

# Effects of Poisonous Vayu and Ayurvedic Approach for its Purification<sup>1</sup>

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*Date of Receiving: 23 Mar 2023, Date of Acceptance: 21 May 2023, Date of Publication: 03 June 2023*

## ABSTRACT

*The whole universe is made-up of panchmahabhoot i.e five basic important elements out of which Vayu(air) is one. Vayu(air) is the part and parcel of the universe in both the sense that is external, known as environmental air as well as a bodily humor known as Vata and is the ultimate essential factor for aliveness of each living creatures. The ancient treatises of Indian medicine, Ayurveda has mentioned the importance of vayu, its functions and properties, impact on body in normal as well as in abnormal state. Nowadays polluted air is the prime cause of various health hazards. These all have been already discussed in ancient vedas about the effects of poisonous vayu(air) and also renders the solutions, rather many methods for its purifications have been told.*

**Keywords:** *Ayurveda; Poisonous vayu(air); Purification of Air.*

## INTRODUCTION

The whole nature is made up of 5 basic elements known as *panchamahabhoot* viz. earth, water, fire, air, ether. All the preventive and curative aspects *Ayurveda* are based on *panchamahabhoot* (five primordial elements) only. *Lok-purusha samya sidhant* (theory of resemblance) states the resemblance between construction of a human body, its functioning and the surrounding nature. Imbalance happening among these five elements in the body, specially *vata*(bodily humor) leads to multiple diseases and vitiated environmental air can lead to many devastating conditions. *Vayu* is the foremost important element of them. It is located in the universe as an environmental air and resides in the human body as *Vata*- one of the bodily humor. An attempt has been made to collectively describe the whole *vayu* normally and abnormally, effects of poisonous *vayu* and its means for purifications.

## NEED OF THE TOPIC

Increase in the incidences of multiple respiratory disorders and the natural calamities have highlighted the area of Air pollution. Due to aggravated level of air pollutants like carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, lead and arsenic like metals, sulfides etc have made the human beings prone for the multiple serious disorders like asthma, COPD, bronchitis, carcinoma, silicosis, pulmonary tuberculosis and many more.

<sup>1</sup> *How to cite the article:* Deshpande A., Mahida M., Apr-Jun 2023, Effects of Poisonous Vayu and Ayurvedic Approach for its Purification, *International Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Studies*, Vol 7, Issue 2, 12-15

## AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To review the *Ayurvedic* approach on impact of poisonous *vayu*(air) and solutions of its purification.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

1. Basic materials from the *Ayurvedic* classics with the available commentaries have been collected and reviewed.
2. Information from the internet is referred for the current statistical data for Air quality and pollution.

## PROPERTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF VAYU(AIR)

1. Properties and functions of environmental *vayu* (air) in a normal state are mentioned in ancient classics. They are as follow; Maintenance of the earth, helps in combustion, formation of clouds and precipitation, flowing of rivers, blooming of flowers and maturing of fruits germination of seeds and growth of plants, manifestation of *panchamahabhootas* etc.<sup>[1]</sup>
2. Properties and functions of *vayu* according to different directions and its impact<sup>[2]</sup> are mentioned as below;
  - The *Vayu* from the East is *Madhura* and *lavana* and is considered as *snigdha* (unctuous), *guru* (heavy to digest) and produces burning sensation. It exacerbates the diseases of those suffering from wounds, poison, ulcers, and is favorable for the lean and emaciated persons due to its qualities.
  - The *Vayu* from the South is *Madhura* and it doesn't cause heart burn and is light and considered as the best for the health, good for eyes and enhancement of strength.
  - The *Vayu* from West is dry, rough hence it decreases strength and causes emaciation to person.
  - The *Vayu* from North is soft, unctuous, sweet and cold hence causes moistness and enhances strength. This is also considered as the beneficiary for the emaciated patients.
3. Apart from this severity, polluted air level can be assessed through Air Quality Index (AQI). The higher the AQI value, then the greater the health concern. Normally its believed to be 100 but when it crosses 201-300 then its highly unhealthy and in beyond capacities its considered as dangerous. Mostly the *Vayu* we find surrounding us is filled with air pollutants such as Carbon Monoxide, oxides of nitrogen, Sulphur Dioxide, Lead toxicity, Carbon Dioxide, Hydrocarbons, cadmium, asbestos, Hydrogen sulphide etc.

## AIR POLLUTION AND AYURVEDA

- The Causes and effects of Air Pollution at epidemic level are highlighted as abnormal season, impact of curse, anger of divine entity, improper acts result in destruction of epidemiology (mass population).
- Its impact on human body is that poisonous *Vayu* causes cough, dyspnoea, vomiting, rhinorrhoea, headache, fever etc<sup>[3]</sup>.
- Features of poisonous air are explained by stating a simile as it makes the birds tired and they fall on ground similarly in humans it causes headache, cough, acute eye problems etc.
- Features of polluted *Vayu* are perceived as either very rough or very cold or very hot or very dry, the velocity of the wind is increased instantaneously like fierce, increased humidity, stormy whorl etc<sup>[4]</sup>. These ultimately results into various abnormalities and diseases to human body.
- Impact of vitiated *vayu* (*air*) on environment are Breaking peak of mountain, uprooting of trees, Disturbances in oceans, Over flowing of lakes, Changing the course of rivers, Earth quakes, Thunders, change in season, epidemiology etc.<sup>[5]</sup>

- By looking at today's scenario, the air we consumed isn't whole pure instead its polluted and vitiated. In *Ayurveda*, This polluted *Vayu (air)* is responsible for the causation of various *nanatmaja vyadhi (diseases)* <sup>[6]</sup> which are total 80 in numbers.

## PROVISIONS OF VAYU SHODHANA (PURIFICATION OF AIR)

Management and treatment protocol of effects of poisonous *Vayu* in *Ayurvedic* texts is described as *Vayu Shuddhikaran/ shodhana*. With the help of different medicated fumes, by performing *Yagya* using different Herbs the level of toxicity in *Vayu (air)* is reduced. Few methods for purification of *vayu (air)* mentioned as following;

### 1. YAGYA

- *Yagya* is a scientific process of sublimating and transforming medical constituents of plants/herbal medicines into vapours and their dissipation in the atmosphere. It not only maintains a balance of oxygen, carbon-di-oxide, neutralises toxic gases, radiation, etc. but also protects the ozone layer. The ozone layer is mentioned as the *Mahatulbam*<sup>[7]</sup> in ancient Veda.
- *Yagya* has been described as the best way to eliminate pollution and is considered as the most effective eco-friendly method of removing harmful germs, bacteria and other carriers of infections and diseases. Many articles have been already published and researches have been done on *Homa-Therapy*<sup>[8]</sup>, one of them is done at Haridwar in collaboration with the central pollution control board, Delhi. The results are encouraging.
- *Laksha (Laccifer lacca)*, *Haridra (Curcuma longa)*, *Ativisha (Aconitum heterophyllum)*, *Abhaya (Terminalia chebula)*, *Harenu (Pisum sativum)*, *Ela (Elettaria cardamomum)*, *Valka, Kushtha (Saussurea lappa)*, *Priyangu (Algaia elaeagnoidea)* are used in the form of fumes to purify the *Vayu(air)*.<sup>[9]</sup>
- *Yagya* is performed with drugs like *Karpura (Cinnamomum camphora)*, *Devadaru (Deodar cedar)*, *Chandana (Santalum album)*, *Agaru (Aquillaria agallocha)*, *Nimba (Azadirachta indica)*, *Somaraji (Psoralea corylifolia)*, *Gandhaka (Sulphur)*, *Guggulu (Commiphora mukul)*, *Rajika (Brassica juncea)* to purify *Vayu (air)*.
- Burying drugs like *Nagkeshar (Mesua ferrea)*, *Jatiphala (Myristica fragrans)*, *Patola (Trichosanthes dioica)*, *Nimba (Azadirachta indica)*, *Bilva (Agle marvellous)*, *Nirgundi (Vitex negundo)*, etc checks for the poisonous *Vayu(air)*.
- Simple combustion of dried cow dung or alone neem leaves fumes is also effective locally in small scale.

### 2. AGNIHOTRA<sup>[10]</sup>

- *Agnihotra* fills the atmosphere with the beneficial nutrients and purifies it.
- It has the catalyst effects in the atmosphere and helps to reset the nature cycle so as to attain the vital harmony and equilibrium.
- This method is however also used for the purification of water resources.

## DISCUSSION

Many research works have been conducted for checking the efficacy of different ayurvedic measures for purification. The results are surprisingly encouraging and further study is also needed for the prevention as well as purification of poisonous *Vayu*. So for the sake of preventive as well as curative aspects of many disorders, necessarily steps must to be followed to keep the *vayu(air)* healthy inside-out.

**CONCLUSION**

*Vayu* is one of the active element of *panchamahabhoot*. It plays certain important role through which the system works at both the environmental and bodily levels. *Ayurveda* has its own provisions for purification of vitiated *vayu* which are time tested. Further clinical researches for purification of *vayu* are required to revalidate.

**Financial Support and Sponsorship:** Nil

**Conflict of Interest:** None

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