

REVIEW ON DIFFERENT CONCEPTS OF CONSTIPATION MENTIONED IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Constipation is defined as infrequent bowel movements, excessive straining, a sense of incomplete evacuation, failed or lengthy attempts to defecate, use of digital manoeuvres for evacuation of stool, abdominal bloating, and hard consistency of stools and in ayurved defined as *mal-vibandha*, *Mal-nigraha*, *Katin mal pravrutti*. It is a common and challenging complaint for physician as well as Proctologist surgeons, but a systematic approach to evaluate patients with constipation can lead to effective treatments. Different conditions mention in *ayurved* as symptom of *Mal-vibandha* cause due to various disease. There are multiple reference mention in ayurved context to the mal vibandha and different treatment approach is mention according to

the cause of mal vibandha. According to the cause constipation treatment changes. In this article we collect maximum reference and treatment references mentioned in ayurved. We defined what is constipation. Physiology of stool formation according to ayurved. Which bad food habits hampers day to day defecation process. What is role of food in constipation. Maximum times bad food habits causes constipation. Preventive and curative measures is also mentioned. In discussion part there is tabulation format use and also we discuss each and every ayurved pathology and its treatment.

KEYWORDS: Mal-vibandha, Constipation, Bowels, Badhapurisha, Purishavaha Srotas.

INTRODUCTION

The definition of constipation includes excessive straining, a sense of incomplete evacuation,

failed or lengthy attempts to defecate, use of digital manoeuvres for evacuation of stool, abdominal bloating, and hard consistency of stools.^[1]

The highest prevalence of constipation was found in older adults in Africa at 32.3% and the lowest in Asia at 13.6%.^[2] Constipation is the common problem faced by every people. Constipation is burning problem in today's healthcare practices, difficult to rule out causes and treatment. If patients don't improve with dietary or lifestyle changes, the majority of pharmacologic treatment for prospective long-term therapy is laxatives.

Diagnostic testing is required to comprehend the underlying anorectal and/or colonic pathophysiology following a failed empiric use of laxatives.

Ayurveda is an ancient clinical science. Constipation is not mentioned as a specific disease but as a symptom of multiple diseases. Ayurveda's basic principles are based on tridosha theory.

When the soul enters the fertilised ovum, life begins, and human prakriti depends on mahabhuta's predominance. Thus, the five fundamental eternal substances—the soul, Akash, Vayu, Tej, Aapa, and Prithvi—are combined to form all living things and are known as the Panchamahabuta. The brilliance of Ayurveda is found in its analysis of a theory of the preservation of health and the origins of disease. The tridosha theory of Ayurveda justifies the demands of the past while also considering the needs of the present and future. The health of the human body is preserved by these three doshas. The maintenance of healthy health depends on the balance of these three fundamental chemicals, similar to how their imbalance might result in death or the dissolution of the body.^[3] There are three primary types of malas. Sweda, Mutra, and Shakrut After food has been broken down in the large intestine, kitta is generated. This topic is about purisha, which is the undigested food residue that Apan Vayu expels from the pakvashaya.^[4]

Samprapti is the name given to the complete phenomenon, which includes the vitiation of dosha and the development of sickness.^[5] According to Vagbhata, samprapti is the study of sickness and deals with the process of dosha vitiation, which causes them to spread throughout the body and manifest as disease signs and symptoms. Therefore, "Nidan panchaka" refers to the study of all alterations occurring in the body as a result of the etiological elements causing the disease.^[6] It addresses both the clinical and sub-clinical stages of disease's impact on the body. In this context, Vagbhata says the following, which is

relevant the doctor should first determine the type of disease, the Dosha and Dhatu derangements that led to it, the organ in which it manifested, and the circumstances that led to this derangement before the sickness could start. When examining a patient, a doctor must take a number of factors into account before making a diagnosis and starting treatment. These factors include the patient's age, mental state, body composition and any underlying diseases, place of residence, strength and digestion power, diet and other small details specific to the patient. Anyone who uses their approach will never make a mistake.^[7]

About Mala - Vyakhya

After digestion, food is separated into two parts, sara and kitta. Sara bhag is also known as Aahar rasa, while kitta bhag is also known as mala, sweda, mutra, purisha, etc.^[8] In Sharirasthana, Charka clarified the meaning of mala, i.e. There are two categories of body parts mala and (dhatu)prasad. The toxic component, known as a "mala portion," is formed in the body's hollow spaces and expelled through an exterior aperture, or "khamala". Anything damaging to the body and vitiated dosha are referred to as mala.^[9] Purisha, i.e., digested food waste, forms after complete and proper digestion. If digestion is not proper, then the patient passes frequent stools because improper digestion causes stagnation or impaction of stools.

After some time, the patient takes some liquid or solid food, then peristaltic movement starts, and the patient passes stool again. This happens due to improper digestion. Sometimes, if the patient doesn't take enough food, proper stool is not formed, proper evacuatary movement is not happening, and the patient feels constipated. Hence stool formation is completely depend upon proper digestion.

Material and method –Source of Litrature

Litrature was taken from Authentic Search engine(Google Scholar, Pubmed) and Classicle Ayurveda Texts. E.g. Charak Samhita, Sushruth Samhita, Ashtang Hridaya.

Concept of Vibandha and Constipation

Ayurveda - In Ayurveda, constipation is described under the following terms: Vibandha, Mala Nigraha, Badha Purisha, Katin Purisha Pravrutti, and Varcha Shosha. These are conditions to which constipation is given as symptoms, i.e., Purisha kshaya, Vataj pandu, Aama, Pakvashayagata vata, Koshtaashrita vata, Vataj gulma, Purisha Aavrita vata, Vistabdhaajirna, Vata vrudhi, Vataj grahani, Udhavarta, Alasaka, Udar roga.

Ayurveda describes every condition of mal vibandha. Different conditions are mentioned in Ayurveda that lead to constipation. The main cause of constipation is ama. Ayurveda focuses on the digestive fire that is the agni. All body physiology depends on the agni. If there is indigestion, then it leads to constipation, so improper digestion is an important pathology in constipation.

Purish Utapati depends upon proper digestion: pachak pitta, saman vayu, apan vayu, kledhak kapha, astha vidha ahar visheshayatan, and purishadhara kala. Balanced Vata, Pitta, Kapha, Saarvan Dhatu, a balanced amount of Sneha, Udak, and various diseases cause deformities in the formation and evacuation of stool. Koshta – Krurar and Mrudhu.

Constituents of Purish: Kitta Ansha of Purish, Majja Dhatu Sneha, Udak – watery content.

If dhatu Kshaya is present this will also affect proper formation of stool as majja Sneha contribute to purish gata senha also in vataj pandu lakshan - Varcha Shosh is symptom given and in pandu there is alpa raktha and alpa medho as described by Acharya Charak. So all dhatu contribute to proper formation of stool.

Ashta vidha ahara visheshayatana (eight specific factors for diet)

- These are the eight distinct components of the dietary method: prakriti (nature), karana (processing), samyoga (combination), rashi (amount), desha (location), kala (time/stage of the disease), upayoga-samstha (usage regulations), and upayoktra (consumer).

Methods of taking meals (Ahara vidhi vidhana)- The prescribed method of eating for the healthy and the sick (in certain cases) who take wholesome food timely and habitually is that one should eat warm, unctuous food in proper quantity, after the previously consumed food is digested. The food eaten should be non-antagonistic (i.e., not unsuitable to one's constitution or habit) and should be consumed in a favorable place, with all the favorable accessories, not too fast, not too slow, not while talking or laughing, and with full concentration.

Snigdhamashninyat, Ushnamashninyat (Eat warm and freshly cooked food, Eat unctuous food)

- Warm food is relished, it enhances agni, gets digested early and stimulates the peristaltic movements and there by evacuates vata, reduces the kapha in intestinal area. Unctuous food is relished, stimulates agni and peristaltic movements, the body is adequately nourished, strengthens the sense organs and also enhances vigour and complexion.

Matravadashniyat (Eat in proper quantity) - In appropriate quantity, the food enhances the life expectancy of the person by keeping the tridosha- vata, pitta and kapha in balance, gets easily propelled down towards the rectum, does not affect the digestive power and thus gets digested and assimilated without any disturbances.

One should eat when the previous meal is digested because if one eats before earlier meal is digested, mixing with undigested food will vitiate all the dosha quickly. On the other hand, when one eats after the previous meal is well digested, the dosha do not get vitiated or unsettled from their natural locations, agni is stimulated, appetite is increased, entrances of the channels get cleared, eructation is pure, heart is normal, there are natural urges to pass bodily wastes and there is no obstruction to their passage, and the eaten food enhances one's life without afflicting any dhatu.

Ashta vidha ahar vidhi is very important factor in normal stool formation.^[10]

Modern - Constipation refers to persistent, difficult, infrequent, or seemingly incomplete Defecation. Most persons have at least three bowel movements per week; however, low stool frequency alone is not the sole criterion for the diagnosis of constipation. Many constipated patients have a normal frequency of defecation but complain of excessive straining, hard stools, lower abdominal fullness, or a sense of incomplete evacuation. The individual patient's symptoms must be analyzed in detail to ascertain what is meant by "constipation" or "difficulty" with defecation. Stool form and consistency are well correlated with the time elapsed from the preceding defecation. Hard, pellety stools occur with slow transit, whereas loose, watery stools are associated with rapid transit. Both small pellety or very large stools are more difficult to expel than normal stools.

^[11]Harrison medicine book

Preventive Measure in Ayurveda – Ayurveda is an ancient life science focused on the preservation of health and prevention of disease. Ayurveda mainly focuses on correcting faulty dietary intake and also improving digestive fire. If the digestive fire is in good condition, then food digestion will be proper and stools will be properly formed. Consume a diet high in fibre. Do not resist the impulse to urinate and defecation. Maintain your fluid intake. Every day, sip 6 to 8 glasses of water. Establish a schedule. Don't consume processed foods or alcohol. Try to stay active and go to the gym frequently. Consume foods high in probiotics, including yoghurt.

Mechanism of passing stool

Colonic mass movements and peristalsis move intestinal contents distally into the rectum. Rectal filling activates mechanoreceptors in the rectal wall causing awareness of the need to defecate. As stool reaches the rectum, a small amount is allowed to pass through to the anal canal by an involuntary relaxation of the internal anal sphincter. This action, known as the rectoanal inhibitory reflex, is necessary for anal sampling, which is the process of determining if the rectal contents are of the gaseous, solid, or liquid form. At this time, if defecation is not socially acceptable or convenient, the rectal wall relaxes, and the need to defecate subsides temporarily. If it is a proper time to defecate, the person generally either sits or squats depending on their environment. Next, contraction of the abdominal muscles and performing the Valsalva maneuver while simultaneously relaxing the external anal sphincter and puborectalis muscle will expel feces from the body due to the pressure gradient generated between the rectum and anal canal. After fecal expulsion, the closing reflex occurs, which involves the external anal sphincter regaining its tone to maintain continence at rest.^[12] Rectal afferent nerves are responsible for the sensation of rectal fullness and the urge to defecate. Sacral nerves S2-S4 supply innervation to the muscles most involved in the act of defecation via the pudendal nerve.

Curative Measure

Ayurveda focuses on resolving the vata imbalance by employing herbs or internal and external oleations to treat constipation. External oleation includes a body massage, whilst internal oleation entails ingesting herbal ghees or oils. Additionally, some yoga asanas aid in bowel movement and constipation relief. According to different causes constipation treatment changes.

Drugs for Mal-Vibandha - Avipattikar Churna, Dhanyapanchaka Kwatha, Narach churanam, Sukumarkumarak Ghrutam, Pranada Gutuka, Eranda tel pana, Abhayadi Gutika, Eranda haritaki churna, Abhyarishta, Drakshavaleha, Drakshasav, Amrutaprash Ghruta.

DISCUSSION

Various Diseases mentioned in Charaka Samhita, AshtangaHriday, Sushruta Samhita etc have been collected. Data was collected from Pubmed, National library of medicine. A detailed description of these Various diseases is seen in the following tables.

Table No. 1: Different conditions of constipation mention in Ayurveda.

Pathology	Sign and Symptoms	Treatment
Purisha Kshaya	Faeces not form	Mash, Yava, Dhanya, Mamsa, Amla dravya ^[13]
Aama ^[14]	Mala sanga (Stagnant faeces)	Langhan, Koshna peya, laghu Anna, ruksha odan, Tikta yush, Pachan(Yog Ratnakar)
Saam PurishaLakshana	Guru, Apakva Purisha (Heavy and improperly digested stool) ^[15]	Undigested food treatment is to do fasting and digestive drugs like Sunta, Marich, Pimpali.
Pakvashayagata Vayu ^[16]	Krichha pravrutti ofpurisha (very hard to pass stool)	Treated as udhavarta -Varti, Niruha basti, Anuvasan basti, Virechan, Anuloman bhojan ^[17]
Vataj gulma	Vibandha of anil and faeces (Do notpass flatus and stool)	Sehan, Abhangya, Niruha, Anuvasan, snigdha Anna. ^[18]
Koshta Aashritvata	Nigraha mutra- varchas (complete obstruction of urine and stool) ^[19]	Kshar, Dipan, pachan dravya, Amla dravya ^[20]
Vidhaavrit vata	Vibandha (After taking Sneha anahadevelops) passes stool with difficulty, dry stool and takes long time fordefecation.	Eranda taila, Basti. ^[21]
Vistabdhajirna	Mala vata Apravruti (Do not pass stool and flatus) associated with abdomen pain and distention	Dipan, Pachan, Anulomna ^[22]
Vatavrudhi	Aanaha, Shakritagraha (Abdomen distention with obstruction ofstool) ^[23]	
Vataj grahaniLakshana	Stools are evacuated with difficulty and consume time. Feces are either watery, dry, small sized associated with flatus and undigested food. Frequency of stoolis increased and patient may sufferfrom cough and breathing difficulty	Dipan, Pachaniya Ghrit, Lavan plus ghrit ^[24]
Udhavart	Vita, MaruthaMutra sanga (delayed and difficulty in evacuation of dry stool)	Varti, Sneha, swedan, Basti (suppositories (<i>varti</i>), non-unctuous enema and unctuous purgatives and diet which regulates movement of <u>vata</u> in downward direction.) ^[25]
Vataj pandu	Varcha Shosha (Dry stool) Anaha	Snehan, Swedhan, Dadimadhi ghrita ^[26]
Purishavegarodharoga	Purisha sanga ^[27]	
Apan vayuvegarodha lakshan	Vata, Mutra, Purisha sanga ^[28]	
Alasaka	Vata, Varcha Nirodhach ^[29]	Langhan, Dipan, pachan.
Udar roga	Sanga Vata Purisha	Danti taila, Virechana, Niruha ^[30]

Constipation is a symptom of multiple internal pathologies. In ayurved there are various pathologies is mentioned for constipation. We have to make thorough differential diagnosis for constipation. We have to correct patient bad habits of eating. Food digestion is very much important in pathology of constipation. Eating habits corrected by taking food on regular time, fresh food, Sneha, Ushna gunna yukta food must be taken for regulating proper food digestion. In bad food habits, food is not properly digested so timing is very much disturb for defecation and patient feels constipated. After correcting food habits most of the patient respond very well, but in some patient we have to deal with specific pathologies.

1. Purisha kshaya – In some diseases there is loss of appetite, if patient doesn't take enough food then stool will not form proper. In that condition purisha kshaya means stool is formed proper and patient doesn't pass stool. Treatment is to give appetizer and bulky forming laxative like isabgol husk, mash, yava like ayurved medicine.
2. Aama – Due to less digestive fire or taking heavy fibre diet, digestion is not happen proper and there is heaviness in abdomen, bloating and loss of appetite, loss of taste. Due to improper digestion, stool formed is sticky and bad odour. This is undigested food part. Treatment is to ignite digestive fire. Give Sunta, marich, pipali, light, liquid diet.
3. Pakvashayagata Vayu - In pakwashagata vayu, internal pathology is vata aggravators which bring roughness in large intestine and that's why proper peristaltic movement is not form and very hard stool is formed, patient passes stool very hardly. In chikitsa we have to give firstly varti (Suppository), niruha basti (Medicated water enema)- to remove hard stool, Anuvasan basti (Medicated oil enema)- to bring proper unctuousness, smoothness in large intestine for proper peristaltic movement.
4. Vataj gulma – Frequent change in the site, shape and pain of the lump along with obstruction of feces and flatus due to roughness of vayu is spread all over digestive system. Treatment is to give internal oleation therapy by panchkola ghrita, all body oil massage to control vayu ruksha gunna. Dashmula Oil enema and medicated water enema for gulma chikitsa.
5. Koshta Aashrit vata- When vitiated vata is located in gastrointestinal tract or in abdomen it leads to urinary retention and constipation, intestinal and epigastric discomforts, gulma, piles and pain in flanks. Treatment the condition of morbid vata lodged in the alimentary tract, the patient should drink alkaline drugs or digestion of humors is to be done with digestive and appetizer groups of drugs.
6. Vidhaavrit vata (Vata occluded by feces)-If the vata is occluded by the fecal matter; it

leads to obstinate constipation, scissoring type pain in anal region, all unctuous matter ingested is immediately digested (due to excess dryness in colon), after food intake the person suffers from increased distension of abdomen and owing to the pressure of the food ingested the patient passes dry feces with difficulty and after long delay. He is afflicted with pain in the hips, groins and back; as the vata moves in a reverse direction causes epigastric discomfort. Treatment -Give hard stool destruction medicine like castor oil and enema.

7. Vistabdhaajirna - Mala vata Apravruti (Do not pass stool and flatus) associated with abdomen pain and distention. Vistabdha means stagnant, this is due to aggravated vata. Some patient eat ruksha, laghu ahar in abundant quantity and this causes indigestion. Patient feels bloating with abdomen pain, constipation. Treatment is to give panchakola ghrita which easily removes stool and bloating.
8. Vatavrudhi - Vataj grahani Lakshana- Stools are evacuated with difficulty and consume time. Feces are either watery, dry, small sized associated with flatus and undigested food. Frequency of stool is increased and patient may suffer from cough and breathing difficulty. Snehana, swedana, shodhana, langhana, deepana, various powder preparation of lavana, kshara, madhvarishtha, surasava, various takra preparation, deepaniya ghrita are to be prescribed to the grahanidosha patient.
9. Udhavart - Obstructs downward moving channels and gradually obstructs the movement of stool, urine and the flatus causing udavarta, the serious trouble. This causes retention of stool. This will be managed with suppositories (varti), non-unctuous enema and unctuous purgatives and diet which regulates movement of vata in downward direction.
10. Vataj pandu- In vataj pandu there was dhatu kshaya, patient is anemic and malnourished. Patient had weak digestive fire due to that patient doesn't eat enough to produce stool and this causes Varcha Shosha (Dry stool), Anaha (Bloating). Treatment is to give enough Sneha for malnutrition and santarpan chikitsa -Snehan, Swedhan, Dadimadhi ghrita- Dadim is Madhur and amla which give enough nutrition and amla ras and ghrita increase digestive fire and this causes proper formation and easy passing of stool.
11. Purishavegarodha roga- Suppression of the urge to defecate causes colic pain, headache, retention of fecal matter and flatus, cramps in the calf muscles and distension of abdomen. In such cases, fomentation, massage, sitz bath, per rectal suppositories, and basti (therapeutic enema) are prescribed and one should take food and drinks that facilitate bowel evacuation to remove obstruction.
12. Apan vayu vegarodha lakshan- Suppression of the urge to defecate causes colic pain,

headache, retention of fecal matter and flatus, cramps in the calf muscles and distension of abdomen. In such cases, fomentation, massage, sitz bath, per rectal suppositories, and basti (therapeutic enema) are prescribed and one should take food and drinks that facilitate bowelevacuation to remove obstruction.

13. Alasaka- When patient takes food very slowly with doing some work. Food gets cold and proper digestion is not happened and food remain in digestive system as it is. Patient doesn't passes flatus (Vata) and stool (Varcha Nirodhach). Treatment is to do fasting (Langhan), andappetizer medicine (Dipan, pachan) like, suntan, marich.
14. Udar roga- The symptoms of vatodara include distension of abdomen, edema of the hands, legs and scrotum, splitting type of pain in abdomen, undue increase and decrease of abdominal distension, abdominal pain, pain in the sides of the abdomen, abnormal upward course of vata within abdomen, body ache, pain in phalangeal joints, dry cough, emaciation, debility, lack of taste in mouth, indigestion, heaviness in the lower abdomen, obstructed flatus, constipation, retention of the urine, brown or reddish black discoloration of the nails, brown or reddish black discoloration of the conjunctiva, buccal mucosa, dermis, urine and fecal matter; abdominal wall possessing thin, blackish stretch lines and vessels, tympanic note on percussion similar to the sound produced on tapping air filled leather bag or bladder and upward, downward and lateral painful movement of vata with gurgling sound within the abdomen.

Treatment - Patient of vatodara who is physically strong should be initially treated with unctuous medications. Then after the snehana is completed, abhyanga (unctuous massage) and sweda (sudation) is done. Then the sneha virechana (purgation with unctuous purgatives) should be given. After elimination of dosha with shodhana (purification procedure) the abdomen should be tightly bandaged so that no space is left in the abdomen for the morbid vata to cause distension of the abdomen again.

CONCLUSION

Constipation involves a decrease in defecation frequency, generally occurring 3 or fewer times per week. This can lead to hardening of the stool and straining when attempting defecation. Constipation is infrequent bowel movements, excessive straining, a sense of incomplete evacuation, failed or lengthy attempts to defecate, use of digital manoeuvres for evacuation of stool, abdominal bloating, and hard consistency of stools. From all above information we conclude that constipation is a symptom of multiple internal pathologies. We have to diagnose

initially causes of constipation and treatment changes according to the causes.

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