

A Comprehensive Review of *Galgand*: Ayurvedic Perspective

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Abstract: *Galgand* is a disease entity described in classics of Ayurveda, characterized by localized swelling in the Gala Pradesh (anterior neck region), closely resemble thyroid gland enlargement and functional disorders. Classical Ayurvedic treatises describe *Galgand* as a condition caused mainly by the vitiation of Kapha Dosha along with Vata Dosha, resulting in abnormal swelling in the throat region. Disturbance of Agni (metabolic activity) leads to the formation of Ama (metabolic toxins), which further contributes to the vitiation of Doshas and affects Dhatus such as Mamsa and Meda, ultimately producing glandular enlargement resembling Granthi. From a modern biomedical perspective, *Galgand* can be correlated with thyroid gland disorders, particularly Hypothyroidism associated with goitre. Hypothyroidism is characterized by reduced production of thyroid hormones, leading to clinical manifestations such as swelling in neck region, weight gain, tiredness, cold intolerance, dry skin, and slowed metabolism. Many of these symptoms correspond with the Kapha dominant features described in Ayurvedic pathology, including Gaurava (heaviness), Alasya (lethargy), and metabolic impairment related to Agnimandya. Therefore, the Ayurvedic concept of Kapha and Meda Dushti should be understood parallelly to the metabolic disturbances observed in hypothyroidism. This review aims to critically analyse the Ayurvedic description of *Galgand* and explore its possible correlation with hypothyroidism, highlighting the relevance of Ayurvedic pathophysiological concepts and therapeutic approaches in the integrative management of thyroid disorders.

Keywords: *Galgand*, Hypothyroidism, Goitre, Ayurveda, Thyroid disorders

1. Introduction

Increasing incidences of Hypothyroidism worldwide has made it necessary to understand its Ayurvedic perspective for proper interventions life style modification to treat the condition more precisely. In Ayurveda there is no direct evidence of hypothyroidism, but on the basis of its clinical presentation such as swelling in neck region, weight gain, tiredness, cold intolerance, dry skin, and slowed metabolism, it can be correlated with Kapha-Meda Dushti and Agnimandya. On the basis of location of thyroid gland, and swelling in the throat, hypothyroidism can be compared with *Galgand*.

Galgand descriptions in Ayurveda:

Acharya Charaka includes *Galgand* in Nanatmaja Kaphaja Roga.^[1] In Trishothiya Adhyaya of Sutrasthan, *Galgand* has been described and explained as an Asadhya condition in Shvayathu Chikitsa.^[2, 3] Acharya Sushruta has described *Galgand* in detail in Nidanasthan and has also given its management in Chikitsa Sthan.^[4, 5] Acharya Vagbhata described *Galgand* in Mukharoga Adhyaya.^[6] Acharya Madhava explained *Galgand* mainly on the basis of Shushruta Samhita whereas Acharya Bhavprakash has explained it in detail with various remedies.^[7, 8]

Etymology of Galagand: The word *Galagand* made up of two parts - *gala* and *ganda*.

- *Gala* - means the pathway of food, i.e., *kantha*.
- *Ganda* - means *pidaka* or *budbuda*, *sphotaka* or *granthi*.

In a nutshell, *Galaganda*, means *sphotaka* or *granthi* in the throat. The relative term from the contemporary medical science is goitre.^[9]

Nidan (Etiological factors):-

In Charak Samhita, Acharya Charak describes *Galgand* under Trishothiya Adhyaya as *Sthaniya Shoth* (local swelling), and no specific cause has been mentioned, thus causes of *Shoth Roga* can be considered as *Nidan* of *Galaganda*. *Nidan* mentioned in context of *Shoth* are the common *Dosh Prakopak Nidana* of *Vata*, *Pitta* & *Kapha*.^[10]

In Shushruta Samhita, Acharya Shushruta mentions that excessive use of *Madhur Rasa* can produce *Galgand*.^[11] While describing the quality of water, Acharya Shushruta mentioned that water of reiver of Himachal Pradesh produces *Galgand*.^[12] Today in mountain region of Himalaya and Himachal Pradesh endemic goiter is more common. It is due to the less iodine content water.

Acharya Vagbhata has described *Galgand* in Mukharoga, where general causes of *Mokhroga* have been mentioned. Since *Galgand* is also considered under *Kaphaja Nanatmaja Vikara*, hence the provocative factors of *Kapha* can also be considered as the causative factors of *Galagand*.^[13]

Purvarupa (Prodromal Signs):-

The discomfort which occurs before the clear manifestations of a disease known as the *Purvarupa* of the disease. The *Purvarupa* of *Galgand* is not mentioned in Ayurvedic Samhitas. In the condition of Hypothyroidism, the disease is also insidious and can not be diagnosed at its early stage, this may be the reason that in modern medicines also the prodromal symptoms of hypothyroidism are not described.

Rupa (Sign & Symptoms):-

According to Acharya Charaka, when the provoked *Kapha* in the body, gathered and form a firm swelling in the throat, it is known as *Galgand*. Acharya Charaka stated chronic swelling, means a slow onset which is again similar to hypothyroidism in modern medicine.^[14] In *Shvayathu*

Chikitsa Adhyaya, *Charaka* mentions *Galgand* as a single swelling which supports its similarity with enlargement of thyroid gland, but there was no detail description of features.^[15] *Acharya Sushruta* and *Vagbhatta* described three types of *Galgand*. *Sushruta* stated that *Vata* and *Kapha* having aggravated in the neck and having accumulated in *Manya*

along with *Medas* produce glandular enlargement with characteristic symptoms.^[16] *Acharya Shusruta* also mentioned that due to collection of *Meda Dhatu* in due course of time, *Vatika Galgand* appears as *Medaja Galgand* and develops very smooth and painless.

S. No.	Symptoms	Shushruta Samhita	Ashtang Hridaya	Madhav Nidana	Bhav Prakash	Yog Ratnakar
1.	<i>Toda</i> (Pricking pain)	+	+	+	+	+
2.	<i>Krishna shira</i> (full of blackish Vein)	+	+	+	+	+
3.	<i>Krishna</i> (black)	+	+	-	-	-
4.	<i>Aruna varan</i> (red)	+	+	+	+	+
5.	<i>Shyava Varna</i> (blackish)	-	-	+	+	+
6.	<i>Parusha</i> (hard)	+	-	+	+	+
7.	<i>Chir vruddhi</i> (increasing gradually)	+	-	+	+	+
8.	<i>Pakam yadrachhaya</i> (rarely suppurate)	+	-	+	+	+
9.	<i>Ashya Vairashya</i> (loss of taste)	+	+	+	+	+
10.	<i>Talu shosh</i> (dryness of palate)	+	+	+	+	+
12.	<i>Gala shosh</i> (dryness of throat)	+	+	+	+	+
13.	<i>Kalad medavata</i> (<i>Meda</i> collects in due course of time)	+	-	-	-	-
14.	<i>Atisnigdha</i> (very smooth)	+	-	-	-	-
15.	<i>Aruja</i> (painless)	+	-	-	-	-
16.	<i>Shira</i> (fixed)	+	+	+	+	+
17.	<i>Savarana</i> (same color of skin)	+	+	+	+	+
18.	<i>Alpa ruja</i> (mild pain)	+	-	+	+	+
19.	<i>Ugra kandu</i> (excessive itching)	+	+	+	+	+
20.	<i>Sita</i> (cold)	+	+	+	+	+
21.	<i>Mahan</i> (big in size)	+	-	+	+	+
22.	<i>Chir abhivridhi</i> (increases slowly)	+	-	+	+	+
23.	<i>Chir prapachyate</i> (rarely suppurates after long duration)	+	-	+	+	+
24.	<i>Madhura ashyata</i> (sweet taste of mouth)	+	+	+	+	+
25.	<i>Talu pralepa</i> (coated pallet)	+	+	+	+	+
26.	<i>Gala pralepa</i> (coated throat)	+	+	+	+	+
27.	<i>Guru</i> (heaviness)	+	+	+	+	+
28.	<i>Snigdha</i> (smooth)	+	-	+	+	+
29.	<i>Mridu</i> (soft)	+	-	+	+	+
30.	<i>Pandur</i> (pale)	+	-	+	+	+
31.	<i>Anishta gandhi</i> (offensive odor)	+	-	+	+	+
32.	<i>Niruja</i> (pain less)	+	-	+	+	+
33.	<i>Ati kandu</i> (excessive itching)	+	+	+	+	+
34.	<i>Pralambate alabuvata</i> (hanging like gourd)	+	-	+	+	+
35.	<i>Alpa mula</i> (narrow base)	+	-	+	+	+
36.	<i>Deha- anurupa kshaya vridhi</i> (size corresponding to the body)	+	+	+	+	+
37.	<i>Snigdha-ashyata</i> (sliminess in mouth)	+	-	+	+	+
38.	<i>Janto gale anu sabdam</i> (unclear voice)	+	+	+	+	+

Samprapti (Pathogenesis):

According to *Acharya Sushruta* vitiated *Doshas* while circulating in the body where-ever find *Khavaigunya* in *Strotas*, they get '*Sanga*' there and produce *Vyadhi*.^[17] *Sushruta* stated that, *Vata* and *Kapha* aggravated in the neck and having accumulated in *Manya*, along with *Medas* produce glandular enlargement with their characteristic symptoms and known as *Galgand*.^[18] According to *Acharya Charaka*, when the provoked *Kapha* in the body gets localized outside the throat, it produces slowly increasing swelling in the form of *Galgand*.^[19]

Concept of Kriyakala:

Acharya Shushruta has described '*Shatkriyakala*' i.e. six stages of treatment, for the development of any disease which seems to be more logical and scientific in considering etiopathogenesis of *Galgand* according to *Ayurveda*.

- 1) **Sanchaya (stage of accumulation):** Due to various *Hetus*, *Tridosha* and *Agni* vitiation occurs, results in accumulation and augmentation of *Kapha Dosh*.
- 2) **Prakopa (Stage of aggravation):** Due to impairment of *Agni*, improper digestion of food results in *Ama Annarasa* which may further augment vitiated *Kapha*.
- 3) **Prasara (stage of progression):** Vitiated *Rasadhatu* and *Rasagni Mandya* causes *Strotodushti*. Progression of the pathological events is ensued by *Uttarottara Dhatvagnimandya* and *Uttarottara* vitiation of *Dhatu*. However *Ama Annarasa* may increase *Strotorodha*.
- 4) **Sthanshamshraya (Stage of localization):** Augmented *Kapha* and vitiated *Rasa Dhatu* undergoes to the process of *Dosha-Dushya-Sammurchana* (amalgamation), vitiation of *Rasa Dhatu* further leads to vitiation of *Meda Dhatu*, which with the help of *Vata* get located in the anterior of the neck.

- 5) **Vyakti (Stage of manifestations):** Accumulated *Kapha* and *Meda* produces swelling over the neck referred as “*Mushkvatlambte gale*” (hanging like scrotum). Other signs and symptoms are also visible in this stage.
- 6) **Bheda (Stage of complications):** In this stage type of *Galgand* can be clearly understood, and if it is not treated properly the condition advances to incurable with time.

Samprapti Ghatak:-

Dosha: *Tridosha* predominantly
Vata and *Kapha*

Dushya: All *Dhatus*
predominantly *Rasa, Meda*

Agni: *Jatharagni & Dhatvagni*

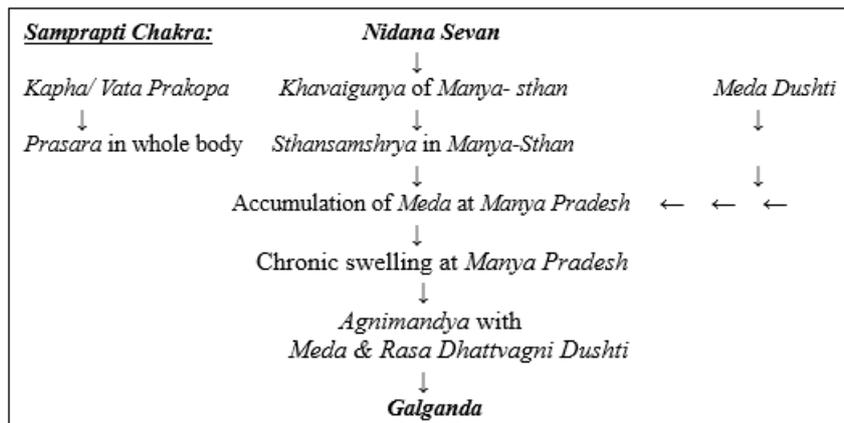
Strotas: All *Strotas* mainly
rasavaha & medovaha

Strotodusti: *Sanga*

Adhithana: *Sarva Sharira*
especially *Kantha Pradesh*

Udbhavastana: *Amashaya*

Rogmarga: *Bahya, Abhyantra*



Asadhyata of *Galganda* is mentioned in *Susruta Samhita* in term of *Kruchra Swasa* (severe difficulty in breathing), *Mridugatratvam* (softness of the body parts), *Aruchi* (tastelessness), *Ksheena gatrata* (emaciated body) and *Bhinna swara* (broken voice) and if the swelling is chronic i.e. older than one year, the patient can't be cured. [20]

2. Conclusion

The principles of *Ayurveda* define every pathological condition in systematic manner only we need to observe keenly. Hypothyroidism, in recent days, is a common pathological condition, which need to be understood through the ayurvedic point of view. In *Ayurveda* the disorder of thyroid gland explained under the heading of *Galganda*. The analysis of *Galganda* regarding symptoms of hypothyroidism showed that in this disease the vitiation of *Vata-Kapha* and *Dushti* of *Rasadhatu* and *Medadhatu* are the main pathological agents, whereas *Agnimandya* plays the pivotal role in development of disease through formation of *Ama Annarasa*, which further leads to *Strotodushti*. So, the management of the condition should be based on *Nidana Parivarjana*, i.e. *Dosha Prakopak Nidana*, avoid causative factors like sedentary lifestyle, oily food, *Divaswapna*, excess dairy. Etc. and intervention of *Agni Deepak (Trikatu, Panchakola)*, *Ama Pachana (Triphala, Guggulu)*, *KaphaVatahara* medications.

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