



A CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF AVARANA

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ABSTRACT

Considering the multitude of functions *Vata* performs and being involved in most of the disease manifestation, it is considered as the prime *dosha* – functional entity and vitiating factor. *Vata* is given high credentials in the understanding of physiology and pathology in *Ayurveda* and subsequently in planning therapy strategies too. Two clusters of *Samprapti* can lead to *Vatavyadhi* viz., *Dhatu kshaya* and *Avarana*. Before treating a disease, it is important to understand the disease condition thoroughly through its *nidana*, *dosha*, *dushya*, *srotas* involved and the *Samprapti*. Though many cases of *Vatavyadhi* can be understood under the umbrella of *Avarana*, many fail to recognize its presence due to multiple factors. This is an attempt made to elucidate the basic concepts of *Avarana*.

Keywords: Vata, Samprapti, Avarana, Dhatu kshaya, Vatavyadhi, Ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

Every science has for its basis a system of principles as fixed and unalterable as those by which the universe is regulated and governed¹. One such system of principles in *Ayurveda* curriculum which is comprised of understanding the imbalance of functional entities in the body, clinical examination methodologies, diagnostic tools, prognostic principles is *Roganidana*. *Dosha* vitiate *dhatu*, *mala* and other entities and thus cause diseases to the *Shareera* and the *manas*. Among these *dosha*, *Vata* is considered as the prime one based on its qualities² and primarily due to its *chala guna*, unique to *Vata* alone. When this *chala guna* of *Vata* is hindered it leads to various conditions². Proper *bala*, *varna*, *sukha* and *ayu* are dependent on *avyahata* – able to move uninterruptedly and normal *vayu*, *agni* (all forms of *agni*) and *srotas*³. *Vayu* in its physiological purview with uninterrupted movement is important for maintenance of *ayu*, which when impeded results in pathology.

Vata is exceptional, where in use of *ahara* and *vihara*, similar to its *guna* and *karma* brings about its *vikruti*, which is similar to other *dosha*, whereas *dushti* of other *dosha* and *dhatu* along with its *dushti* can also bring about *vikruti* in *Vata* through different *Samprapti*.

All the said *nidana* can lead to *Vatavyadhi* through either of two modes of *Samprapti*⁴

- through *dhatu kshaya*

- through *Avarana*.

The case of *dhatu kshaya janya Vatavyadhi*, it is easier to understand and also the treatment is easier as it is *kevala vata janya*. Whereas *Avarana janya Vatavyadhi* is a multi-factorial condition where in different entities play their role in the disease causation, pathogenesis and so also all these should be considered during the treatment.

THE WORD – AVARANA

The word *Avarana* is derived as *Aang+Vru+Lyut*⁵

‘*Aang*’ is *upasarga*

‘*Vru*’ is *dhatu*

‘*Lyut*’ is *pratyaya*

Avarana word has got synonyms like *Aachadana*, *Aakeerna*, *Pravruta*, *Valayita*, *Vestita*, *Ruddha*, *Samvita*, *Gatinirodha*⁶ which may be understood as Covering, Enveloping, Obstruction, Resistance.

DEFINITION OF AVARANA

Ayurvediya Shabdakosha defines *Avarana* as *Avarodha*, *Gatinirodha* which means obstruction to the movement or resistance to the movement. This obstruction can happen to a *gati yukta* entity only and that is *Vata* alone. So, the basic pathology in *Avarana* is *gatinirodha* and / or *avarodha* of *Vata*. Thus, *Avarana* can be understood as a condition characterised by obstruction or resistance to the movement of *Vata*⁷. Being an *amurta dravya*, pathological manifestation of *Vata* in terms of *Avarana* has to be understood by *Gatihanana* – resistance to movement⁸.

Ayurveda shabdakosha has defined *Avarana* as *ABHISARPATA BALAVATA DOSHENA ABHIBHUTO DURBALO DOSHA PRATYAVRUTAHA SAN AAVRUTA ITI UCCHYATE*⁹ - the condition where a *balavan dosha* covers or impedes the *durbala dosha*.

*MARGAVARANENA VEGA PRATIBANDHADEVA KUPITO BHAVATI*⁷ – condition where obstruction causes hinderance in the movement of *Vata*.

COMPONENTS OF AVARANA

As explained under the definition, *Avarana* has two components or two entities involving *dosha*, one is a *balavan dosha* and the other *durbala dosha*.

The two components are termed as

1. *Avaraka*
2. *Avruta*

Avaraka – The one or the components which covers or impedes. It is also termed as *Aacchadaka*¹⁰. *Avaraka* is usually a *balavan*¹¹ *dosha* which may be *Kapha*, *Pitta*, any *dhatu*, *mala*, *anna*.

Avruta – The component of *Avarana* which gets covered is *Avruta*. It is also termed as *Aacchadita*¹². This *Avruta* is always *Vata* only.

EFFECT OF AVARANA

When there occurs the pathology through *Avarana*, there can happen either of the two effects. That is – there can be either *vrudhhi* or increase of its qualities or effects and *hani* or decrease or loss of its qualities or effects. Either decline or exacerbation of the effects or qualities *Avruta* which is usually *Vata*¹³.

This above said effect is relatively dependant on the quality and or *bala* of the *Avaraka dhatu* or *dosha* or entity. If the *avaraka* entity is *balavan* and having qualities opposite to that of the *Avruta*, then the effects of *Avruta* entity gets diminished and the qualities or effects of the *Avaraka* will be prominently seen. For an instance, if there is *Pittavruta Vata* and here the *avaraka Pitta* mainly exhibits its qualities as it is explained in *lakshanas* of *Pittavruta vata* as *Daha, Trushna, Bhrama, Tama, Shoola* and similarly in case of *Kaphavruta vata – Sheetata, Gourava, Ruksha ushna kamita, Shoola* where all *kapha* dominant features are observed. Though considered as one among the *Vatavyadhi*, the *Samprapti* of *Vatavyadhi* which results in the genesis of symptoms where usually expected clinical features of *Vatavyadhi* are not seen in *Avarana*. Therefore, *Avarana* state of *Vata* is explained as a distinct mode of *Samprapti* for the genesis of *Vatavyadhi* and so also the distinctness in the resultant clinical features.

Where as in case of the components of *Avarana*, viz., *Avaraka* and *Avruta* are of similar qualities, usually the *lakshana* of both the entities will be seen. This is observed usually in cases of *Anyonya Avruta Vata*. As in case of *Pranavruta Udana vayu – the lakshana* illustrated are – *Shirograha, Pratishtaya, Nishwasa uchwasa sangraha, Hrudroga, Mukhashosha*. Here it can be observed that the *sthana* of both *Prana* and *Udana Vata* and also their functions are hampered. Though *bala* is a matter to be considered and whichever is *balavan*, its qualities will be more dominantly seen, but here both *Avruta* and *Avatraka* components of *Avarana* being *Vata* itself and having similar qualities, they both complement each other and so the *lakshana* of both *Prana* and *Udana Vata* are seen.

Though considered as one among the *Vatavyadhi*, the *Avarana Samprapti* results in the genesis of symptoms, where the usually expected clinical features of *Vatavyadhi* are not seen in *Avarana*. Therefore, even though *Vrudhhi* or *kshaya lakshana* of *Vata* itself are seen in *Avarana janya Vatavyadhi* also, *Avarana* state of *Vata* is mentioned as an independent entity.

Thus, by all the above said explanations it can be understood that *Vata dosha* is the one which usually undergoes *Avarana* i.e., it occupies the seat of *Avruta*, mostly, in the *Samprapti* of *Avarana* and other bodily vitiated components usually become *Avaraka*.

TYPES OF AVARANA

In general, it can be grouped into two.

- *Anya Avarana*¹⁴ – *Vata* being *Avruta* by other entities
- *Anyonya Avarana*¹⁵ – Both entities are *Vata* alone

WHY VATA UNDERGOES AVARANA

Qualities of *Vata* are *Laghu, Ruksha, Khara, Sukshma*¹⁶ along with *Chala guna* with the doinancy of *Vayu* and *Akasha Mahabhuta*. All these aid in making *Vata Laghutama* in comparison to *Pitta* and *Kapha dosha*. *Vata* has *Avyahata gati* and keeps moving from one region to another without any hindrances.

Pitta qualities are *Sneha, Teekshna, Ushna, Laghu*¹⁶ along with *Sara guna* with *Agni mahabhuta pradhanyata*. Though *Pitta* has the *Sara guna*, it cannot move as swiftly as that of *Vata* as the other qualities do not aid for the same.

Kapha is *Manda, Sthira* and *Ghana*¹⁶ along with *Pruthvi mahabhuta pradhanyata*, it is *sthiratwa pradhana*.

This makes the *Kapha dosha* most susceptible to cause *Avarana* to the entities which have the quality to move, thus making it the most common cause in the genesis of *Avarana* along with *Pitta*, other *dhatu*, and other body entities.

As explained, *sukshma* and *sara guna* are prime ones among *Vata* and they will not be exhibited during *Avarana*¹⁷, as for *gatinirodha* to happen these *guna* need to be subdued and when achieved by the *avaraka bhava*, the attainment of *Samprapti* of *Avarana* happens.

WHAT CAUSES AVARANA

Even though *dosha* are considered as *Dushanatmaka*, they do not vitiate others during normalcy in the view of the fact of *Sahaja satmya*¹⁸. So, it is important to note that, even though *Vata dosha* is considered as a prime factor in the *Samprapti* of *Avarana*, the *dosha* or others which are doing *Avarana* i.e., *Avaraka* should also be given equal importance in the process of disease causation.

As said a normal *dosha* or other body entity cannot assume the role of *Avaraka*. So, the *Avaraka* entity is also a vitiated one. It should also be noted that for the *Samprapti* of *Avarana janya Vatavyadhi* to begin, there has to be *nidana* related to other *dosha* or *dhatu* also and not related to mere *Vata*. It is said that *Dosha* should be *sama* to be an *avaraka*¹⁹. Thus, it is also to be understood and should be treated first too.

DISCUSSION

4 modes of *Samprapti* in terms of *Srotodushti* are essential for the genesis of a *Vyadhi* – *Stipravrutti*, *Sangha*, *Siragranthi* and *Vimargagamana*²⁰. Though *Avarana* may be understood in terms of *Sangha* at times, but in case of *Anyonya Avruta*, any typical *Srotodushti* may not be appreciable. There are various terminologies we come across in the texts which sound similar to or go hand in hand with the term *Avarana*. They are – *Marga Avarana*, *Baddha marga*, *Avruta marga*, *Sroto sangha*, *Sroto rodha*, *Sroto avarodha*, *Ruddha gati*, *Avruta gati*, *Avaruddha gati*. These are used in context of various disease conditions and they all need to be properly analysed. Though all these are understood with similar meaning, they require a thought.

Vata may be present in the body in four states. Normal state, *Kshaya*, *Vruddhi* or being in the state of *Avarana*²¹. Among the later three abnormal states, the state of *Avarana* always requires keen understanding through *Pareeksha*. As it is understood *Vata* can get vitiated due to numerous factors, its *Samprapti* can be cornered down into two majorly as *Dhatu kshaya janya* and *Avaranajanya*. Both these need a thorough understanding in terms of the patients and only then one has to treat, if understood otherwise and treated, it may end in confusion and treatment result may be a failure. So, it's always wise to understand the disease and then treat accordingly²².

CONCLUSION

The word *Avarana* in the clinical medicine is always a question mark due to its complexity in understanding as thought by most. But it needs through understanding as said by *Acharya Charaka* – one should understand the disease first and only then plan treatment if not his success is always by luck²². *Avarana* is one such mode of *Samprapti* in many of the *Vatavyadhi* which needs thorough understanding and if present should be treated in those lines only. If the basic concepts of entities related to *dosha*, *Samprapti*, whys and whats of *Avarana* are understood clearly, then diagnosis and clinical understanding of *Avarana* becomes much clearer and when diagnosed and treated accordingly, it will be a successful one.

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