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### “AAMVATA UNVEILED: EXPLORING THE AYURVEDIC APPROACH TO RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS – NIDANPANCHAK AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES”

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#### **Abstract:**

In Ayurveda, RA is often referred to as "Aamvata." To understand Aamvata, we must first delve into Ayurvedic principles. According to Ayurveda, health is a state of balance between the three doshas Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. When this balance is disrupted, diseases, including Aamvata, can occur. Aamvata is primarily associated with the vitiation of Vata and the accumulation of 'Ama,' which represents toxins or undigested waste products in the body. "Ama" – a toxic substance created by incomplete digestion. Ama is believed to be a central factor in the development of RA. In Ayurveda, Aamvata is a term used to describe a specific type of joint disorder.

It is characterized by the accumulation of "Ama," which refers to toxins or undigested waste products in the body, and "Vata," which is one of the three doshas (biological energies) in Ayurveda, associated with air and ether elements. Aamvata is primarily a Vata disorder, but the presence of Ama aggravates the condition. The combination of Ama and Vata disrupts the

natural functions of the joints and leads to pain, stiffness, and inflammation. Aamvata's concept aligns with certain aspects of autoimmune and inflammatory joint disorders like rheumatoid arthritis. In both systems, reducing inflammation is a key goal.

However, Ayurveda's emphasis on individualized treatments based on a person's unique constitution (Prakriti) and imbalances (Vikriti) differs from the more standardized approaches in modern medicine. Traditional Ayurvedic approaches to managing Aamvata typically involve a combination of dietary changes, herbal remedies, lifestyle modifications, and therapies like Panchakarma (a detoxification process). These aim to pacify Vata and eliminate Ama from the body. Common herbs and treatments include ginger, turmeric, Ashwagandha, and Ayurvedic massage with medicated oils.

**Keywords:** RA, Aamvata, Prakriti, Vikriti, Imbalance etc

### **Introduction :**

Amavata is a sickness where Ama, due to vitiated Vata Dosha, collects Sleshma Sthana, a condition that is commonly referred to as rheumatoid arthritis.<sup>i</sup> The modern era is characterized by a changing lifestyle, fast food consumption, inactivity, etc. Will eventually leads to Mandagni, who in turn produces Ama. Amavata, which has the symptoms Sandhi Shotha, Shoola, Sparshaasahatwa, and Gatrastabdhatva, is caused when Ama mixes with vitiated Vata Dosha in Sleshmasthana. Amavata shares clinical characteristics with rheumatoid arthritis. a long-term inflammatory condition affecting numerous joints, including the minor and major joints in the hands and

feet. It has been reported that the prevalence of rheumatoid arthritis varies between 0.15 and 1.35% in men and between 0.5 and 3.8% in women in India. Whenever Ama localizes in a joint or bodily tissue,<sup>ii</sup> it may cause the associated joints to become painful, stiff, swollen, tender, etc.<sup>iii</sup> Amavata shares many characteristics with ra, an autoimmune disease that results in symmetrical polyarthritis and chronic inflammation.<sup>iv</sup> The first and most important line of management for any disease in Ayurveda is NidanaParivarjana, or avoiding causative factors. A Shodhana (biological purification of the body) procedure called vivechanakarma is used to balance the Pitta Dosha in particular and the Vitiated

Dosha in general. Therefore, to properly manage Amavata, both the therapy modalities—Nidana Paravarjana and Virechanakarma—were included in this study.<sup>v</sup>Madhava was the first Acharya to mention Aamvata as a disease. The outlook is not good, despite the fact that the sickness appears to be easily curable. Aamvata was still somewhat of a mystery prior to Acharya Madhava. Aamvata develops as a result of both Vata Dosha and Ama's Dushti, or Prakopa. The bulk of ailments are caused by the idea of Ama, which is exclusive to Ayurvedic medicine. There is no parallel to Ama in modern science.<sup>vi</sup>

#### **Description in Ancient Texts**

- Ancient Ayurveda texts; Sushruta Samhita, Charak Samhita, AsthtangSamgrah and Ashtang Hridaya have described role of Ama and Vata in pathogenesis of diseases.<sup>vii</sup>
- Madhav nidana described Amavata separately as disease.<sup>viii</sup>
- Chakaradutta, bhaishjyarnavali and Vangsenā explored treatment approaches of Amavata.<sup>ix</sup>
- Madhava Nidana described Samprapti of Amavata according to the Shatkriyakal.

#### **AamvataNidana (Causes)**

- Viruddha Ahara means excess consumption of incompatible food
- ViruddhaCheshta means indulgence in awful behavior.
- Mandagni means hypo functioning of Agni
- Involvement in sedentary life style and Nischala
- Late night awakening and day time sleeping habits
- Environmental and genetic factors which triggers autoimmune activities.
- Dietary: Viruddha Ahara (consistency of items consumed out of order, inconsistent eating patterns.) A major contributing factor to Ama is Viruddha Ahara, which agitates the Doshas without removing them from the body. For example, combining milk and fish in a diet.
- Improper physical activity, or Viruddha Cheshta, is defined as physical activity carried out outside of protocol. For example, engaging in physical activity or having sex when one already has Ajeerna
- Nischalata (Lack of physical activity): Lack of physical activity or sedentary life style is the main cause of accumulation of Ama in the body .
- SnigdhamBhuktavatoVyayaamam: Performing physical exercise soon

after intake of heavy food causes Ama in the body.

- Psychological: Negative mental states while taking meals. Stress is a triggering factor for rheumatoid arthritis.
- Others: Improper management in pregnancy and post partum period causing aggravation of Vata can lead to Amavata.

**SampraptiGhatakas**

Dosha: Vata and kapha

Dhatu: Rasa, Mamasa and Asthi

Srotases: Annavaha, Rasavaha and Asthivaha

Srotodusti: Sanga and Vimaragagmana

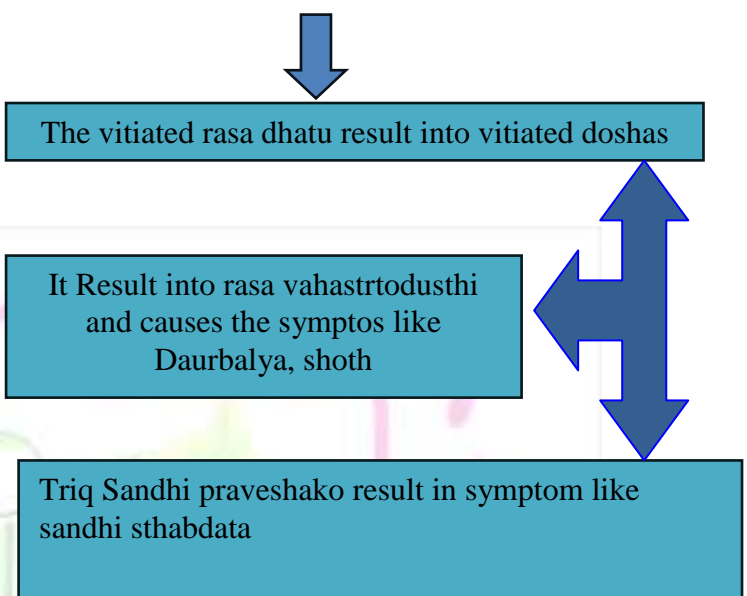
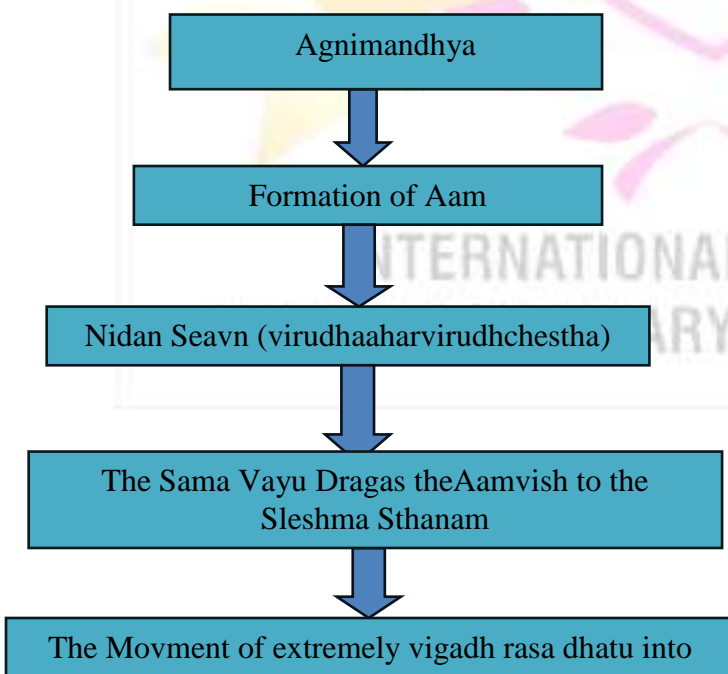
Udbharasthana: Amashya and Pakvasaya

Vyaktasthana: Sandhi

Agni: Jataragni, Mandya and Dhatwagni

Mandy

**Aamvata Samprapti<sup>x</sup>**



**Amavata Lakshana<sup>xi</sup> - Samanya Lakshana of Amavata (initial phase)**

1. Angamarda – Body ache
2. Aruchi – Anorexia
3. Trushna – Thirsty
4. Gourav – Heaviness in the body
5. Aalasya – Lethargy
6. Angashunata – Swelling in the body
7. Jwara – Pyrexia
8. Apaki – Indigestion

**Clinical manifestations of RA or Aamavata:**

Generally, the disease begins with gradual pain, swelling, and stiffness of the multiple joints in the hands and feet at the metacarpo-phalangeal, proximal interphalangeal, metatarsophalangeal, wrist and ankle. Elbows, shoulders, knees and temporo-mandibular(TM) joints are also commonly affected. Hip and lower back pain is less common. The neck joints are frequently affected in children.

Morning stiffness lasting for 1 hr or more is very common. There are also complaints of muscle pain, fatigue, low-grade fever, depression, weight loss, lack of appetite and thirst in about one-third of patients. Less frequently, patients may experience monoarticular arthritis at the onset of the disease, with more joints affected later. In palindromic rheumatism, there is episodic pain and swelling of the joints lasting anywhere from a few hours, to a few days and may reoccur days, weeks, or months later. Aside from manifestations in the joints, muscles, and tendons, there are also extra-articular manifestations in the form of uveitis, scleritis episcleritis, rheumatoid nodules, anemia, pleural and pericardialeffusions, sicca syndrome, splenomegaly, vasculitis, neuropathy and renal disease. Moreover, there is increased incidence of coronary artery disease in patients suffering from RA.

According to Ayurveda, articular symptoms fall under three categories:

Patients in the first group mostly have joint discomfort and tenderness, with little to no visible synovitis or swelling in the joints. Antibodies against cyclic citrullinated peptide and/or rheumatoid factor are positive. In addition, these patients' pain sensations seem excessive given the physical symptoms, raising the possibility

of a psychological component. The majority of these patients have exacerbated vata.

The second category is patients who have an aggravated Pitta which is manifested by redness of joints and burning pain

Patients with exacerbation of Kapha make up the last category. Together with stiffness and synovial enlargement, they also suffer comparatively less discomfort and swelling. The prognosis is better for patients with one Dosha imbalance and worse for those with three Dosha aggravations.

### **Management**

- ❖ Nidana Parivarjana (avoidance of causative factors) is prime approach to control disease pathogenesis.
- ❖ Drugs possess Katu and Tikta Rasa can be used in Amavata.
- ❖ Ushna and Laghu drugs with Tikshna qualities provide Vata Hara and Amapachaka actions. ☞
- ❖ Swedana, Virechana and Vasti are recommended. <sup>xiii</sup>

### **Goals of treatment**

Patients and physicians should begin working toward achieving these three sets of goals simultaneously to treat RA or

### **Aamavata:**

- Short-term: Relieving pain and restoring joint function

- Intermediate term: Controlling inflammation, which is the core of the disease pathogenesis; protection of joints; and preserving body and joint function
- Long-term: Achieving remission, preventing complications and minimizing toxic effects of medicines.

Panchakarma therapy: For increasing the Agni, excretion of Aama and removal of vitiated and accumulated Doshas, purification or Shodhana and pacifying or Shamana treatments are given. This category of treatment comes under

**Panchkarma therapy.** It consists of

- Medicated or retention enemas (Basti)
- Medical emesis (Vaman)
- Medical purgation (Virechan)
- Nasal medication (Nasya)
- Bloodletting (RaktaMokshan)

Out of these five treatments the medicated enema is considered to be the most effective and specific therapy for this category of diseases. Emesis and purgation may reduce Agni and hence are not much used in Aamavata. Bloodletting is effective but because of its invasive nature is not used much. Medicated or retention enemas include herbal retention enemas and oil retention enemas. Herbal retention enemas remove Aama and accumulated Doshas. Various herbs used are

Dashmoola, Rasna, Eranda (Ricinis communis) Bala (Sida cordifolia), Shatavari (Asparagus racemosus), Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia), Ashwagandha (Withaniasomnifera), and Gokshura (Tribulus terrestris) Oil retention enemas help to replenish the depleted body constituents. Various oils used are PanchkolaGhrita, RasnadiGhrita, Ashwagandha Ghrita, castor oil, DhanvantaraTailam, and Narayana Tailam.

#### **Shaman Chikitsa:**

Shamana recommended when the patient is not able to tolerate the Shodhana or purifying treatments.

These are also given as maintenance treatments following the purifying treatments. These treatments help eliminate accumulated Doshas, Aama, and toxins and to regain strength.

The following are various Ayurvedic herbal preparations used in the management of Aamavata

#### **Decoctions**

MahaRasnadikwatha, Ashwagandharistha, Bhallatakasava-this can give rise to severe reactions in some patients especially with Pitta Prakriti hence it has to be used under medical supervision, RasnaPanchakKwatha, RasnaSaptakaKwatha, Dashamoolarishta, and Amritarishta are commonly used.

Herbal powder mixtures/Churnas

AjmodadiChurna, PanchakolChurna, ShunthiChurna, Ashwagandha Churna, DashamoolChurna, RasnaChurna, MustaChurna, VaishwanaraChurna, Kariramoola are used.

Tablets

SimhanadGuggulu, MahayogarajaGuggulu, YogarajaGuggulu, PunarnavaGuggulu, TriphalaGuggulu are used.

**Ghee/Oil Panchakola Ghrita,** RasnadiGhrita, Ashwagandha Ghrita, DashamulaTaila, ErandaTaila (castor oil), Narayana Taila, DhanvantaraTaila are used.

Avaleha

BhallatakaAvaleha, GorakhaAvaleha. Various preparations of Bhallataka can be used in Aamavata.

**Ayurveda Formulations Recommended for Amavata**

- AjmodadiChurna
- VaishwanaraChurna
- GuduchyadiKvatha
- RasnadiKvatha
- Maha YogarajaGuggulu
- YogarajaGuggulu
- VishamushtikaVaṭi

**Prognosis of Aamvata**

It depends on the participation of doshas, dhatus, number of symptoms and Upadravamanifestations in the patient.

Considering its severity, Madhavaconsiders Amavataa terrible disease. Nature of illness to the point that the patient will immediately go into an acute state. Commenting on joint involvement and its complexity, Madhavaconcludes that the management of Amavatais difficult, if swelling and pain to all the joint involved.<sup>xiii</sup>

Clinical feature	Prognosis
If involvement of only one Dosha	Curable
If involvement of two Dosha	Palliable (Yapya)
If involvement of all Dosha, Presence of generalized edema	Difficult to treat

**Pathya**

Rakta Shali, Syamaka, Yava and Kulattha, bulb of Rasona, root of Punarnava, Shigru, Vastuka and fruit of Karavellaka.

**Apathya**

Guru and Abhiṣyandi Anna, Maṣa, milk, curd, fish, suppression of natural urges and indulgence in sedentary life style, etc

**Conclusion**

Dushti of RasavahaSrotas is the cause of the deadly illness Aamvata. Rheumatoid arthritis and Aamvata share similar clinical characteristics. The primary causative elements of Aamvata are Viruddha Ahara, Nischalata, and Mandagni, with Ama

serving as the fundamental pathogenic element. Agnimandya is the consequence of all of Aamvata's etiological ingredients, and Ama, a poison, is generated as a byproduct. Angamarda, Aruchi, and Trushna symptoms, along with Sandhishoola and Stambhadi symptoms, are caused by Ama moving through the RasavahaStrotas in the body.

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