

An Observational Study of Relation between *Jatharagni*(digestion) and *Jivha*(tongue)

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Abstract: Ayurveda is science of life and life depends on Agni(digestive fire). *Jatharagni*(digestive fire of stomach),*Dhatwagni*(digestive fire related to body *Dhatus*) and *Bhootagni*(digestive fire related to *Mahabhoots*) are three types of Agni in body. Another division is done on the basis of *Paka* (digestion) i.e., *Tikshna*(abnormally high), *Manda*(low), *Sama*(proper),*Vishama*(sometimes proper). *Jatharagni*(main digestive fire that nourishes other *agnis* too) is considered main Agni in body which nourishes other *Agnis* in body. Acharya Vagbhatta considers *Agnimandya*(low digestive fire) as root cause of all diseases. Whenever there is *Agnimandya* it causes formation of *Ama*(indigested food). It's manifestations can be seen over tongue. It causes coating of tongue. Acharya Yogratnakar suggested *JivhaPariksha*(tongue examination) under *Ashtavidha*(8 types)*Pariksha*. To find this relation,this study was conducted over 350 volunteers. Tongue photographs were taken (before and after brushing)and volunteers were asked questions as per questionnaire. Assessment of *Jatharagni* status was done with validated format over tongue health. Suitable test(Chi-square) was used to reach conclusion,where this relation found true and not by chance.

Keywords: Ayurveda, *Jatharagni*, *Jivha*.

1. Introduction

In Ayurveda,*agni* refers to the digestive and metabolic process that converts food into energy, supporting all vital bodily functions. Maintaining a healthy *Jatharagni*(digestive fire)is crucial in preventing illnesses. *Jivha* (tongue) has direct connection with *Jatharagni*. The tongue plays a significant role in the digestive process. Firstly, the taste buds on the tongue help detect the flavors of the food, which triggers the release of saliva that contains digestive enzymes. Saliva helps to break down carbohydrates in the food. Additionally, the tongue helps to mix food with saliva and form a bolus, which is easier to swallow and move down the esophagus into the stomach for further digestion. The tongue also helps in mastication (chewing) which further breaks down food and makes it easier for digestive enzymes to act on it. Therefore, the tongue plays a crucial role in the initial stages of digestion and helps to prepare food for further digestion in the digestive system. Whenever digestion is not proper it is reflected on tongue surface. This study aims to establish that clean and healthy tongue reflects good health and digestive power.

रोगाःसर्वेऽपिमन्देऽग्नौसुतरामुदराणितु।

अजीर्णान्मलिनोजयन्तेमलसशयात्।) A.H.NI. 12/1)

Tongue examination is an important aspect of Ayurveda, and the tongue can provide information about the health status of a person. In *Vataja* conditions, the tongue is cold, rough, and cracked, while in *Pittaja* conditions it is reddish and blackish. In *Kaphaja* conditions, the tongue is whitish and sticky. In *Sannipata* conditions, the tongue is blackish, thorny, and dry. In *Dwandwaja*(any two *doshas* together)*Dosha* conditions, there are mixed symptoms and signs.

Currently, there is ongoing research on tongue examination in specific diseases, such as stroke and diabetes. Scholars are also working to develop instruments for tongue examination. In the future, the tongue may become an important tool for disease diagnosis. However, there is a lack of research in this area specifically in the context of Ayurveda, which primarily focuses on the *agni* status of a person when diagnosing and treating patients. A study on the characteristics of the tongue in relation to *agni* could help reduce the time needed for diagnosis, benefiting both the physician and the patient.

Concept of Agni and Jivha in Ayurveda and modern sciences:

Agni was also believed to be present in each and every cell of the body[1], performing functions such as vision, taste, and hearing, and was said to cure many diseases.[2],[3],[4] The dominance of *agni* is accepted by giving it different names as *Teja*, *Ushna*, *Dehosma*, *Pittosma*, *Samtapa*, *Kayagni* and *Audaryagni*[5]. It is believed that *agni* influences both good and evil through the agency of Pitta.[6] *Agni* is responsible for *Ayu*(life), *Bala*(strength), *Varna*(color), *Swasthya*(health), *Upachaya*(body growth), *Prabha*(charm), *Oja*(Extract of all body *dhatu*s) and *Prana*(normal functioning of body).[7] *Pachaka Pitta* is accepted as *agni*. [8] Pitta is located between the *Pakvasya*(intestine) and *Amashaya*(stomach).[9] *Agni* is included in five types of *Pittas*. [10] The most important of *Agnis* is *Dehagni* or *Jatharagni*, as all other *Agnis* depend on it.[11] There are 4 type of *Agni*.

A) **Samagni**: A person with *Samagni* has a properly functioning digestive system that digests and absorbs food at the appropriate time, resulting in the improvement of the body's supportive tissues. This leads to good health and wellness.[12]

B) **Vishamagni**: This *agni* alternates between fast and slow digestion of food.[13]

C) **Tikshnagni**: *Tikshnagni* refers to a state of rapid digestion, where food is digested quickly, regardless of its type. This results in an increased hunger or desire for food. According to Ayurvedic principles, when the digestive power increases above normal levels, the mouth, throat and lips become dry and have a burning sensation, a condition known as *Bhasmak Roga* (condition of excessive hunger eg thyrotoxicosis).[14]

D) **Mandagni**: *Mandagni* refers to a slow digestive power or ability, where the *agni* digests only a small amount of food over a long period of time, according to Acharya Sushruta.[15]

The physiological factors involved in gastrointestinal digestion are essential and auxiliary factors. The essential factors, which play a crucial role in the transformation of food, include *Ushma*(digestive fire), *Vayu*(air), *Kleda*(water), *Sneha*(lubricants), *Kala*(time), and *Samayoga*(appropriate).[16]

Digestion is the process where food is broken down into simple chemical substances that can be absorbed and used as nutrients by the body.[17]

The digestion process can be broken down into four stages:

1. Swallowing
2. Breaking down of food
3. Uptake of nutrients
4. Elimination of waste

Type Of Enzymes In Digestion:

Enzymes that break down proteins into amino acids, known as Proteolytic Enzymes. • Lipolytic Enzymes that break down fats into fatty acids and glycerol. • Amylolytic Enzymes that break down carbohydrates and starch into simple sugars. • Nucleolytic Enzymes that break down nucleic acids into nucleotides.

Jivha(Tongue) Origin:

तृतीयेमासिसर्वेन्द्रियाणिसर्वाङ्गावायवाश्चयौगपध्येनभिनिर्वर्तन्ते॥ च.श.४/१

All the body and sensory organs are formed simultaneously during the third month.

Jivha Of Dirghayu Balaka (Child With Long Life Expectancy)[18]

आयामविस्तारोपपन्नाश्लक्षणातन्वीप्रकृतिवर्णयुक्ताजिह्वा च.श.८/५१

A healthy tongue, referred to as *Prakrut Jivha*, is characterized by a uniformly pink or pinkish red color, symmetrical shape with even length and width, or oval shape. It is moist, not too dry or too wet, with a transparent layer of saliva. The tongue has a transparent or thin layer of white coating, is clean without any bad odor or taste, and is steady when protruded. It is also free of cracks, deep cuts, lines, patches, bumps, and teeth marks. The taste buds on the tongue are also free of any of these anomalies.[19][20]

The ancient practice of examining the tongue, known as *Jivha Parikshana*(examination), is part of the *Ashatavidha Parikshana*, which includes examination of pulse (*Nadi*), urine (*Mutra*), feces (*Mala*), sound (*Shabda*), touch (*Sparsha*), vision (*Druka*), appearance (*Akruti*), and the tongue itself. By observing the surface of the tongue, one can determine the functional status of the corresponding internal organ. This is emphasized by the quote from Acharya Yogaratnakar.

रोगाक्रांतशरीरस्यस्थानान्यष्टोनिरिक्षयेत|नाडीमूत्रमलजिह्वाशब्दस्पर्शद्रुगाकृती|| यो.र.पू.रोगिणामष्टस्थाननिरिक्षणम्

It is also important to have a good illuminating light source, such as a mouth mirror or natural sunlight, to aid in the examination.[21],[22]

Study Plan:

Selection of volunteers as per inclusion/exclusion criteria. Informed written consent was taken. First taking tongue photographs two times a day, (before and after brushing)and asking questions as per questionnaire, assessment of *Jatharagni* status with validated format over tongue health. A questionnaire based on parameters to assess *Jatharagni* status was also filled while interacting with them. Suitable test(Chi-square) was used to reach conclusion.

Observation:

The age range for all volunteers is from 19 to 29 years minimum age 19 years and maximum 29 years, 66.7% of the volunteers were female, 100% of volunteers were student 87.4% from volunteers were resident of urban areas, 70% of volunteers were in regular exercise group, 75.4% were taking sound sleep, 60.6% of volunteers were having *UttamAbhayvharanShakti*(amount of food taken), 79.7% were having pink colour tongue, 69.1% had thin coating over tongue, 54.9% had oval shaped tongue, 66% had clearly visible tongue buds, 90.3% had moist tongue, In 82.3% had same tongue margin as body.

2. Result

There is a significant association between *Jatharagni* and exercise habits, with more people having irregular exercise habits. There is a significant association between *Jatharagni* and *Ahara*, with 50.9% of the participants having mix *Ahara* and 49.1% having Vegetarian *Ahara*. There is a significant relationship between *Jatharagni* and *abhyavaharana shakti*. There is a significant relationship between *Jatharagni* and tongue color, with *Samagni* group having dominancy of pink color of tongue.

3. Conclusion

Study shows *Jatharagni* has visible effects on tongue as both these are part of digestive system and all body functions depend on *Agni*. [23] whenever there is *Agnimandya* it causes *Ama* formation. [24]

Subjects with good status of *Agni* either *samagni* or *tikshanagni* had pink color tongue with *Tikshanagni* group red color tongue is second dominant color.

Tongue margin was same as body in 82.3% volunteers with more dominant in *Samagni* group volunteers.

Most of the volunteers had oval(54.9%) followed by triangular shaped tongue(35.4%). Though is found non-significant in relation to *Jatharagni*.

Subjects with *Samagni* or *Tikshanagni* were also found to have better *abhyavharan* and *JaranShakti*. [25]

Subjects taking vegetarian diet were mostly from *Samagni* group. which indicates lite diet has role in maintaining *Samagni*.

Subjects involved in exercise either regular or irregular, were having good status of *Agni* as most of subjects doing exercise were in *Samagni* or *Tikshanagni* group.

The study evaluated different parameters of tongue analysis and *Jatharagni* analysis, including age, gender, profession, religion, habitat, marital status, exercise, sleep, *Ahara*, habits, *abhayavaharanashakti*, *jarana shakti*, tongue color, coating, shape, movement, texture, and moisture. There was no significant association between *Jatharagni* and habitat, marital status, or sleep. The study also suggests that normal tongue color, coating, shape, movement, texture, and moisture are indicative of good health status, while any differences may suggest health disturbances.

Jatharagni plays a role in digestive health. But it is not the only factor affecting digestive power, as other factors such as diet, lifestyle habits, and other physiological processes can also play a role.

CHI-SQUARE TEST/ P-value Significance:

***Jatharagni* and exercise** found significant with good *Agni* status in volunteers with exercise habits (irregular or regular).

Jatharagni* and *ahara found significant relationship which means *Jatharagni* is directly related to type of food with more *samagni* volunteers in veg diet taking volunteers.

Jatharagni* and *abhayavaharana shakti significant association between *Jatharagni* and *abhayavaharana shakti*.

***Jatharagni* and tongue color** found significant with *samagni* and *tikshanagni* with dominancy of red color.

***Jatharagni* and margin** found significant with *samagni* individuals had more prevalence of same tongue margin as of skin

***Samagni* and tongue color** significant association between the tongue color and the *Samagni* group.

P value = 0.00<0.05, thus there is significant relationship between *Jatharagni* and *Jivha*.

HEALTH ASSESSMENT PROFORMA	
<p>HEALTH ASSESSMENT BY SELF REPORTING: [Original Source: CSIR Ayurgenomics Unit - TRISUTRA, CSIR-IGIB, New Delhi] Complaints, if any:</p> <p>H/O Present Complaints:</p> <p>History of Past Illness:</p> <p>History of Medication/Surgery:</p> <p>Family History of Disease, if any:</p> <p>If no obvious complaints, further:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Do you feel that your appetite has become very low, very high or frequent since last month? Yes/No Do you feel sensation of vomiting before or after meal? Yes/No Have you ever had unusual constipation or frequent loose stool since one month? Yes/No Do you feel excessive thirst since one month? Yes/No Do you feel that you sleep has become very less/ very high/ disturbed recently/ in last one month? Yes/No Have you experienced unusually frequent/ excessive/ very low/ burning sensation/ pain in urination recently/ in past one month? Yes/No Have you ever observed swelling on feet or face especially evening or in morning since last month? Yes/No Have you been absent from your work because of weakness? Yes/No Have you had bleeding from any part of your body (without injury) in any form? Yes/No If Yes, Duration --- Have you experienced any kind of chest pain in last one month? Yes/No Have you had difficulty in breathing in past one month? Yes/No Do you have cough/ fever for more than 21 days? Yes/No Have you had acute/ chronic/ frequent abdominal pain? Yes/No Do you frequently get the feeling of sadness/ nervousness/ frightened/ anxious/ worthless/ fearfulness? Yes/No If yes, does it stay for longer period i.e. > 7 days? Yes/No Have you had an episode of sudden black out? Yes/No Do you often have severe or regular headache? Yes/No Have you ever felt vertigo since one month? Yes/No Do you feel numbness or loss of sensation in any part of body? Yes/No Do you often have any joint pain while trying to climb stairs or at the time of mild exercise? Yes/No 	
<p>For the Female Subjects</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What was your last menstruation date? <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> How many days your cycle takes to complete? <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Do you have unusually heavy/ scanty menstruation bleeding? Yes/ No Do you have irregular or painful menstruation? Yes/ No Do you have any abnormal vaginal discharge? Yes/ No <p>For the Married Females</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How many offspring do you have? How old is your youngest child? Are you breast feeding your child at present? Yes/ No Is there any history of abortion or stillbirth? Yes/ No <p>Systemic Examination: (If any indication or abnormality detected from above)</p> <p>Vitals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Blood Pressure : mm of Hg (Sitting Position) Pulse Rate : /min Respiratory Rate : breaths/min Temperature : °F [Axillary] <p>Other Information, if any :</p> <p>Can be enrolled for the study?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Signature of the attending Physician</p>	

Jatharagni assessment and examination of tongue

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3	SHAPE	Oval <input type="checkbox"/> Square <input type="checkbox"/> Triangular <input type="checkbox"/>	Wide <input type="checkbox"/> Long <input type="checkbox"/> Short <input type="checkbox"/>																																																																																																																																										
4	Movement	Still <input type="checkbox"/>	Shaky/Shivering <input type="checkbox"/>																																																																																																																																										
5	Texture	Visible Buds <input type="checkbox"/>	Cherry <input type="checkbox"/> Wet <input type="checkbox"/>																																																																																																																																										
6	Moisture	Moist <input type="checkbox"/>	Excessive <input type="checkbox"/>																																																																																																																																										
Signature of the patient <input type="text"/>		Signature of the doctor <input type="text"/>		Signature of the PG (Scholar) <input type="text"/>		Signature of the PG (Scholar) <input type="text"/>																																																																																																																																							

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