

A Toxicological Perspective on *Shwasa Roga* : An Analytical Study through Agad Tantra

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Cite this paper as: Dr. Santosh Gupta, Dr. Noori Aara (2024) A Toxicological Perspective on Shwasa Roga : An Analytical Study through Agad Tantra. *Frontiers in Health Informatics*, (5), 1087-1091

ABSTRACT

Tamak Shwasa, a form of chronic dyspnea characterized by recurrent attacks of breathlessness, is described in Ayurvedic texts as a subtype of *Shwasa Roga*. While its primary pathology is associated with vitiated *Vata* and *Kapha doshas*, there is a significant scope for exploring its manifestation and management within the domain of **Agad Tantra**. In Agad Tantra, which deals with the diagnosis and treatment of poisoning and toxin-induced disorders, *Tamak Shwasa* can be studied from the perspective of **Dushi Visha** (latent toxins), **Garavisha** (artificial or slow poisons), **Sthavara-Jangama Visha** (plant and animal based toxins), **Virudhahara** and **environmental or occupational toxins** that may contribute to respiratory distress.

Key Words – Agad Tantra, *Tamak Shwasa*, *Dushi Visha*, *Garavisha*, *Virudh Ahara*

INTRODUCTION

Tamak Shwasa, a chronic and often debilitating respiratory condition, is classified in Ayurveda as one of the five types of *Shwasa Roga*. It is marked by **recurrent episodes of breathlessness, wheezing, cough and chest tightness**, often aggravated at night or upon exposure to dust, smoke, and allergens. Ayurvedic classics such as **Charaka Samhita** and **Ashtanga Hridaya** describe it as a **Vata-Kaphaja Vyadhi**, where the obstruction caused by vitiated *Kapha* impairs the normal movement of *Vata*, leading to disturbed respiratory function. Though traditionally viewed as a disease difficult to cure (**Kricchrasadhya** or **Asadhya** in chronic stages), *Tamak Shwasa* remains a major clinical concern due to its resemblance with modern bronchial asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). While the classical texts have extensively discussed its pathogenesis and management under **Shwasa Chikitsa**, there is significant potential to explore its etiology and treatment through the lens of **Agad Tantra** - the Ayurvedic branch dedicated to **toxicology (Visha Chikitsa)**. In this context, **Dushi Visha** (latent poisons), **Garavisha** (artificial or slow poisons), and **Sthavara-Jangama Visha** (toxins from plant and animal sources) are considered contributing factors to systemic toxicity that can compromise respiratory health. Additionally, the concept of **Virudh Ahara** (incompatible food combinations) and

long-term exposure to environmental and occupational toxins may also act as *Agantuj hetu* (external causes) in the manifestation and aggravation of *Tamak Shwasa*.

Agad Tantra provides a unique therapeutic perspective through *Agada Chikitsa* (antidotal therapy), which includes the use of detoxifying herbs and formulations that neutralize the effects of various toxins and restore *doshic* balance. This intersection of *Shwasa Roga* and toxicological principles invites a multidisciplinary approach, offering novel insights into the **etiopathogenesis, prevention and management** of *Tamak Shwasa* beyond conventional boundaries.

Shwasa in Agad Tantra

- *Shwasa* is one of the *lakshana* of *visha* in *Kapha sthana* (Charaka).
- *Shwasa* one of the symptom of *Dushi visha* (Madhav Nidan & Bhava prakasha).
- *Shwasa* one of the complications of *Garavisha* (Acharya Vagbhata).
- *Visha* is considered as cause of *shwasa* (Charaka).
- Causative factor for *Shwasa* - *Dooshivisha*, *Garavisha* and *Virudhahara*.

Dooshivisha

- A low-potency poison that remains in the body for a long duration and envelops with *Kapha dosha* vitiates the *dhatu* on obtaining favorable conditions - Chakrapani.
- *Heena virya*, *dehad shesham*, *guna vihinam*, vitiated due to specific place (marshy place), and diet - Susruta.
- Exposure to the *Prag vaat*, *ajeerna*, *sheet*, *diwaswapna* and unsuitable foods, gets vitiated and further vitiates the *dhatu* - Vagbhata.
- Depending on *Kha-vaigunya*, *Dooshivisha* (cumulative toxicity) lead to the appearance of *Tamaka Shwasa*.
- *Asatmendriyarth* *sanyoga* of the *Ghranendriya* to pollens, dusts etc. plays important role in development of *Shwasa roga*.

Dushivisha janya Tamak Shwasa

- *Dushit desha*, *kala*, food, *diwaswap* (cold air, dust, acrid fumes etc) are triggering factors for the both *dushivisha* and *Shwasa*.
- Newly identified poisons which have less potency, tendency to remain inside the body and vitiate *dhatu* e.g. preservatives in food, different pesticides, germicides, different adulterants, harmful gases, polluted watery etc are both aggravating factors of *dushi visha* and *shwasa roga*.
- *Dushivishajanya Tamakswasa* can be correlated with allergic bronchial asthma as symptoms of paroxysm dyspnoea, wheezing, cough and chest tightness are also *visha lakshanas* described by Charak and *visha updrava* by Vagbhata.
- *Tamakshwasa* is produced due to defective cellular metabolism causing production of *rasagata kapha* which obstructs the channels and produces vitiation of *vata*.
- *Dushivisha* is intrinsic cause of altered immune response (*Ojodusti*) and can generate harmful effects similar to that of hypersensitivity reaction.

- The gastro-esophagial reflux has an etiological role in bronchial asthma. The *Ama visha* is formed during the stage of *Mandagni* (at *Kostha* and *Dhatu* level).

Tamak Shwasa and Garavisha

- According to Charaka, *Garavisha* (Concocted poison) is prepared artificially by the combination of substances either poisonous or non-poisonous. They are slowly metabolized or digested in the body, show their effects after some time and hence do not kill the person instantly.
- The different modes of administration of poison like food, drinks, toothbrush, dress, ornaments etc. are told as *Garavisha adhistanas* (Site of Concocted poison) by Dalhan.
- Similar factors are also seen in the etiology of *Tamaka Swasa* (Bronchial asthma).
- Repeated or continuous exposure to chemicals has respiratory sensitizing effects that result in tissue mast cells and basophil production leading to clinical symptoms.
- According to various research works, it is found that artificial food additives like Tartrazine, Allura red, Monosodium glutamate, Benzoates, Yeast etc. can cause asthma symptoms.
- It is seen that occupational exposure to metals like platinum, chromium, cobalt, nickel, etc. can lead to asthma by impairing the immune system.
- The asthmatic population is sensitive to aspirin and other NSAID.
- In smoking, the irritating substances settle in the moist lining of the airways and can set off asthma.

Tamak Shwasa and Virudhahara

- *Virudhahara*, aggravate the *doshas* but don't expel them and bring abnormalities in the *rasadi dhatus* giving rise to diseases.
- *Virudhahara* (Incompatible diet) can lead to inflammation at the cellular level.
- *Desha virudha* (Ex-Residing in a cold place and use of cold water and food), *Matra virudha* (Ex-Deficient or excessive quantity of food) etc. are also told in the etiology of *Tamaka Shwasa*.
- Due to *khavaigunya*, this also can lead to the manifestation of *Shwasa roga*.
- The dietetic causes (ingestion of toxins, unboiled milk, cold water and mutually contradictory food) vitiate the *Vata Dosha*, which may be similar to allergens working as triggering factors for asthma.
- Long-term exposure of gluten (wheat and grain products), shellfish, eggs, milk, nuts, peanuts, sesame seeds and soya are associated with a high risk of developing asthma with unique airway-sensitizing properties causes the formation of antigens, induces the production of specific IgE and activates tissue mast cells and basophils and causes clinical symptoms.

MANAGEMENT OF DUSHIVISHAJANYA TAMAK SHWASA

1. Correcting *Agnimandya*
2. *Ama pachana*
3. Increasing immunity : (*Vyadhikshamatva*)

4. *Kaphaghna and Vataghana chikitsa*

5. *Shothahar chikitsa*

6. *Rasayan chikitsa*

7. *Manas chikitsa*

8. *Nidan Parivarjana*

9. *Vishaghna chikitsa*

- Acharyas has advised *vatakaphaghana*, *ushna*, *vatanulomana* drugs as a first line of treatment of *tamakshwasa*.
- Drug exhibiting quick control over *aama pachana* and *pittastana* along with *vatakaphghnata* and *vishasghnata* can provide permanent relief.

AGAD FORMULATIONS FOUND BENEFICIAL IN *TAMAK SHWASA*

- Formulations like *Pippalyadi agad*, *Dooshivishari Agada* and *Bilwadi agada* act on different toxic and allergic conditions owing to their *Kaphahara* and *Vishaghna* properties. Apart from being *ushna virya*, most of the ingredients are either having *katu rasa* or *katu vipaka*.
- *Katu* has *lekhana guna* and secretogenic effect in diluting thick mucus plug.
- *Katu* is *Deepana*, *pachana*, *ruchikara* and *kaphghna* and is *Ama pachak*.
- *Katu* (*Prasaryati strotansi*) is bronchodilator.
- *Ushna virya* helps in pacifying *kapha* and *vata*, fast destruction of cell debris and clearing micro channels. It also helps in removing the *dushivisha* from various *dhatu*s.
- Through these formulations, *Samprapti Vighatana* occurs in a systemic manner starting from the *Aamashaya* where the *Dipana - Pachana* and *Agni Guna* of these drugs helps in the *Pachana* of *Amavisha* and *dushi visha*. *Kapha Shamaka Guna* will help to clear *kapha avarana* and *Srotorodha* and *Vatanulomana* will be achieved.
- *Balya Guna* of these medicines on the other hand will prevent the *Prakopa* of *Vayu* which may occur due to continuous use of *Kapha Nashaka Aushadh*.

Bilwadi Agad

- *Bilwadi agada/ gutika*.
- 13 ingredients are *bilwa*, *surasa*, *karanja*, *nata*, *suvaha*, *haridra*, *daruharidra*, *triphala*, *trikatu*. It is indicated in *Sarpa damsha*, *Loota visha*, *Unduru visha*, *Vrischika visha*, *Visuchika*, *Ajeerna*, *Gara visha*, *Jwara Bhoota bhada*. *Gara visha* is manifested in form of *Shwasa* along with other manifestation.

Peepalyadi agad

- *Pippali Hingu* (*Ghrut Bharjit*), *Saindhav Kapitha* (*Phal majja*), *Mishri Sita* 1 part.
- *Pippali* and *Hingu* have properties like *katu rasa*, *anushna* and *ushna virya*, *Kapitha* have *madhura*, *amla*, *kashaya rasa*, *vipak katu* and *vishahar karma*.
- *Deepana*, *pachana*, *ruchikara* and *kaphghna katu rasa* which is present in drug help to break the pathogenesis of *Shwasa roga*.

CONCLUSION:

Tamak Shwasa, though traditionally categorized under *Shwasa Roga* as a *Vata-Kaphaja* disorder, demands a broader and more integrated understanding in light of its chronic nature and complex triggers. While Ayurvedic classics provide a comprehensive framework for its diagnosis and management, exploring its pathogenesis through the lens of Agad Tantra opens new avenues for addressing underlying toxicological factors, often overlooked in conventional approaches. The role of *Dushi Visha*, *Garavisha*, *Virudh Ahara*, and environmental toxins as *Agantuj Hetu* underscores the need for a multidimensional strategy that incorporates detoxification and antidotal therapies. *Agada Chikitsa*, with its emphasis on neutralizing systemic toxins and restoring doshic harmony, presents a promising complementary approach in managing *Tamak Shwasa*. Therefore, integrating the principles of *Shwasa Chikitsa* with those of Agad Tantra not only enhances our understanding of the disease but also broadens the therapeutic scope for more effective and sustainable outcomes in the treatment of this debilitating condition.

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