

Ayurvedic Perspective of Fever in Children

Dr. Aruna Kumari Sangwan

Assistant Professor, Department of Kaumarbhritya, FIMS, SGT University, Gurugram, India

Abstract: Fever is the primary and most common symptom of many diseases. Fever is more common in children and it often occurs as the first clinical indication of many illnesses. Fever is referred to as *Jwara* in the Indian traditional medical system, Ayurveda, and is considered a distinct and major illness entity. Ayurveda describes a wide range of clinical variations of *Jwara*, which are detailed in this manuscript. To prepare this manuscript, several research articles were reviewed. Different types of *Jwara* in children are described in detail in Ayurveda, particularly in the *Kashyapa Samhita*. All types of *Jwara* are explained in a very scientific way and are useful in the diagnosis of newer pediatric febrile disorders. Content of this article is an attempt to draw attention to the various types of *Jwara* in children and to improve the validity of Ayurvedic diagnostic terms in current paediatrics practice and to enhance child care.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Fever, *Jwara*, Paediatric, Febrile disorders

1. Introduction

Ayurveda mentioned *Jwara* as the synonym of the disease or a febrile condition.¹ From among all disorders *jwara* deserves to be described first, it being the foremost of all somatic diseases.¹ *Charak Samhita* mentions *jwara* (fever) as a disease entity causing *sañtāpa* in *deha*, *manah*, and *indriya* (increased temperature of body, psycho - sensorial impairment) and as *sarvarogāgraja* (supreme of all diseases).² *JWARA* is important and critical among all conditions, because it affects each and every living being. Hence, it has been given first place in the classical texts of Ayurveda.³ The word '*TAKMAN*' (which makes life miserable) was used for the disease *jwara* in *Atharvaveda*.

In Ayurveda:

Aacharya Charak - According to *Charak*, *jwara* is described first, because it is the earliest (in appearance) of all the somatic diseases and originated by the anger of "Lord *Maheśvara*".⁴

Suśruta samhita - Suśruta has described *jwara* elaborately in *uttara tāntra* of *suśruta samhita* and mentioned that, *jwara* is the king of diseases.⁵

Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya - Vāgbhatta, the author of *Aṣṭāṅga hṛdaya* has given different nomenclature for *jwara* like, *Rogāpati*, *pāpmā*, *mṛtyu*, *ojośana*, *ātānka*, *krodha*, *dakṣādhvaradhvaṁsi*, *rudrodhvanayanodbhava*, *janmantavayormohamaya*, *sañtāpa*, *ātmāpacārāja*.⁶

Kāśyapa samhita - *Jwara* described in *jwara cikitsā adhyāya* in *cikitsā sthāna*.⁷

Origin⁸

In the *Tretayuga* when Lord *Shiva* was observing the vow of wrathless, the demons created mischief for thousand divine years in order to put obstacle *Daksha Prajapati*, the Lord of progeny and father in - law of *Shiva* ignored and did not give due place to Lord *Shiva* in the sacrifice organized by him, in spite of having been advised by the Gods to do so. Thus, *Daksha* made the sacrifice devoid of the mantras relating to the Lord of animals and offerings pertaining to Lord *Shiva* which were necessary for the success of the sacrifice. When after completion of the vow, Lord *Shiva* came to know the lacking's of *Daksha*, he the knower of the self, came into the wrathful state and by creating an eye (third one) in his forehead, the potent one reduced all the demons to ashes and

created a boy, heated with the fire of anger, who could destroy the celebrations of the sacrifice, the Gods were pained and the living beings afflicted with heat and pains. They were moving g then and there in all directions. Then the congregation of Gods along with seven sages praised the omnipresent Lord *Shiva* with incantations till Lord *Shiva* returned to his normal benevolent state. Knowing that he is now in the benevolent mood, the fire of wrath submitted to the Lord *Shiva* with folded hands. Now, Sir, what should I do for you? The Lord replied to him. "You will be '*Jwara*' in the world during the birth and death and also in conditions of unwholesomeness.

Fever in Children

Fever, although has been considered as major disease in ancient Ayurvedic texts but children being delicate and more vulnerable to various disorders due to immature *Dhatus* and deficient in *Bala/Oja* are more prone to fluctuations in temperature. Moreover, the causes of fever in children also differ than adults. Fever caused due to vitiated breast milk; fever due to seizure by *Grahas* etc. are completely different than that of adult fever.

*Kashyapa*⁹ has mentioned neonatal (*Jatamatra*) fever, similarly in *Kshirapa* (breast fed) and *Kshiranabhojina* (breast + cereal fed) including treatment along with congenial and non - congenial for infants suffering from fever. There are eight different types of fever in *Nidana Sthana*, two types of fever (*Sama* and *Vishama*) in *Sutra Sthana*, and treatment for *Jeerana Jwara* (chronic fever) in *Chikitsa* chapter. Unfortunately, the two chapters that describe fever have been lost and the *Chikitsa* chapter comprises just one page.

Ayurvedic Concept of Viral Fever

Virus and viral fevers are not directly mentioned in Ayurvedic classics. But the concept of *Agantu Nidana* (exogenous factors) and *Agantu Jwara* (fever due to exogenous factors) mentioned in *Jwara* can be taken. The exogeneous factors may be *Bhuta* (exposure to microbes), poison, exposure to polluted air, exposure to fire and external trauma.¹⁰ Viral fever can be taken as *Abhishanga* (by contact with the source of infection) type of *Agantu Jwara* which is caused by *Bhutadi* (microbes) and is *Tridoshika* (aggravation of all the *Dosha*) in nature.¹¹

Synonyms of Jwara¹²

Some synonyms of *Jwara* with meaning:

JWARA - A disease which alleviates body temperature

ROGAPATI - Superior among all disease

ROGARAJA - King of various disease

PAAPMA - Disease caused by previous sins

MRITYU - Disease which may end in death

ANTAKA - Disease which may end in death

OJAKSHAYA - Disease which destroys *Oja*

KRODHA - Fever is caused by *krodha* (anger) and associated with *krodha*

Etiological Factors¹³

Charka says *Jwara* has two *Prakriti*'s

a) *Sharirika* (Physical) - *vata*, *pitta*, *kapha* involvement.

b) *Mansika* (Psychic) - *raja*, *tama* involvement.

Both these can also be termed as etiological factors and clarifying it *Charka* says that the status of body, when there is no vitiation of *Doshas*, presence of *Jwara* is impossible. While classifying etiological factors.

1) *Sannikrishta* (proximate) factors: *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*

2) *Viprakrishta* (remote) factors:

- *Mithya Ahara Vihara* - Non - congenial food and life style
- *Asatmendriyarth* - *samyoga* - overuse, misuse, disuse of sensory and other organ
- *Pragyaparadha* - Disobedience of natural decisions of intellect.
- *Parinama (Kala)* - Non - observance of rules of *Dincharya* (day routines), *Ritucharya* (night - routines) and seasons as described by *Ayurvedic* texts.

Classification

1) *Jwara* is classified into two categories according to the following characteristics.

- *Sharira* (physical) and *manasa* (mental)
- *Saumya* (dominated by cold) and *agneya* (dominated by heat)
- *Antarvega* (internal) and *bahirvega* (external)
- *Prakrita* (according to seasons) and *vaiakrita* (unseasonal)
- *Sadhya* (curable) and *Asadhya* (incurable)

2) *Jwara* is categorized into five types based on the dosha's strength and weakness as well as the time. These are intermittent in nature.

- *Santata*
- *Satata*
- *Anyedushka*
- *Tritiyaka*
- *Chaturthaka*

3) *Jwara* is again classified into seven categories based on the *Ashraya* (location of manifestation in the body) of each of the seven dhatus (body tissues).

- *Rasadhatugata Jwara* (fever located in *Rasadhatu*)
- *Raktadhatugata Jwara* (fever located in *Raktadhatu*)
- *Mamsadhatugata Jwara* (fever located in *Mamsadhatu*)
- *Medodhatugata Jwara* (fever located in *Medodhatu*)

- *Asthidhatugata Jwara* (fever located in *Asthidhatu*)
- *Majjadhatugata Jwara* (fever located in *Majjadhatu*)
- *Sukradhatugata Jwara* (fever located in *Sukradhatu*)

4) Eight types of *jwara* are distinguished based on the eight causes of *jwara* (*dosha* predominance)

- *Vata* (by the vitiation of *Vata Dosha*)
- *Pitta* (by the vitiation of *Pitta Dosha*)
- *Kapha* (by the vitiation of *Kapha Dosha*)
- *Vatapitta* (by the vitiation of *Vata+Pitta Dosha*)
- *Vatakapaha* (by the vitiation of *Vata+Kapha Dosha*)
- *Pittakapha* (by the vitiation of *Pitta+Kapha Dosha*)
- *Sannipataja* (by the vitiation of *Vata+Pitta+Kapha Dosha*)
- *Aganthu Jwara* (fever due to exogenous factors)

*Kashyapa Samhita*¹⁴, as available presently, is in fragmented form. *Nidana Sthana* is totally unavailable whereas description of *Jwara* in *Sutrasthana* is also not found. So, in *Kashyapa Samhita*¹⁴ two types of *Jwara* has been described in *Sutrasthana* as well as eight types are provided in *Nidan Sthana*.

So, classification of *Jwara* by *Kashyapa Samhita* can be made on the basis of their description of *Jwara* in various available chapters. The description available in *Sutra Sthan* explains prodromal feature of *Jwara*, under *Vedna - adhyaya* i. e. the child repeatedly flexes body parts, yawns, coughs frequently before onset of fever, clings to wet nurse and averges breast feeding, salivation is excessive, body temperature is raised, forehead of infant is excessively hot. The infant show anorexia and has cold feet.

On the basis of references available in *Charka Samhita*¹⁵, *Sushruta Samhita*¹⁶, *Kashyapa Samhita*¹⁴, *Ashtang Sangraha*¹⁷, *Ashtang Hirdya*¹⁸ and *Madhava Nidana*¹⁹ brief classification can be as under: -

1) *Nija* (Endogenous): Due to vitiation of *Doshas*, i. e. direct influences of dietetics and mode of life by consumption of *Dosha* specific dietetics, *Nija (Dosha specific) Jwara* ensue.

- *Vata* (Single *Dosha* vitiation)
- *Pitta* (Single *Dosha* vitiation)
- *Kapha* (Single *Dosha* vitiation)
- *Vata and Pitta* (Dual *Dosha* vitiation)
- *Vata and Shaleshma* (Dual *Dosha* vitiation)
- *Shaleshma and Pitta* (Dual *Dosha* vitiation)

2) *Agantuja* (Exogenous): Such *Jwara*, which has originated due to exogenous factors, initially, no involvement of any *Dosha* is present but later turns *Doshika* due to involvement of *Dosha* and *Dhatus* of body. The sign and symptoms are according to vitiation of particular *Dosha*.

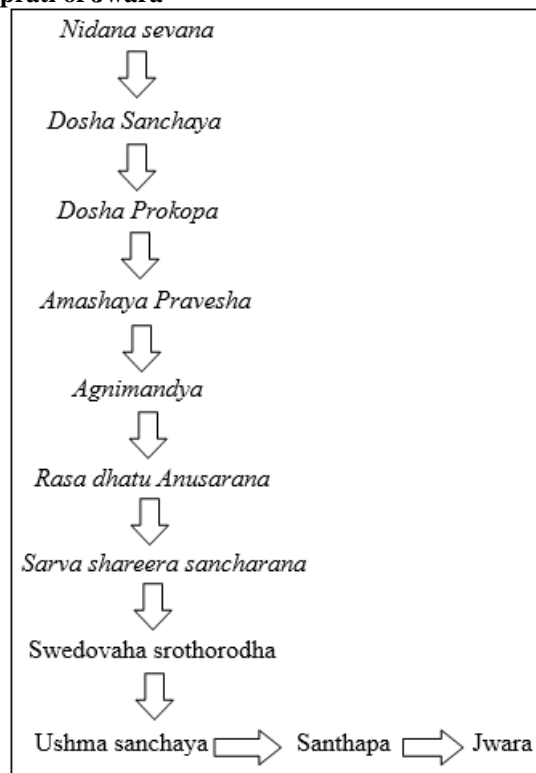
- *Vishjanya* (Toxic)
- *Aushadhi Gandh Janayas* (Allergic)
- *Kama* (Sexual)
- *Bhyadijanaya* (Psychic)

Cause of Obstruction of Svedavaha Srotasa²⁰

There is a normal state of *agni* (digestive fire) in *koṣṭha* but due to *mithya ahara* and *vihara* (unwholesome food and habits) leads to vitiation of *dosha* specially *vata dosha*

which disrupts the normalcy of *agni*, thereby indigestion takes place and indigested product obstruct the *srotas* (minute channels) specially *svedavaha srotas* leading to lack of perspiration and augmentation of *jwara*.

Samprati of Jwara²¹



POORVAROOPA (Prodromal Features)²¹ - *Charaka* has described the following premonitory symptoms additionally. They are *anannabhilasha*, *Brahma*, *pralapa*, *Jagarana*, *Dantaharsha*, *Avipaka*, *Daurbalya*, *Sadana*, *Bala*, *Varna Hani* etc. The premonitory symptoms reveal the types of *jwara*.

ROOPA (Cardinal symptoms)²¹ - Numerous symptoms occurring the *jwara* have been described in classics according to the type of *Jwara*. *Charaka* says that the cardinal symptoms of *jwara*, the rise in *tapa* of the body and mind. *Acharya Bhavamisra* and *Madhavakara* have given three cardinal symptoms of *Jwara* namely:

- *Swedavarodha* - Obstruction of sweat
- *Santapa* - Rise in *tapa*
- *Sarvanga graham* - pain all over the body.

While other *Acharyas* described various symptoms according to the variety of the diseases.

Prodromal Symptoms of Jwara²¹

The symptoms are usually of two types.

- General Prodromal Features -
 - Shrama* (Fatigue)
 - Arati / Anavasthita Chittatva* (Uneasiness)
 - Vivarnata* (Change in complexion)
 - Vairsya* (Distaste)
 - Sheeta* - *Vata* - *Alapa Ichha / Dwesha* (Intolerance to climate variation)
 - Nayanaplva / Ashru Purna Netrata* (Watering eye)
 - Jrimbha* (Yawning)
 - Angamarda* (Body ache)

- Guruta* (Heaviness of body)
- Romaharsha* (Horripilation)
- Aruchi* (Anorexia)
- Tamahpravesha* (Drowsiness)
- Apraharsha* (Aversion to sex)
- Sheeta* (Chill)

2) Specific Prodromal Features -

- Yawning (*Jrimbha*) in *Vata Jwara*
- Burning Sensation in eyes (*Nayanadaha*) in *Pitta Jwara*
- Anorexia (*Aruchi*) in *Kaphaja Jwara*
- Mixed symptoms in combination of two *Doshas*
- Amalgamated symptoms in *Sannipata Jwara*

Stages of JWARA²¹

Taruna Jwara - Upto 7 days

Madyama Jwara - 8 to 12 days

Poorna Jwara - After 12 days

UPASHAYA - ANUPASHAYA²¹

Elaborate description of *upashaya* and *anupashaya* of *Jwara* has not been mentioned in classics. *Vagbhata* has stated in brief that the causative factors like *Katu* - *Tikta rasa*, *Vishamashana* etc. are the *anupashaya* of *vataja jwara*. *Amla lavana* and *krodha* etc. are *anupashaya* for *pittaja jwara*. *Madhuara*, *Amla* and *diva swapna* are *anupashaya* for *Kaphaja Jwara*. Contrary to above mentioned etiology, the antagonizing factors of *gunas* of *doshas* are the *upashaya* for *vatadi Jwara*.

PATHYA - APATHYA²¹

As *jwara* bears a complicated picture of its own, *pathya* and *apathya* also differ according to these varieties. *Charaka Samhita* has given description of *pathya* and *apathya* of *jwara* according to the conditions of the disease and the diseased.

The fever patient should avoid indulging in food and drink that are irritants, heavy disagreeable and antagonistic; they should also avoid exertion, baths, over eating and sexual indulgence.

Acharya Bhavamisra has described common *Pathya* for *Jwara* as:

- Patient of *Jwara* needs to be kept in *nirvata sthana*
- Patient should be covered with heavy and warm cloths.
- Patient should drink boiled water frequently.

The patient of the *taruna jwara* should avoid *Parisheka*, *Pradeha*, *Snehapana*, *Samshodhana*, *Divaswapna*, *Vyayama*, *Vyavaya*, *Krodha*, and *kashaya rasa prayoga* etc.

CHIKITSA OF JWARA

Jwara is *rasa pradoṣaja vyādhi*²², treatment advised for *rasa pradoṣaja vyādhi* is *laṅghana*,²³ so the first line of treatment given in *āmāvastha* is *laṅghana* i. e. lightening therapy. It is not indicated in the *jwara* caused by aggravation of *vayu* by fear; anger, grief and physical exertion. *Laṅghana* is not restricted up to *upavāsa* but it contains *daśavidha laṅghana*. It includes *catuṣa prakāra* of *samśudhi*, *pipāsā* (thirst), *māruta* (air), *ātapa* (sunbath), *pācana* (digestion), *upavāsa* (fasting), *vyāyāma* (exercise).²⁴ *Svedana* (sudation, diaphoresis), *Kala* (awaiting time), *Yavagu* (drinking of thin

gruel), use of (drugs) of bitter taste and *Pachana* (drugs) which cook (transform by heat) the *Doshas*. These should be administered either as suitable to the stages of fever or in successive order.²⁵

2. Conclusion

Jwara is a critical condition in both Ayurvedic and modern medicine, especially in the pediatric population. Its management requires a comprehensive understanding of its causes, symptoms, and appropriate treatments. The integration of Ayurvedic principles with modern clinical practices can offer effective solutions for managing pediatric fevers, ensuring the well-being of children

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