

## THE ROLE OF AGNI IN CONTEXT OF PRAMEH

Dr. Muskan Nainwani<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Salil Jain<sup>2</sup> and Dr. Gote Megha Suresh<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,3</sup>MD Scholar (Samhita Siddhant) Pt.Khushilal Sharma Govt. Ayurveda College & Institute,  
Bhopal M.P.

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor (Samhita Siddhant) Pt.Khushilal Sharma Govt. Ayurveda College &  
Institute, Bhopal M.P.

Article Received on  
20 June 2025,

Revised on 10 July 2025,  
Accepted on 30 July 2025

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr202515-37797



\*Corresponding Author

Dr. Muskan Nainwani

MD Scholar (Samhita  
Siddhant) Pt.Khushilal  
Sharma Govt. Ayurveda  
College & Institute, Bhopal  
M.P.

## ABSTRACT

*Ayurveda* being a life science manages pretty much every part of life to ensure an unceasing health status. *Ayurveda* has its own fundamental principle to work, and one of them is concept of *Agni*. *Agni*, is central to the Ayurvedic understanding of health and disease. It governs the processes of digestion, absorption, and tissue transformation, ensuring the maintenance of homeostasis. When *Agni* is impaired—a state known as *Agni Dushti*—it leads to the formation of *Ama* (toxins), disturbed metabolism, and the development of various diseases. One such disease is *Prameha*, a metabolic disorder characterized by excessive urination, turbidity in urine, obesity, and deranged fat metabolism, often compared to diabetes mellitus. This article explores the physiological role of *Agni*, its pathological disturbances, and its specific involvement in the etiology and progression of *Prameha*.

**KEYWORDS:** *Agni*, *Agni Dushti*, *Prameha*, *Mandagni*, *Jatharagni*, *Medo Dhatwagni*, *Ayurveda*, Metabolism.

## INTRODUCTION

*Ayurveda*, the science of life, offers holistic knowledge to maintain health through harmony with nature. A person is considered healthy when there is a balance of *Doshas*, *Dhatus*, *Malas*, And *Agni*. Among these, *Agni* plays a central role, governing digestion, absorption, and tissue nourishment.

*Agni* is classified into three broad types:

1. ***Jatharagni*** – Digestive fire located in the stomach and duodenum; governs the initial digestion of food.
2. ***Bhutagni*** – Five elemental fires (associated with *Pancha Mahabhutas*) that digest the elemental components of food.
3. ***Dhatwagni*** – Seven metabolic fires present in each *Dhatu*, responsible for tissue-specific metabolism and transformation.

Disruption in *Agni* (*Agni Vikriti*) is seen as the root cause of all diseases. *Prameha*, a metabolic disorder, is specifically linked to *Medo Dhatwagni* dysfunction. As *Dhatwagni* depends on *Jatharagni*, any imbalance in the latter affects all metabolic processes. *Agni* can become imbalanced due to various factors like improper diet, sedentary lifestyle, and emotional stress. This leads to *Agni Dushti*, which can be of four types:

- *Tikshnagni* (hypermetabolism)
- *Mandagni* (hypometabolism)
- *Vishmagni* (irregular metabolism)
- *Samagni* (balanced metabolism) – the ideal state

Among these, *Mandagni* is most commonly associated with *Prameha*.

### Need of Study

*Prameha*, a major metabolic disorder described in *Ayurveda*, bears clinical resemblance to modern-day Diabetes Mellitus. With the global rise in lifestyle-related diseases, understanding *Prameha* through the lens of classical Ayurvedic wisdom becomes crucial. Despite advances in conventional medicine, the increasing prevalence (i.e 1 in 10 adults globally affected and in India 101 million people have diabetes) and chronicity of metabolic disorders highlight the need for an integrative and preventive approach.

Modern research primarily focuses on biochemical markers and glucose regulation, often overlooking the underlying metabolic dysfunctions addressed in Ayurvedic pathology. The Ayurvedic concept of *Agni*, especially *Dhatwagni* (specifically *Medo Dhatwagni*), offers a foundational and holistic view of disease onset that aligns with emerging metabolic insights. Additionally, the role of *Kapha* and *Kleda*, *Ama*, and *Srotas Dushti* in disease progression is unique to Ayurveda and warrants detailed exploration.

## Review of literature

All the literatures related to *Agni* and *Prameha* will be collected from *Brihatrayi*, *Laghutrayi*, *Nighantus* and other classical text of *Ayurveda*, and the modern literature including recent advances in this field will also be review.

- मरीचिरुवाच - अग्निरेव शरीरे पित्तान्तर्गतः कुपिताकुपितः शुभाशुभानि करोति(Ch.Su.12/11)
- "Mandagni hi mulam pramehasya" (A.H.Ni.12/1)
- दिवास्वप्नाव्यायामालस्यप्रसक्तुं शीतस्निग्धमधुरमेद्यद्रवान्नपानसेविनं पुरुषं जानीयात् प्रमेहीभविष्यतीति  
(सु.नि.6/3)
- त्रिदोषकोपनिमित्ता विंशतिः प्रमेहा भवन्तिविकाराश्चापरेऽपरिसंख्येयाः । तत्र यथा त्रिदोषप्रकोपः प्रमेहानभिनिर्वर्तयति तथाऽनुव्याख्यास्यामः ॥ (च.नि.4/3)
- तत्राविलप्रभूतमूत्रलक्षणाः सर्व एव प्रमेहाः ।(सु.नि.6/6)
- "Bahudravashleshmaa Doshavisheshah"(Ch.Ni. 4/5)

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To review concepts of *Agni* and its *Dushti* in context of *Prameh Vyadhi*.

## DISCUSSION

The food we ingest, which acts as fuel for the body<sup>[1]</sup>, undergoes transformation at various stages until it is ultimately converted into bodily tissues. This transformative process is governed by *Agni*. The metabolic heat generated during these conversions, primarily through the action of *Pitta*, is essentially referred to as *Agni* in *Ayurveda*.<sup>[2]</sup>

In *Ayurvedic* physiology, *Agni* refers to the biological fire responsible for digestion, metabolism, and transformation within the body.<sup>[2]</sup> It is functionally associated with *Pachaka Pitta*, a subtype of the *Pitta dosha*<sup>[3]</sup>, which resides anatomically between the stomach and duodenum.<sup>[3]</sup> *Pachaka Pitta* facilitates enzymatic breakdown of food into absorbable units, enabling the assimilation of nutrients and the elimination of waste products. This biological activity corresponds closely to the concept of gastrointestinal enzymatic activity, especially that of gastric acids, bile, and digestive enzymes.<sup>[4]</sup>

*Agni* is not a singular entity but represents a collective of physiological mechanisms responsible for various catabolic and anabolic processes.<sup>[5]</sup> Based on its location and function, *Agni* is classified into *Jatharagni* (central digestive fire), *Dhatvagni* (tissue-level metabolic fires), and *Bhutagni* (elemental metabolic processes that assimilate the five basic elements or *Pancha Mahabhutas*). *Agni*, the vital metabolic force, is conceptualized as being composed of all five fundamental elements (*Pancha Mahabhuta*), yet it is predominantly characterized by the *Agni Mahabhuta* (fire element). This elemental dominance reduces its fluidic nature, differentiating it functionally from water-dominant components.<sup>[6]</sup>

The *Jatharagni* primarily governs gross digestion, whereas *Dhatvagni* and *Bhutagni* regulate metabolism at the tissue and elemental level, respectively.<sup>[8]</sup>

This biological force responsible for digestion and metabolic transformation<sup>[9]</sup>—as being intrinsically associated with *Pitta Dosha*. Functioning within the body, *Agni* can operate in either a balanced (physiological) or imbalanced (pathological) state, producing favorable or adverse effects on health accordingly. Owing to its central role in multiple layers of metabolism, due to which it is referred to by various names such as *Panchagni* (fivefold metabolic fire), *Antaragni* (internal fire), *Kayagni* (bodily fire), and *Jatharagni* (digestive fire), reflecting its diverse physiological functions across different systems and tissues.<sup>[10]</sup>

Subsequently, the digested material is biochemically classified into functional components: regulatory elements (comparable to *Doshas*), nutrient essence (*Rasa saar*, or plasma-like nutritive fraction), and metabolic waste products (*Kitta*), which are excreted as urine (*Mutra*) and feces (*Purisha*) and sweat (*sweda*).<sup>[11]</sup>

When *Agni* is impaired—whether centrally (*Jatharagni*) or at the tissue level (*Dhatvagni*)—it leads to incomplete digestion and impaired metabolism. This results in the formation of *Ama*, a concept corresponding to toxic or improperly metabolized biochemical substances. *Ama* accumulates in the gastrointestinal system (*Mahasrotas*) and various body tissues (*Dhatus*), thereby disrupting nutrient assimilation and obstructing the progressive formation and transformation of tissue layers. This results in excess waste production (*Mala*) and imbalance among *Doshas*—for instance, weakened *Jatharagni* fuels *Vata*, impaired *Rasagni* enhances *Kapha*, and deficient *Raktaagni* aggravates *Pitta*.<sup>[12]</sup>

Such *Agni* dysfunction is viewed as a fundamental pathogenic factor in the onset of disease. *Ayurveda* emphasizes the evaluation of *Agni* as a primary step in diagnosis and therapeutic decision-making. Acute disorders like *Alasaka*, *Visuchika*, and *Jwara*, as well as chronic and metabolic diseases such as *Prameha* (including diabetes mellitus), are understood to stem from the disturbance of *Agni* and subsequent formation of *Ama*. Hence, both digestive and metabolic pathologies are deeply rooted in *Agni* derangement.<sup>[13]</sup>

**Prameha** is derived from the Sanskrit root “*Prakarshena Mehati*,” meaning excessive and forceful discharge, particularly of *Mutra* (urine), *Shukra* (semen), and other *Dhatus* (body fluids)

“*Prameh Prakarshen Mehti Ksharati Viryyadirnenati*”(Sh.K.Du)<sup>[14]</sup>

Though *Prameha* is a *Tridoshaja Vyadhi* (a disorder involving all three doshas: *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*), it is predominantly a *Kaphaja* disorder. The onset and severity of the disease depend on factors such as *Nidana* (causes), *Dosha*, *Dushya* (affected tissues)<sup>[15]</sup>

The condition is primarily characterized by *Avila* (turbid) and *Prabhuta Mutra* (excessive urination), often due to the predominance of *Shleshma* (*Kapha*)<sup>[16]</sup>

When these factors are discordant, disease may not manifest or remains mild. However, when they align in a mutually aggravating manner, as seen in *Prameha*, the disease becomes evident and severe. It includes a spectrum of urinary and metabolic disorders, including diabetes mellitus (*Madhumeha*).

Types of *Prameha*: 20 types described:

10 *Kapha Prameha*, 6 *Pitta Prameha*, 4 *Vata Prameha*.

***Samprapti***<sup>[17]</sup>

Step 1: *Nidana Sevana*:

Excessive intake of Sweet, unctuous, heavy foods, *Shita* (cold), *Snigdha* (unctuous), and *Guru* (heavy) substances such as *Shooka Dhanya* (grains like wheat), *Brihi-Tandula* (rice), milk and its products, sugarcane and its derivatives, + sedentary lifestyle → *Kapha Prakopa* → *Meda dhatu* vitiation → Initiation of pathological changes in metabolism.

Table No. 1

<i>Nidan</i>	<i>Dosha vikriti</i>	<i>Agni dushti</i>
Excess <i>Madhura, Snigdha, Guru Aahara</i>	↑ <i>Kapha &amp; Meda</i>	<i>Jatharagni Mandya</i>
<i>Avyayama, Divaswapna</i>	↑ <i>Kapha</i>	<i>Dhatwagni Mandya</i>
<i>Adhyashana</i>	Ama formation	Agni blockage & overload
<i>Beeja dosha</i> (Genetic influence)	All	Alters tissue metabolism ( <i>Dhatwagni</i> )
<i>Kleda Vardhaka Ahara</i>	↑ <i>Kleda</i>	Weakens transformation at <i>Dhatu</i> level

**Step 2: Agni Mandya**

*Kapha* dominance leads to sluggish *Jatharagni* → Incomplete digestion → *Aparipakva Aahar Rasa* → predominantly *Prithvi-Apya* in nature of *Rasa* → enhances *Madhura Avasthapaka* → *Drav Guna* of *Kapha* increases → *Mandagni* → *Aama Utpatti* → *Dhatwagni Dushti* (esp. *Medo-Dhatwagni*) → Abnormal *Meda* metabolism.

**Step 3:** *Dhatu Dushti & Kleda Vriddhi* → *Shithil Meda, Mamsa, Shukra* accumulate → ↑ *Kleda* in body → Vitiated *Mutravaha Srotas* → *Srotorodha + Atipravritti* of *Mutra*.

**Step 4:** *Lakshana Utpatti* → Urine becomes more frequent, turbid, sweet → Classical signs of *Prameha*.

According to *Dosh* dominance (*Vaat/Kapha/Pitta Agni Mandya*), different types of *Prameha* manifest (20 types)

*Nidana* [Excessive intake of calorie-dense, sweet, heavy, unctuous foods + Sedentary lifestyle]



*Kapha and Meda* (adipose tissue) aggravation



*Agni Mandya* (Suppression of Digestive Fire)



Incomplete digestion



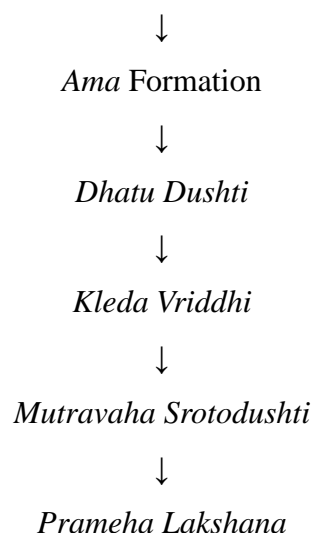
*Aparipakva Aahar Rasa* (improperly digested nutrient fluid)]



*Madhura Avasthapaka* ↑



*Drava Guna* (fluidity) of *Kapha* ↑



[Type and severity vary based on *Dosha* dominance (*Kapha* / *Pitta* / *Vata*)]

### Scientific Interpretation of Ayurvedic Concepts in *Prameha*

*Agni* can be correlated with basal metabolic rate, enzymatic efficiency, and hormonal regulation of metabolism (especially involving insulin sensitivity and pancreatic function).

*Ama* parallels toxic metabolic intermediates, contributing to oxidative stress and cellular dysfunction.

Impaired *Medo-Dhatvagni* may be compared with adipocyte dysfunction and abnormal lipid metabolism, closely tied to insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes.

*Mutravaha Srotas Dushti* reflects renal and urinary system dysfunction, including polyuria, glycosuria, and nephropathy in chronic stages of diabetes.

### CONCLUSION

*Agni* acts as the root cause:

When *Jatharagni* is impaired → improper digestion → *Ama* formation

When *Dhatvagni* is impaired → improper tissue nourishment, esp. *Meda dhatu*

Hypofunction of *Agni* leads to metabolic errors → mimics insulin resistance and beta-cell dysfunction.

The pathogenesis (*Samprapti*) of *Prameha* revolves largely around *Agni Dushti*. It is not just a digestive dysfunction, but a systemic metabolic derangement. Therefore, regulating and preserving *Agni* is essential in both prevention and management of *Prameha*.

**REFERENCES**

1. Dash VB. Concept of *Agni* with special reference to *Agnibala Pariksha*. 2nd ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Amarabharati Prakashan, 1993; 53.
2. Dwivedi L. Charaka Samhita. Part 2. 5th ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Krishnadas Academy, 2021; 283.
3. Gupt A. Ashtanga Hridayam. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Publication, 2007; 90–100.
4. Guyton AC, Hall JE. Textbook of Medical Physiology. 13th ed. Philadelphia: Elsevier Saunders, 2016; 805-820.
5. Desai RR. Ayurvediya Kriya Sharir. Naini, Allahabad: Shri Vaidyanath Ayurveda Bhavan Limited, 2010; 332–341.
6. Tripathi B. Ashtanga Hridayam of Vagbhata. Vol. 1. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishthan, 2013; 230-240.
7. Dwivedi L. Charaka Samhita. Part 3. 5th ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Krishnadas Academy, 2021; 515.
8. Dash VB. Concept of *Agni* with special reference to *Agnibala Pariksha*. 2nd ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Amarabharati Prakashan, 1993; 24.
9. Dwarakanatha C. Introduction to Kayachikitsa. 3rd ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia, 2018; 69.
10. Radhakanta R. Shabda Kalpa Druma. Part 1. 2012 ed. Digital Library of India, 2012.