Diseases emanating from GIT form a considerable part of medical practice in India and abroad. Starting from ancient time to the modern era, Grahani Dosha has remained a fore runner but has also behaved like the fountain head of many GIT ailments. The faulty lifestyle, wrong food habits and busy schedules with abnormal-stressed lifestyle, changed eating habits and their patterns, inadequate sleep and non-observance of daily regime, seasonal regime, night regime and Sadvritta are the reasons for growing metabolic diseases in society. Due to improper digestion of food, there is vitiation of the Doshas and Agni and symptoms like alternate Constipation and Diarrhoea, with associated symptoms are seen, which can be collectively called as Grahani Roga. All the renowned physician of Ayurveda has given an account of treatment modalities for Grahani Roga. Among the different food habits and medicinal preparations, Takrasevan and Ashvaghola have been taken in this study. Takra having Ushna Veerya, Kashaya Rasa, Madhura Vipaka & Ruksha Guna pacifies Vata, Pitta, potentiates the Agni and digests as well as absorbs the food articles, and Ashvagola having Madhura Rasa, Sheeta Veerya and Madhura Vipaka is Vata Pittashamak and give bulk to the stool, relieving the symptoms and treating the disease in a generous way. This study is an attempt of the author to explain the effect of Butter milk and Ashvagola in Grahani Roga with the help of Ayurvedic Pharmacodynamics and other experimental studies.

KEYWORDS: Grahani Dosha / Roga, Agni, Takra, Ashvagola.

INTRODUCTION

Grahani as body organ holds a very important place in human anatomy; its physiological functions are also interlinked not only with mere digestion but with greater concept of Agni. It means that the ancient Acharaya gave utmost importance to the balanced functioning of the digestive track. The incidence and prevalence of a disease can be understood by studying the literature and available documentation of that era. While viewing the Ayurvedic classics written many centuries ago, it appears that the disease and symptoms related to various ailments of Grahani are found in scattered chapters. No doubt the food provides nourishment to Deha-dhatus and is the enhancer of immunity, strength and complexion but in effects it is the Agni that plays a vital role in this connection because tissue elements like rasa etc. cannot even originate from undigested food particles. Extinction of Jatharagni leads to death, its proper maintenance helps a person to live long life and its impairment leads to diseases. Therefore Jatharagni is considered to be the root of living being. [1] If Agni is in normal state and if the individual takes appropriate quantity of food, then there will be proper digestion of food which leads to maintenance of the equilibrium of all the tissue elements. Diminished digestive power brings about Vidaha (burning sensation) which moves upwards and downwards in gastrointestinal tract. When the digested and undigested food move downwards, the condition is known as Grahani. Here the food remains in the state of Vidagdha leading to symptoms like Constipation or diarrhoea, thirst, dysphagia, tastelessness, excessive salivation, dyspnœa, vomiting and eructations. [2]

Grahani Dosha/Roga

According to Acharaya Charak, Grahani which is the site of Agni is so called because of its power to restrain (Grahana=the downward movement) food. It is located above the umbilical region, and is supported and nourished by the strength of Agni. Normally it restrains the downward movement of undigested food and after the digestion, it release the food through its lumen. In the abnormal condition, when it gets vitiated because of weakness of Agni it releases the food in undigested form only. [3] Acharaya Sushruta elucidates that the Shashti-pittdharakala situated in between the stomach and the large intestine is called Grahani. [4] According to Ashtanga Sangraha, the ingestion, digestion, absorption and assimilation of the four type of Aahaar and the subsequent elimination of the waste material is done by Grahani. [5] According to Chakrapani, Trividh anomalies of the jatharagni is called Grahaniroga. [6]

Etiological Factors for Grahani Dosha

There seems to be unanimity among the various Acharayas when they elucidate the reasons of Grahani Dosha/Roga. Acharaya Charak and Sushruta have classified two types of broad reasons and have categorized the disease according to them. Acharaya Charaka stresses...
more on reasons which are of the dietary and lifestyle related i.e., Aaharjanya (Food habits); Abhohajanat (Excessive fasting), Ajeernabhohjanat, Attibhohjananat (excessive eating), Visamasanat (irregular eating), Asatmya Guru, Sheeta, Ruksa, Sandустa Bhohjanat etc. Improper administration of Vanama, Virechana and Snehana therapies, Vyadhikarshanat and Vegavidharana (suppression of natural urges). [7] Acharaya Sushruta has described it as a sequel to the intake of wrong diet after the incidence of diarrhoea. [8]

Role of etiological factors for Grahani Dosha/Roga mentioned in treatise in the present day perspective

With the passage of time a considerable change has occurred in the lifestyle and food habits of individual in comparison to what it is used to be during the time the most ancient texts were written. In present era life is moving at fast pace, totally unhealthy diet which includes fast foods and aerated beverages accompanied by abreacted daily routine and mental stress has reinforced the importance of the above mentioned etiological concept of Acharayas. All these etiological factors ultimately results into imbalance of the body humour (Vata, pitta and Kapha) and deranged the Agni. No Surprise, there is increased preponderance of the diseases now-a-days which have Grahani Roga/Dosha as a Central presentation. It is most important part of pathogenesis of a disease. According to Charak, being thus vitiated a person does not digest even the light food. This undigested food become sour in taste and it works like an unsuitable product. [9] According to Acharaya Sushruta, if a person is cured of Atisar but continues with the indiscretion of diet and the lifestyle, it will lead in to Mandagni resulting in risk of acquiring Grahani Dosha/ Roga. [10]

Premontory symptoms

According to Acharaya Charka Trishna (thirst), Aalasya (feeling of laziness), Balakshaya (Diminision of strength), Aanvidaah (burning sensation), Chir Pakka (delay in digestion of food) and Gaurvam (heaviness of the body) are the premonitory sign and symptoms of Grahani dosha/roga. [11] Acharaya Sushruta while describing the above said Poorvvaroopa have additionally described Aruchi (Anorexia), Kasa (Cough), Karnakshveda (Tinnitus) and Antrakunjana (Gargling sound of Abdomen) as the premonitory signs. [12]

Pathogenesis

When a person consumes Agnidushthika Nidanas, it results in disturbance in equilibrium of Manas and Shareerika Dosh. This Dosa Vaishyama passes through different stages and ultimately produces disease. The concept of Kriyakala described the mode and stage of development of disease. A good understanding of pathogenesis of disease is essential for early diagnosis, prognosis and for adopting and preventive measures. Grahani Roga is a disease which is superimposed over preexisting Agni dushti, due to injudicious Aahara and Vihara. When a person with Agnimandhya indulges in consumption of injudicious Aahara and Vihara the Grahani Roga engenders. Because of the Agni dushti, ingested food is not properly digested and results in Apachana (indigestion) and Ama formation. Thus, the food attains Shuktata. At this stage, Dosa i.e., Kledaka Kapha, Pachaka Pitta, and Samana Vayu sheltered in the organ and Grahani gets vitiated. The Shupataka stage leads to Anna-visha formation. Here indigested food undergoes fermentative changes. Now in this condition food attains such a form that it becomes able to produce so many ailments like poison does. Anna Visha gets located in Grahani and further vitiates it, resulting in functional (Karyatmaka Vikriti). The Anna-visha may also spread in the whole body through Rasa, and mixes with Doshas, Dushyas or Dhatus. Anna-visha while, remaining in the Grahani and spread in the whole body through Rasadi Dhatus produces symptoms, Viz. Vistamhya (Abdominal distention), Sadana (feeling of prostration), headache, fainting and giddiness, stiffness of back and lumber region, yawnings, malaise, morbid thirst, fever, vomiting, tenasmus, anorexia and indigestion of food. This is a serious condition and is named as Grahani Roga. [13]

Clinical Features

The most common symptoms of Grahani Dosh /Roga is Mandagni (weak digestive fire) which brings out the Vidagdha (a part of which is digested and the other part is undigested) of food, which moves upward and downward in the Gastro intestinal tract. The digested and the und digested food move downwards and the condition is called Grahaniagada. In this condition entire food material usually remains in the state of Vidagad. In association with Trishna (Thirst), Aaruchi (Anorexia), Verasya (Distaste of Mouth), Praseka (Excessive salivation), the afflicted person voids stool in large quantity either in solid or liquid form. He also suffers from oedema in Legs and Hands, Pain in Bones and Phalanges, Chhardi (Vomiting), Jwara (Fever) and Tikata Anamaludhgaar (Eruptions having metabolic smell of Ama and Bitter as well as sour taste). [14] Acharaya Sushruta described that the patient suffering from Grahani Dosha complains of Oedema on hand and feet, weight loss, pain in joints, urge to eat food of all taste, thirst, vomiting, fever, heat in body. There is reduced desire to eat food. [15]

Ayurvedic Management of Grahani Dosha

The first and foremost principle of treatment of any disease is Nidana Parivarjan. Ayurveda is the only system which elaborately advocates the disintegration of the pathogenesis as a form of treatment. Acharya Bhav Prakash says that Grahani Dosa should be treated like that of Ajeerna Roga. Langhana and Deepana medicines should be used along with the medicines which are given in case of Atisara should be used. [16] If the Ama moves downwards and remain adhered to the colon then the patient should be given purgation therapy with such drugs which are stimulant to digestion. If the Dosa in its Ama stage is converted into rasa and pervade the other parts of body, then the patient should made to fast and be given drugs conducive to Pachana. [17] To cover all the signs and symptom of the Grahani dosha Ayurvedic texts describe an ample range of classical medicines. Many expert physicians use single drug therapy while treating the patients. In case of Grahani Dosha/ Roga, there is huge range of crude drugs which can be used independently or mixed with other medicines. One of the most important single drug medicine used is Husk of Ashvagol which shows very good effect in

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relieving the complaint of incomplete evacuation by forming bulk stool. An interesting finding that has emerged, patients who modified their life style and food plan along with the Pathya Apathya, balanced daily regime as explained by the text will get cured and one of the best Pathya for Grahani is daily use of butter milk (Takra).

### Importance of Butter Milk

For a patient suffering from the Grahani doshosa, butter milk is the excellent drink because it stimulates the power of digestion, it is Grahi and easily digestible. Butter milk is sweet, sour, astringent in taste; light and dry in properties, hot in potency and sweet in metabolism. Because of Madhura (sweet) Vipaka, it does not cause aggravation of Pitta. Because of its astringent taste, hot in potency, it is useful for counteracting the aggravated Kapha. Because of the sweet and sour taste, it is useful for counteracting the aggravated Vayu. When freshly prepared it does not cause burning sensation. Acharya Charak has given a detailed description of how butter milk needs to be administered in a patient of Grahi, giving due concentration to his digestive fire, he ranges the duration of treatment either 1 week, 10 days or maximum for a month. In this duration, butter milk is administered in the morning and Takra or Takralehika or Takrapeya with rock salt or Takrandana with fat is administered in patient with poor, good, better, and still better state of digestive fire respectively.[10] Therefore all the recipes of butter milk described for the treatment of Jathra and Arsha should be used for the treatment of Grahani.dosa/roga. [11] Acharya Vagbhata has advised buttermilk as a drink when Ama (Undigested material/toxins) is present in Grahani (IBS). In Grahani Roga (IBS), powder of drugs of Pachana (digestive), Grahi (bowel binding) and Dipana (carminative/ that which improve digestive power) groups along with buttermilk or buttermilk alone is beneficial. Takrarishtha (Fermented preparation of buttermilk) or sour Buttermilk is advised in Grahani (IBS) caused due to aggravated Kapha. Though freshly prepared buttermilk is astringent in taste and good for pacifying Kapha, but for stimulating digestive fire, sour type of buttermilk is beneficial and hence it is recommended in Grahani (IBS) caused due to aggravated Kapha.[20] According to Bhavaprakasha, He who uses butter milk daily does not suffer from diseases and the diseases cured by butter milk do not reoccur, just as Amrita (divine nectar) is for the Gods, butter milk is for humans.[21] Buttermilk has characteristically sour taste, increased activity of buttermilk is primarily due to lactic acid produced by Lactic acid bacteria; while fermenting lactose, the primary sugar in milk. The tartness of buttermilk is due to acid in the primary milk protein, the ph of the milk decreases and casein, the primary milk protein, precipitates, causing the curdling or clabbering of milk. Buttermilk has probiotic qualities that help to regulate the functions of Gastrointestinal system. [22]

Takraor butter-milk serves as a natural substitute for the probiotics. Corticosteroids used in the treatment of IBD decreases the ability of the body to cope up with physical stress and also suppress the immune system activity, causing increased risk of infection. Considering the hazardous effect of these medicines in a long run, better management options are available in Ayurveda and Takraprayoga is one such. [23]

### Nutritional fact of 100 ml of Butter Milk[24]

- Total fat 0.88 g, Saturated fat 0.55 g, Cholesterol 4.00 mg, Total carbohydrates 4.79 g, Protein 3.31 g, Vitamin A 26 IU, Vitamins C 1.00 g, Sodium 105.00g, Calcium 116.00 g, Iron 0.05 mg, Potassium 151 mg, Lysine 0.28 g.

### Husk of Ashvagol in management of Grahani

Ashvagola (Plantagoovata) belonging to Plantaginaceae family is a miraculous drug for curing Grahi disease. Isabgol husk is an herbal medicine and used for the treatment of habitual constipation; in conditions in which easy defecation with soft stools is desirable, e.g. in cases of painful defecation after rectal or anal surgery, anal fissures and hemorrhoids and in patients to whom an increased daily fibre intake may be advisable e.g. as an adjuvant in constipation predominant irritable bowel syndrome, as an adjuvant to diet in hypercholesterolemia. [25]

The drug is sweet in taste; heavy and ununctuous in properties; cold in potency and sweet in metabolism. Ashvagol Husk gives best results in patients with constipation due to spastic colitis. [26] The pharmacological effects, gut motility and transit rate can be modified by Ispaghula husk through mechanical stimulation of the gut wall depending on the increase in intestinal bulk by water and the decrease in viscosity of the luminal contents. When taken with sufficient amount of liquid (at least 30 ml per 1-gm of husk), it produces an increased volume of intestinal contents due to its highly bulking properties and hence a stretch stimulus occurs which triggers defecation. At the same time the swollen mass of mucilage forms a lubricating layer which makes the transit of intestinal contents easier. [27]

In one study, patients were given Ispaghula seeds and Ispaghula husk. After 15 days of treatment, there was symptomatic improvement in patients of IBS. After 30 days treatment, 27 out of 30 patients reported symptomatic improvement and their need for antispasmodic medication dropped by more than 50%. [28] In an experimental study, P. ovata seeds ameliorated the development of colonic inflammation in transgenic rats as evidenced by an improvement of intestinal cytoarchitecture, significant decrease in some of the pro-inflammatory mediators and higher production of short-chain fatty acids. [29] Plantago seeds act as laxative which is due to the increased volume of the mucilage within the seed membrane; thereby it increases the volume of stool and softens intestines. Plantain seeds should always be administered with plenty of water. [30]

### CONCLUSION

It is seen that in the clinics of every medical practitioner whether Ayurvedic, Homeopathic or of Allopathic system of medicine, they receive large number of patients which are Grahan Dosh centric but such patients can be best treated with Ayurveda drugs and diet regimens. The nutritional contents of butter milk help in relieving different symptoms of Grahani while the husk of Plantago ovate helps in relieving the spasmodic pain found in patient of IBS. Further, experimental and
clinical studies are required to evaluate the efficacy of Buttermilk and Ashvagola in management of Grahani Roga.

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