

Amlapitta Management

Vaidya Asavari Manvikar, B.A.M.S., M.D. (Ayurveda - Kayachikitsa)

Definition:

Amlagunodricitam pittam amlapittam.

(Reference: *Charak chikitsa sthana*, chapter # 15/48)

In *Charaka Samhita*, Amlapitta disease is described in short as partial functional impairment of the small intestine (**Grahani dosha**). Due to causes such as excessive fasting, improper diet, eating while experiencing indigestion, improper seasonal diet, the digestive power (*Agni*) vitiates, indigestion ensues, and food eaten later on becomes poisonous or toxic (*shukta*, or *amla*, *annavisha*).

This toxic juice (*annavisha*) combines with **Pitta** and creates a variety of pitta dominant diseases. **Amlapitta** is one of them.

Amlapitta disease is very precisely discussed in the book *Madhavanidana*.

Etiological factors (*Nidan*):

Incompatible combinations of food (*Virodhi anna*): salt+ milk, many salad dressings and cheeses; milk + cereals; milk + fruits (especially sour); fish + milk; cooked or heated yogurt; sprouts, honey, and milk mixed and consumed with meat and/or fish; cold and hot drinks one after the other; clarified butter (ghee)+ honey equal portions; heated honey; drinking very cold drinks during the cold season.

Contaminated food (*Dushta anna*): leftover food, expired or spoiled food

Sour food (*Amla*): all fermented food items such as cheeses, idli (fermented rice cakes), rice-lentil crapes (dosa), many salad dressings, tomato ketchups, pizza, chips, pickles, etc.

Food that causes a burning sensation in body (*Vidahi*)- deep fried food, difficult to digest food, reheated food, all spicy foods, dry lentil crepes (*papad*), pickles.

Other factors related to food, behavior and seasonal changes and causes that vitiate Pitta Dosha are outlined below.

Pathophysiology (*Samprapti*)

Six stages of Disease progression:

1. Accumulation (<i>Sanchay</i>)	- Pitta gets accumulated due to causes described above.
2. Aggravation (<i>Prakop</i>)	- Pitta gets vitiated; Pachak pitta -- heat, liquidity, sourness -- increases.
3. Overflow, spread (<i>Prasar</i>)	- Vitiated pitta overflows and spreads out of its site, which is the small intestine (<i>grahani</i>)
4. Relocation (<i>Sthansanshray</i>)	- Vitiated pitta, saman vayu, channel - Alimentary tract (<i>Annava srotas</i>)
5. Manifestation (<i>Vyakti</i>)	- Actual signs and symptoms, as indigestion, etc.
6. Complications (<i>Bhed</i>)	- Gastritis, ulcers form

Dosha	- Pachak pitta, saman vayu vitiated
Other factors (<i>Dushya</i>)	- Lymph, and blood (<i>Rasa, Rakta dhatu</i>)
Channel (<i>Srotas/khavaigunya</i>)	- Alimentary tract (<i>Annava srotas</i>)
Type of vitiation	- Overflow (<i>Atipravartan</i>)
Digestion (<i>Agni</i>)	- Weak

Classification:

- Adhoga Amlapitta (downward)
- Urdhwaga Amlapitta (upward)
- Amlapitta caused by Vata
- Amlapitta caused by Kapha
- Amlapitta caused by Vata Kapha
- Amlapitta caused by Pitta Kapha

Symptoms:

Adhoga Amlapitta

- Thirst
- Burning sensation

- Fainting
- Giddiness
- Delusions
- Rashes on skin
- Perspiration

Urdhwaga Amlapitta

- Vomiting of green, yellow, blue, black, slightly red or of bright red color having sour material
- Belching of similar nature
- Burning sensation in the throat, chest and upper abdomen
- Headache
- Burning sensation in the palms and soles
- Loss of appetite

Caused by Vata

- Tremors
- Delirium
- Fainting
- Feeling of pins and needles
- Weakness of body parts
- Pain and darkness before eyes

Caused by Kapha

- Expectoration of thick phlegm
- Feeling of heaviness
- Weakness
- Coldness
- Vomiting
- Lassitude
- Coating on tongue
- Burning sensation
- Itching of skin
- Excessive sleepiness

Caused by Vata Kapha

All the above symptoms (any of them)

Caused by Kapha Pitta

- Bitter, sour, pungent eruptions

- Burning sensation in chest, throat, abdomen
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Loss of appetite
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Lazy feeling
- Salivation
- Sweet taste in the mouth

Management of Amlapitta

Amlapitta is curable after much effort if treated in its early stage. It requires lifelong management if addressed in its later stage.

Basic principles of treatment

1. Initial stage- Appetizers, herbs that increase digestive power
2. Later stage when there is lot of vitiation- Upward Amlapitta-Emesis (*Vaman*)
3. Downward Amlapitta- Purgation (*Virechan*)
4. Dosha when not very vitiated, in control- Pacifying treatment (*Shaman*)
5. *Agni (digestive power)* vitiation should always be considered while treating Amlapitta
6. Bitter taste is the only remedy, as it decreases Pitta, as well as it is very good for increasing digestive power.
7. Treatment according to symptoms

Burning sensation- Santalum album (sandalwood) (*chandana*),

Glycyrrhiza glabra (*yastimadhu*), Asparagus racemosus (*shatavari*),

Belching- Terminalia chebula (haritaki), which has a carminative effect.

Salivation-Black roasted powder of Emblica officinalis (*amalaki mashi*)

Recommendations for Amlapitta

- Emesis with mild emetic drugs and downward evacuation with laxatives.
- After evacuation and purification of the body, the patient takes herbal oils internally (*Siddha grhita*), and pacifying management (*Shaman*) is administered.
- Medicated enema prepared with oils is given.
- Body purification, in which all the three doshas are vitiated.

Recommendations for upward Amlapitta:

- Emesis · For patients with dominance of Kapha Dosha, a decoction of Snake gourd (*patol*) leaves, Azadirachta indica (*nimb*) leaves Xeromphis spinosa (*madanphala*), honey and rock salt (*saindhav*) should be given for emesis
- Edibles made of Barley (*yava*) and Wheat (*godhum*) should be given to patients, without salt, red chili powder or sour and pungent in taste.

Recommendations for downward Amlapitta:

- Evacuation by purgatives and laxatives. Operculina turpethum (*nishottar*) and snake gourd (*patol*) decoction should be given to a patient as a purgative. Operculina turpethum (*nishottar*) and resins decoction is also beneficial.

Decoctions:

- Ginger (*shringver*) and snake gourd (*patol*) decoction
- Ginger, snake gourd and coriander seeds decoction
- Snake gourd, ginger, tinospora cordifolia (*amrita*) and Picrorhiza Kurroa (*kutaka*) should be given Pitta-Kapha dominant Amlapitta
- Barley, snake gourd decoction + honey
- Tinospora cordifolia (*amrita*), Acacia catechu (*khadira*), Glycyrrhiza glabra (*yashtimadhu*), Berberis aristata (daruharidra) decoction + honey
- Bhunimbadi decoction

Fresh juices:

- Aloe Vera juice (*kumari*)
- Asparagus racemosus juice (*shatavari*)
- Pomegranate juice (*dadim*)
- Ficus glomerata juice (*udumbar*)

Single or mixed herbal powders:

- Asparagus racemosus (*shatavari*)
- Tinospora cardifolia (*amrita*)
- Azadirachta indica (*nimb*)
- Emblica officinalis (*amalaki*)
- Santalum album (*chandan*)
- *Panchanimbadi powder* (made up of five different herbs which are bitter in taste, reduce burning sensation, and increase digestion)

- *Avipattikar powder* (main content is *Operculina turpethum* (*nishottar*), useful mild laxative, and helps in evacuation of *Pitta*)
- *Madhu pippali yoga* (*Piper longum/ pippali* and honey mixture early in the morning)

Syrups / Avaleha (*made from fruit pulp and a decoction of herbs, honey, ghee*)

- Dadim Avaleha (main ingredient is pomegranate)
- Dhatri Avaleha (main ingredient is *Emblica officinalis*)
- Khanda Kushmanda Avaleha (main ingredient is tender coconut)

Favor:

Old rice (*shali*), barley (*yava*), wheat (*godhuma*), green gram (*mudga*), soup of chicken or turkey, long gourd, bitter gourd (*karela*), squash, asparagus, coriander, spinach (*vastukam*), cauliflower, cabbage, pomegranate, banana, and all edibles sweet and bitter in taste are recommended in *amlapitta*.

Reduce / Avoid:

Sesame seeds, black gram (*maash*), goat's milk, vinegar (*dhanyamla*), fenugreek, salty, pungent and spicy food, food items that are heavy (*guru*) to digest (digest with difficulty), yogurt and alcohol. Canned as well as frozen food should also be avoided as it is heavy for digestion.

- Fermented foods – Indian foods such as idli, dhokla, dosa; bread made with yeast, pizza
- Sour foods - tomato, salad dressings, ketchup
- Unripe fruits – especially mango, banana
- Habits- late night sleep, smoking

Bibliography

- *Charak Samhita, Chikitsa sthan*
- *Madhav nidan, Amlapitta nidan*
- *Yogaratanakar Samhita*

Disclaimer: *The sole purpose of this article is to provide accurate information about Ayurvedic theories. This information is not intended for use in the prevention, treatment, or cure of any disease. If you have any serious, acute or chronic health concerns, please consult your family physician or health care provider who can fully assess your individual needs and provide the care you require. The contents of this article may not be reproduced in part or whole without the permission of the author.*