Importance Of Grahani and Its Physiological Aspects

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ABSTRACT
Almost in all Ayurvedic classics, the organ Grahani is described as an organ of digestion. These descriptions of various Acharyas are based on different criterions. Some Acharyas defined Grahani considering its functional aspects, while few others considered anatomical peculiarities. According to Acharya Charaka, Grahani is the seat (Adhisthana) of Agni and is located above Nabhi (umbilical region). It is supported and nourished by the strength of Agni. Normally, it receives the ingested food, which is retained by it by restraining the downward movement (Grahanati). After digestion it releases the food through sides of lumen to next Ashaya i.e., Pakwashaya. According to Acharya Susruta, the sixth Kala described as Pitta Dhara Kala is situated between Amasaya and Pakwashaya, and it is stated to be Grahani. In Astanga Hridaya, it is quoted that Grahani is the organ of Mahasrotasa, which is a seat of Agni (i.e., Pachaka Pitta) and it receives and retains food.

Keywords: Grahani, Pitta, Agni, Jathragni, Intestine, duodenum, Amashaya, etc.

INTRODUCTION
Ayurveda is being chiefly a medical science laid emphasis on proper understanding of the Sarira (body) as very evident from the statements- “The knowledge of anatomy and physiology is essential for the benefit of the body as this knowledge gives insight for the treatment and hence expert highly recommends the anatomical and physiological understanding of the body.” \textsuperscript{1,2} Acharya Charaka considered Grahani to be above Nabhi\textsuperscript{3} and to be present on left side while Acharya Sushruta and other Acharyas had elaborately describe the position of Grahani in comparison to Acharya Charaka and considered that it is situated between Amasaya and Pakvasaya and regarded it as Pittadhara Kala\textsuperscript{4}. As Acharya Sushruta and other Acharyas had illustrated that Grahani is situated between Amasaya and Pakvasaya, thus in order to get the exact position of Grahani, location of Amasaya and Pakvasaya must be established. The term Amasaya and Pakvasaya are mentioned by all Acharyas in Kostha or as Kosthangas. Kosthang as may differ when their anatomical and physiological aspect are considered and it can be seen even in present era as the “gastrointestinal tract” is more of anatomical term while “digestive tract” is indicative of physiological aspect of the alimentary tract.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES
To understand anatomy and physiology of Grahani
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Koshtha is a cavity formed from Avarana (wall) which is consisting of Dhatus (solid structure). Koshtha is known as Mahastrotasa (the great channel) which is from mouth to the anus i.e. complete digestive system and as Abhyantar Roga Marga (internal pathway of diseases). Charaka states that Koshtha is the cavity containing fifteen organs - umbilicus, heart, pancreas, liver, spleen, kidneys, bladder, lungs, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, rectum, anus, Pakwashaya (large intestine including pelvic colon), Purishadhara (the cecum). Sushruta states that Koshtha is a cavity containing heart, lungs, stomach, intestine, rectum, pancreas and urinary bladder. Here it appears that there is difference between the view of Acharyas regarding the role of Amasaya in digestion but it is not so as Acharya Chakrapani had clarified the doubt by dividing the Amasaya in two parts Urdhva-Amasaya and Adho-Amasaya, among these Urdhva-Amasaya was considered as site for Kapha Dosa and Adho-Amasaya for Pitta Dosa. Thus, Urdhva-Amasaya of Charaka corresponds to the Amasaya of Sushruta and other Acharyas. While Adho-Amasaya corresponds to Grahani, where whole digestion and absorption of all essential nutrient occur. Thus, Amasaya can rationally correlate with stomach.

All Acharya has regarded Grahani as the seat of Agni whose chief function is to receive the food coming from Amasaya and hold it for proper digestion and after absorption of nutrients the digested food is propelled forwards to Pakvasaya. The Agni or Pachaka Pitta is responsible for digestion of food as per all Acharya. The gastric gland produces the gastric juice which contains enzymes that plays important role in digestion of food and after this, complete digestion and absorption of food occur in between Amasaya and Pakvasaya Madhya i.e., in Grahani. While Acharya Charaka had emphasized on the concept Agni though the functions of Agni i.e., Ayu, Bala, Varna, Swasthya (health), Utasaha, Sharirapachaya-apachaya (body catabolism and anabolism) Oja, Teja, Dhatvagni and bhutagni along with Prana depends upon Jathragni. Even this Jathragni subsides death of the person occurs means in the Sama state of Agni the body is healthy while in its disturbance leads to origin of various diseases into body. As already discussed, that Pachaka Pitta and Jathragni are same entity while Accha Pitta is Pitta which is secreted when partially digested food moves from stomach towards Pitta Sthana, as seen recorded in Charaka Samhita that, “thereafter, as the partly digested food which has attained Amla Bhava is moved down, Accha Pitta is secreted”. According to Acharya Chakrapani, Agni is situated into Grahani and when the doshas gets resides into Grahani known as Grahani Dosha. Diseases like Agnimandhya, Ajeerna, etc. arises due to doshas resides into Grahani.

DISSCUSSION

Modern interpreters have viewed Grahani from the angle of different regional parts of gastrointestinal tract including the associated glands and can be summarized as Dr. Ghanekara, Dr. D.S. Gauda, Dr. Hari Prapanna Sharma, Dr.D.N. Banarji accepted the mucous membrane of entire small intestine as Grahani. Dr. Gananatha Sen regarded the proximal twelve finger portion of Ksudrantra (small intestine) as Grahani. Dr.V.S. Variyara concluded that pyloric valve can be considered as Grahani. Dr. Guru etal. preferred Grahani up to the large intestine as the process of absorption continues up to level of large intestine. Dr.R.K. Gupta etal. also considered Grahani to be entire small bowel & colon. The description of anatomical structure of Grahani available by now is been far from a universal acceptance. Anatomically, Grahani is the organ situated between Amashaya and Pakvashaya while physiologically it is the seat of Pittadhara kala. Grahani is having the function of grahana, dharana, pachana, munchana.
Grahani has been considered in one among the Astamahagadas, which suggest that it is difficult to diagnose and difficult to treat also. In ayurveda much importance has given to functional aspect than structural aspect but Grahani is one of the diseases, where structural as well as functional aspect is also considered. Grahani dosha can be considered as syndrome with alteration in stool either solid or liquid form, containing both ama and pakva food products. Malabsorption constitutes the pathological interference with the normal physiological sequence of digestion (intraluminal process), absorption (mucosal process) and transport (post-mucosal events) of nutrients. Intestinal malabsorption can be due to: Mucosal damage (enteropathy), Congenital or acquired reduction in absorptive surface, Defects of specific hydrolysis, Defects of ion transport, pancreatic insufficiency, impaired entero-hepatic circulation.

CONCLUSION

Grahani takes food firstly stored in the Amashaya. It is situated above the Pakwashaya. Grahani is a type of Kala situated between the Amashaya and Pakwashaya. Grahani Kala is the seat of Antaragni which secretes digestive juice to digest four types of food coming from Amashaya and also helps in absorption of digested food. when there is disturbance in the Grahani, then secretion of digestive juice is no properly occur, results in digestion of food and formation of Aam. This Aam produces Grahani disease. The symptom of Grahani disease is digested and indigested passing of fecal matter. The main strength of Grahani is Antaragni or Pitta which is situated in it. If Agni is decreases then disorders of food digestion occurs. Chief function of Grahani is digestion of food and absorption of digested food material.

REFERENCE

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