If the *Bhootagni* is disturbed (e.g., by an imbalance in the *Pitta dosha*, which governs fire), it can lead to malabsorption or improper digestion, affecting the body's ability to nourish the *Rakta Dhatu* and leading to conditions like *Pandu*. A

balanced *Agni* leads to the proper transformation of food into nutrients, which are then absorbed by the body and contribute to the formation of healthy tissues, including *Rakta*. This prevents conditions like Anemia. Weak *Agni* (Indigestion or Low Digestive Fire): In the case of *Pandu*, weak *Agni* leads to incomplete digestion of food, poor absorption of nutrients, and insufficient nourishment of the *Rakta Dhatu*, which causes the symptoms of pallor and fatigue.

### Initial Disruption of *Agni*

In *Pandu*, the digestive fire (*Agni*) is often impaired, leading to a reduction in the body's ability to process and absorb nutrients. When *Agni* is weak (known as *Mandagni*), the digestive process becomes inefficient, resulting in the improper digestion of food and *Ahara* (diet).

This leads to the formation of *Ama* (undigested, toxic material), which has a direct impact on the quality of the body's tissues (*Dhatus*), including *Rakta* (blood). *Ama* is considered a precursor to many diseases, including *Pandu*.

### Impaired Digestion and Nutrient Absorption

A weak *Agni*, result in production of either less quantity of blood (*Rakta*) or of lead to nutrients necessary for proper formation (Erythropoiesis) poor absorbtion/metabolism of necessary nutrient responsible for synthesis of blood (Erytheropoesis). the transformation of food into essential nutrients, especially *Rasa* (the nutrient fluid derived from food), *Rakta* (blood), and other tissues, is disrupted. The formation of *Rakta Dhatu* becomes suboptimal, leading to deficient and impaired blood production.

Iron deficiency anemia (IDA) can have profound effects on the gut and digestive system, contributing to poor "*Agni*" (digestive fire) in Ayurvedic terms, which refers to the body's ability to metabolize and absorb nutrients.

Iron is an essential nutrient that plays a critical role in various bodily functions, particularly in oxygen transport and cellular metabolism. However, it also has a strong connection to gut health. The gastrointestinal (GI) system, particularly the small intestine, is involved in the absorption of iron, and any dysfunction in the gut can worsen iron deficiency or Anemia.

Iron deficiency is known to decrease *Agni*, which manifests in several ways: iron deficiency may lead to alterations in gut microbiota, favoring the growth of pathogens like *Helicobacter*

pylori, which thrives in an acidic stomach environment. This can further damage gut health and hinder the digestive process, contributing to low *Agni*.

One of the hallmark symptoms of iron deficiency anemia is reduced appetite (anorexia), which contributes to malnutrition. This loss of appetite affects the intake of essential nutrients, including iron itself, which further exacerbates the deficiency. Poor nutrition also weakens the digestive system's ability to function properly, further damaging *Agni* and reducing the body's ability to assimilate nutrients from food.

### **Vitiation of *Dosha***

When *Agni* is weak, it results in the production of *Ama* (toxins) and the vitiation of the *Tridosha* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*). In the case of *Pandu*, there is often an imbalance in *Pitta* dosha, which leads to a disturbance in the *Rakta Dhatu* and *Raktagni*.

### **Excessive *Ama* and *Rakta* Deterioration**

As the digestive fire (*Agni*) remains weak and *Ama* accumulates, it further disrupts the balance of the body's *Dhatu*. The formation of *Rakta* (blood) becomes compromised, and the quality of the blood deteriorates.

*Ama* obstructs the channels and weakens the tissues, resulting in *Pandu* symptoms such as pallor, fatigue, weakness, and poor circulation. Since blood is crucial for nourishing the body, this deficiency further leads to a decline in overall health.

## **DISCUSSION**

1. Purpose of *Agni* in Digestion- *Agni* is considered the essential factor responsible for digestion and metabolism. Proper *Agni* ensures the proper breakdown of food, leading to the arrangement of essential nutrients like as '*Rasa*' (plasma) and '*Rakta*' (blood). In individual suffering from *Pandu Roga*, weak *Agni* results in inappropriate digestion, leading to the conformation of '*Ama*' (poisonous metabolic waste) and nutrient deficiencies, particularly of iron and other vital factors necessary for healthy blood product.
2. *Agni* and Nutrient Absorption. The quality of *Agni* directly influences the engrossment of nutrients. When *Agni* is serving optimally, nutrients from food are efficiently assimilated into the body. Again, in cases of decreased *Agni*, indeed a nutrient-rich diet may fail to address deficiencies, worsening the symptoms of *Pandu Roga*.

3. Medicinal Implications. Ayurvedic treatment for *Pandu Roga* focuses on rejuvenating *Agni* through nutritive changes, herbal remedies, and lifestyle changes. Specific herbs like as *Ashwagandha*, *Punarnava*, and *Amla* are known to enhance *Agni* and enhance nutrient immersion. also, practices similar as *Panchakarma* (detoxification) can help rule out *Ama*, thereby restoring balance and upgrading overall health.

## CONCLUSION

*Agni* is a central conception in Ayurveda that plays a vital role in the averting and treatment of *Pandu*. The relationship between *Agni* and *Pandu* highlights the momentousness of digestive health in helping and managing Anemia. By prioritizing the strengthening of *Agni*, *Ayurvedic* expounders can address the root causes of *Pandu Roga* rather than merely easing symptoms. The contemporary understanding of nutrition and its impeachments for health further supports the *Ayurvedic* perspective on the necessity of a well- working digestive system. As the global frequency of Anemia continues to rise, integrating *Ayurvedic* principles, particularly the generalization of *Agni*, into contemporary health practices could offer extravagant perceptiveness for precluding and treatment. By emphasizing the significance of digestive health and nutrient engrossment, *Ayurveda* provides a comprehensive infrastructure for addressing Anemia holistically. Future investigation and clinical studies examining the effectiveness of *Ayurvedic* treatments in convergency with contemporary medical practices may enhance our understanding of this condition and refine health outcomes for those affected by *Pandu Roga*.

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