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COVID - 19 From Ayurvedic point of view

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Abstract

Ayurveda as science of life has proved its potential both in preventive as well as curative aspect. Pandemics occupy part of Ayurveda literature as Janpadadhwansa - diseases having same manifestations influencing huge populace and at a time driving demise are called as Janpadadhwansa. Polluted states of Air, water, topographical area and time are referenced as fundamental explanations behind Janpadadhwansa. This section despite everything stays to be the fundamental establishment of disease transmission. Ayurveda has explained different shades of fever depending upon involvement of Dosha, Dushya, Kala and causative factors. This multifactorial aspect of Ayurveda encompasses maximum infective pathologies and helps understanding new and emerging fevers. Being an infectious disease and with the SARS-CoV-2 well identified as the causative agent, COVID-19 can be classified as an Agantuj disease. Not getting in contact with an infected person or contaminated surfaces is the best known and most effective way to prevent the disease. As pointed out earlier, Bhutabhishaga by Visha Krimi is a very nearest understanding of the Nidana or etiology of COVID-19 from the Ayurvedic viewpoint. Finer discussions are warranted before viruses can be classified under a specific category of extraneous causative agents described in the classical texts, which is not being attempted in this paper.

Keywords: COVID-19, Ayurveda, vatakapaj jwar, Janpadadhwansa.

Introduction

Ayurveda as science of life has proved its potential both in preventive as well as curative aspect. Pandemics occupy part of Ayurveda literature as Janpadadhwansa - diseases having same manifestations influencing huge populace and at a time driving demise are called as Janpadadhwansa. Polluted states of Air, water, topographical area and time are referenced as fundamental explanations behind Janpadadhwansa. This section despite everything stays to be the fundamental establishment of disease transmission. An Ayurvedic assessment of the disease can help to classify the clinical presentations of COVID-19 on the basis of the Tridosha framework (the three Dosha called Vata, Pitta and Kapha represent the self-regulatory mechanisms of the body, the failure of which leads to development of disease). It is seen that the clinical presentations of the patients are different with the lower respiratory, gastrointestinal or upper respiratory systems being variably affected in patients. The question that we are addressing in this paper is whether such clustering of symptoms can be interpreted based on an Ayurvedic understanding of the pathogenesis with reference to

imbalance of Tridosha . This would lead to development of appropriately specific Ayurvedic medicines that can be integrated into the designing COVID-19 management protocol.

We are surrounded by trillions of microbes to which 'survival of fittest' principal applies equally. Evolution is continuous for all forms of life. Ayurveda is empowered by Sadvritta (How to carry on), Dinacharya (Daily routine), Ritucharya (Seasonal routine), dietetic guidelines and decorum's, Panchakarma and Rasayanas (Rejuvenation treatment) to prevent such diseases.

Materials & methods:

The fundamental and conceptual materials for this study were gathered from the *Āyurvedic* classics, specifically the *Sūsruta Samhitā*, *Caraka Samhitā*, and other classics with available commentaries, as well as a variety of reference books to be reviewed. These texts are known as the *Brihatrayee* and *Laghutrayee*. For a deeper comprehension of the idea and a comparison with modern science, a variety of publications, textbooks of contemporary science, research papers, and seminar proceedings have been cited. The conversations with senior faculty members and distinguished academics have cleared the path for some productive findings.

Samprapti Ghataka in COVID-19:

Dosha – Vata, Pitta, Kapha. **Dahtu** – Rasa in early stage, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Asthi, Majja, Shukra in late stage **Mala-** Sweda, Mootra, Purisha **Srotas (Channels):** Pranavaha, Udakavaha, Annavaha (Cough and Dyspnoea) ,Rasavaha, Swedvaha (Fever), Raktavaha, Mamsvaha, Medovaha, Asthivaha, Majjavaha, Shukravah, and Manovaha **Srotas (Complications)** Sthansanshraya (Site of disease manifestation) – **PranvahaSrotas** (Respiratory system). **Kapha VatajaJwara**, a type of fever was confirmed.

Ayurveda has explained different shades of fever depending upon involvement of *Dosha*, *Dushya*, *Kala* and causative factors. This multifactorial aspect of *Ayurveda* encompasses maximum infective pathologies and helps understanding new and emerging fevers. There are countless *Ayurvedic* prescriptions that are presently being used for a wide range of *KaphaVataja* and *Sannipataja* (fatal combination of all three *Doshas*) *Jwara* which may end up being successful for COVID-19.

COVID - 19 From Ancient point of view:

Sushrut Samhita also lists fevers among diseases that are contagious¹ (Su. Ni. 5–34). Out of the eight broad categories of fevers described in *Ayurveda*, the *AgantujJwaras* are caused by external agents² (Ch. Ni. 1/7)

AbhishangajJwara is one of the sub-categories of *AgantujJwara* which includes a sub-type of fever called *BhutabhishangajJwara*³ (Ch.chi.3/111-112, 114– 115).

Chakrapanidatta clarifies that Bhuta means VishaKrimi or a virulent organism⁴ (Ch.Sh.1/121)

Further, *Vijayarakshita*, the commentator of *Madhava Nidana* points out that diseases caused by *Bhutopasarga* (invasion of *Bhutas* like *Visha Krimi*) can be contagious and spreads from person to person⁵ [Ma.Ni.49/42–43].

Charaka Samhita specifically advises self-protection (*Atmagupti*) and relocating to places that have not been affected (*ShivanamJanapadanamSevanam*)⁶ (Ch. Vi.3/15-16)

In fevers caused by *Abhishanga* in general and even in *Bhutabhishanga* specifically, there is a tendency for derangement of all three *Dosha* leading to what is technically known as *SannipataPrakopa*^{7,8} (Ch Vi.3/115-116)(A.H. Ni 2/43).

Even in *AgantujJwaras* caused by extrinsic agents, *Dosha* imbalance occurs eventually⁹ (As.Hr.Chi.1/171)

Understanding COVID-19 based on analysis of *Nidana*, *Dosha* and *Dushya*:

As discussed earlier, an unlisted disease can be studied by analysis of *Nidana* (etiology), *Dosha* and *Dushya*.

***Nidana* (etiology) ;**

Being an infectious disease and with the SARS-CoV-2 well identified as the causative agent, COVID-19 can be classified as an *Agantuj* disease. Not getting in contact with an infected person or contaminated surfaces is the best known and most effective way to prevent the disease. As pointed out earlier, *Bhutabhishaga* by *Visha Krimi* is a very nearest understanding of the *Nidana* or etiology of COVID-19 from the *Ayurvedic* viewpoint. Finer discussions are warranted before viruses can be classified under a specific category of extraneous causative agents described in the classical texts, which is not being attempted in this paper.

***Nidana*, *Dosha*, *Dushya* interactions (agent–host interactions):**

Charaka Samhita clarifies in that *AgantujJwara* (fevers of extraneous origin) does not disturb the *Doshas* for a short period of time. In this stage, symptoms may be seen without indication of *Dosha* imbalance¹⁰ [Ch.Ni.1/30)

Chakrapanidutta clarifies that this phase lasts for about 3–7 days after which signs of *Dosha* imbalance manifest.

Vagbhata emphasizes that the fever will progress only if the *Dosha* imbalance occurs within this period¹¹ (A.H.Chi.1/172)

It can be inferred from this discussion that individuals in whom *dosha* imbalance does not get established, may present without symptoms or mild symptoms and do not progress to critical stages. As pointed out earlier, three patients in our observational survey did not develop fever or progress into severe or critical stages and exhibited only other mild symptoms until tested negative. The progression of the disease interpreted on the basis of disturbances of the *Dosha* is critical for developing treatment strategies in *Ayurveda*.

***Shatkriyakala* (clinical course of the disease);**

Further clinical studies are needed to build a detailed description of the clinical course of COVID-19 from an *Ayurvedic* perspective. An attempt is being made in this paper to sketch a rough outline of the *shatkriyakala* pointing out the gaps that will need to be addressed by conducting further studies.

***Chaya*, *Prakopa* and *Prasara*;**

The *Chaya*, *Prakopa* and *Prasara* stages are difficult to distinguish in an *Agantuj* disease. We can tentatively correlate the incubation period of COVID-19 with this phase. This stage need not be totally asymptomatic and symptoms indicating viral infection (*Hetu Vyanjaka Lakshana*) may be present but yet not noticed.

Loss of smell and taste, sore throat, diarrhoea and such non-specific symptoms have been reported as the only presenting signs of COVID-19 infection. Being the *Agantuj* phase of pathogenesis, *Dosha* specific symptoms will not be seen.

***Sthanasamsraya*;**

The Stage of *Sthanasamsraya* is the stage in which the prodromal symptoms (*purvarupa*) are manifesting. This stage is not well demarcated in available clinical documentation of COVID-19. Certain presentations with mild symptoms could be potentially classified as the stage of *Purvarupa* but extensive clinical studies are required for a clear understanding.

***Vyakti* ;**

The Stage of *Vyakti* is the symptomatic stage of the disease, which can be mild to moderate or severe. There is further scope for further classification of the clinical presentation of COVID-19 on the basis of specific symptom clusters related to variations in *Dosha* imbalances and location of the disease process.

Bheda ;

The Stage of *Bheda* represents the complications of COVID-19, which is characterized as the critical stage with severe pneumonia, ARDS and hypoxia. This stage of COVID-19 is associated with higher rate of mortality. Other factors like *Dosha Prakriti* (Tridosha constitution) of the individual, the geographical region (*Desha*) as well as the prevailing season (*Kala*) during the outbreak may have prognostic implications for COVID-19, which deserves attention. We have not done an extensive analysis of the *Deha*, *Desha*, *kala* or *Prakriti* in this study. However, based on this preliminary understanding of the disease progression and the *Dosha Vikalpa*, an assumption can be made that those individuals with *VataKapha Prakriti* and tendency for *Pitta* aggravation may be more susceptible to developing complications. Adequate data is not available for further discussion on this topic in this paper.

Nidan of covid-19 :

Similarly the *pradhnanikahetu* for covid-19 is also *Agantujai.e.Bhoota sarscov-2*) And the supportive causes i.e. *Vyanjakahetu* are favourable season such as *Sharada Ritu*, *Malina Ahara-jala Sevana*, *VataKaphaj prakriti* and presence of *Ama* in the body and further particular *Aharaja* and *Viharaja Nidana* also does *UnmargaGamana* of *Doshas*.

Poorvarupa:

Symptoms that manifest themselves before the appearance of the disease are known as *Poorvarupa*. An ability to understand and observe unmanifested or premonitory signs is important to prevent the progression of a disease. As covid-19 are also types of *Jwara* hence *poorvarupa* of covid-19 similarly visualize like *Samanya poorvarupa* of *Jwara* as mentioned . *Charaka Samhita* suggests specific modalities for treatment of a patient at this stage. e.g. Light food (*Langana*) should be giving when premonitory signs of fever are seen. Manifestation of all the premonitory signs indicates bad prognosis of the disease.

Rupa / Lakshana:

It has the same importance as that of *Nidana* and *poorvarupa* in the prognosis of diseases. Rise in number of *Rupa* makes the disease difficult to cure *Rupa* denotes the complete manifestation of the disease along with *Dosha* predominance. The diseases can be treated in a proper way if one is having the knowledge of all the sign and symptoms and the *Dosha* responsible for it.

Lakshana Of covid-19 :

As per *Ayurveda* perception following *Lakshana* of covid-19 concluded from the whole study of covid-19:

TivraJwaraa - 40°C Tivrasirahshoola

Hrillasa

TivraJwaraa with kampa

Mamsapeshishoola

Gadhavarchata

Alpa Balatvam

Daurbalya

Shramava

Klama

Upashaya:

Knowledge of *Upashaya* is helpful in differential diagnosis of diseases. It also helps in identifying the diseases which are not clearly manifested. In covid-19 in acute stage *Upshaya* is same as above but in chronic stage i.e. in *Jirnavastha* due to *Dosha* association with *Ama*, *Upashaya* indicated in *Amavata* is beneficial here also.

Samprapti:

Samprapti provides the details of the diseases such as *Dosha* predominance, predominance of one or the other fraction of the three *Doshas*, specific time of aggravation, and manifestation of diseases which plays a significant role in the management of diseases.

The pivotable role of a physician in the management of diseases is *Samprapti Vighatana* i.e. to break the association of vitiated *Dosha* and *Dushya*. This is not possible without proper knowledge of *Samprapti* and *Samprapti Vighatan*.

Samprapti of Covid-19:

Due to Consumption of *Vata - Kaphaj Ahara Vihara* ->*Vata Kapha* naturally in augmented state ->*Agantuja* cause i.e toxins produced by covid-19 virus -> As a result *Vata Kapha* more provoked by *Ushnatva* and *Dravatava* of *Pitta* increased (but *Ushnatva* is more as compare to *Dravatva*) ->*Agnimandya* ->Especially *Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Asthi, Majja* and *Shukra Dhatus* vitiated ->*Vata Kapha Vardhaka Ahara Sevana* -> *Vata Kapha Sanchaya* ->*Agantuja Karana* (toxins from sarscov2) -> *Vata Kapha* in more vitiated state.

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