

**INDIGESTION DUE TO INCOMPATIBLE DIET**

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ABSTRACT

The definition of health in *ayurveda* goes like “*Samdosha samagnishcha, samdhatu malakriyah prasannatmendriya manah sawasthabhidheyte*” –*Susurut*. A person is assumed to be healthy only if there is a perfect balance in his *doshas*, *agni*, *dhatu* and *mala*. 13 types of *agni* in human body has been described by *Acharyas*. Out of which *Jatharagni* is the biological fire inside the body that is responsible for digestion process. Indigestion is an uncomfortable feeling of fullness, pain or burning in abdomen. Signs of indigestion

may include belching, heartburn, bloating and nausea. In today's era different factors are responsible for causing indigestion, such as disturbed lifestyle, stress, anxiety, consuming leftovers, frozen foods, excessive use of caffeine, smoking, alcohol, either dry or deep fried foods very often, Untimely eating habits, large amount of drinking water immediately after food and some medications often are making it worse. In *Ayurveda* a word *Ajirna* has been used to denote indigestion. The better way to get rid of indigestion is the betterment of lifestyle by planning a well diet chart with good eating habits and some regular yoga and exercises. In this article we will discuss about different types of *Ajirna* and there prevention and treatment.

KEYWORDS: Agni, Jatharagni, Doshas, Dhatu, Mala, Susurut, Ayurveda, Ajirna.

INTRODUCTION

An appropriate relationship between people and environment is very important for a healthy life. Lifestyle diseases are those which occurs due to bad food habits, physical inactivity, and disturbed biological clock.

The *Jatharagni* is considered as the master *Agni* and is claimed to govern the function of all other *Agnis* besides its own function.^[1] Lifestyle of urban society is becoming very fast and stressful that leads people towards irregular and bad habits of *Ahara*, *Vihara* and creates problems like *Agnimandhya* and *Ajirna*. The main reason for indigestion is the deranged functions of *Agni*.

The word *Ajirna* signifies the state of incomplete process of digestion of ingested food material. Incomplete metabolism due to weakened digestive fire (*Agnimandhya*) leads to unprocessed state of food causing *Ajirna*.

Epidemiology

According to a report, jointly prepared by The World Health Organization and The World Economic Forum^[2], 60% of all deaths worldwide in 2005 (35 million) resulted from non-communicable diseases and accounted for 44% of premature deaths. The report also points to the fact that countries like Brazil, China, Russia and India currently lose more than 20 million productive life- years annually to chronic diseases.

According to a survey done by the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ASSOCHAM)^[3], 68% of working women in the age limit of 21 – 52 years were found to be afflicted with lifestyle ailments such as obesity, depression, chronic backache, diabetes, hypertension and indigestion.

Aetiology

According to *Ayurveda*, following points has been described for *Ajirna*:

1. *Aharaj nidan*: According to *Acharya Sushrut* following dietary aetiological factors are responsible for *Ajirna* –
 - *Ati jalpan*
 - *Vishamashan*
 - *Asatmya bhojan*
 - *Guru, Vishtambhi, Sheeta etc. Kapha vardhak Ahara sewan.*^[4]

2. *Viharaj nidan*: Following environmental and behavioral aetiological factors has been described by *Acharya Charak* and *Acharya Sushrut* –
 - *Vega dharan*
 - *Swapna viparyaya*
 - *Vaman, Virechan, sneha mithya yoga*
 - *Raatri jagaran*.^[5]
3. *Maansik nidan*: Following Psychological factors are also responsible for *Ajirna* :
 - *Irshya* (Envy)
 - *Bhaya* (Panic)
 - *Krodha* (Annoyance).^[6]

Pathogenesis of *Ajirna*

Due to above all three aetiological factors *Jatharagni* gets deranged which further vitiates *Vata* and *Kapha dosha*. An increase in *Kapha dosha* further produces *Agnimandhya* which fails the process of digestion. Undigested food substances becomes toxic in nature and initiates pathologic process inside the gastrointestinal tract and produces many diseases.

DISCUSSION

Food is the primary requirement of body, hence it has been given a very significant place in an individual's life.^[7] As *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned about excessive drinking of water can lead to *Agnimandhya*, it can be understand as, the easiest way to put out a fire is to pour water on it, therefore excessive drinking water will diminish digestive fire, that produces *Ama*. It is defined as "Toxic by product generated due to improper or incomplete digestion", which is not removed from body will eventually arise various health issues.^[8] For a healthy body one should follow a very healthy life style. Thus one should not consume food in less or more quantity without considering nature of food. Consuming food again without digestion of previous meal brings the vitiation of all doshas instantly. While if food is consumed after digestion of previous one Doshas remain in constant and *Agni* is provoked, that maintains digestive system properly.^[9] According to *Ayurvedic Samhitas*, perfect *Dincharya* and *Ritucharya* plays an important role for a healthy body and soul. Holding the reflexes of defecation and micturition for a long period in its *sthan* causes toxic substances (*Aamvish*) as a result it favours development of diseases. Running life style without focusing on health brings dishomeostasis inside body. Inhibited natural urges aggravates *Dosha* that leads to vitiation of *Agni* favoring development of *Ama*.^[10]

A person with anxiety can never be healthy. Digestive issues are prominent part of it. The large intestine is particularly sensitive to stress, which while under stress or anxiety stops its normal function and causes constipation.^[11] During anxiety there is a response started in brain “fight” or “flight” which results in slower down of muscles responsible for digestion.^[12] A sound sleep is also very important for a proper and healthy digestion. In today’s era, a person is too much busy in his/her work for sake of money, that he don’t get enough time to sleep properly, which plays a big role in disturbing digestion. Deep sleep is responsible for giving rest to organs of digestive system. Restlessness is the basic reason for irritable bowel syndrome or a sensitive stomach.^[13]

According to predominance of vitiated doshas *Ajirna* is classified in seven divisions

1. *Amajirna* - vitiated kapha dosha
2. *Vidagdhajirna* - vitiated pitta dosha
3. *Vishtabdhajirna* - vitiated vata dosha
4. *Ras sheshajirna*
5. *Din paaki ajirna*
6. *Prakritik ajirna*
7. *Anna vish ajirna*

Understanding it properly as

1. *Amajirna* – When *Kapha* is increased in stomach it vitiates *Kledak Kapha* that creates *Agnimandhya*, which make a barrier in digesting food. Symptoms are like, heaviness in body, nausea, swelling over cheeks & eyes, acid eructations.^[14]
2. *Vidagdhajirna* – An increase in *Pitta dosha* creates increase in *Amla & Drav guna* which leads to *Agnimandhya*. Symptoms are like, Vertigo, Burning sensations in abdomen, Polydypsia, Burning in chest, sweating.^[15]
3. *Vishtabdhajirna* - Increase volume of gas in abdomen is the reason for *Vishtabdhajirna*. Vitiated *Vaat dosha* slows the function of *Agni* in body which disturbs digestion. Symptoms are Constipation, Flatulence, Bodyache, pain in abdomen.^[16]
4. *Ras sheshajirna* – When almost food is digested only a small part is left, it remains in body as it is, then called *Ras shesajirna*. Symptoms are Heaviness in chest, belching, and salivation.^[17]
5. *Din paaki ajirna* – When digestion does not occur within 24 hours then it happens after 24hours of ingestion.

6. *Prakrit Ajirna* – This is a stage before starting of digestion process.
7. *Anna vish ajirna* – *Acharya Charak* has mentioned about this type of *Ajirna*, when digestion remains improper then *Aam anna vish* gets mixed up with *Vata, pitta & kapha*.

CONCLUSION

Ajirna is the primary source of production of *Ama* which is the root cause of almost diseases. All *Acharyas* has described *Ajirna* in detail with their symptoms, aetiological factors and treatment too. The best way to avoid *Ajirna* or indigestion is to make a healthy life style. Avoidance of aetiological factors can make a big change in health.

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