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A Conceptual Study of *Prameha* and Its Relevance in Modern era

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is from an ancient Hindu word that means science of life. It originated in India and continues to be used by millions of people worldwide. The principles of Ayurveda state that a person comprises body, mind, and spirit, with health being the holistic union of the three. Ayurveda focuses on healthy living with therapeutic measures that relate to physical, mental, social and spiritual harmony. *Pra* means excess of urine in both frequency and volume. *Prameha*, thus, becomes self-explanatory and holds the twin meanings of "*Prabhutha-mutratha*" or excessive urination and "*Avil-mutratha*" or turbid urine. According to *Ayurveda*, *Prameha* (*diabetes*) is a *tridoshajavyadhi*. However the predominance of anyone *dosha* and *dooshya* enables its classification into *Vataja*, *Pitaja*, & *Kaphaja Pramehas*. They are further sub classified into 20 sub categories. Any of the *prameha* (urinary disorder) if neglected ultimately it ends up in *Madhumeha* due to nature of the illness. In modern science, *Madhumeha* can be correlated with Diabetes mellitus and is one of the cardinal problems in the medical profession because it cannot be cure but some extent controlled. Diabetes mellitus is a clinical syndrome characterized by hyperglycemia due to absolute or relative deficiency of insulin. The *Ayurvedic* treatment for this disease is based on an entire change in the lifestyle of the person & on the individual constitution. Along with medication and diet, the patient is also advised to lead a healthy lifestyle and live an active life. Dietary and lifestyle changes rejuvenate the body's cells and tissues, allowing them to produce insulin properly.

KEYWORDS

Prameha, Chikitsa, Ojas



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INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the science of life. This holistic ancient science has two objects, viz. to maintain the health of healthy person & to treat the sick person. The entire ayurveda is frame on *trisuutra- hetu, linga, aushadha*¹. *Aushadha* is the most important among them. Plants, animals & minerals, these three are the main sources of ayurvedic drugs.

The word Prameha is derived from the 'Miha sechane' which means watering. *Pra* means excess of urine in both frequency and volume. *Prameha*, thus, becomes self-explanatory and holds the twin meanings of "*Prabhutha mutratha*" or excessive urination and "*Avilmutratha*" or turbid urine. Acharya Sushruta considered it under one among the eight grave diseases. In modern science it can be correlated with diabetes. In modern era due to stressful life style, the incidence of Diabetes is definitely increasing. Ayurveda provides the patient holistic treatment, which depends person to person, so it is demand of era to cure the patient through ayurvedic treatment.

ETIOLOGICAL FACTORS OF PRAMEHA²

Asyasukha (excessive food intake)

1. *Swapnasukha* (excessive sleep)
2. *Dadhi* (curd)

3. *Gramya mamsa* (meat of domestic animals)
4. *Oudaka mamsa* (aquatic animals)
5. *Anupa mamsa* (marshy animals)
6. *Payamsi* (milk and milk products)
7. *Navanna* (new grains)
8. *Gudavikriti* (jaggery and its products)
9. *Kaphakara ahara* (food and beverages increasing kapha dosha)
10. *Avyayama* (sedentary life)
11. *Alasya* (laziness)
12. *Sheeta-snigdha-madhura ahara* (old, unctuous and sweet substances)
13. *Dravanna* (excess liquid diet) etc

Predominant clinical features³:

Excretion of large amount of vitiated urine (turbid or unctuous), with deranged color is the main feature of this illness.

PURVARUPA (PROMODAL)

SYMPTOMS^{4,5}

They are as follows:

1. *Prabhutavilamootrata* (polyuria): *Swedawaha srotoavrodha* causes increased urinary output with turbidity
2. *Madhuratava* in *mutra*: Glycosuria
3. *Dantadiham mala sanchaya*: Due to *ama*, deposits are seen in mouth
4. *Panipada daha*: Abundance of unutilized glucose in the blood. This causes disturbance in the equilibrium of dhatus and



doshas in the body exposing body to further complications. It gives rise to *padapani daha*, which means burning sensation of feet and palm.

5. *Chikkanta* - Stickiness.

6. *Trishna* (Thirst and Polydipsia): In the process of lypolysis, more water is utilized which results into activation of thirst center in the brain.

7. *Swadasyata*: Sweetness is experienced in the mouth due to increase in the sugar level.

Origin of the Disease

Due to *nidana sevan*, the *Kapha dosha* is dominantly aggravated (in association with other doshas) and they affect *medas* (fat), *mamsa* (flesh), *udaka* (lymphatic channel/endocrinal secretions) etc. Due to the abnormal digestion, the afflicted *dhatu*s (tissues and their derivatives) are driven towards urinary system and the disease *prameha* is resulted. Based upon the *dosha* involvement their degree of affliction and gradation of the illness, various signs and symptoms are resulted. According to the features, different names are given.

TYPES OF PRAMEHA

A) *HETU BEDHAS* (As per etiology)

1. *Sahaja prameha*: Juvenile or congenital diabetes

2. *Kulaja*: Familial

3. *Apathyaja*: Due to improper dietary habits

B) *DEHA PRAKRITI BEDHAS* (As per features of the body)

1. *Sthula pramehi* : Obese-related

2. *Krisha pramehi* : Leanness-related

C) *MUTRA VIKARA BEDHAS* (As per urinary abnormality)

*Kaphaja prameha*⁶:

1. *Udaka meha*- The urine is transparent (*accha*), excess(*bahu*), white(*sita*), cold (*sheeta*), odorless(*nirgandha*), similar to water (*udakopama*), turbid (*avila*) and slimy (*picchila*).

2. *Ikshu meha*- The urine is very sweet and similar to sugar cane juice (*ikshurasavat madhura*). It is slimy and turbid in nature.

3. *Sandra meha*- The urine is dense (*sandra*) and it precipitates when allowed to settle down when kept overnight (*paryushita sandra*).

4. *Sura meha*- In this condition, the urine appears similar to arrack (*sura*). The supernatant part appears clear and the lower part will be dense and thick.

5. *Pishta meha*- In this condition, the person feels horripilation on urination and the urine is white (*sita*) like the paste of the fine grain flour (*pishtavat*).

6. *Shukra meha*- The urine appears like semen (*shukrabha*) or mixed with semen (*shukramishra*).



7. **Sikata meha**- In this condition, the urinary gravels appearing like sand particles are expelled out.

8. **Sheeta meha**- Excess amount of urination which is sweet (madhura) and cold (sheeta) in nature is found in this condition.

9. **Shanai meha**- Little by little, repeated, slow urination is complained in this disease.

10. **Lala meha**- In lala meha, the urine appears similar to saliva (*lalatantrayuta*) and is slimy (*picchila*) in nature.

Features of *Pittaja prameha*⁷:

1. **Kshara meha**- Here, the urine has the odor, color, taste and texture of alkaline solution (*ksharatoyavat*).

2. **Kala meha**- Large quantity of black colored urine, just like the burnt coal (*masinibha*) is found in Kalameha.

3. **Neela meha**- The urine which is blue in color similar to the feather of Blue jay bird (*chashapakshanibha*) is complained in this condition.

4. **Rakta meha**- Here, urine will have the color and smell of blood and is salty in taste.

5. **Manjishta meha**- *Manjishta* (*Rubia cordifolia*) is a drug which gives dark red colored decoction or fresh juice. Here, the urine will have bad smell (*visra gandha*) and

the urine appears similar to the decoction of *manjishta*.

6. **Haridra meha**- In this particular kind of prameha, the urine will be pungent (*katu*), has dark yellow color similar to turmeric (*haridranibha*) and associated with burning sensation.

Features of *Vatajaprameha*⁸:

1. **Vasa meha**- In *vasa meha*, the person passes the urine repeatedly which is mixed with fatty oil and often appears turbid and sticky similar to fat.

2. **Majja meha**- Here, urine will have the appearance similar to marrow and it is excreted frequently.

3. **Hasti meha**- In this condition of *Hastimeha*, urine is often excreted like an intoxicated elephant (*mattahastiriva ajasrammutra*) without force. In few of the cases lymph with clots are also found.

4. **Madhu meha**- Acharya Charaka explained that the roughness of aggravated vatadosha transforms the sweet taste (of ojas) into astringent taste and expels out along the urine. Thus, causes *Madhumeha*. Urine with astringent mixed sweet taste, pale color and unctuousness are the features of this condition.

Acharya Vagbhata opines that all *pramehas* if neglected or not treated properly,



ultimately they reach the terminal stage - *madhumeha*.

Ojas & Prameha

Ojas is essence of life, extract of all the *dhatu*s (body tissue), which manifests in the form of *bala* (strength). Normally all the physical, psychic, sensory and motor functions are determined by *ojas*. The appearance of *ojas* is supposed to be like ghee (in purity and luster), taste is supposed to be like honey, and smell like fried paddy. In diabetes mellitus normal quantity of *ojas* in the body hampered in two ways:

- i) By obstruction in vessels (*Srotorodha*)
- ii) By degeneration of the body contents (*Dhatukshaya*)

Complications of prameha^{9,10}:

1. *Thrishna* (thirst)
2. *Atisara* (diarrhea)
3. *Jwara* (fever)
4. *Daha* (burning)
5. *Dourbalya* (debility)
6. *Aruchi* (anorexia)
7. *Avipaka* (indigestion)
8. *Pootimamsa* (bad odor)
9. *Pramehapidaka* (diabetic carbuncles)
10. *Alaji* (cellulitis)
11. *Vidradhi* (abscess)
12. *Hrit shola* (cardiac pain)
13. *Makshikopasarpana* (neuritis) etc

Prognosis of prameha according to the dosha¹¹

1. *kaphaja* = *sadhya*
2. *pittaja* = *yapya*
3. *vattaja* = *asadhya*

Management of prameha:

Treatment is based upon the nature of the individuals in obese (*sthoola*) and lean (*krisha*). In obese patients, purification (*samshodana*) is carried first and later *santarpana* (tissue rejuvenation) is followed. The disease is controlled by wholesome diet and habits. In case of lean, *brimhana* (tissue nourishment/rejuvenation) is carried by selective medicines and diet. Other than this, all the *pramehas* are treated based upon *Dosha* dominance¹².

General line of treatment according to acharya charaka :

-decoction of darvi , surahva, triphala & musta mixed with honey.
- haridra along with the juice of amalaki¹³.

Wholesome diet habits^{14,15}:

1. *mantha*(flour of different types of corn mixed with water)
2. *kasayas*(decoction)
3. *yavaudana*(cooked barely)
4. *saktu*(roasted corn flour)
5. *vatya* (barely- porridge)
6. *apupa*(pan-cakes)
7. *purana shali*



8. *danti-ingudi – atsi- sarshapa tail*

9. *shashatika*

10. *trinda dhanya*

Specific therapies according to Acharya

Charaka:

Purification therapies including emesis & fasting therapies, administered at the appropriate time, cure *kaphaja* types of *prameha*.

Pittaja types of *prameha* are overcome by purgation, *santarpana* (refreshing therapy) & alleviation therapies¹⁶.

Decoctions:

Table 1 Prescription for Prameha

Si. No.	<i>Kahaja prameha</i> ^{17/227,28,29}	<i>Pittaja prameha</i> ¹⁸ C ci 6/30,31,32
1.	<i>haritaki, kataphala, musta, & lodhra</i>	<i>Ushira, lodhra, anjana, candana</i>
2.	<i>Patha, vidanga, arjuna, dhanvana</i>	<i>Ushira, musta, amalaka & abhaya</i>
3.	<i>Haridra, daru, haridra, tagara, vidanga</i>	<i>Patola, nimbi, amalaka & amrta</i>
4.	<i>Kadamba, sala, arjuna, dipyaka</i>	<i>Musta, abhaya, padmaka, vrksaka</i>
5.	<i>Darvi, vidanga, khadira, dhava</i>	<i>Lodhra, ambu, kaliyaka, dhataki</i>
6.	<i>Survaha, kushtha, agru, candana</i>	<i>Nimbi, arjuna, amrata, nisa, utpala</i>
7.	<i>Darvi, agnimantha, triphala, patha</i>	<i>Sirisa, sarja, arjuna, kesara</i>
8.	<i>Patha, murva, svadanstra</i>	<i>Priyangu, padma, utpala, kimsuka</i>
9.	<i>Yavani, ushira, abhaya, guduchi</i>	<i>Asvattha, patha, asana, vetasa</i>
10.	<i>Cavya, abhaya, citraka, sapta parna</i>	<i>Kantakateri, utpala, mustaka</i>

Specific treatment according to acharya sushrut¹⁹:

Table 2 Prescription for Prameha according sushrut

S.No	Type of prameha	Treatment
1	<i>Udaka meha</i>	<i>Paarijaata kashaya</i>
2	<i>Ikshu meha</i>	<i>Vaijanti kashaya</i>
3	<i>Sura meha</i>	<i>Nimbi kashaya</i>
4	<i>Sikta meha</i>	<i>Chitraka kashaya</i>
5	<i>Sheney meha</i>	<i>Khadira kashaya</i>
6	<i>Lavana meha</i>	<i>Padha-agru-haridra kashaya</i>
7	<i>Pishta meha</i>	<i>Haridra-daru haridra kashaya</i>
8	<i>Sandra meha</i>	<i>Sapta parna kashaya</i>
9	<i>Shukra meha</i>	<i>Durva-shevaal-plava-hadha-karanja-kaseru-kakubha-chandana kashaya</i>
10	<i>Phena meha</i>	<i>Triphala-aragavadha-mrudavika kashaya +madhu</i>
11	<i>Paitika – nilameha</i>	<i>Shalasaaraadi kashaya / ashavatha kashaya</i>
12	<i>Haridra meha</i>	<i>Raazavriksha kashaya</i>
13	<i>Amla meha</i>	<i>Nyogradhaadi kashaya</i>
14	<i>Shara meha</i>	<i>Triphala kashaya</i>
15	<i>Manjhishdha meha</i>	<i>Manijhisdha-chandana kashaya</i>
16	<i>Shodita meha</i>	<i>Guduchi-tinduka asthi-kashamarya-khajura kashaya +madhu</i>
17	<i>Sarapi meha</i>	<i>Kushdah-kutaja-padha-hingu-katurohini kalka+guduchi-chitraka kashaya</i>
18	<i>Vasa meha</i>	<i>Agnimantha/shinshapa kashaya</i>
19	<i>Shaudra meha</i>	<i>Khadira-kramuka kashaya</i>
20	<i>Hasti meha</i>	<i>Tinduka-kapitha-shirisha-palasha-padha-murva-dusparsha kashaya + madhu, hasti-ashva-shukar-khara-aushtra-asthi shara</i>



Formulations referred in Prameha (in general):

1. *Nishakhadiradi kashaya*
2. *Kathakakhadhiradi kashaya*
3. *Triphala kashaya*
4. *Chandraprabhavati*
5. *Lodhrasava*²⁰
6. *Dantyaasava*²¹
7. *Bhalataka asava*
8. *Jambwasava*
9. *Shilajaturasayana*
10. *Vasantakusumakara rasa*
11. *Mahamanjishtadi kashaya*
12. *Trikantakadya sneha*
13. *Phaltrikadya kwath*²²
14. *Asanadi kashaya*

Single line of drug:

1. *Shigru*-drum stick
2. *Haridra*-turmeric
3. *Amalaki*-goose berry
4. *Shyamaka*- *Setaria italica* (L.)
Beauv.
5. *Kodrava*- *Echinochloa frumentacea*
Linn.
6. *Yava*-barley
7. *Godhuma*-wheat
8. *Mudga*-green gram
9. *Kulattha*-horse gram
10. *Patola*-snake gourd
11. *Karavellaka*-bitter gourd
12. *Maricha*-pepper

13. *Lashuna*-garlic
14. *Jambu*-blue berry
15. *Vyayama*-exercise etc
16. *Chadaka*
17. *aadhaki*

Unwholesome diet:

1. *Kanda moola* (root-rhizome)
2. *Ikshu* (sugar cane juice)
3. *Taila*(oil)
4. *Ghrita*(ghee)
5. *Guda*(jiggery)
6. *Kanjika/shukta*(sour gruels)
7. *Madya*(alcohol)
8. *Pishtanna*(carbohydrate rich food)
9. *Anupamamsa*(animals of marshy
land)
10. *Dadhi* (curd)
11. *Navanna* (new grains)
12. *Divaswapna* (day sleep) etc

DISCUSSION

Prameha is a grave disease. It is not just a lack of insulin. Its most probable cause is plain poor maintenance of our body. It 's cure will need to include all of these things discussed. By doing all, diet, herbs, exercise and stress management, we will be able to take care of a single problem *Diabetis(prameha)*.



CONCLUSION

A chronological study of the Ayurvedic classics and the samgraha texts shows changing trends of emphasis on its study and practice. *Prameha* has been described eloquently and elaborately in *Charak samhita*, *sushruta samhita*, & *astangahridya*. Managing *pramaha* through Ayurveda is a comprehensive therapeutic modality that yields best outcome when treatment is individualized. It involves extensive dietary modifications, lifestyle changes and use of regimen derived from herbs/ food supplements.



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