

**A REVIEW ARTICLE ON MALAVSTAMBHA (CONSTIPATION) AND  
ROLE OF AYURVEDA IN ITS MANAGEMENT****<sup>1\*</sup>Dr. Prakash A. Rathod and <sup>2</sup>Dr. Suresh Dahiphale**

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Article Received on  
07 Sept. 2023,

Revised on 27 Sept. 2023,  
Accepted on 17 October 2023

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr202319-30056

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**ABSTRACT**

Constipation is broadly defined as unsatisfactory defecation characterised by infrequent stools, difficult stool passage or both<sup>[1]</sup> Constipation is a disease condition resembles with Malavstambha described in ayurveda. Malavstambha or Badhapurisha means obstruction or constipation i.e., sang which indicates a state of Srotodushti especially in Purishvaha Srotas.<sup>[2]</sup> This condition, which is very insignificant (in the eyes of general public) can cause anal fissure, haemorrhoids, rectal prolapse or even colorectal cancer when becomes chronic.<sup>[3]</sup> Hence it has very importance according to ayurvedic perspective. The present article deals with etiopathogenesis and management of Malavastambha (Constipation) with its Ayurvedic perspective.

**KEYWORDS:** Malavstambha, Constipation, Purisvaha Srotas, Ayurveda.

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

1. To study details about Malavstambha (Constipation).
2. To role of Ayurveda in its management.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS**

1. Different references regarding Malavstambha collected from Ayurvedic Samhita Granthas.
2. Concept of Malavstambha (Constipation) was studied.

- Collection of all the references done and correlation between Malavstambha and Constipation was done logically i.e., by using Yukti Pramana (Logical inferences) and role of Ayurveda in its management explained.

## INTRODUCTION

In this era of modernisation Malavstambha is increasing day by day in the society especially in the urban population with sitting job profile. According to Ayurveda Dosha, Dhatu and mala have a very important role in the body. After consumption of food, it gets digested. The useful parts are used to make body components and the useless part are eliminated from the body. All these unfit parts are called Mala in Ayurveda. In this, there are mainly three Mala namely Purish, Mutra and Swed. In order to maintain the health and wellness of body it is very important that their quantity stays in the body for a certain period and then gets excreted. Because the definition of health in ayurveda is as follows

**समदोषाः समाग्निश्च समधातू मलक्रियाः ।**

**प्रसन्नात्मन्द्रिय मनः स्वस्थ इत्याभिधीयते ॥ (सु. सू. १५/४७)<sup>[4]</sup>**

It means Mala has the same importance as Dosha, Dhatu and Agni. this highlights the importance of stool and physical activity related to it. Constipation can be correlated with Malavstambha as both terminologies have similar features like Purish Nigraha (obstruction of stool), Pakvashay shool(pain in abdomen), parikartika( pain during defecation) etc. according to ayurveda constipation can occur at any age more common among individuals who resist the urge to move their bowels at their body signal.

### Malavrodha (Constipation) Swarup (form)

If the stool does not enter easily and at the right time, then amount of the stool in the rectum also increases. Obstruction, restriction and blockage of the function of defecation is called Malavrodha in Ayurveda. Due to this body feels heavy (Gourava), lack of appetite (Agnimandya), appetite and taste are not so good, lack of enthusiasm, laziness, weakness like many symptoms start building in the body and foundation of disease is planted in the body. As Sharandhar said

**मलिनीकरणान्मलाः । शा. सं. पु. ५/४२<sup>[5]</sup>**

The body becomes Malin(dirty) and various disease arise.

**Misconception about malavstambha (Constipation)**

There is belief that drinking plenty of water cures this disorder. Which scripture has such a description? Which patient is it suitable for? ineligible anyone?. It is just creating pressure without getting any knowledge about it. Many people blindly implement the intention of Atyambupan(drinking lot of water) which is the cause of many diseases according to ayurveda. And along with it they invite various disease like Ajirna(indigestion), Pratishay(cold), Shopha (Edema), diabetes, kidney disease, Swas(bronchial asthma), Kaas(cough) described in ayurveda. Basically, everything that enters the body has to be digested by our Agni (digestive action). It is then converted into body components. This theory has to be explained and treated. There are some people of this section that believes consuming more leafy vegetables clears the stomach/ relieves the constipation. Basically, Acharya Bhavprakash has said that Shaka (vegetables) causes Malavistambha.

प्रायः शाकानि सर्वाणि विष्टंभिनी गुरुनी च ।

रुक्षाणि बहुवर्चसि सृष्टविंमारुतानि च ॥२॥

शाकं भिनत्ति वपुरस्थि निहन्ति नेत्रं वर्णं विनाशयति रक्तमथापि शुक्रम ।

प्रज्ञाक्षयं च कुरुते पलितं च नूनं हन्ति स्मृतिं गतिमिति प्रवदन्ति तज्ज्ञा ॥३॥

शाकेषु सर्वेषु वसन्ति रोगास्ते हेतवो देहविनाशनाय !

तस्माद् बुधः शाकविवर्जनं तु कुर्यात्तथाम्लेषु स एवं दोषः ॥४॥ भा . प्र . शाकवर्ग<sup>[6]</sup>

Some people take medicines like Kayamchurna, Triphala Churna, Sonamukhi, Nityam Vati etc. to get rid of constipation without taking consideration of body Prakruti, Koshta, Agni. it causes intestinal laxity by repeated use of such drug. Basically, taking medicine like laxative, purgatives without looking at the reason of constipation is sheer stupidity. That's why considering malavastambha according to its cause different treatment have been described in ayurveda, according to its nature and disease.

**Malavstmbha (Constipation) due to excessive anxiety**

Anxiety is common and equally important disease in most patient today with a variety of causes. Due to this the natural functions of body are distorted. It is mainly seen that Adya Rasa Dhatu and Majja Dhatu are vitiated and due to this the complaint of Malavstambha is seen in such patient. Because if Rasa Dhatu is vitiated then subsequent digestion in Dhatu and their Mala will be vitiated. Akshivit Twak Sneha(unctuous) is said to be mala of Majja Dhatu. So, if Majja Dhatu is vitiated then drugs that act on vitiated Majja Dhatu (the marrow) have

to be used. In this concept Ghruta (clarified butter) Sneha Kalpana is so useful. Ex. Mahakalyanak Ghruta, Dadimadi Ghruta, Sukumar Ghruta, Panchatikta Ghruta guggul, Mahapanchgavya Ghruta like various siddha Ghruta are useful in such patients. A non-vegetarian can take bone soup with Saindhav lavana (type of salt). Also if Asthi-Majja Pachak churna(Guduchi, Amalaki, Musta) if taken with luke warm Ghee also works best. If Ruksha is more in Kosta (gastro intestinal tract) then only Goghruta (cow ghee) and Saindhava mixture should be taken in Apankala (before taking meal) or Samankala (in between meal). Nutrients like almond, black raisins, fig are Rasadhatu poshak, Majjadhatu poshak and acts on Majjadhatu. So, one can take these nutrients soaked in water. Vasantkusumakar Rasa should be given with Navneet(butter)and Khandasarkara(granulated sugar). Butter and sugar increases Sneha guna in Majjadhatu which ultimately increases Vitsneha causing decrease in Ruksha(dryness) in mala and helps to relive Malavrodha.

#### **Malavstmbha (Constipation) in Arsha (Haemorrhoids), Parikartika (Anal Fissures) and Udavarta (Gaseous Abdomen)**

It mainly involves Apan vayu vikruti, Gud avayav vikruti(abnormalities in anal region) as well as abnormalities due to Pakvashaygat Annapachan(digestion in Duodenum) and Sarkitta Vibhajan (Sarcoid division). Malavstambha (constipation) is the main reason behind Arsha(haemorrhoids) and Parikartika (Anal Fissures). In such cases digestion should be improved with Panchasakara Churna, Sutsekhar Rasa, Hingvastaka Churna like medicine. Gudapicchu (cotton soaked in medicated oil) should be kept in Guda bhaga (anal region) in these patient to relive gas in the anal area and to facilitate bowel movements. For this Gudapicchu prepared from Yashtimadhu oil, Shunthi Siddha Erand (castor) oil, Jatyadi oil, Changeri Ghruta etc. should be utilised. Gudapuran (installation of medicated oil in anal opening) with Yashtimadhu oil or shunthi siddha Erand (castor) oil can be done. If there is nothing at all available, then simply Matrabasti (enema) with sesame oil if given makes the patients feel better immediately. Because burning sensation and pain due to fissure in anal canal is quite severe.

#### **Malavstmbha (Constipation) and Swasa (Asthma) and Kasa (Chronic cough)**

Acharya Vagbhata said while explaining pathophysiology of kasa swasa that,

तत्र अधो विहितो अनिलः ।

ऊर्ध्वं प्रवृत्तः प्राप्योरस्तस्मिन् कंठे च संसृजन् ॥<sup>[7]</sup>

That is Apan Vayu gets blocked and comes to upper region in the body. Due to this Pranvayu acquires upward motion and Swasa Kasa develops in the patients. Therefore the symptoms of Malavstambha or Malavibandha are seen preferentially in the patients of Swasa (Asthma) and Kasa(chronic cough). In such a cause Anulomana of this upwardly inclined Apan Vayu helps to reverse Mahavyadhi like Swasa Kasa (for which the most number of sutras/sholka have been written by Acharya Vagbhata). In such cases Kantakari Ghruta, Kantakari Avaleha, Agastya Hritaki Rasyan, Chitrak Haritaki Avleha, Swadanshtradi Ghruta (Kasa Chikitsa) etc. should be used for Malaanulomana.

### **Malavistambha (Constipation) in vata prakruti patients**

Constipation is frequent complain in Vata Prakruti patients. In this, the quality of Ruksha, Khara, Shita, Parush etc. of Vata are distorted and this symptom appears. In such a case, first of all Sarvang Abhyanga or Snehana (oil) application should be started. A combination of Kshira-Ghruta (milk+ ghee) should be given with Khandasarkara (granulated sugar). Due to this roughness, hardness, dryness of Vata dosha get reduced and helps in Vata Anulomana (gas passing) and helps in getting rid of constipation. Dashmoola siddha Matra Basti or sesame oil Anuvasana Basti (enema) is useful. Chinchalavan oil should be given orally. Ask to consume Ushna(hot) Snigdha(fatty), liquid, soft food, meat soup etc. Kalpa or yoga (formulation of medicine) of Madhur(sweet) Amla, and Lavana(salty) Rasa Dravyas used to conquer Vata in these patients. Ex. Yasthimadhu, Amalaki (Indian gooseberry), Saindhava (type of salt) should be given which helps to reduce gas. Because these three Rasas are Mala Anulomaka. Many people have a strong belief that laxatives or purgatives are the only remedy for constipation, which is wrong. By finding out the exact cause or purpose and eliminating it, the obstruction disappears. And finally, how to maintain bowel function should be considered from the medical pion of view.

### **Obesity and Constipation<sup>[8]</sup>**

High prevalence of constipation was found in adults with obesity class 2 and 3. in such patient there are reason of Avyam (absence of any exercise), day time sleepiness, excessive consumption of Madhura (sweet), Snigdha (greasy) and heavy food. Due to this Vikrut Meda (abnormal fat) begins to accumulate in the body, specially at Kati (waist line), abdomen and breast. Due to which intestinal dysfunction/weakness occurs according to Ayurveda. Although the feces are Snigdha (greasy), the force of defecation does not remain in the intestine. Also, it is seen that obese patients had increased sweating. The fluid is absorbed

from intestine for this. So in these patient the most important thing is to ask patient to do exercise, walking, Kapalbhathi, Anuloma-Viloma Pranayam, Surya-Namaskara etc. Madhur (sweet), Snigdha(greasy) food should be completely avoided. Luke warm water should be given when thirsty. Yava Mudga (green gram) Yusha, Sidha jala (medicated water) should be used. Bala Hirda, Survari Hirda Churna should be given at night with luke warm water and 15 to 20 black raisins. Triphala powder should be given. Eranda(castor) Bhrusta Haritaki (Terminalia Chebula) powder should be given with hot water in patients who have symptoms of Adhman and Anaha (Gaseous Distension of Abdomen). Medopachak kwath is also useful in such patients.

### **Wardhakya/Jarajanya (Geriatric) Malavstmbha (Constipation)**

According to ayurveda Vata predominance is found in old age. Therefore, the symptoms of Vata Prakopa appear in the body. Symptoms like Nidranasha(insomnia), Malavstmbha, Durbalya (weakness) are seen it. The use of Rasayan Dravyas is more useful in these patients because the body is more worn out. Such patients should do Sarvang Snehana, Swedana, and Basti in Panchakarma and win the Vata Dosha. after that Rasayan herbs like Shatavari, Guduchi, Amalaki, Gokshur, Yashtimadhu, Ashwagandha should be used.

### **Constipation due to loss of intestinal peristalsis due to long term use of Laxatives<sup>[9]</sup>**

Due to repeated consumption of laxatives like Kayam churna, Nityam Vati, Duphalac Syrup etc. the intestinal power becomes weak and bowel movement slows down. In such patient medicine like Agnitundi Vati should be used because Shudha Kuchala (purified Nux Vomica) drug contained in it. It improves bowel movements and helps to restore intestinal movement. When there is Majja Dhatu dushti in such acquisitions, Aampachak Vati having potential to reach Ashti Majja works best. If after all these measures, Malavstambha is still persist there, then in such cases medicine like Aarogyavardhini vati which containing Kutki having Bhedana (penetrating) property should be used. Sutsekhara Rasa should be given in disease like Sampitta, Pittaj Grahani when stool movement disturbed and kind of poision is produced in the intestine. Also, Bhunimbadi Churna mentioned in Pittaj Grahani Chikitsa should be given with jaggery powder with proportion of water.

### **Malavrodha and Aatyik awastha (Extreme state)**

Perhaps everyone thinks that the equation of constipation and extreme state is exaggerated, but in daily practice it is seen that this experience comes up all the time.

**a) Tamak Swasa (Status asthmaticus)**

In these patient, respiratory rate is often observed to increased when patient is constipated. It is seen Apan Vayu invades Prana Vayu and due to this speed of breathing is seen to be intense. While giving a dose of sesame oil + Saindhava helps to reduce the Apan Vayu and speed of breathing seen to slow down.

**b) Hypertension**

In these patient too often the inversion of Apan Vayu and associated Malavrodha (obstruction) is the causative factor. So, by doing Vata Anulomana high blood pressure can be controlled.

**Use of mutrasangrahaniya gana in malavstmbha (Constipation)- A consideration**

If there is Malavibandha, abnormalities should be in Saar Kitta Vibhajana. Solid and liquid should be considered in Kitta (Mala). If the urine output is increased due to excess fluid formation. Then loss of moisture/fluid which is required for the formation of soft stool happens. This makes the stool more and more hard and worsens the rectal disorders. In such cases Mutrasangrahaniya Gana (Cha.Su.4/33)<sup>[10]</sup> should be used to limit urine formation. So that it will provide the necessary moisture/fluidity to form stool and help in getting rid of constipation.

**DISCUSSION**

Constipation is common and is caused a wide variety of primary and secondary etiology. Especially for severe cases, understanding the approach to primary cause is worth while to direct therapy and improve symptoms.

**CONCLUSION**

In this way seemingly trivial symptoms can cause various disease in the body. So, it is very important that stool should be passed easily every day. for Malavstambha i.e., constipation thinking should be holistically and not just a laxative to treat it.

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