



A Review of Ayurvedic Approaches to Amlapitta (Hyperacidity)

Dr. Ankita Kumari¹, Dr. Srinidhi Shetty², Prof Surendra Kumar Sharma³

^{1,2}MD Scholar, ³Professor and HOD

Dept. of Roga Nidana Evam Vikriti Vijyana, National Institute of Ayurveda (Deemed to be University), Jaipur

ABSTRACT

Amlapitta (Hyperacidity) is one of the most prevalent *vyadhi* (disease) of *annavahasrotas* (Gastrointestinal track disease), induced by vitiated *agni* (appetite). *Amlapitta* (Hyperacidity) is a state in which *amlaguna* (sour taste) of *pachak pitta* (gastric juice) increases due to *samata*. *Amlapitta* (Hyperacidity) is classified as *Pitta Kaphapradhana Tridoshaja Vyadhi* (complex disease caused by numerous variables). *Aacharya Kashyap* accepts the involvement of three *Doshas* in *Amlapitta* (Hyperacidity), whereas *Madhavkara* accepts *Pitta's* dominance in this disease. *Aacharya Charak* did not mention *Amlapitta* as a separate disease, but rather as one of its *Lakshana* (symptoms). According to *Ayurveda*, many illnesses are caused by vitiated *Agni* (appetite). Several factors and ongoing changes in lifestyle, such as the adaptation of more and newer food materials, junk foods, fast foods, changes in cooking methods, occupational dangers, and so on, have contributed to the disease's rising prevalence. Along with those stimulating factors, worry exacerbated the condition, particularly *Amlapitta* (hyperacidity). This is a lifestyle condition, and those who are hooked to tobacco, alcohol, or an excess of packaged foods high in salt content are more likely to contract this disease. According to modern research, *Amlapitta* (Hyperacidity) is linked to hyperacidity. It simply refers to a higher level of stomach acid. The stomach secretes hydrochloric acid, a digestive liquid that reduces food particles to their smallest form to ease digestion. Hyperacidity occurs when the stomach produces an excessive amount of hydrochloric acid. It is a gastrointestinal disorder caused by aberrant enzyme production in the stomach and pancreas. In medical research, it is known as Acid Peptic Disorder (APD). In Ayurveda, it is known as *Amlapitta* (hyperacidity). It is a very prevalent disease found all over the world.

Keywords: *Agni, Amlapitta, Annavahasrotas, Hyperacidity, Pachak Pitta* etc.

INTRODUCTION

The term "*Amlapitta*" (Hyperacidity) is formed up of two words: *amla* (sour) and *pitta*¹ (gastric juice). In *Amlapitta* (Hyperacidity), the quantity of *Pachaka Pitta* (Gastric juice) increases. Its quality as a result of fermentation, *Pitta* (Gastric juice) loses its regular bitter taste (alkaline) and becomes more sour (acidic). This heightened sour character is referred to as *Amlapitta*² (Hyperacidity). It is a gastrointestinal disorder caused by aberrant enzyme production in the stomach and pancreas. In medical research, it is known as Acid Peptic Disorder (APD). In Ayurveda, it is known as *Amlapitta* (hyperacidity). It is a very prevalent disease found all over the world.

Amlapitta (Hyperacidity) is a prevalent *vyadhi* (illness) of *annavahasrotas*³ (Gastrointestinal track disorder), induced by vitiated *agni* (Appetite). *Amlapitta* (Hyperacidity) is a condition in which the *amlaguna* (Sour) of the *pachak pitta* (Gastric juice) increases due to *samata*, resulting in a *vyadhi* (Disease) situation. *Aacharya Kashyap* accepts that three *Doshas* are involved in *Amlapitta*⁴ (Hyperacidity), whereas *Madhavkara*⁵ accepts *Pitta's* primacy in this disease. *Aacharya Charak* does not mention *Amlapitta* (Hyperacidity) as a separate ailment, but rather as one of its *Lakshana*⁶ (symptoms). According to *Ayurveda*, a number of diseases are caused by vitiated *Agni* (Appetite). Various factors in today's progressive civilization, such as rapid environmental changes, adaptation to newer and newer food materials, changes in ways of cooking, pollution in the atmosphere, encroachment of various chemical agents in newer lifestyles, occupational hazards, and so on, have precipitated an increase in disease prevalence. Along with such stimulating stimuli, extreme stress and worry have aggravated the condition, including *Amlapitta* (hyperacidity). This is a lifestyle disorder, and those who are addicted to nicotine, alcohol, or an excess of salty packaged foods are more likely to get this disease.

Hyperacidity is simply an elevated level of acid in the stomach. The stomach secretes hydrochloric acid, a digestive fluid that reduces food particles to their smallest form for easy digestion⁷. Hyperacidity, also known as acid dyspepsia, occurs when the stomach contains an excessive quantity of hydrochloric acid. Acid dyspepsia is characterized by burning pain or discomfort in the upper abdomen, typically in the epigastrium, as well as postprandial stomach discomfort with fullness and nausea⁸.

According to *Aacharya Vagabhat*, *Pachak Pitta* (Gastric juice) acts like *Agni* (Appetite). *Pachak Pitta* (Gastric juice) is associated to HCL and *Amlapitta* refers to a circumstance where the quantity of *Pachak Pitta* (Gastric juice) increases when its liquid form is lost. As a result, the Ayurvedic *Amlapitta* (Hyperacidity) disease entity is associated with hyperacidity. *Amlapitta* (hyperacidity) is characterized based on the *Dosha Dushti* (juice defect) and *Sthana Dushti* (place) of the *Strotasa* (system). *Amlapitta* (Hyperacidity) has symptoms such as *Avipak* (indigestion), *Kalma* (general weakness), *Utklesh* (nausea), *Tikta Amlodagar* (burping), *Gaurava* (heaviness), and *Hrdakantha Daha* (heartburn). *Aruchi* (loss of tastes)⁹.

Causes of *Amlapitta* –

Acharaya disease can be diagnosed using the following criteria: *Nidana* (aetiology), *Purvarupa* (premonitory symptoms), *Linga* (symptoms), *Upashaya* (therapeutic diagnosis), and *Samprapti*. All of these considerations highlight the necessity of knowing and treating the disease, as well as taking the appropriate precautions and avoidance.

However, in the case of *Amlapitta*, the aetiological element may be associated with *Aaharaja*, *Viharaja*, *Manasaka*, and others.

1) *Aharaja Hetu*: (*Ka. Khi. 16¹⁰, Ma. Ni. 51*)

विरुद्धदुष्टाम्लविदाहिपित्तप्रकोपिपानान्नभुजो विदग्धम् ।

पित्तं स्वहेतूपचितं पुरा यत्तदम्लपित्तं प्रवदन्ति सन्तः ॥१॥(*M.N.51/1*)

Aharaja Hetu:

a) According to type of *Ahara*:

1. *Kulattha*

2. *Pulaka* (Husky food)

b) According to quality of food:

1. *Atiruksa* (Very coarse)

2. *Atisnigdha* (Unctuous)

3. *Abhisyandi*

4. *Gurubhojya*

5. *Vidahi anna*

6. *Vidahi pana*

c) According to *Dusitanna*:

1. *Dustanna sevana*

2. *Paryusitanna sevana*

d) According to the *Pitta* provocative potency of diet:

1. *Apakvanna sevana* (Uncooked diet)

2. *Bharjitanna sevana* (Fried paddy)

3. *Iksu vikara sevana* (Sugarcane products)

4. *Pistanna Sevana*

5. *Ajirnasana* (intake of food in indigested state)

6. *Adhyasana* (eating before the previous diet is digested)

7. *Atiusna* (Very hot)

8. *Ati amla* (intake of excessive acidic diet)

9. *Ati drava* (intake of excessive liquid)

10. *Atipana* (over drinking)

11. *Katu annapana* (Pungent diet and drinks)

12. *Viruddhasana* (incompatible diet)

e) According to the capacity to weaken the digestive power:

1. *Atiruksanna sevana* (Excessive coarse diet)

2. *Atisnigdhanna* (Excessive oily diet)

f) Faulty dietary habits:

1. *Antarodaka pana* (Drinking of excess water during meals)
2. *Akala Bhojana* (Untimely eating)
3. *Kale ansana* (Avoiding the diet in proper time)
4. *Visamasana* (Incompatible diet)

g) Miscellaneous:

1. *Annahina Madya* (Alcohol without Eating)
2. *Gorasa sevana* (Milk products)
3. *Madya sevana* (Alcohol drinking)

2) Viharaja Hetu: (*Ka. Khi. 16/6*)

1. *Atisnānāta* (Taking excessive bath)
2. *Atiawagahanata* (Excessive swimming)
3. *Bhuktvā divāshayanāta* (Sleeping in daytime after meals.)
4. *Vegānām vidhāranāta* (Suppression of natural urges).
5. *Dukh Shaiyyā prajāgare* (Improper sleeping schedule).

3) Manasika Hetu:

Manas Bhava is crucial for maintaining both physical and mental well-being, according to *Acharya Charaka*, who highlighted the close relationship between the soul, mind, and body.

Acharya Sushruta emphasizes the importance of mental health in maintaining overall health. He claims that good health is dependent on the balance of the *Tridosha*, *Saptadhatu*, *Trimala*, and thirteen different types of *Agni*, as well as the harmony of the soul (*Atma*), senses (*Indriya*), and mind (*Mana*). Any imbalance between these elements can cause disease. Mental disturbances such as tension, strain, anger, anxiety, and greed (Ch. VI. 2/8). All have a negative impact on *Agni*, causing irregular digestive juice secretions. This might induce indigestion, which finally leads to *Amlapitta*.

Other factors include living in *anoopadeshai*, *Sharadritu* (fall season), addiction to alcohol, smoking, and tobacco chewing, excessive use of NSAIDS (pain relievers), and *Helicobacter pylori* infection. All of the aforementioned circumstances cause an excessive rise in '*Pitta dosha*' in the body, which manifests as *Amlapitta* symptoms.

Synonyms of *Amlapitta*:

1. *Prameelaka* and *Pitta-visuchika* (*A.S.Su.- 5/27*) (*Indu*)
2. *Amlika* (*Sushruta*)
3. *Pittamla* (*Yogaratanakara*)
4. *Amla Hikka* (*Harit*)
5. *Suktata* (*Kashyap Khila sthana*)
6. *Dhumaka* and *Vidaha* (*Charaka in pittananatmaja vyadhi*)
7. *Amlaka* (*Acharya Charaka* and *Vagbhata* while explaining *pittananatmaja vyadhi*)

Classification –

• According to *Kashyap*¹¹: 3 types

- Vatolvana*
- Pittolvana*
- Kapholvana*

- According to *Madhava*¹²: According to *Gati of Pitta* – two types of *Amlapitta* i.e.

-*Urdhavaga Amlapitta*

-*Adhoga Amlapitta*

Again from the point of view of *Dosha-Dosha Samasarga Avastha* has been categorized into 4 categories¹³.

1. *Vatadhika*
2. *Vata Kaphadhika*
3. *Kaphadhika*
4. *Sleshmapittaja*

Samprapti of Amlapitta:

According to *Shadkriyakala*-

1. *Sanchayawastha*

(*Samana* *vayu*, *Pachaka pitta* & *Kledaka kapha* vitiated)



2. *Prakopawastha*

(Undigested *Ahara* i.e. *Ama* becomes *Shukata*)



3. *Prasarawastha*

(Vitiated *Dosha* spread all over the body)



4. *Sthanasansharyawastha*

(Due to imbalance of *Dosha lakshana* of *Amlapitta* in low intensity are produced)



5. *Vyaktawastha*

(Specific symptoms of *Amlapitta* like *Amlodgara*,

Hritkanthadaha, *Tiktashyata* are expressed)



6. *Bhedawastha*

(Leads to *Updrava* like *Atisara*, *Pandu*, *Aruchi*, *Grahani*)

Nidana sevana

(*Aharaja*, *Viharaja*, *Mansika* & *Agantuka Nidana*)



Dosh Dushti (Pitta)



Mandagni



Annavisha



Vidagdha Paka



Shukta Paka



Increase Amlata



Amlapitta

Complications:

In *Ayurveda*, *Amlapitta* is a condition characterized by excessive acidity and digestive issues, often correlating with modern-day hyperacidity or acid reflux. Complications of *Amlapitta* can arise if the condition is left untreated or is improperly managed. These complications can affect various systems in the body and manifest in different ways. Here are some potential complications of *Amlapitta* in Ayurveda:

1. Digestive Disorders: Chronic *Amlapitta* can lead to more severe digestive issues such as:

- Peptic ulcers
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)
- Chronic gastritis
- Duodenal ulcers

2. Systemic Effects: The imbalance caused by *Amlapitta* can lead to systemic health issues, including:

- Nutrient malabsorption
- Weakness and fatigue due to poor digestion and absorption of nutrients
- Weight loss or weight gain, depending on how the digestive system is affected

3. Respiratory Problems: *Amlapitta* can lead to complications in the respiratory system, such as:

- Chronic cough
- Asthma-like symptoms
- Sore throat or pharyngitis

4. Cardiovascular Issues: The stress and strain on the body from chronic acidity can sometimes lead to cardiovascular issues like:

- Hypertension
- Palpitations

5. Mental Health Issues: The chronic discomfort and pain associated with *Amlapitta* can lead to:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Sleep disturbances

6. Oral Health Problems: The increased acidity can affect the oral cavity, leading to:

- Dental erosion
- Bad breath (halitosis)
- Mouth ulcers

7. Skin Problems: Chronic *Amlapitta* can sometimes result in skin-related issues such as:

- Acne
- Rashes
- Dermatitis

8. Metabolic Disturbances: Prolonged issues with digestion and acidity can lead to broader metabolic disturbances:

- Altered metabolic rate
- Hormonal imbalances

9. Liver and Pancreatic Issues: Persistent acidity and digestive disorders can also affect liver and pancreatic functions, potentially leading to:

- Hepatitis
- Pancreatitis

Ayurvedic Management and Prevention:

To prevent these complications, *Ayurveda* emphasizes a holistic approach involving:

- Dietary Adjustments: Avoiding foods that aggravate *Pitta* (spicy, sour, and acidic foods) and incorporating more cooling and calming foods (milk, ghee, green leafy vegetables).
- Lifestyle Modifications: Regular meals, avoiding late-night eating, and reducing stress through practices like yoga and meditation.
- Herbal Remedies: Utilizing herbs like *Amla* (Indian gooseberry), *Yashtimadhu* (licorice), and *Guduchi* to balance *Pitta* and improve digestion.
- Panchakarma: Detoxification therapies like *Virechana* (purgation) to cleanse the body of accumulated toxins.

By addressing the root causes and maintaining a balanced lifestyle, *Ayurveda* aims to manage *Amlapitta* and prevent its complications effectively.

Pathya (Beneficial Practices):

1. Dietary Recommendations:

- Milk and Milk Products: Milk is often recommended as it helps to neutralize stomach acid.
- Rice Gruel (*Kanji*): Easy to digest and soothing to the stomach.
- Green Vegetables: Especially leafy greens which are less likely to increase acidity.
- Ripe Fruits: Such as bananas and papayas, which are soothing to the stomach.
- Porridge: Made from barley or other grains, which are easy on the digestive system.
- Coconut Water: Known for its cooling properties and ability to neutralize acidity.
- Herbal Teas: Such as fennel, coriander, and licorice teas.

2. Lifestyle Recommendations:

- Regular Meals: Eating at regular intervals to prevent the stomach from becoming too empty or too full.
- Adequate Sleep: Ensuring proper rest to maintain overall health.
- Stress Management: Practices like yoga and meditation to reduce stress, which can exacerbate *Amlapitta*.
- Moderate Exercise: Engaging in light to moderate physical activities.

Apathya (Harmful Practices):

1. Dietary Restrictions:

- Spicy and Oily Foods: Such as fried items and spicy curries that can increase acidity.
- Sour Foods: Including pickles, tamarind, and excessive citrus fruits.
- Fermented Foods: Such as yogurt, which can increase acidity in some individuals.
- Caffeinated Beverages: Including coffee and tea, which can irritate the stomach lining.
- Alcohol: Known to increase stomach acid production.
- Heavy and Rich Foods: Such as red meat and rich desserts which are hard to digest.

2. Lifestyle Restrictions:

- Irregular Eating Habits: Skipping meals or eating late at night.
- Overeating: Consuming large quantities of food in one sitting.

- Stress: High levels of stress and anxiety.
- Lack of Physical Activity: Sedentary lifestyle can worsen digestive issues.

CONCLUSION:

Amlapitta, a condition recognized in *Ayurveda*, can be roughly equated to acid dyspepsia or hyperacidity in modern medical terminology. This condition arises due to the imbalance of *Pitta dosha*, resulting in increased acid secretion in the stomach. Effective management of *Amlapitta* focuses on restoring balance through dietary regulations, lifestyle modifications, and herbal treatments.

According to *Ayurveda*, *Pachak pitta* (Gastric juice) serves as *Agni* (Appetite). When its liquid state is lost, *Agni* (Appetite) plays a crucial role in digestion. So *Pachak Pitta* (Gastric juice) is comparable to HCL, and *Amlapitta* (Hyperacidity) is a condition in which *Pachak Pitta* (Gastric juice) is produced in excess. As a result, the Ayurvedic *Amlapitta* (Hyperacidity) entity can be identified with hyperacidity. If not addressed promptly and incompatible food, regimen, and habits are maintained, it can develop to stomach ulcers, chronic gastritis, duodenitis, irritable bowel syndrome, malabsorption, anemia, and stenosis.

In modern literature, certain technical words have been introduced to describe an aberrant condition similar to *Amlapitta* (hyperacidity). These names describe either the disease's pathological condition or its characteristics. *Amlapitta* (Hyperacidity) is extremely difficult to associate with a single disease of modern science.

REFERENCES:

1. Prof. Ajaykumar Sharma, *Kayachikitsa* (Part 2), Chaukhamba Publishers Varanasi 2013, Adhyaya no.25 *Amlapitta*, page 324
2. Vijayaraksita & Srikanthdatta & extract from *Atankadarpan* by Vasapti Vaidya Edited by Vaidya Jadavji Tricumji Acharya, *Madhavnidan* by Madhavkara with the commentary *Madhukosh* 5th edition Nirnayasagar Press Bombay 1955, *Amlapittanidanm* 51/1
3. Prof. Ajaykumar Sharma, *Kayachikitsa* (Part 2), 51ST edition Chaukhamba Publishers Varanasi 2013, Adhyaya no.25 *Amlapitta*, page 328
4. P.V. Tewari, *Kasyapasamhita/ Vrddhajivakiya Tantra*, 2nd Edition Chaukhambha Visvabharati 2002 16/7
5. Vijayaraksita & Srikanthdatta & extract from *Atankadarpan* by Vasapti Vaidya Edited by Vaidya Jadavji Tricumji Acharya, *Madhavnidan* by Madhavkara with the commentary *Madhukosh* 5th edition Nirnayasagar Press Bombay 1955 *Amlapittanidanm* 51/2
6. Vidhyadhar Shukla & Prof. Ravidatta Tripathi, *Charak Samhita* (Part 2), Chaukhamba Sanskrit Partishtan Delhi 2005 *Grahani Chikitsa Adhaya* 15/44.
7. [https:// www.jiva.com> diseases>hyperacidity](https://www.jiva.com> diseases>hyperacidity)
8. Siddharth Shah, *API text book of Medicine* (Volume 1) 8th Edition Page 631
9. Vaidyaraj Datto B Borakar, *Sarth Madhavnidan*, 4th edition Ganesh D Dixit Pune 1952 51/2
10. P.V. Tewari, *Kasyapasamhita/ Vrddhajivakiya Tantra* 2nd Edition Chaukhambha Visvabharati 2002 16/3-4
11. P.V. Tewari, *Kasyapasamhita/ Vrddhajivakiya Tantra* 2nd Edition Chaukhambha Visvabharati 2002 16 /15.
12. Vaidyaraj Datto B Borakar, *Sarth Madhavnidan*, 4th edition Ganesh D Dixit Pune 1952 51/3-6
13. Vaidyaraj Datto B Borakar, *Sarth Madhavnidan*, 4th edition Ganesh D Dixit Pune 1952 51/9-11