



## UNLOCKING SECRETS OF AGNI AND KOSHTA PARIKSHA AND ITS DIAGNOSTIC SIGNIFINANCE IN AYURVEDA PRACTICE

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### ABSTRACT

In Ayurveda, the term "Pariksha" denotes a thorough examination or investigation intended to obtain precise information about a patient or illness. Understanding elements like Ayu, Rogi Bala, Roga Bala, and the degree of morbidity is essential for understanding treatment planning. Our Acaryas explain about various forms of Parikshas, including Trividha, Chaturvidha, Astavidha, and Dashavidha Pariksha, highlighting the significance of thorough examination before initiating any treatment. When it comes to planning Chikitsa (treatment), Agni (digestive fire) and Koshta (the gastrointestinal tract) Pariksha are important considerations. Among different types of Agnis, Jatharagni is the most significant type as it controls all other types of Agnis. Agni is responsible for digestion, absorption, and metabolism of Ahara. The state of Agni is further categorized into Tikshnagni, Mandagni, Vishamagni, and Samagni. Koshta Pariksha, which examines the nature of bowel movements, is equally important in clinical practice. Koshta is categorized into Krura (hard), Madhyama (moderate), and Mridu (soft), each influencing the choice of treatment, especially in therapies like Snehana (oleation), Vamana (emesis), and Virechana (purgation). So, Agni and Koshta Pariksha are fundamental in Ayurveda, guiding the appropriate administration of drugs, dietary recommendations, and therapeutic interventions. Proper assessment ensures that treatments are effective and safe, preventing complications and supporting both the healing process and the maintenance of health. Understanding the interplay of Agni, Koshta, and Prakriti (constitution) is essential for successful Ayurvedic practice, emphasizing the need for careful examination in every stage of treatment.

**KEYWORDS:** Pariksha, Agni, Koshta, Clinical applicability.

### INTRODUCTION

Pariksha means "Pareetha Ekshaie" the circumspect examination or study. In Ayurveda the term Pariksha is used in place of Pramana.<sup>[1]</sup> Pramanaih arthavadharanam iti pariksha – Through means of Pariksha one can acquire clear knowledge about Vishaya (patient or disease). Pariksha aids to gain Pratipatti jnana i.e., Nidana, Lakshanas which helpful in treatment planning. The purpose of examination is to obtain knowledge regarding Ayu, Rogi bala, Roga bala and intensity of morbidity The physician should first examine the disease and then administer the drug after getting complete knowledge about the disease.<sup>[2]</sup> In Samhithas for the diagnose of disease various Parikshas like Trividha pariksha, Chaturvidha pariksha, Astavidha pariksha, Dashavidha pariksha are explained. Among numerous factors, Agni and Koshta pariksha are given prime importance. As

Agni and Koshta pariksha are crucial for planning chikitsa in Rogi, for selecting Aushadha, Aushadha matra, Kalpanas, Snehapana dosage, sodhana drugs and considering individual as Swasthya.

**CONCEPT OF AGNI:** Agni is defined as an entity that burns and moves upwards and it is also considered as pitta. The synonyms of Agni are Vaishwanara, Vahni, Anala, Pavaka, Viryam, Tejasa, Rudri, Shikhi, Chitrabhanu, Vayu sakha etc., Grahani is the seat of Agni and it is located above the Nabhi.<sup>[3]</sup> It holds the food for proper digestion absorption and assimilation. Agni is responsible for maintaining of Ayu, Varna, Bala, Swasthya, Utsaha, Deha Pushti, Prabha, Ojas, Tejas, Prana and Dehagni.<sup>[4]</sup> It burns when fed with food and drinks.

**Classification of Agni based on function and site of action.**

CARAKA	SUSHRUTA	VAGBHATA
Jatharagni - 1 Dhatwagni - 7 Bhutagni - 5	Pachaka pitta Ranjaka pitta Sadhaka pitta Bhrajaka pitta Alocaka pitta	Bhutagni - 5 Dhatwagni - 7 Doshagni - 3 Malagni - 3

Among all types of Agni, Jatharagni (Jatharam ithi udaram) has given prime importance as it controls the function of all other Agnis.<sup>[4]</sup> Based on Avastha Paka Jatharagni divided into Tikshnagni, Mandagni, Vishamagni, Samagni<sup>[5]</sup> but acc to Haritha samhitha only 3 types i.e., Mandagni, Tikshnagni, Samagni are explained.

**TIKSHNAGNI:** Tikshnagni is the one which is able to digest Prabhuta Matra of upayukta anna very quickly and it is Ashu Pachaka, which digests quickly. If ignoring this agni results in Atyagni or Bhasmakagni and ignored further, resulting in Gala, Talu, Osthasosha, Daha, and Santapa. Virechana karma and Madhura, sita, snigdha dravyas are useful for treatment.

**MANDAGNI:** Digestive power is slow and are unable to digest the food even in small quantity. It manifests symptoms like Udara Shiro Gaurava, Praseka, Kasa, Swasa, Chardi, Gatra sadana and managed by katu, tikta, kashaya dravyas.

**VISHAMAGNI:** Vishamagni is the state in which improper digestion and metabolism take place. It manifest symptoms like Adhmana, Shula, Udavartha, Pravahana, Udara gourava, Antrakujana and managed by snigdha, amla, lavana dravyas.

**SAMAGNI:** Physiological state of agni which means food is digested properly at the proper time and increases the quality of dhatus. It is equilibrium state of functioning of Tridoshas. Acarya Susruta explains that for maintenance of normalcy Mahisha Ksheera, Dadhi, Sarpi should be given in Atyagni.<sup>[6]</sup> Another type of Agni is explained in Sharangadhara samhitha i.e., Bhasmakagni where Tikshna guna of pitta is involved.<sup>[7]</sup>

**Relation between Prakriti and Agni**

PRAKRITI	AGNI
Vata	Vishamagni
Pitta	Tikshnagni
Kapha	Mandagni
Sama dosha	Samagni

**Relation of koshta and involvement of doshas acc to different authors**

KOSHITA	CHARAKA <sup>[14]</sup>	SUSRUTHA <sup>[15]</sup>
Mridu	Pitta	Pitta
Madhyama	Kapha	Sama dosha
Krura	Vata	Vata and Kapha

**Relation between Agni bala, Ritu and Vaya<sup>[8]</sup>**

AGNI BALA	RITU	VAYA
Uttama	Hemanta Sishira	Yavana
Manda	Varsha Vasantha Pravrit	Vrddha

**AGNI PARIKSHA:** Assessment of agni based on 2 components: Abhyavaharana Shakti-Pravara, Madhyama, Avara and Jarana Shakti – Digestive capacity. It is assessed based on lakshanas like Udgara suddhi, Utsaha, Vegotsarga, Laghuta, Kshuth, Pipasa.

In Aturopakramaneeya adhyaya; acharyas had explained before commencing the treatment the physician should examine Ayu, Vyadhi, Ritu, Agni, Bala, Vayas, Sattva, Satmya, Prakriti, Bhesajaya, Desha.<sup>[9]</sup> It is important to assess the strength of agni according to Prakriti, Vayas, Ritu. Aushadhi, Aushadhi matra, Route of administration all depend on strength of Agni as Tikta rasa Pradhana dravyas are choice of treatment in Pittaja vikaras with agnimandya. Also helps for recommendations of type of ahara for example Laghu ahara dravyas in Mandagni<sup>[10]</sup> and Vihara as Chankramana, Vyayama, Nidra increases Agni.

**CONCEPT OF KOSHITA**

Koshta - Sarvam udaram i.e., entire abdomen<sup>[11]</sup> It is a cavity formed from Avarana which consists of dhatus. It also considered as Mahasrotas, Sarira Madhya, Amapakwashaya and Abhyantara Roga marga.<sup>[12]</sup> Acc to Bhavaprakasha; Amashaya, Pakwashaya, Mutrashaya, Rudhirashya, Rhudya, Unduka, Phupusa are considered as Koshta.<sup>[13]</sup> Physiologically bowel movements is considered as Koshta acc to constitution of person. Koshta is of three types i.e., Krura, Madhyama and Mridu. Krura koshta-Elimination of Hard faeces with difficulty or non-elimination due to Ruksha and khara guna of Vata dosha. Mridu koshta-Elimination of Semisolid faeces(watery) once or twice in a day due to Drava, Sara, Laghu guna of pitta dosha. Madhyama koshta-Solid faeces which are firm moving out smoothly and regularly due to Snigdha, guru, sthira guna of Kapha dosha.

**KOSHITA PARIKSHA AND ITS IMPORTANCE**

Koshta pariksha can be done through Darshana pariksha i.e., by Anumana pramana after ingestion of Anulomana dravyas purgation occurs or not. We check whether persons gets purgated with Ksheera, Aragwadha, Ikshu, Takra, Mastu, Guda, Krushara, Nava Madhya, Ushnodaka, Draksha, by this we can infer Pitta

Bahulyata and then considered as Mrdu koshta Persons get purgated with Kushta, Sama, Triphala we can infer there is more Vata and then considered Koshta as Krura koshta.<sup>[16]</sup> It helps for selecting type of Aushadha dravya and its matra in Chikitsa i.e., Sodhana and shaman.<sup>[17]</sup> It also helpful for fixation of dosage and duration of Snehapana.<sup>[18]</sup>

Acc to Jejjeta; duration of Snehapana varies based on Tara and Tama bhavas as mentioned in below table.

Mrdu Tama - 1 day	Madhyama Tama - 4 days	Krura - 7 days
Mrdu Tara - 2 days	Madhyama Tara - 5 days	Krura Tara - 8 days
Mrdu - 3 days	Madhyama - 6 days	Krura Tama - 9 days

It mainly helpful for assessment of Prakriti with the Koshta, which is an essential step in Ayurvedic clinical practice.<sup>[19]</sup>

KOSHITA	PRAKRITI
Krura koshta	Vata prakriti
Madhyama koshta	Kapha prakriti
Mridu koshta	Pitta prakriti

**ROLE OF AGNI AND KOSHITA IN SODHANA CHIKITSA**

**In Snehapana:** Sneha prayoga is irrational without considering the strength of agni. If Agni bala is Uttama then Uttama matra of Sneha is administered.<sup>[20]</sup> Sharangadhara had given Abhyantara Snehapana matra based on Agni bala i.e., In Tikshnagni persons 1 pala, Madhyama agni 2 karsha, Mandagni 1 karsha.<sup>[21]</sup> Sneha dravya is administered based on the strength of agni like for Mandagni persons ghritapana is advised and for Uttama agni bala persons vasapana is advised. Assessment of agni is helpful for fixation of trail dose and for Arohana krama matra.

**Assessment of Agni for Snehapana<sup>[22]</sup>**

Agni assessment based on Abhyavaharana shakti, Jarana Shakti and kala

Calculating the Agni bala index = test dose / Given dose x time

Interpretation: Lesser the ABI = Higher will be the Agnideepthi. So it is taken as Scoring pattern for Kshudh Pravritti

For Eg: In a person 30 ml Sneha get digested in 3 hours ABI is 3 on first day and on the last day in the same person 300 ml is digested in 6 hours ABI is 0.6 that means person has more agni bala.

**Assessment of Koshta for Snehapana<sup>[23]</sup>**

KRURA KOSHITA	MADHYAMA KOSHITA	MRIDU KOSHITA
Kathina or Sushka Mala Pravritti	Formed stools	Semiformed or formed stools
Does not pass stools regularly	Passes stools daily once	Passes stools daily once or twice
Requires long time for defecation	Requires long time for defecation compared to Mridu	Requires lesstime for defecation
Incomplete evacuation of stools	Complete evacuation of stools	Complete evacuation of stools
Requires Teekshna Virechana drugs	Requires Madhyama Virechana drugs and does not purgated by milk	Requires Mridu Virechana drugs and get purgated by Milk,
No change in bowel movements after giving test dose	Changes in bowel movements that is semi formed or formed stools after giving test dose	Changes in bowel movements and increased frequency 1-2 times after giving test dose

**In Vamana karma:** Vamana is suitable when persons had Tikshnagni and strong bala. In relation to Vamana three types of koshta is explained in Vagbhata<sup>[24]</sup> i.e., Sleshmadikatwam - Mrdu koshta, Sleshma madhyatwa - Madhyama koshta, Sleshma hinata- Krura koshta by considering these Aushadhi can be administered.

**In Virechana karma:** Aushadhi undergo Pachana first here so Krura koshta and Alpagni persons are not suitable.<sup>[25]</sup> If Tikshna Virechana given in persons having Mrdu Koshta and Diptagni it does not eliminate dosha properly<sup>[26]</sup> similarly Persons having Krura koshta and

Tikshnagni, if given Alpa oushadhi leads to Vyadhi and Bala vibhrama so assessment Agni and Koshta before Virechana is Necessary.

**In Basti karma:** Basti administered without considering Koshta and agni leads to basti vyapat. As it causes atiyoga in Mridu koshta persons if we give basti with Ati Tikshna and ushna dravyas and in Krura koshta persons alpavirya oushadhi causes margavarodha.<sup>[27]</sup> Persons who have more rookstha and bahuavata symptoms should take Anuvasana basti every day; in other situations, it should

be taken once every three days to avoid agni derangement.<sup>[28]</sup>

**In Samsarjana krama:** After sodhana karma Agni becomes weak by the elimination of all doshas from the body so Samsarjana krama to be adopted.

Peyadi krama for Vata pitta doshas dominant and Tarpanadi krama for Kapha pitta doshas dominant. These are helpful to increase Agni bala without disturbing other doshas.

#### CLINICAL APPLICABILITY OF AGNI AND KOSHITA IN SHAMANA CHIKITSA

Acc to Caraka dosage refer to a person having moderate type of Koshta, Vaya, Bala. Matra of the Aushadhi is based on the Dosha, Agni, Bala, Vyadhi, Koshta for the better management. Heena matra is given in persons having tikshnagni it does not show any effect on the disease. Similarly persons with Deeptagni and krura koshta Majja to be advised (C.Su13/50). In Grahani roga<sup>[29]</sup> some clinical applicability are explained like persons with Agnimandya and ama- Dashamuladya ghrita, Chitrakadi gutika; Pittaja Grahani with agnimandya – Sodhana followed by Tiktaka ghritas; Agnimandya with kroora koshta – Ghrita with lavana to be given.

#### AGNI AND KOSHITA IMPORTANCE IN RASAYANA CHIKITSA

Rasayana treatment helps for attaining the excellent qualities of rasadhi dhatu, increases longevity, memory, free from diseases etc., Agni is prime factor to be considered before starting Rasayana therapy along with the Koshta suddhi for better absorption of drugs. For example After Shodhana procedure Yavagu with ghrita to be given for 3,5,7 days till elimination of purana varchas.<sup>[30]</sup> Based on strength of Agni and bala of the patient matra of Rasayana drugs is increased.<sup>[31]</sup>

#### DISCUSSION

Agni is a vital component of the human body as it is responsible for the body's metabolic and digestive processes. Appropriate consumption of Ahara and Vihara is necessary to sustain a normal condition of Agni, and its impairment leads to formation of Ama which results in diseases. The Abhyavaharana shakti, Jarana shakti, and additional elements like Ritu, Vaya, Mala, and Prakriti properly evaluate Agni, which aids in the preparation of chikitsa in Rogi. Similarly, koshta pariksha is essential for assessing before Sodhana and also selection of drug in Shamana. Understanding relation of prakriti - Agni -Koshta is important in Chikitsa because patient with complaints of Constipation can't considered as Krura koshta it may also causes due to dysfunctioning of Apanavayu. Agni vaiparithya treatment is to be adopted because most of the diseases are caused by the derangement of agni. Normally Sara guna is predominant in pitta Prakruti persons if we give drugs having sara guna leads to purgation. Manasika

bhavas such as Bhaya, Krodha, shoka are depend on the Agni as these are the functions of Sadhakagni by the means of manas. If Agni is prakruta those bhavas also in prakruta.

#### CONCLUSION

Koshta and Agni pariksha are basic and important in Ayurveda for the administration of drugs, appropriate ahara and vihara, and also in every stage of treatment. It helps in the selection of a line of treatment for the disease, and if anyone is administered without seeing Agni and Koshta, it leads to several complications, even death. Derangement of agni leads to diseases; hence, assessing the agni at an early stage helps in the prevention of diseases at an early stage. Not only in Atura person but also Swastha person for maintaining Swasthyata Samagni should be there. In Shodhana Chikitsa, Koshta and Agni Pariksha helps in fixing dosage, duration and Samsarjana krama. Koshta suddhi is important for proper absorption of Ahara and Aushadhi. So in every stage of the Swasthya rakshna and Vikruti prashamna agni and Koshta pariksha is very much essential and beneficial. Similarly, if we give drugs without assessing koshta and agni, it leads to Atiyoga, Ayogya, and Mithyayogya.

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