

## ROLE OF AGNI IN UDARA ROGA: A REVIEW

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## ABSTRACT

*Agni* plays a pivotal role in maintaining person's health and overall wellbeing. Its optimal functioning is crucial for the efficacious, digestion, absorption and assimilation of nutrients from ingested food. *Agni* is responsible for one's longevity, immunity and health. Detrimental effects of sedentary lifestyle and inappropriate dietary habits on *Agni* leads to many diseases such as *Udara Roga*. Its role in *Udara Roga* highlights its centrality in both the prevention and treatment of disorders rooted in digestive dysfunction. In *Udara Roga*, the predominant disruption is often *Mandagni*, where weakened digestive capacity results in incomplete metabolism, resulting in accumulation of waste products including *Dosha* and *Mala* between skin and muscle tissue, this accumulation of *Dosha* contaminates *Prana Vayu*, *Agni* and *Apana Vayu* blocking the upward and downward channels of circulation which results in distension of abdomen.

**KEYWORDS:** *Udara Roga*, *Mandagni*, *Mala*, Abdominal distension, *Dosha*

## INTRODUCTION

*Udara Roga* is a broad term in *Ayurveda* which encompasses various abdominal diseases and disorders. It refers to any condition that affects the abdominal region including intestines, spleen, liver etc *Udara Roga* refers to the disease which occur in abdominal cavity causing the distension of abdomen due to lodging of toxic waste in between *Twak* (skin) and *Mansa* (muscle tissue).<sup>[1]</sup> It is one of the disease of *Ashtamahagada*<sup>[2]</sup> mentioned in classical texts. It

is a *Tridoshaja vyadhi* leading to *Malasanchaya* (accumulation of morbid matter) in abdominal region and causes generalized abdominal distension. *Mandagni* (decrease in digestive strength) and *Mal Vridhhi* (accumulation of morbid waste) causes obstruction of channels and localization of vitiated *Dosha* in between skin and muscle tissue.

*Udara Roga* is classified into 8 types<sup>[3]</sup> – *Vatodara*, *Pittodara*, *Kaphodara*, *Sannipatodara*, *Plihodara* (Splenomegaly), *Chiddhrodara* (abdominal enlargement due to intestinal perforation), *Baddhgudodara* (enlargement of abdomen due to intestinal obstruction), *Jalodara* (Ascites).

*Agni* is responsible for longevity, complexion, strength, health, enthusiasm, well built, lusture, immunity.

*Agni* in *Ayurveda* encompasses 13 distinct categories which can be stratified into 3 primary classifications.

1. *Jathargni*- the digestive fire responsible for catabolism of ingested food
2. *Bhutagni*- A quintet of *Agni* entities governing the digestion and metabolism of *Panchamahabhoot* (5 fundamental elements)
3. *Dhatvagni*- *Agni* entities regulating the nourishment and metabolism of seven *dhatu*s (tissues) in the human body.

Other classification of *Agni* can be done on the basis of strength of digestive fire namely.

- *Mandagni* (weakened digestion)
- *Vishmagni* (erratic digestion)
- *Tikshmagni* (excessive digestion)
- *Samagni* (adequate digestion)

*Acharya Charak* has described the importance of *Agni* as: “The *Aayu* (age), *Varna* (complexion), *Bala* (strength), *Swasthya* (health), *Utsaha* (enthusiasm), *Upchaya* (development), *Prabha* (radiance), *Ojas* (vital strength), *Tejas* (valour), *Vaya* (stage of life), and *Prana* (life)- all depend upon *Deha-agni*. As Long as *Agni* is normal person can have healthy life, vitiation of *Agni* leads person to unhealthy life and loss of *Agni* leads to loss of life.<sup>[4]</sup>”

The paramount importance of *Agni* can be emphasize by other statement mentioned by *Acharya Vagbhata*, which quotes that -“Generally most diseases occur due to *Mandagni* but specifically it leads to *Udara Roga*”.<sup>[5]</sup>

### ***Udara Roga and it's Relation to Agni***

**Etiology:** Three main Etiologies are considered in *Ayurveda* for the occurrence of *Udara Roga*- *Malsanchaya* (accumulation of morbid products), *Mandagni* (weak digestive power) and *Paap Karma* (evil deeds), out of which *Mandagni* (weak digestive power) is the fundamental cause.<sup>[6]</sup>

***Samprapti of Udara Roga:*** In the event of diminution of digestive efficacy, consumption of contaminated food leads to indigestion, which results in accumulation of *Dosha*. This causes vitiation of *Prana Vayu*, *Agni* and *Apana Vayu*, consequences in obstructing both *Swedavaha* and *Ambuvaha Srotas* (channels) of circulation. The morbid matter and vitiated *dosha* lodge between *Mansa*(muscle tissue) and *Twak* (skin) causes distension in abdomen called *Udara Roga*.<sup>[7]</sup>

**General Symptoms:** The manifestations of *Udara Roga* includes Abdominal distension, gurgling sound from abdomen, swelling in hands and feet, weak digestion, difficulty in walking, dry mouth, emaciation, loss of physical strength, inability to eat etc. In *Ayurvedic* literature, *Acharyas* unanimously agree in the understanding of Symptom low digestive fire. *Acharya Charaka* termed it as *Mandagni* and *Acharya Madhava*<sup>[8]</sup> and *Acharaya Sushrut*<sup>[9]</sup> both termed it as *Durbalagni*.

## **MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY**

Data is collected from ancient *Ayurvedic* Texts

*Charaka Samhita*

*Susruta Samhita*

*Ashtang Hridaya*

*Madhav Nidana*

## **DISCUSSION**

This study explores the *Ayurvedic* conceptual framework of *Udara Roga*, emphasizing the centrality of *Agni* (digestive fire) in maintaining digestive health and its pivotal role in the pathogenesis of abdominal distension and related disorders. This analysis underscores

*Mandagni* (weak digestive power) as the principal etiological factor, linking impaired digestion to the accumulation of *Ama* (toxic, undigested substances) and the subsequent vitiation of *Dosha*.

The systemic pathology of *Udara Roga* is rooted in the imbalance of the three *Dosha* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*), with a vitiation of predominantly *Vata Dosha*. The disturbed *Agni* results in the production of *Ama* which leads to the obstruction of both upward and downward *Srotas* (channels) This blockage results in a cascade of symptoms including emaciation, difficulty in walking, dryness of mouth, abdominal distension and systemic weakness etc. The insights from classical texts align with the modern understanding of metabolic disorders, particularly conditions such as ascites, which is highly emphasized as an advanced manifestation of *Udara Roga*.

A major strength of *Ayurvedic* theory lies in its holistic view of digestive health, illustrating the interconnectedness of physiological systems. The focus on *Nidan Parivarjan* (avoiding causative factors), *Deepana dravya* (digestive stimulants), and *Srotoshodhan* (channel-clearing therapies) in the management of *Udara Roga* reflects an collective approach to restoring digestive balance. This aligns with contemporary approaches in integrative medicine, which stress dietary and lifestyle modifications, detoxification, and the restoration of microbiome health.

## CONCLUSION

The *Ayurvedic* concept of *Agni* provides a profound framework for understanding the etiology and management of *Udara Roga*. By addressing the root cause—*Agni* dysfunction—*Ayurveda* offers a holistic approach that not only alleviates symptoms but also restores the digestive and metabolic balance essential for long-term health.

By integrating classical *Ayurvedic* principles with contemporary understanding, the therapeutic importance of *Agni* in *Udara Roga* continues to offer profound insights and solutions for maintaining abdominal health. Ensuring the balance of *Agni* is thus not merely a treatment strategy but a vital act of preserving life and well-being in accordance with *Ayurvedic* wisdom. Therefore, to control and stimulate *Agni*, it's essential to pay attention to our diet and lifestyle. Specifically *Nidan Parivarjan*, *Deepan dravya*, *Srotoshodhan* should be done in *Udara Roga*.

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