



## An Exploratory Analysis of *Ānāham* In *Hastyāyurvedam*: A Critical Examination of *Vataja Gulma* in *Ashtanga Hridaya*

**Reshma S Menon**

Final year PG Scholar, Department of Dravyagunavijnāna. VPSV Ayurveda college, Kottakkal.

**ABSTRACT:** Ayurvedic veterinary medicinal tradition of india was existed in the literary record for atleast 4000 yrs and the oral lineage is older than that. First account of a dedicated veterinary hospital comes from time of king Ashoka in 1463bc. Pandava brothers nakula and sahadewa were experts of horse and cattle respectively. Veterinary medicine and Animal husbandry deeply entangled with the cultural history of india. But the advancement of modern science and technology had forced the ancient knowledge in this area to a back track. If this situation persists this is going to be a medical history. Literatures from *Hastyāyurvedam* and opinion from experts reveals that *Āyurveda* offers simple yet effective solution in veterinary diseases. *Ānāham* is one such disease. Recent changes in domestication of elephants and their change in diet pattern had accelerated this disease. Due to peculiarities of the digestive system, elephants are more prone to this condition. Intestinal impaction is not an uncommon condition affecting the Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) in captivity. Conventional medicine tries to solve this condition but unfortunately these treatments worsens the condition. Ayurveda can give much more effective solution. This paper throws light upon the unexplored disease *ānāham* of *hastyāyurvedam* and critical analyze with *vataja gulma* of *Ashtangahridaya*. Many more diseases are awaited to be explored.

**KEY WORDS:** *Hastyāyurvedam*, *Ānāham* , Intestinal impaction , *vataja gulma*.

### INTRODUCTION

Elephant is considered to be an incarnation of Lord Ganesha is a symbol of wealth. An elephant is a store house of mystical secrets. The earliest quasi-scientific descriptions of elephants, particularly of those used in war, in the classical Indian literature are in Kautilya's *Arthashastra* (dated variably between c. 300 BCE to 300 CE), which, incidentally, may also be the first treatise on the commodification of elephant<sup>1</sup>. The lines from the *Aṣṭamiprabandhā*, Prose No. 26, written in Malayalam by Melpathoor Narayana Bhattathiri (1559–1645), refer to the crescent shaped design on the caparison of elephants, indicating the historicity of the cultural association between the two species. The state emblem of kerala where two elephants stand facing one another with raised trunks with the Ashoka pillar and a conch in between depicts the cultural significance of elephants.<sup>1</sup> *Hastyāyurveda* text by acharya palakapya is a comprehensive work on elephant medicine. The text is partly prose and partly in verse. The book consist of twelve thousand verses, which arouse out of a dialogue between Romapadaraja and Palakapya in Chambapuri. This text extensively deals with characteristics of elephants, their life span, care training, signs of a good and trained mahouts , diseases and their management. *Ānāham* has been exquisitely explained in the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of maharogasthana in *Hastyāyurveda*. Acharya charaka says all substances in the universe is made up of panchamahabhutha. Ayurveda mentions that all disease is due to mandagni. In *hastyāyurveda* also treatment is based on concept

of tridosha similar to human being. Experts opines that *ānāham* is one such disease which affects the agni due to bad diet. The broad aim of this article is to provide a general outline on the description of *Ānāham* from Hastyāyurveda with special reference to vataja gulma in Ashtanga Hridaya. It is written with an intention to preserve the depriving knowledge base of traditional treatments for animals existing in ayurveda.

## OBSERVATIONS

### AN OVERVIEW OF DISEASE *ĀNĀHAM* IN HASTYĀYURVEDA

Hastyāyurveda text by Ācharya Palakapya is a comprehensive work on elephant medicine. The text is partly prose and partly in verse. The book consist of twelve thousand verses , which arouse out of a dialogue between Romapadaraja and Palakapya in Chambapuri. This text extensively deals with characteristics of elephants, their life span, care training, signs of a good and trained mahouts ,diseases and their management. *ĀNĀHAM* has been exquisitely explained in the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of maharogasthana in Hastyāyurveda.

SL .No.	NIDANA AS PER PALAKAPYA SAMHITHA	SYMPTOMS AS PER PALAKAPYA SAMHITHA
1.	<p><b><i>ATYĀSITĀNĀHAM</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intake of grass &amp; food in excess.</li> <li>Intake of excess water when hungry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decreased urine and faeces.</li> <li>Increased respiration.</li> <li>Abdominal distention.</li> <li>Colic.<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>
2	<p><b><i>VĀTONMATHITAM</i></b></p> <p>(A) <b><i>ŚUDDHA VĀTONMATHITAM</i></b></p> <p>(B) <b><i>SAMSAKTABHAKTĀNĀHAM</i></b></p> <p>(C) <b><i>ASAMSAKTĀNĀHAM</i></b></p> <p>(A) <b><i>ŚUDDHA VĀTONMATHITAM</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intake of vishama rookshahara</li> <li>Intake of food and water in improper time.</li> </ul> <p>(B) <b><i>SAMSAKTABHAKTĀNĀHAM</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intake of food in ajeerna avastha</li> <li>Vishamashaana</li> </ul> <p>(C) <b><i>ASAMSAKTĀNĀHAM</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improper feeding of grass, food, yava.</li> <li>Intake of katu thiktha kashaya rasa, rooksha bhojana.</li> <li>Vishamashana.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abdominal distention.</li> <li>Colic.<sup>3</sup></li> <li>Increased respiration.</li> <li>Obstruction in urine and faeces.<sup>4</sup></li> <li>Decreased urine and fecal matter.</li> </ul>

<p>3</p>	<p><b>BASED ON DHĀNYAPRADUṢṬAM</b>  <b>(A) APRADUṢṬAMĀNĀHAM</b>  <b>(B) SAMPRADUṢṬAMĀNĀHAM</b></p> <p><b>(A) APRADUṢṬAMĀNĀHAM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intake of cooked pulses in excess.</li> <li>• Intake of uncooked pulses.</li> <li>• Intake of cold water in excess.</li> </ul> <p><b>(B) SAMPRADUṢṬAMĀNĀHAM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intake of parinitha shushkadhanya apakwanna.</li> <li>• Intake of vividha rasa.</li> <li>• Drinking excess water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obstructed and hard faeces.</li> <li>• Abdominal colic.<sup>5</sup></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obstruction of Flatus.</li> <li>• Obstructed faeces.</li> <li>• Yawning.<sup>6</sup></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty in micturition.</li> <li>• Abdominal colic.</li> <li>• Hard fecal matter.</li> <li>• Obstruction in defaecation.<sup>7</sup></li> </ul>
<p>4</p>	<p><b>MRTTIKĀJAGDHA ĀNĀHAM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intake of mud excessively in rainy season.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adhmanam dharunam</li> <li>• Aversion to food</li> <li>• Obstruction in defaecation.<sup>8</sup></li> </ul>
<p>5</p>	<p><b>SANNIPĀTĀNĀHAM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intake of food in excess quantity.</li> <li>• Intake of Sneha dravyas in excess quantity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigestion.</li> <li>• Flatus will be obstructed.<sup>9</sup></li> </ul>

• **NIDANA OF VATAJA GULMA**

- Intake of vatala Āharas.
- Drinks cold water when hungry.
- Indulge in activities immediately after food.<sup>10</sup>

• **SAMPRAPTHI OF VATAJA GULMA**

Increased vata and depletion of kapha and pitha



Vitiation of vayu in koshta and increased rooksha guna it attains katinatha.<sup>11</sup>

- **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

- गुल्मं बद्धशकृद्वातं वातिकं तीव्रवेदनम्।<sup>12</sup>

Obstruction of faeces and flatus, severe pain.

- व्यधः सूच्येव विट्सङ्गः कृच्छ्रादुच्छसनं मुहुः ।

Pain, Obstructed faeces , difficulty in breathing.<sup>13</sup>

- **TREATMENT OF ĀNĀHAM** Hastyāyurveda

Basic treatment principle mentioned in Hastyāyurveda in every Ānāham is Deepana pachana ,Vatanulomanam, Varti, Vasti and exercise. Agnideepana with internal administration of combination of drugs like pippali, chithraka, shunti, yava kshara. Vasti with vathahara drugs. Varti prepared out of teekshna anulomana drugs like (Lasuna,pippali,saindhava ) Elephants are made to walk in uneven surfaces.

- The treatment of vataja gulma mentioned in Ashtangahridaya is similar to the above perspective.

- स्त्रोतसां मार्दवं कृत्वा जित्वा मारुतमुल्बणम् ।  
भित्त्वा विबन्धं स्निग्धस्य स्वेदो गुल्ममपोहति ॥<sup>12</sup>

Softening the channel, by mitigating the greatly increased vata and removing the obstruction by sudation therapy.

- बस्तिकर्म परं विद्याद्गुल्मघ्नं, तद्धि मारुतम्।<sup>12</sup>

Vasti karma is the best to destroy gulma.

## **FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ĀNĀHAM IN CURRENT SCENARIO**

The lack of trained mahouts consequent to the rapid increase in elephants has affected caregiving. Earlier, elephants walked from one festival location to another, receiving adequate exercise. Contrary to expectations, trucking elephants only added to the stress by increasing the distance the animals were made to travel. When they walked, the distance travelled was restricted to a few tens of kilometres, but with the introduction of the trucks, elephants were shuttled across the state, travelling hundreds of kilometres in hours, each parading in multiple festivals each day. In addition to fatigue-related stress, lack of sleep also increased during such extensive movement. Various medical problems such as impaction and digestive problems became common in elephants travelling on trucks. Laws *et al.* (2007), in a study on physiological stress levels in the relocation of a male Asian elephant from one zoo to another, found that stress increased by 340% following transportation and persisted for a long period. Besides, the frequency of stereotypic behaviour, an indicator of behavioural stress, also increased significantly.<sup>14</sup> Considering that one relocation event had such a high impact on the physiology and behaviour of an individual suggests that frequent travel by truck could pose many medical problems. This may be the primary reason behind the recent increase in deaths in captivity, particularly of younger individuals, many of whom have died due to impaction and cardiac disorders, both of which can be attributed to elevated stress levels.<sup>1</sup> Since the posture is against the gravity it is difficult to expel out the faeces. Intake of cold water after prolonged walk and intake of vidhahi aharas or costive food.

## INTESTINAL IMPACTION

Intestinal impaction is not an uncommon condition affecting the Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) in captivity.<sup>15</sup> It is a non-infectious disease condition resulting from partial or complete obstruction of the intestinal tract by undigested food material, foreign bodies or a hard faecal bolus in captive Asian elephants and in all of them, a hard faecal mass was the cause of impaction. It can be very painful and uncomfortable for the elephant and, if not diagnosed and treated in time, can prove fatal.<sup>18</sup>

The first vital sign noticed in intestinal impaction is a lack of defecation for a period longer than normal, which is accompanied in many cases by bloating of the abdomen. A healthy elephant defecates about 15–20 times a day. If an elephant has not defecated for long, it may be suffering from a serious digestive disorder, such as intestinal impaction, intussusception or volvulus. Following the lack of defecation, animal will stop feeding and show signs of colic. Based on the severity of the symptoms and duration, the colic could be per-acute (severe), acute (moderate) or chronic (mild). The typical symptoms of colic in elephants are; kicking the belly, frequently sitting down and getting up, lying down and flipping over from side to side. In severe colic, these symptoms are accompanied by frequent opening of mouth (yawning appearance) and holding and biting the trunk in the mouth. Elephants, showing such symptoms with the absence of appetite and defecation for a considerable time, could have partial or complete intestinal obstruction, volvulus or intussusception. The history is vital in differentiating between these. For example, if the animal was noted eating soil, or there was a sudden change in diet, overeating, drinking less water, etc., obstruction is likely. Elephants suffering from arthritis or lameness with reduced movement and lack of exercise may also be prone to reduced gut motility and thus impaction.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, a history of incidents such as falls, symptoms of aerophagia or sudden changes in diet may indicate volvulus or intussusception. In most cases, we have observed that impaction and colic occurred mainly due to factors like reduced gut movement, dehydration, or inadequate exercise, rather than from ingested items. Compared to other species, surgical management of intestinal impaction in elephants is difficult and challenging, because of the large visceral cavity, large intestinal volume, and higher chances of incision dehiscence.<sup>17</sup> Once dehydration arises, it is followed by electrolyte imbalance, endotoxic shock, and circulatory collapse. The condition may lead to recumbency and death in the case of per acute colic.<sup>18</sup>

## DISCUSSION

A striking similarity is observed between the nidana, signs and symptoms of vataja gulma and anaha in Hastyayurveda, highlighting a potential convergence of diagnostic criteria. A notable concordance is observed between the treatment principles outlined in Hastyayurveda and those recommended for vataja gulma, highlighting a consistent therapeutic approach. A more effective approach would be to consider this condition as a continuum of interconnected diseases, where each stage progresses sequentially. The progression of Ānāha to Vataja Gulma and subsequently to Hrdroga illustrates a cascade of pathophysiological events. Internal textual analysis of Hastyāyurveda provides conclusive evidence to substantiate this claim. A bidirectional relationship exists between conventional medicine and our understanding of disease etiology and symptom manifestation.

## CONCLUSION

Ayurveda can act as in both preventive and curative aspect in this disease. Its quiet interesting that even our science insist that even the insects and ants should be seen with respect. It would be better to consider this disease as a syndrome which progresses from a simple disease to a major dreadful one. As acharya says prathyaksham hi alpam Aprathyaksham hi analpam Known is less and unknown is more. An integrative paradigm in veterinary medicine is essential for advancing our understanding of animal health and disease.

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