

UNDERSTANDING SYMPTOMS OF DIGESTION IN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Aharapaka (digestion of food) is the main spring of *Sharira Poshana*. *Jatharagni* plays central role in conversion of peculiar substance into easily absorbable form by the process called as digestion. As the digestion processes, our body shows certain signs which reflect the stages of digestion. *Udgarashuddhi* (clear belching), *Utsaha* (enthusiasm), *Laghuta* (lightness), *Khut* (hunger), *Pipasa* (thirst), *Vegotsarga* (excretion) are *JirnaharaLakshana*. Out of these *Udgarashuddhi*, *Laghuta* are observed at initial phase. *Kshut* and *Pipasa* are seen at middle stage. *Vegotsarga* i.e. excretion of *Mala* and *Mutra*, *Utsaha* are there at the end stage of digestion.

Keywords: *Jirnaharalaxhana*, *Aharapaka*, *Udgarashuddhi*, *Vegotsarga*, *Kshut*, digestion

INTRODUCTION

The thing which is being swallowed is consider as Ahara or food. Ahara is the root of healthy as well as diseased condition¹. Ahara gets utilized by body after its digestion. Digestion or Aharapachana is the process by which conversion is done of unfamiliar (*Vijatiya*) substances into familiar substances (*Sajatiya*). Digestion is done by *Jatharagni*, with assistance of other Ahara *Parinamakara Bhava* viz. *Vayu*, *Kleda*, *Sneha*, *Kala* & *Samayoga*². In classics, certain signs and symptoms are described which reflect the stages of digestion, called as *Jirnahara Lakshana*. These are *Udgarashuddhi* (clear belching), *Utsaha* (enthusiasm), *Laghuta* (lightness), *Khut* (hunger), *Pipasa* (thirst), *Vegotsarga* (excretion)³. Study of each *Jirnahara Lakshana* gives thought of stage of

digestion.

JIRNAHARA LAKSHANA -

Different wordings are used in various Samhita to describe *Jirnahara Lakshana*.

According to *Charaka Samhita*, *Svasthanagata Dosha* (*Dosha* at their place), *Agni Udirana* (*Ignition of Jatharagni*), *Kshut Bodha* (*feeling of hunger*), *Vivruta Srotas Mukha* (*free channels*), *Shuddha Udgara* (*clear belching*), *Vishuddha Hrudaya* (*Alertness of all senses*), *Vatanulomana*, *Visrushta Vata-mutra-purisha Vega* (*free excretion of waste products*) are described as *Jirnahara Lakshana*⁴.

According to *Sushrut Samhita*, *Srushta Mala-Mutra*, *Laghuta in Deha* (*feeling of lightness in body*), *Vishuddha Udgara*, *Suvimala Hrudaya*, *Vatanulomana*, *Annayam Shraddha* (*liking towards food*),

Klamaparigama (freshness), Shithila Kukshi (feeling of looseness in abdomen) are explained as Jirnahara Lakshana⁵.

According to Ashtanga Hrudaya Samhita, Prasrushta Mala-Mutra, Suvimala Hrudaya, Svapathaga Dosha, VishuddhaUdgara, Kshut Uapagamana, Vatanulomana, Agni Udirana, Vishadakarana, Laghuta in Deha are elucidated as Jirnahara Lakshana⁶.

According to Ashtanaga Sanhira Samhita, Svasthanagatam Dosha, Vatanulomana, Utsrushta Mutra-Purisha Vega, Vishuddha Udgara, Vishuddha Hrudaya, Vishuddha Srotas Mukha, Vishadakarana, Laghu Sharira, Kshut Bodha are expressed as Jirnahara Lakshana⁷.

According to Madhava Nidana, Udgara shuddhi, Utsaha (enthusiasm), Vegotsarga (excretion of waste products), Laghuta, Kshut, Pipasa (thirst) are considered as Jirnahara Lakshana³.

Udgarashuddhi (clear belching) -

Other terms used to denote this is Vishuddhe Udgare. Basically Udgara is Karma of Prana Vayu⁸.

Laghuta (lightness) -

Similar terms used to indicate Laghuta are Dehe Cha Sulaghau, Klamaparigame.

Kshut (hunger) -

Similar terms used to show Kshut are Agnou Chodirne, Jatayam Bubhukshayam, Shithila Kukshi, Udrikta Agni, Annayam Shraddha, Kshutupagama.

Pipasa (thirst) -

Other term used to denote Pipasa is Trushna.

Vegotsarga (excretion) -

Parallel terms used to symbolize Vegotsarga are Visrushteshu Vatanulomana, Svasthanastheshu Dosheshu, Doshe Svapathagate. Vatanulomana or

Adhovata means passage of flatulence. Mutrotsarga means excretion of urine. Malotsarga means defecation.

Utsaha (enthusiasm) -

Utsaha term can be correlated with Vivruta Srotas Mukha, Vishadakarana, Vishuddha Hrudaya.

DISCUSSION

Jirnahara Lakshana

Jirna means old. In relation with Ahara it refers as Digested food. It is supposed that one should not consume next food (full meal) until previously taken food is digested completely. Jirnahara Lakshana reflects process of digestion. In addition it tells about completion of digestion, like the end stage of digestion is formation and excretion of waste product. After which one is supposed to consume next food (full meal). Also any variation in Jirnahara Lakshana gives idea about abnormality. So knowing Jirnahara Lakshana is important.

Udgarashuddhi (clear belching) -

Vayu is responsible for any kind of movement in body. Likewise, as ingested food moves from Amashaya to Pachyamanashaya, Vayu is accountable for that. As food moves into Pachyamanashaya, the cavity inside that is occupied by food, resulting into displacement of Vayu which was positioned in Pachyamanashaya. So the displaced Vayu tries to move through nearest way from Pachyamanashaya, i.e. mouth in terms of belching. As food has undergone first stage of Avasthapaka in Amashaya, the displaced Vayu does not have any smell of ingested food. That's why it is called as Udgarashuddhi.

Laghuta(lightness) -

Feeling of lightness is subjective. After ingestion of food, related increase of weight is there. After action of Jatharagni, assimilation takes place and increased weight comes to base line consequently. As a result lightness is felt.

Kshut(hunger) -

Kshut is symbol of gastric emptying time. As food moves from Amashaya to Pachyamanashaya, stomach becomes empty. So hunger is felt during or at the end of Second Avasthapaka.

Pipasa (thirst) -

Thirst is felt when Ushna and TikshnaGuna are functioning at their crest during the process of digestion. At that time body demands for Sheeta, Mrudu and Snigdha Guna to compensate in terms of Jala which is reflected as Trushna or Pipasa. So thirst is there during or at the end of Second Avasthapaka.

Vegotsarga (excretion) -

Vegotsarga is indication of completion of digestion. Adhovata, Mutra, Purisha are considered as Aharamala⁹. Mala are going to form at the end of digestion.

Adhovata i.e. Aharamala Svarupa Vayu is formed at third stage of Avasthapaka¹⁰. Its elimination is the function of ApanaVata.

According to Ayurveda, Mutra nirmana takes place in Pakwashaya. When Ahara comes to Pakwashaya during third stage of Avasthapaka, separation of Mala part is done in two forms Drava Mala and Ghana Mala. Drava Mala is turned into Mutra (urine) and is excreted by Apana Vata¹¹. Ghana Mala is converted into Purisha and is excreted out of body by Apana Vata¹².

Svasthanasthesu Dosheshu or Doshe Svapathagame means after completion of digestion all Sharira Bhavas - Dosha, Dhatu, and Mala are placed at their appropriate place. Vata, Pitta and Kapha are formed during third, second and first stage of Avasthapaka respectively. After Sara-KittaVibhajana (segregation of useful and waste product), Ahararasa is carried to Hrudaya and is circulated all over the body. There by Dhatu Poshana is achieved. Mala are excreted out.

Utsaha(enthusiasm) -

Enthusiasm is quite subjective sensation. When digestion completes, formed Mala are going to be excreted from body. After excretion, person feels lightness, energetic which is termed as Utsaha. When Mala are excreted out, cleanness is experienced by all Srotas (channels present in body). It is termed as Vivruta Srotas Mukha. Because of pooled outcome of excretion, enthusiasm and cleanness in channels of body, purity is felt at Hrudaya which is coined as Vishuddha Hrudaya (freshness felt at Hrudaya). Here meaning of Hrudaya is not limited to heart. According to Ayurveda, Hrudayais seat for Manas, Indrya, Atma, and Ojas¹³. Thus it has broad spectrum. So Vishuddha Hrudaya means proper functioning of Manas, Indriya will be very good and person will be attentive.

CONCLUSION

Body reveals certain marks to represent the process of digestion in the form of Jirnahara Lakshana. Udgarashuddhi, Laghuta are observed at initial phase. Kshut and Pipasa are seen at middle stage. Vegotsarga i.e. excretion of Mala and Mutra, Utsaha are there at the end stage of digestion.

Knowledge of Jirnahara Lakshana gives idea about normal and abnormal functioning of gastrointestinal tract.

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