



## DOES ĀMADOṢA CAUSE SINUSITIS?

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### ABSTRACT

Partial digestion and un-assimilation of food leading to toxicity is called āmadoṣa in Ayurveda. It occurs to one who is habituated to incompatible food, eating food before the digestion of prior food, food which is abhorrent, constipative, overcooked, undercooked, heavy, dry, cold, contaminated, causing burning sensation in stomach, dried and excessively water soaked and when food is consumed by those afflicted by grief, anger and revenous hunger. This ama, when mixes with Kapha will be turbid, thread-like, solidified, sticky (gummy) and slimy. These symptoms have a resemblance of sinusitis explained by modern system of medicine and so a humble attempt is made here for a comparative analysis of both these conditions to resolve the issue from recurrent infections.

**KEYWORDS:** Āmadoṣa, Sinusitis, food, infection.

### INTRODUCTION

Sinusitis<sup>[1]</sup> is an infection of paranasal sinuses that either is bacterial (mainly strptococcus pneumoniae and Haemophilus influenzae) or is occasionally fungal. It is most commonly associated with an upper respiratory tract infection and can occur with asthma. Symptoms include frontal headache, purulent rhinorrhoea, facial pain with tenderness and fever. It can be confused with a variety of other conditions such as migraine, trigeminal neuralgia and cranial arteritis.

Symptoms of Kapha aggravation include, excessive unctuousness, hardness, itching, cold feel, heaviness, obstruction in pathways, coating, inactivity, edema, indigestion, excessive sleep/narcolepsy, pallor, feel of sweet and salt taste in mouth and chronicity. Many of these Ayurvedic findings correspond to the Sinusitis of the modern system.

What is Āmadoṣa? Due to weakness of digestion, the initial body tissue (end product of digestion in the G.I tract; i.e., rasadhatu-asthayi) being not properly transformed undergoes vitiation and return (retrograde) to stomach- this is what is called Āmadoṣa. This would lead to Blocade of body channels, loss of strength, heaviness of body, blocade in the function of vata, laziness, indigestion, spitting continuously, constipation, loss of appetite and weakness comprise symptoms of dosas coupled with ama(undigested food).

### Need for comparison

While explaining the location of Kapha dosha in Ayurveda, it is said that thorax, neck, head, oesophagus, joints, stomach, the food essence, adipose tissue, nose and tongue are mentioned out of which thorax is considered to be its main seat. In acute coryza, the complications are that it may lead to Sinusitis which can become chronic, particularly in the maxillary sinuses, causing persistent discharge from the front and back of the nose often accompanied by nasal obstruction and headache. Kapha by nature possessing the properties of unctuous, cold, heavy, slow, fine, sticky and stable, when gets mixed up with Ama, attains cloudy, thready, heavy, sticky and slymy nature which get adhered into the passage of maxillary sinuses with nasal obstruction and headache as mentioned above in aute coryza.

### Management

The management<sup>[2]</sup> of these complications as per the modern view is that, nasal decongestant such as oxymetazoline hydrochloride(0.05% solution-0.15 ml instilled into each nostril every 8-12 hourly) is of value when nasal obstruction is troublesome but such preparation should only be used for shorty periods. However, in Ayurveda properties represent the physical and physiological qualities of doshas. These deranged properties in the form of increase should be tackled by opposite properties as per the tabular coloumn below to minimize the effects of sinusitis said by modern or sama kapha said by Ayurveda as both match with each other.

1. Heavy x light

2. Slow x sharp
3. Cool x hot
4. Unctuous x dry
5. Smooth x rough
6. Thick x liquid
7. Soft x hard
8. Stable x flow

In the above chart left side are the properties normally get aggravated in sinusitis or sama kapha and they are tackled with opposite properties mentioned there. Anu thailam,<sup>[3]</sup> an Ayurvedic nasal drop medication is useful in nose block due to congestion. Instill two drops in each nasal in the morning after teeth cleaning clears the block in nose by draining out the thick phlegm in the nostrils. By habituating this nasal medication, the shoulders become strong and elevated, the cervical spine becomes strong enough, mouth and chest will become consistent, well developed and clear (without blemishes and marks), sense organs will become strong and there will be no greying of hair. Similarly, herbal smoke.<sup>[4]</sup> in Ayurveda is recommended for the prevention and elimination of diseases of the head and neck due to kapha and vata. Based on the condition of the complaint of the patient, the inhalation type is chosen and regular use of it will prevent cough, dysnoea, rhinorrhoea, hoarseness of voice, halitosis, anaemia, diseases of hair, discharges from ear, mouth and eyes, itching, pain, inertia, laziness (lethargy), and hiccup.

#### Internal Medications

Some of the internal medications recommended in Ayurveda have an amazing effect in sinusitis explained by modern medicine. To say a few, Varanadi gana said by Vagbhata Acharya<sup>[5]</sup> when consumed in the morning and evening in empty stomach as a decoction with 3 ml of honey added to it, pacifies kapha and meda (dyslipidaemia/ obesity) and cures dyspepsia, stiffness of the thighs caused by sama kapha, headache, abdominal fullness and internal abscess. Marica (Piper nigrum), Pippali (piper longum) and Nagara (dry ginger) together known as 'trikadu'<sup>[6]</sup> in powder form when taken about 3 grams and mixed with 6 ml of honey is consumed morning and night after food cures obesity, diminished digestive fire, asthma, cough, filariasis and rhinorrhoea.

**External Paste:** Eladi gana<sup>[7]</sup> explained by Vagbhatacharya when applied as a warm paste with ginger juice on forehead cures sinusitis by relieving headache, running nose, vata and kapha related disorders.

#### CONCLUSION

By the above facts, it is evident that the signs and symptoms of sama kapha explained in the Ayurvedic texts are in line with the sinusitis said by modern medicine and the recovery from this illness through Ayurveda serves not only a cure but also boosts the immune system to fight against the recurrence of

sinusitis, which has not been attended by the modern system of medicine.

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