

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW ON AGNI & ITS IMPORTANCE

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ABSTRACT

All organisms eat foods that contain different nutrients, and the gastrointestinal tract (GIT) is where *Agni* plays a crucial part in the metabolic process. In Ayurveda, the idea of *Agni* and digestion has been systematically explained. Although the word "*Agni*" literally means "fire," in Ayurveda it refers to a variety of components that affect and influence how a living thing digests and uses its energy. The three sets of *Agni*—*Jatharagni*, *Bhutagni*, and *Dhatvagni*—work in combination with the processes of digestion, metabolism, and assimilation. *Agni* is in charge of vital breath, strength, health, and longevity. It also determines how much food should be eaten in order for life to be maintained, food must be broken down, absorbed, and assimilated. Regarding the significance of *Agni*, *Acharya Charaka*

stated that a person dies when their *Agni* function is stopped, but when their *Agni* is *Sama*, they are completely well and will live a long, happy, and healthy life. However, a person's entire metabolism would be disrupted if his *Agni* were vitiated, leading to illness and poor health. *Agni* is hence seen as the *Moola* of life.

KEYWORDS: *Agni*, *Jatharagni*, *Bhutagni*, *Dhatwagni*,

INTRODUCTION

According to Ayurveda, the human body is a replica of the cosmos; everything that exists in the cosmos is represented in the human body, perhaps in a different form. Within the human body, the physiological *Agni* (fire) and the biological *Agni* are closely related. *Agni* is a crucial component for preserving health. *Acharya Charaka* asserts that *Agni* is necessary for the balance and vitiation of *Dosha*, while *Acharya Sushruta* states that all *Doshas*, *Dhatu*, *Mala*, and *Agni* must be in balance with their typical functioning for human well-being. *Agni*

is a symbol for the body's metabolic and transformational processes, which include food digestion, absorption, assimilation, and conversion into nutrients and energy. It is regarded as one of the essential elements in charge of preserving health and vitality. *Agni's* balance and strength are thought to be essential for preserving good health. Proper digestion, waste product removal, and the body's production of essential energy (*Ojas*) are all maintained when *Agni* is functioning at its best. *Agni* imbalance, on the other hand, can result in a number of health problems, such as indigestion, insufficient absorption, and the buildup of toxins (*Ama*) in the body. Because of *Agni's* impairment, *Ama* is the root cause of all ailments. As a result, the state of the *Agni* determines the body's health and illness.

NIRUKTI OF AGNI

The word *Agni* is derived from – *Ang Dhatu & Gati Pratyaya* which means widely spreading.

SYNONYMS OF AGNI

According to *Shabdakalpadruma*, there are 61 synonyms of *Agni* e.g. *Vaishwanara*, *SarvaPaka*, *Tanoonpata*, *Amivachantana*, *Damunasa*, *Shuchi*, *Vishwambhara*, *Rudra*, *Tejasa*, *Shikhi*, *Anala*, *Vanhi*, etc.

KOSTHAGNI VYAPARA (FUNCTIONS OF DIGESTIVE FIRE)

After the food is consumed, it is effectively cooked using *Pachaka Pitta* and *Kosthagni* to produce two substances: *Kitta bhaga*, (food waste products), and *Sarabhaga*, also known as *Ahara rasa* (essence of food). The first *Dhatu* (first tissue) of the body, *Rasadhatu*, is created when the *Dhatwagni & Bhutagni* perform additional alterations on the *Sarabhaga* or *Ahara rasa*. The nutrients obtained from food and needed by the *Dhatus* (tissues) are found in the *Rasadhatu*. All throughout the body, this *Rasa Dhatu* provides the nutrients for all other *Dhatus*, which use the material for growth (metabolism).^[1]

TYPES OF AGNI

Agni is found in every single *Dhatu Paramanu* (cell) in the body, it is innumerable. However, several traditional Ayurvedic scriptures include different numbers of *Agni*. According to *Acharya Charaka* there are 13 types of *Agni*. *Jatharagni* 1, *Bhutagni* 5, and *Dhatvagni* 7.^[2]

Acharya Sushruta describes five different forms of *Agni*, which are *Pachakagni*, *Ranjakagni*, *Alochakagni*, *Sadhakagni*, and *Bhrajakagni*.^[3] Several forms of *Agni* have been described by *Acharya Vagbhata*, includes *Audaryagni*-1, *Bhutagnis*-5,^[4] *Dhatvagnis*-7, *Dhoshagni*-3, and

Malagni-3^[5] Pitta-5. Sharangadhara described 5 types of Pitta as Agni i.e. Pachaka, Bhrajaka, Ranjaka, Alochaka and Sadhaka

Agni has been divided into 13 types according to the function and site of action.

1. Jatharagni –Agni present in the Stomach & duodenum.
2. Bhutagni: Agni made up of five fundamental components.
3. Dhatwagni: Each of the seven Dhatus contains one of the seven Agni.

As a result, they are divided into three groups: Dhatvagni, Bhutagni, and Jatharagni.

JATHARAGNI

The Agni or bioenergy found in the Jathara (stomach and duodenum) is known as Jatharagni. The seat is called the Grahani (duodenum). It gets its name from the fact that it temporarily withholds food inside the Amashaya (stomach) to aid in digestion. It is the Kala called "Pittadhara," which is located at the entrance of the Pakvashaya (intestine) and serves as a bolt to the door of the food channel or passageway. It is in charge of all Bhutagni and Dhatvagni. Life, health, bravery, Ojas (the essence of the Dhatus), and the strength of all Bhutagni and Dhatvagni are all attributed to it. Both the strength of Agni and the strength of the Grahani originate from Agni itself. When the Agni becomes vitiated, the Grahani too becomes vitiated and develops illness.^[6]

Jatharagni is divided into four groups based on how well it aids in human digestion: Vishamagni, Tikshanagni, Mandagni, and Samagni.^[7]

(A). Samagni^[8,11]

It's Agni's physiological state. The Samagni correctly ingest and digest food at the appropriate time. Consequently, this improves the Dhatus (the body's supporting tissues) quality. Samagni individuals are consistently hale and healthy.

(B). Vishamagni

Vishamagni is characterized by improper digestion and metabolism, which can occasionally result in normal functions followed by abnormal ones. Symptoms include flatulence, abdominal Pain, diarrhoea, heaviness in the abdomen, intestinal gurgling, and straining exercises to get rid of stools. Various forms of Vata Vyadhi are produced when this Agni is impacted by the Vata Dosha.

(C). Tikshnagni

Tikshnagni is a condition in which, food regardless of its form is digested extremely quickly. According to *Acharya Shushruta* food digests extremely swiftly and causes hunger or the need for food when the power of digestion is raised from normal to above average. This condition is known as “*Bhasmak Roga*”. *Tikshnagni* state gives rise to manifestation of *Pittaja Vyadhi*.

(d). Mandagni

Slow digestive power or capacity is known as *Mandagni*. People with *Mandagni* consume very little food since they can't even digest the smallest quantity of food. It digests the least amount of food in the greatest amount of time and is characterized by head and abdominal heaviness, coughing, dyspnea, excessive salivation, vomiting, and physical weakness. *Kaphaja Vikara* manifests itself in the *Mandagni* condition.

BHUTAGNI

The one found in a basic element (*Bhutas*) is called *Bhutagni*. Each of the five fundamental elements—*Parthiva* (earth), *Apya* (water), *Tejas* (Fire), *Vayavya* (Air), and *Nabhasa* (ether)—has five *Agni*. According to *Acharya Charaka*, each of the five *Bhutagni* breaks down a portion of the element found in food. The food we eat are *Panchamahbhovtic* (have all five components). Each *Bhuta* feeds their own unique *Bhoutika* body parts with processed material that has their components and qualities after food has been processed by *Bhutagni*.¹² In order for *Bhutagni Paka* to become endogenous, all exogenous substances must be exposed to it. In this way, tissues are properly sustained.

DHATVAGNI^[13]

Each of the bodies seven *Dhatus*, or elemental tissues, has its own *Agni* to break down the nutrients that are given to it by their respective *Srotas*.

1. *Rasagni* present in the *Rasa Dhatu*.
2. *Raktagni* present in the *Rakta Dhatu*.
3. *Mamsagni* present in the *Mamsa Dhatu*.
4. *Medagni* present in the *Meda Dhatu*.
5. *Asthyagni* present in the *Asthi Dhatu*.
6. *Majjagni* present in the *Majja Dhatu*.
7. *Shukragni* present in the *Shukra Dhatu*.

The distinct metabolic and digestive functions that take place at every *Dhatu* level are represented by *Dhatvagni*. It is in charge of digesting the food consumed and removing the nutrients required to support and refuels the corresponding *Dhatus*. Every *Dhatvagni* is associated with a certain tissue and regulates the development, upkeep, and removal of waste materials from that tissue. For instance, *Rasa Dhatvagni* controls the development and maintenance of plasma tissue by acting on plasma. In a similar manner, *Rakta Dhatvagni* controls blood tissue maintenance and transformation among other things.

The appropriate growth and functioning of the *Dhatus* is assured when the *Dhatvagni* functioning at its best. Nonetheless, if *Dhatvagni* is out of balance or impaired, it can result in a number of health problems, such as malformations of the tissue, nutritional deficits etc.

IMPORTANCE OF AGNI

Bala (strength), *Varna* (colour), *Swasthya* (health), *Utsaha* (enthusiasm), *Upachaya* (development of the body), *Prabha* (complexion), *Ojas* (strength), *Tejas* (valour), *Vaya* (age), and even *Ayu* (life) - all depend on *Agni* and its function. Man can live a long, healthy life as long as his *Agni* is normal; loss of *Agni* results in death.^[14]

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda holds that *Agni*, a highly superior entity in charge of digestion and metabolism is the primary component necessary for life to exist. The majority of the ailments we are confronting are brought on by poor dietary and lifestyle choices. *Agni dushti* and a host of other illnesses are caused by the eating of unwholesome food. *Agni* is essential for the body's removal of waste and toxins. A healthy *Agni* inhibits the production of *Ama*, a toxic sticky substance that can impair physiological processes and cause illness. When *Agni* is operating properly, it assists the liver, kidneys, and other organs' detoxifying activities, which enhances general health. Even with a healthy diet, malabsorption and nutrient shortages may result from weak or unbalanced *Agni*. Weakness, exhaustion, and weakened immunity are among the most of the health problems that may arise from this. Maintaining *Agni* properly prolongs life, and disrupting it can lead to a number of diseases.

CONCLUSION

Agni is essential to a person's ability to sustain optimum health. In Clinical practice, the patient's *Agni Pariksha* is crucial since it serves as the foundation for determining the course of treatment in the future. *Agni* is the sole determinant of the body's state of health and

illness. Proper digestion, absorption, and metabolism are ensured by balanced *Agni*, which supports tissue and organ sustenance. It also supports the elimination of toxins and waste, preventing the accumulation of harmful substances that can lead to imbalances and diseases. Food should be properly consumed to protect *Agni* since it serves as fuel. *Agni* is disturbed and illness develops in the body if a person is malnourished or consumes excessive amounts of food for an extended period of time. *Jatharagni* plays a crucial role in the efficient digestion of food by facilitating the release of several chemicals, enzymes, etc. Furthermore, the body uses *Dhatwagni* and *Bhutagni* to aid in the digestion, absorption, and assimilation of dietary items. According to Ayurveda, all ailments originate from a disruption in the *Agni*'s activity.

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