

## MEDICAL INFORMATION IN *AGNIPURĀṆA*

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### ABSTRACT

*Agnipurāṇa* is one amongst the 18 *Purāṇa* of the Hindu literature. Its title is so because it was narrated by *Agni* to *Vaśiṣṭha*. It consists of 16000 stanzas distributed in 383 chapters. It has not only the compilation of special topics from different Ayurvedic texts but also carries information regarding some missing links, serets and some issues which are not disussed in *Āyurvēda*. There is deference of opinion regarding the date of this *Purāṇa*. Medical information given in *Agnipurāṇa* was taken from *Suśruta Samhitā*, *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha*, *Vṛnda Mādhava* and *Cakradatta* etc. At some places *ślōkas* were reproduced and at some places zist has been taken. Basic principles, anatomy, physiology, medicine etc. medical information is available in *Agnipurāṇa* which is being presented in this article.

### Introduction

According to Mr. R.C. Hazra, who is the authority on Puranic literature, the word '*Purāṇa*' means 'old' or 'old narrative'. There are eighteen *Purāṇa* in total in Hindu literature. *Agnipurāṇa* occupies 8<sup>th</sup> place. *Purāṇa* are supplemented by forty six *Upapurāṇa* also.

*Agnipurāṇa* is also known as *Vahnipurāṇa* or *Āgnēyapurāṇa*. *Agnipurāṇa* is called so because, *Agni* had narrated it to *Vaśiṣṭha*. It occupies an important place among the most popular works in the Sanskrit literature, exceptionally, for its scientific tracts. It is also called *Āgnēya-purāṇa* and is narrated by *Sūta*, a disciple of *Vyāsa* (who is believed to be the arranger of the *Vēdas*). He received it from *Vaśiṣṭha*. *Agni* (main god of this *Purāṇa*) communicated it to *Vaśiṣṭha*. It is a work of *Vaiṣṇava* class and is regarded as the "most blessed and the holiest of the Holies among its sister compositions". As a religious work it constitutes the main foundation of the actual popular creed of the Brahminical Hindus. According to Goldstucker, "it possesses an antiquity far beyond the reach of historical computation". In view of the great variety of material of which it is composed it can virtually be regarded as an Encyclopedia of Hinduism.

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It consists of 16,000 Stanzas, distributed in 383 Chapters. Subject matter of this *Purāna*, is two fold namely 'Parā-vidyā' - sacred knowledge or theology and 'Aparā-vidyā' - profane knowledge or the arts and sciences known to the people.

*Agnipurāna* carries information from *Rāmāyaṇa Mahābhārata*, *Harivaṃśa*, *Vāyupurāna*, *Piṅgala Sūtra* with commentary, *Amarakōṣa*, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, *Hastyāyurvēda* by *Pālakāpya*; *Nārada smṛti*, *Yājñavalkya smṛti* and *Viṣṇupurāna*. And also *Yamagītā* from *Kaṭhōpaniṣada*, extract of *Gītā* from *Bhāgavata-gītā Yōga* from *Yōga sūtra*, of *Āyurvēda* from *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha*, *Vṛnda Mādhava* and also from *Cakradatta*.

Prof. Wilson made remarks on the general character of this *Purāna* that, "It is a compilation from various books. It is probably anterior to the struggles that took place in 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> centuries of our era between the followers of *Śiva* and *Viṣṇu*. It is not unlikely that many chapters were arbitrarily supplied about 8 or 9 centuries ago, and a few perhaps even later, to fill up the charms which time and accident had made in the original *Āgnēyapurāna*". He again remarks, "It is subsequent to the *Itihāsa*, to the chief work on grammar, rhetoric and medicine and to the introduction of the *Tāntrika* worship of *Dēvi*. The materials of the *Agnipurāna* are however, no doubt of some antiquity. The medicine of *Suśruta* is considerably older than the ninth century; and the grammar of *Paṇini* probably precedes Christianity". He gives the summary of the contents of this *Purāna*. According to him early chapters discuss the subject of medicine, compiled, avowedly, but injudiciously, from the *Suśruta*.

As per *Vāyupurāna*, the *Purāna* is that which was alive in the ancient times (2/203). *Matsyapurāna* says, *Purāna* is a guide to incidences of past (53, 63).

According to Pargiter, *Purānas* are popular encyclopedia of ancient, middle age Hindu religious, philosophical, historical, social and cultural material (Pargiter, F.E: ERE, X,P. 448). Dr.Hazra believes that *Purānas* were written from 3<sup>rd</sup> Century A.D. onwards.

*Purānas* are 18 in number. They are,

1	<i>Brahma</i>	10	<i>Brahmavaivarta</i>
2	<i>Padma</i>	11	<i>Varāha</i>
3	<i>Viṣṇu</i>	12	<i>Liṅga</i>
4	<i>Vāyu</i>	13	<i>Skanda</i>
5	<i>Bhāgavata</i>	14	<i>Vāmana</i>
6	<i>Nāradiya</i>	15	<i>Kūrma</i>
7	<i>Mārkaṇḍēya</i>	16	<i>Matsya</i>
8	<i>Agni</i>	17	<i>Garuḍa</i>
9	<i>Bhaviṣya</i>	18	<i>Brahmāṇḍa</i>

#### **Date of *Agnipurāna***

Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra opines that, it is extremely difficult to find out exactly the period when this cyclopaedic work was written. It was undoubtedly written long before the Mahomedan invasion. Twelfth to fifteenth chapters carry the synopsis of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*. Hence it is proved that the work was written long after *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. The *Mantras* of this are generally of the *Tāntrik* type. The likely inference is that this work was written after the Tantric period. But the chapters on medicine, materia medica and pharmacy as well as those on the treatment of diseases of elephants and horses are highly interesting. He writes on the subject of *Gaja Āyurvēda* and the veterinary art of treatment. *Gaja Āyurvēda* is explained by one called *Pālakāpya* and the latter, instead of addressing *Suśruta Lōmaharṣaṇa* was king of *Aṅga* and the receiver of his instructions.

To attain knowledge, pleasant mind is must. Pleasant mind rests only in healthy body. Keeping in view all the *Purānas* like, *Agni*, *Garuḍa*, *Mārkaṇḍēya*, *Vāyu*, *Viṣṇu Purānas* have described *Āyurvēda* the science of life for maintenance of health and to cure the diseases. Amongst the *Purānas*, after *Garuḍapurāna*. *Agnipurāna* carries the Ayurvedic information from different texts and missed, secrets, unpublished etc., literature has been brought into lime light by *Agnipurāna*. *Agnipurāna* contains some verses that are similar to those in *Caraka Samhitā*.

There are several references to *Āyurvēda* in *Agnipurāṇa*. Time of *Agnipurāṇa* can be decided by its contents. The Ayurvedic material in *Agnipurāṇa* was taken from *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha* (7<sup>th</sup> century), *Vṛnda Mādhava* (9<sup>th</sup> century) and *Cakradatta* (1060 AD). At some places *Ślōkas* were reproduced and at some places zist has been taken.

*Agnipurāṇa* might belong to *Bhōjarāja*'s period. His time was 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Dr.Hazra, & S.K.Dey put this in 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Hariprasad Sastri accepts its time as 800-900 A.D. S.V.Chaudari, puts it in middle of 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Centuries. S.D.Gyani says it was compiled in 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century A.D., elaborated in 700-800 or 1000-1100 A.D. By above mentioned facts date of *Agnipurāṇa* can be determined and may be adjusted in 3 periods. First in 4<sup>th</sup> centruity A.D., second in 7-9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. or thirdly in 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

*Agnipurāṇa* refers to surgical treatment mentioned by *Suśruta*. But the subject was not given due importance. *Agnipurāṇa* advocates treatment for *Vraṇa* (wound) only by needling, this might because of inclusion of this topic by the influence of Buddhism.

*Agnipurāṇa* mentions 20 additional *Sirās* in woman's body than in that of male, whereas according to *Suśruta* the number is 124. Number of bones according to *Agnipurāṇa* is 360 (similar as in *Caraka Saṁhitā*). *Suśruta* counts 300 only.

Signs & symptoms of diseases are not mentioned in *Agnipurāṇa* where as *Mādhava Nidāna* carries all details. Based on this evidence, it can be understood that, *Agnipurāṇa* was compiled before the compilation of *Mādhava Nidāna* which was done in 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

*Agnipurāṇa* also mentions *Śivaliṅga* made up of *Pārada* or *Rasa* (mercury) for prayers etc., not in the context of medicinal usage.

1. 3<sup>rd</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (Parasnath Dwivedi, Based on- *Amarakōśa* etc. got information from *Agnipurāṇa*)
2. 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D.
3. 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (Sri Hazra & S.K.Dey)
4. 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (Middle period – Haraprasad Sastry, S.V.Chaudary)
5. 7<sup>th</sup> (*Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha*); 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.(*Cakradatta* – 1060 A.D.) - presently available text of *Agnipurāṇa* as per Dr.Hazra).

It is believed that, *Agnipurāṇa (Vahnipurāṇa)* was compiled in Bengal State because *Mantras* mentioned in this *Purāṇa* are linked with *Kālī* or *Durgā*. Bengal is the state where *Durgā/Kālī* is worshiped till today. Based on this information place of compilation of *Agnipurāṇa* might be North-East India or Bengal or surrounding place.

### Medical information

*Agnipurāṇa*, a compilation of the early medieval period, discusses human physiology, embryology and anatomy on the basis of old *Sāṅkhya* literature together with three classical medical texts by *Caraka*, *Suśruta* and *Vāgbhatā*.

*Agnipurāṇa* refers medicine in the following chapters.

#### Topic (with number of chapter)

- Churning of ocean and the origin of Lord *Dhanvantari* (Chapter-3)
- Preserving the dead body of *Daśaratha* in *Taila Droṇi* (Chapter-6)
- Bringing back life to the dead *Vānaras* by sprinkling *Amṛta* by *Rāma* (Chapter-10)
- *Mṛttikā Snāna* (mud bath) (Chapter-22)
- *Apamānjāna mantra* for the cure of all diseases (Chapter-31)
- Herbs useful for bath (mixing in the bathing water) (Chapter-95)
- Thirty six polyglot medicinal plants ; preparation of medicines etc (Chapter-140)
- *Haritakyādi phala kathanam*; *Mṛtasañjīvanayōga*; *Sarvarōga-praśamanādi Yōga* (Chapter-141).
- *Mantras* and *Auśadhas* (chanting and medicines) (Chapter-142)
- Disposal of the dead body and some rules for it (Chapter-157)
- Bath for relief of sterility and other kinds of baths (Chapter-266)
- *Siddhausadhāni* - emetics and purgatives for different kinds of fevers.
- *Siddha* medicines for the cure of fever, *Takrāriṣṭa* etc. for *Vāta Rōga* and others (Chapter-279)
- *Sarvarōgaharāṇi* - *Auśadhāni* : description of four kinds of diseases -*Śārīra*
- *Mānasa*, *Āgantuja* and *Sahaja* and origin as well as causes of diseases. Discription of different types of constitutions etc. (Chapter-280)
- *Rasādilakṣaṇam*: Preparation of decoctions. Ingestion exercises (Chapter-281)
- *Nānārōgaharāṇi*- *Auśadhāni*: Medicines for the cure of several diseases; another decoction for diarrhoea. Medicine for children's diseases, piles and *Mūtrakrcchra* (Chapter-283)

- *Mṛtasañjīvanakara Siddhayōgas*: Decoctions for *Vātajvara*, *Gaṇḍamālā*, *Pradara* (menstrual disorders) day blindness and night blindness (Chapter-285)
- *Mṛtyuñjayakalpa*: Some decoctions and powders (Chapter-286)
- *Daṣṭa Cikitsā* (animal bites) (Chapter-295)
- *Pañcāṅga-rudra vidhāna* for poisons (charms against poisonous bites) (Chapter-296)
- *Mantras* and *Auśadhas* for poisons (Chapter-297)
- *Gōnasādi Viṣa Cikitsā*: Medicines and *mantras* for snake (*Gōnasādi*) bite etc. (Chapter-298)
- *Bālādīgrahahara bālatantra*: *Dhūpas*, *balis* etc. for driving away the devils (Chapter-299)
- Organs of the body; *Karmēndriyas* & 7 *Āśayas* etc. (Chapter-370)

In the above chapters the following subjects were discussed.

- *Svasthavṛtta*
- Preparation of *Āsava*, *Ariṣṭa* etc.,
- Seventeen *Auśadha pādapas* (medicinal plants) described.
- *Dravyagūṇa* also.
- *Bāla rōga*, *Prasūti tantra*, *Śarīra Racanā*, *Kriyā śarīra* are also described.
- *Prāṇavaha 10 Nāḍīs* & 10 types of *Vāyu* (which flow in them) with their nomenclature and functions were also described.
- *Āyurvēda (Kāyacikitsā, Śalya, Śālākya, Kaumārabhṛtya, Agadatantra, Bhūtavidyā, Rasāyana, Vājīkaraṇa (8 aṅgas))*.
- In addition to *Āyurvēda*, “*Yōga Śāstra*” also described.
- *Vṛkṣāyurvēda* (282) also well described.
- *Paśucikitsā* also described in *Agnipurāṇa* (288, 289, 290).
- *Dhanvantarī* had taught *Āyurvēda*, *Vṛkṣāyurvēda* and *Paśucikitsā* to *Suśruta*.
- Name of Lord *Dhanvantari* was mentioned in *Agnipurāṇa* while discussing the *Samudra manthan* (churning of ocean).
- Based on description available in *Suśruta Samhitā* the controversy of *Dhanvantari* was clarified.
- *Dhanvantari* is considered as an incarnation of *Viṣṇu*.
- *Divōdasa* was mentioned in *Agnipurāṇa* (278/12).
- *Āyurvēda* was considered in 14 sciences (219/59, 60).
- Appointing of *Rāja vaidyas* (Ayurvedic physicians) was also referred (220/7).
- Residence of physician should be in the West side of town (106/12).

- Practice of abortion (termination of pregnancy) was a punishable crime (250/64).
- Making of *Śivaliṅga* with mercury was started for the purpose of prayers during this period only.
- *Agnipurāṇa* advocates the kings to consider physicians for appointing as ambassadors as first choice (220/7, 235/12).

### References about *Āyurvēda*

**A. Basic principles:** Several Mythological stories on *Nidāna* of different kinds of diseases have been given. It deals with several topics as given below.

*Pañcamahābhūtas* (*Ākāśa, Vāyu, Tējas, Jala, Pṛthvī*) are the basis for the formation of *Śarīra* (body)-(59/14-15). At one place these five *Bhūtas* are called “*Pañcavyūha*”. These *Pañcamahābhūtas* are derived from *Pañcatanmātrās* i.e. *Śabda, Sparśa, Rūpa, Rasa* and *Gandha* (17/4-5). This theory of *Pañcamahābhūtas* and their relationship was discussed while discussing the pregnancy & development of foetus. Relation between *Bhūtas* and body parts is mentioned as follows,

- Ākāśa* - Cavities in the body  
*Agni* - Complexion, shape, bodily temperature,  
Formation of *Dhātus*, growth, Strength etc.,  
*Jala* - Sweat, blood, semen, urine etc.  
*Pṛthvī* - Hair, nails, heaviness in the body etc.  
*Vāyu* - Inhalation & expiration - (369/28-31).

**B. Anatomy:** *Agnipurāṇa* gives an account of the process of conception, periodical development of the embryo and the factors responsible for the development of various organs of the human body. It accepts that human body is made up of five physical elements (*Pañcamahābhūtas*) and deals with them. *Agnipurāṇa* follows the pattern laid down by *Caraka* and *Suśruta* and discusses cosmogony in relation to the earliest *Sāṅkhya* philosophy.

According to *Purāṇa* the body is divided into six branches, two legs, two hands, trunk and the portion above the neck. The six fold division of the skin is described *Ātrēya* school and is followed in *Agnipurāṇa* instead of the better views expressed in *Suśruta Samhitā*.

Description of development of body parts is in the same lines of *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha Śārīra Sthāna* (5/3) in which eyes, umbilicus are classified as *Pratyāṅgas*.

Skin: Skin mentioned in the *Agnipurāṇa* is called *Udakadharā* (water carrying) by *Caraka* second one carries blood, 3<sup>rd</sup> is the site for *Kilāsa* (leucoderma), 4<sup>th</sup> is the place of leprosy, 5<sup>th</sup> one is site for *Vidradhi* & *Alajī* (tumors) and 6<sup>th</sup> one carries the vitality of the life.

Thickness of the skin is not mentioned in *Agnipurāṇa*. Other details are in the same lines as in *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha* i.e. seven layers (*Śārīra Sthāna* 5/26-33).

Sl. No.	<i>Vāgbhaṭa</i>	<i>Agnipurāṇa</i>	<i>Suśruta</i>	<i>Caraka</i>
1	<i>Avabhāsini</i>	Not mentioned	<i>Avabhāsini</i>	<i>Udakdharā</i>
2	<i>Asrgdharā</i>	<i>Rudhiradhārikā</i>	<i>Lōhitā</i>	<i>Asrgdharā</i>
3	<i>Śvētā</i>	<i>Vilāsadhāraṇī/Kilāsadhāraṇī</i>	<i>Śvētā</i>	-
4	<i>Tāmrā</i>	<i>Kundadhāraṇī/Kuṣṭhadhāraṇī</i>	<i>Tāmrā</i>	-
5	-	<i>Vidradhisthānā</i>	<i>Vēdinī</i>	-
6	<i>Rōhiṇī</i>	<i>Prāṇadharā</i>	<i>Rōhini</i>	-
7	<i>Māmsadharā</i>	Not mentioned	<i>Māmsadharā</i>	Not mentioned

*Rōma kūpa* (hair follicles): Number is given as 72 crores. -(370/39-40).

*Kalā* (layer) and its modern aspect:

This *Purāṇa* describes 5 *Kalās*.

- *Māmsadharā* - Deep fascia (Inter muscular septa)
- *Raktadharā* - Endothelial lining of blood vessels and sinuses in the liver, spleen.
- *Mēdōdharā* - Omentum deep fascia.
- *Ślēśmadharā* - Synovial membrane.
- *Puriśadharā* - Mucus membrane of the colon and rectum.
- *Pittadharā* - Mucus membrane of the small intestine.
- *Śukradharā* - Mucus membrane of the vesiculae seminalis & vas deferentia.

The formation of *Kalā* is not mentioned in *Agnipurāṇa*.

*Hṛdaya* (heart) & *Manas* (psyche): *Agnipurāṇa* throws some light on *Hṛdaya* and *Mānas*. *Hṛdaya* is considered as the substratum (*sthāna*) of the *Manas*, which is located

in the middle of the body. (280/36). Five *Tanmātrās* of *Mānas*, viz. *Śabda*, *Sparsā*, *Rūpa*, *Rasa*, *Gandha*; *Indriyas* (*Tvacā*, *Śrōtra*, *Nāsikā*, *Nētra*, *Rasanēndriya*) are also referred in *Agnipurāṇa* (59/12-13).

*Indriyas*: *Buddhīndriya* (*Gyānēndriya*): - *Śrōtrēndriya* (ears), *Tvak* (skin), *Cakṣu* (eye), *Jihvā* (tounge) & *Ghrāṇēndriya* (nose). *Karmēndriya*: *Pāyu* (anus), *Upastha* (genital organs), *Kara* (upper limb), *Pāda* (lower limb) & *Vāṇi* (mouth) it seem to be taken from *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha*. (370/2).

*Kōṣṭhāṅgas*

“*Vṛkkau phupphusapliḥyayakṛtkōṣṭhāṅgahṛdvapāḥ*  
*Uṇḍukaśca Mahābhāga Nibaddanyāśaye mataḥ”.*

– (370/11)

They are 7 in number viz. *Vṛkka*, *Phupphusa* (2), *Pliḥā*, *Yakṛt*, *Hṛdaya*, *Vapā* & *Uṇḍuka*.  
*Kaṇḍarā*: - *Kaṇḍarā* is the *Vṛtta* (round) Round shaped *Snāyu* (tendon) is referred as *Kaṇḍarā*

*Jālaka* (plexus or rete):-They are 16 in number. Union of *Māmsa*, *Sirā*, *Snāyu*, *Asthi* is called *Jālaka*.

*Kūrca* - (brush like structures)- They are 6 in number and located in

- Kara* (hands) - *Karatālikā Snāyu*.
  - Pāda* (legs) - *Pādatālikā Snāyu*.
  - Grīvā* (neck) - *Grīvōdharā Snāyu*.
  - Mēdhra* (penis) - *Śīsna Uttōlikā Snāyu etc.*,
- 370/25.

*Māmsa Rajju*: They are 4. Two internal & two out side ways fixed (Great musculotendinous bands or cords).

*Asthi* (bones): These have been described as vital organs and enumerated as 360 (370/29-33).

*Agnipurāṇa* represents the non-medical version of early Indian views on osteology and it alludes to seven (7) Sutures (*Sīvanīs*) five in the head and one each in penis & tongue. 16 *Jālas* (perforations), four each in flesh, ligaments, tendons.

*Asthi saṅghāta samūha* (Group of bones)- they are 14 in number.

*Asthisandhi*: *Asthisandhis* are 210 in number (based in *Suśruta Saṁhitā, Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha*). *Śākhā*-68; *Antarādhi*-59; *Above Grīva* (neck)-83.

*Snāyu* (tendon): Tendons are 900 in number. They run all over the body. They are *Śākhā* (limbs)-600; *Antarādhi* (trunk)-230; above the neck-70. This was based on *Suśruta Saṁhitā, Yājñavalkya Smṛti, Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha* etc.

*Sīvanī*: They are seven in number which unite the outer layer on bones to *Kalās* (Sutures/ raphae) (370/26-27).

*Sīmanta*: They are 18 in number. *Sīvanī* and *Sīmanta* are constraint to each other hence *Agnipurāṇa* has described it at one place.

*Pēśī* (muscle): They are 500 in number. *Suśruta* and *Vāgbhaṭa* have mentioned 20 more *Pēśīs* in woman. Same description is followed in *Agnipurāṇa*. *Pesī* are above the neck; *Stana*; *Śākhā*; *Yōni*; *Antarādhi*; *Garbhāśaya*.

*Nāḍī* : They are 10 in number. *Idā, Piṅgalā, Suṣumnā, Gāndhārī, Hastijihvā, Pṛthā, Yaśā, Alambuṣa, Huhu* and *Śankhinī* were considered as *Prāṇa Nāḍīs* (214/5).

*Sirā*: *Agnipurāṇa* mentions about *Sirā* but not the number. Where as *Suśruta Saṁhitā & Yājñavalkya* refer - 700 *Sirā*. *Sirā & Dhamanī mukhāgra* (arteriole and veinule i.e. minute ends are also described (370/38-39).

*Āśaya* (seat): *Seven Āśayas* are mentioned. They are *Rakta, Lasīkā, Pitta, Mūtra, Vāyu, Āmāśaya, Pakvāśaya* etc., *Agnipurāṇa* further adds that kidneys, lungs, liver, spleen, coecum and other reservoirs are interconnected. The measurement of human intestines mentioned in *Agnipurāṇa* is similar to that mentioned by *Suśruta* who says that a man's intestine measures three and a half *Vyāmas* (1 *Vyāma* = 7 feet) and that of a woman is three *vyāmas*. But according to latest knowledge woman possess at least one feet longer intestine than a man.

*Prāṇāyatanas* (vital parts): These are 10 in number. This number is different from the views of *Caraka & Vāgbhaṭa*. They are,

1. *Grīvā* (neck); 2. *Hṛdaya* (heart); 3. *Nābhi* (navel); 4. *Kaṇṭha* (wind pipe); 5. *Jihvā* (tongue); 6. *Śukra* (semen); 7. *Rakta* (blood); 8. *Guda* (anus/pelvis); 9. *Vṛkka* (kidney); 10. *Gulpha* (ankle).

*Snāyus*:- (tendons) : Tendons run all over the body. Trunk -230; above shoulder-70; four limbs-600.

*Raktavaha Srōtas* (vascular system): - *Agnipurāṇa* doesnot give more details on blood circulatory system. But followed *Kaśyapa & Caraka* in enumerating the channels like *Sirā* -700; *Dhamanī* -200.

Fetal development (embryology): *Agnipurāṇa* gives details of the process of conception periodical development of the embryology and the factors responsible for the development of various organs of the human body. Description of this subject in *Agnipurāṇa* is based on *Manusmṛti* and *Yajñavalkya Smṛti*. It is different in texts of *Āyurvēda*. Description of the development of foetus is as given below.

1 <sup>st</sup> month	-	<i>Śukrakalā</i> (layer) – Zygote.
2 <sup>nd</sup> month	-	Solid
3 <sup>rd</sup> month	-	Formation of bodily parts
4 <sup>th</sup> month	-	Bones
5 <sup>th</sup> month	-	Flesh & skin
6 <sup>th</sup> month	-	Hair grows out of skin
7 <sup>th</sup> month	-	Foetus starts feeling pain
8 <sup>th</sup> month & 9 <sup>th</sup> month	-	<i>Udvēga</i> (moving swiftly)

*Agnipurāṇa* also considers body as *Pāñcabhautika* (made up of *Pañcamahābhūtas*) and accepts *Mātrja* (maternal), *Pitrja* (paternal) and *Ātmaja* (soul) factors for pregnancy.

Formation of body parts

<i>Hṛdaya</i> (heart)	-	From <i>Kapha</i>
<i>Jihvā</i>	-	From flesh, <i>Rakta</i> & <i>Kapha</i>
<i>Kālēya</i> (liver)	-	From the combination of <i>Rakta</i> , <i>Vāyu</i> and digestive juice
<i>Klōma</i> (pancreas)	-	From the end product of intestinal blood & flesh
<i>Plīhā</i> (spleen)	-	From the digestive juice
<i>Phuphphusa</i> (lungs)	-	From froth of blood.
<i>Unḍūka</i>	-	From the end product of <i>Rakta</i>
<i>Vṛkka</i> (kidney)	-	From <i>Mēdas</i> & <i>Rakta</i>
<i>Vṛṣaṇa</i> (testes)	-	From <i>Mēdas</i> , <i>Rakta</i> , <i>Kapha</i> & <i>Māmsa</i>

**C. Śarīra kriyā (physiology):** The following topics are discussed i.e. digestion of food and formation of *Sapta Dhātus, Malas*. Diet consumed is converted into two, 1. *Rasa*, 2. *Mala*. Digested food first transforms into *Rasa* and then *Dhātus*. They are formed in a chain of reactions and one after the other i.e. from *Rasa* to *Rakta, Māmsa, Mēda, Asthi, Majjā, Śukra* and *Ōjas* (280/9 & 10).

*Mala* (impurity): - *Malas* mentioned are viz. stools, urine, sweat; *Mala* from eyes, nose, ears etc. (280/8).

*Prakṛti* : *Agnipurāna* considers two types of *Prakṛti* i.e. *Śārīrika* (bodily) and *Mānasika* (psychological) in the lines of *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha* (280/36-39; 369/37-39).

<i>Śārīrika</i>	<i>Mānasika</i>
<i>Vātaja</i>	<i>Tāmasa</i>
<i>Pittaja</i>	<i>Rājasa</i>
<i>Kaphaja</i>	<i>Sātvika</i>

*Vāta Prakṛti* : A person of this *Prakṛti* is characterized by non static mind, anger, quarelling nature, in dreams he flies in the sky. In addition, emaciation, less hair on the body and with imbalanced digestive fire/power etc.

*Pitta Prakṛti*: *Prasvēdī* is one added to the list of characters given in *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha*.

*Ślēṣma Prakṛti*: Strong bodily parts, stable mind, glow and healthy hair.

Male has been described with 28 best characters. Where as description of best characters of a female was not elaborative when compared to that of a male. This was taken from the *Garga Saṁhitā*. Description of female in *Agnipurāna* mostly relates to cosmetic purposes or physical appearance but not according to medical lines (243/7-26).

Concept of *Tridōṣa* (three humors): Like *Āyurvēda*, *Agnipurāna* also consider *Vāta, Pitta, Kapha* as the three *Dōṣas*. (280/6). The basis for this description was *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha*. *Rasas* and their effect on *Dōṣas* were also mentioned. *Specifically Agnipurāna* tells that *Madhura Rasa* actually will not work as the pacifier of *Vāta Dōṣa* directly, but due to its *Vipāka* only. In addition, *Uṣṇa Vīrya* acts as *Kapha & Vāta* pacifier, *Śīta & Madhura Vipāka* is *Pitta* pacifier (280/20,21). Relation between seasons and *Dōṣas* was described as per *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha*. (280/22-24).

Types of *Vāta* are enumerated as 5 i.e. while describing *Nāḍīcakra* (214/5). In addition to this classification five more types of *Vāyu* are mentioned viz. *Nāga*, *Kūrma*, *Kṛkala*, *Dēvadatta* & *Dhanañjaya*. (214/5-6 & 214/13-14).

*Prāṇa Vāyu* is the king among these 10 types. It carries all types of physiological activities and located in the heart. When it leaves the body, person dies, hence it is called as “*Prāṇa*”. (214/6-8).

Functions of these five types of *Vāyu* are, *Udgāra*, *Unmēsa*, *Kṣudhā* and *Īrmbhā* respectively. Fifth type *Dhanañjaya* which locates in all over the body will stay back in the body even if the person dies.

Causes for vitiation of *Dōṣas*

<i>Vāta</i>	Intercourse, heavy work, irregular food intake & grief	280/40-41
<i>Pitta</i>	Things which cause burning, things sharp in potency, exposure to sun and heat, hot food intake, excessive walking etc.	280/41-42
<i>Kapha</i>	Excessive drinking of water, intake of heavy diet of heaviness in nature, sleeping immediately after in take of food.	280/42-43

*Agnipurāṇa* also discusses about relation of moon & sun in the increase in the quantity of six *Rasas* (tastes). *Amla*, *Lavaṇa*, *Madhura Rasas* will increase according to *Śīsira*, *Vasanta*, *Grīṣma Rtu* based on the direction of sun (280/27).

*Agnipurāṇa* discusses about location of *Tridōṣa* and their vitiating factors (280/42-43) as per *Rtu* (season), *Rasa* etc., this description is based on *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha Sūtra* (4-6).

<i>Dōṣa</i>	<i>Sañcaya</i> (Accumulation)	<i>Prakōpa</i> (Vitiating)	<i>Prasamana</i> (Pacification)
<i>Vāta</i>	<i>Grīṣma</i>	<i>Varṣā</i>	<i>Śarad</i>
<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Varṣā</i>	<i>Śarad</i>	<i>Hēmanta</i>
<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Śīsira</i>	<i>Vasanta</i>	<i>Grīṣma</i>

*Sapta Dhātus* & their formation: The seven *Dhātus* and *Ōjas* were also discussed in *Agnipurāṇa* (280/10). Formation of *Dhātus* is described in the same way as it is in the

Ayurvedic literature. *Ōjas* has been said to be the essence of seven *Dhātus* and it spreads all over the body. *Para Ōjas* which is yellowish in color and is located in the *Hṛdaya* (280/10).

The above description seems to be taken from the *Caraka Saṁhitā* (*Cikitsā* 15/28-29). Description on *Dhātus* & their functions is taken from *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha* (*Sūtra* 1/32-33).

<b><i>Dhātu</i></b>	<b>Function</b>
<i>Rasa</i>	<i>Prīṇana</i> (to feed the body)
<i>Rakta</i>	<i>Jīvana</i> (to give life)
<i>Maṁsa</i>	<i>Lēpana</i> (to coat externally)
<i>Mēdas</i>	<i>Snēhana</i> (oilation)
<i>Asthi</i>	<i>Dhāraṇa</i> (to bear)
<i>Majjā</i>	<i>Pūraṇa</i> (to fill)
<i>Śukra</i>	<i>Garbhōtpādana</i> (to procreate)
	- 370/40-41

The quantity of *Dhātus*, *Malas* was described in *Agnipurāṇa* based mostly on description in *Viṣṇudharmōttara Purāṇa* (11, 115, 92-94) and *Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha*.

<i>Udaka</i> (water)	- 10 <i>Añjali</i> ( <i>Caraka Saṁhitā</i> , <i>Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha</i> )
<i>Dugdha</i> (milk)	- 2 <i>Añjali</i> ( <i>Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha</i> , <i>Caraka Saṁhitā</i> , <i>Agnipurāṇa</i> )
<i>Ārtava</i> (menstrual blood)	- 4 <i>Añjali</i> ( <i>Aṣṭāṅga Saṅgraha</i> )
<i>Majjā</i>	- 1 <i>Añjali</i>
<i>Rasa</i>	- 10 <i>Añjali</i>

#### D. *Svasta Vṛtta* or Preventive medicine:

*Dinacaryā* (daily regimen): Early rising from bed (in the *Brāhma Muhūrta*) is advocated. Attending the natural calls etc. should be followed one by one, 1. While attending the natural calls one should face North, 2. *Danta Dhāvana* (brushing); 3. *Abhyaṅga* (massage with oil); 4. *Vyāyāma* (exercise); 5. *Snāna* (bath); 6. *Udvartana* (rubbing or cleansing) (*Prathama* & *Dvitiya* (1st & 2nd); Drinking of water.

*Rātricaryā* : *Agnipurāṇa* discusses about *Trayōpasthambhas* viz. *Āhāra* (diet), *Nidrā* (sleep), *Brahmacarya* (abstinence). Diet should be wholesome, little in quantity and easily digestible.

*Rtucaryā* : It was not discussed in detail; but *Abhyaṅga* for *Vāta prakṛtika* person has been discussed i.e. in *Grīṣma Rtu* (summer)-nominal, simple or more massage on bodily parts. *Vasanta Rtu* (spring)-Moderate *Abhyaṅjana* (anointing)

There is mention about social responsibilities to be maintained by a person i.e. he should give way with respect to elders, pregnant woman, teachers etc. (155/14, 17).

**E. Dravya Guṇa (Pharmacology):** *Agnipurāṇa* carries information on more than 150 plants, animal products, metals and minerals for the treatment of different kinds of diseases. Description of *Auśadha Pādapa* (medicinal plants) and their pharmacological aspects are also available in *Agnipurāṇa*. Animal husbandry is also described in *Agnipurāṇa* (i.e. treatment for elephants, cows etc.).

*Agnipurāṇa* mentions that a physician who understands well the properties of following herbal extracts as well as their chemical reaction should be employed to attend King. Classification of drugs based on *Rasa* (taste) is seen in *Agnipurāṇa*. It is described that *Rasas* like *Madhura* (sweet), *Amla* (sour), *Lavaṇa* (salty) are formed by moon. *Kaṭu* (pungent), *Tikta* (bitter), *Kaṣāya* (astringent) by *Agni*. gives the following information, i.e. classification of drugs 1. *Ugra* (stimulating) i.e. of *Uṣṇa Vīrya* (hot potency). 2. *Śīta* (soothing) i.e. of *Śīta Vīrya* (cold potency) (Chapter -281).

According to *Agnipurāṇa*, before fixing the dose, potency of medicines should be considered in each individual case then only dose should be regulated accordingly. For example a *Tikta* (bitter) drug like *Guḍūci* which is soothing may exert stimulating effect when combined with other bitter drug. Similarly a drug of a heat producing property or *Kaṣāya* (astringent) taste may exert a soothing influence through a process of chemical change. Meat which is ordinarily sweet may exercise a stimulating effect.

**F. Agada tantra (Toxicology):** *Suśruta*'s famous treatment for snake bite i.e. *mantra* was very much praised in *Agnipurāṇa* and discussed in *Agnipurāṇa*.

**G. Kāyacikitsā (General medicine):** Under this conversation between Lord *Dhanvantari* and *Suśruta* which covers the treatment aspects and dietary restrictions for a large number of disorders has been reproduced.

It is mentioned in *Agnipurāṇa* that, all the diseases are either to an over loading (feeding) of the stomach, or to an absence or insufficiency of food as well as to an

artificial restraining of the impulses of eructation, micturition etc. A remedial measure is nothing but an agent (drug) which operates contrarily to a cause or to a set of causes, that has or have engendered the disease (280/31-34).

*Agnipurāṇa* refers to herbal drugs, for different diseases like *Raktapitta*, *Kṣaya*, *Śūla*, *Pittātisāra*, *Pāṇḍurōga*, female disorders, pregnancy and development of fetus etc., were also discussed. *Agnipurāṇa* believes prayers to *Viṣṇu*, Cows, *Brahma*, moon & sun are useful before starting any treatment.

General disorders caused by *Tridōṣas* are referred here in *Agnipurāṇa* i.e.

- Fractures, Astringent taste and dryness in mouth, *Jṛmbhā*, *Lōmaharṣa* (dryness of the hair/body) etc. These are the symptoms of *Vāta* disorders (280/44).
- Yellowish discoloration of nails, eyes and blood vessels, pungent taste in the mouth, thirst, burning sensation or hotness in the body etc, are the symptoms of *Pitta* disorders (280/45).
- Laziness, salivation, heaviness, sweetish taste in the mouth and liking for heat etc. are the symptoms of *Kapha* disorder (280/46).

#### **Diseases mentioned in *Agnipurāṇa*:**

- *Āmavāta* (Rheumatoid arthritis)
- *Anāha* (blockage of faeces)
- *Apasmāra* (epilepsy)
- *Arśas* (piles)
- *Aruci* (aversion to food)
- *Atisāra* (diarrhoea)
- *Gulma* (tumour)
- *Hikkā* (hiccough)
- *Jvara* (fever)
- *Kāmalā* (jaundice)
- *Kṛmi* (worm infestation)
- *Kṣaya* (tuberculosis)
- *Kuṣṭha* (skin disorders)
- *Mūrcchā* (faint)
- *Mūtrakṛcchra* (difficulty in micturition)

- *Pāṇḍu* (anemia)
- *Pramēha* (urinary disorders)
- *Raktapitta* (hemorrhagic disorders)
- *Śōtha* (dropsy)
- *Śvāsa* (breathlessness)
- *Tṛṣṇā/Pipāsā* (thirst)
- *Udararōga* (ascitis)
- *Unmāda* (schizophrenia)
- *Vamana* (vomiting)
- *Vātarakta* (gout)
- *Vātarōga* (neurological disorders)
- *Visarpa* (erysipelas)

**Management:** Physician while attending to a patient should take into consideration the place, the season during which the disease had been contracted, the strength, stamina and the peculiar temperament of the patient, as well as the nature of the disease he has been suffering from and the virtues and potency of the remedial measures to be used in that particular case. The following prayer should be read.

“May the gods *Brahma*, *Dakṣa*, the *Aśvins*, the *Rudras*, *Indra*, the Earth-goddess, the sun, the moon, the wind, the fire, the holy sages, the medicinal drugs, the ghosts and malignant spirits preserve thee. May the medicine act as the *Rasāyana* (vital elixir) prepared by the *Ṛsis* as the nectar used by the celestials, and as the ambrosia eaten by the good serpents” (280/10-14).

A physician should understand well the properties of the herbal extracts, as well their potency and the altered virtues which they acquire through chemical reaction. Such physicians are only suitable for the employment to attend a king (281/1-2).

Treatment of *Vāta* disorders included *Snigdha* (unctuous) diet, *Uṣṇa* (hot) diet, for external application and internal administration of oil etc. Where as in *Pitta* disorders - *Ghṛta* (clarified butter), *Kṣīra* (milk), *Śarkarā* (sugar), cooling the body in moonlight etc. are prescribed. For *Kapha* disorders- honey & *Triphalā taila*, exercises (both physical and mental) are said useful.

Management of *Atisāra* (diarrhea) given for example, “*Śallakī badarī jambupriyālā mrārjunādvacaḥ*” which means the combination of *Śallakī*, *Badara*, *Jambu*, *Priyāla*, *Āmra* and *Arjuna* bark in the form of powder with honey should be given (285/58).

*Pañcakarma* (Five purifying methods of *Āyurvēda*): These are the peculiar purifying methods mentioned in *Āyurvēda* both for the maintenance of good health and treatment of several diseases. They are *Vamana*, *Virēcana*, *Āsthāpana Vasti*, *Anuvāsana Vasti* and *Śirōvirēcana*. *Snēhana* (applying medicated oil on the body) and *Svēdana* (inducing sweat) are the preparatory procedures for *Pañcakarma* therapy.

For *Snēhapāna* - Oil, *Vastikarma-Ghrta*, *Svēdana-Agni* and for *Stambhana-Śītala jala* are the best ones (279/62). *Vṛnda Mādhava* advised that, depending on *Dōṣa* involved *Pañcakarma* to be decided. For *Vāta-Vasti* (enemata); *Pitta -Virēcana* (purgation); *Kapha -Vāmana* (emesis) respectively (*Āmarōcakādhikāra* – 4).

Drugs for *Virēcana (Pitta)* - *Trivṛt Ghrta*; For *Vamana (Kapha)*- *Madanaphala & Madhu* (honey); For *Vasti (Vāta) -Taila* (oil) ( 279/62). For *Vamana & Virēcana* the following other formulations are also mentioned in *Agnipurāṇa*.

1. Decoction of *Trivṛt + Triphalā* with jaggery is mentioned for *Virēcana*.
2. *Vacā* and *Triphalā* with boiled milk is mentioned for *Vamana*.
3. *Pippalī + Indrayava + Saindhava Lavaṇa + Vacā* (paste) + honey with decoction of *Madhuyaṣṭī kvātha* for *Vamana* (283/41).

Precautions for *Virēcana Karma*: This aspect also been discussed in *Agnipurāṇa*. It is mentioned that, to keep the man in pleasant mood, suitable and pleasant drugs should be administered.

Some times due to maladministration of *Virēcana*, that can lead to *Mandāgni*, heavyness in abdomen and *Aruci* etc., This may be prevented when *Haritāla*, *Saindhava Lavaṇa*, *Pippalī* powder & hot water are added to it. *Vamana* should be administered only after *Snēhana & Svēdana*. *Virēcana* should be done only after *Vamana*. If this order is disturbed *Grahaṇī* (malabsorption syndrome/sprue) occurs.

## Conclusion

*Agnipurāṇa*, a compilation of the early medieval period, discuss human physiology, embryology and anatomy, general medicine, toxicology, meteria medica etc. on the basis of old *Sāṅkhya* literature together with three classical medical texts *Caraka*, *Suśruta* and *Vāgbhata*.

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## सारांश

### अग्निपुराण में चिकित्सिकीय जानकारी

पी.वी.वी. प्रसाद, सुभोस वाराणसी, पी.के.जे.पी. सुभक्ता एवं अला नारायण

अग्निपुराण हिन्दू साहित्य के अठारह पुराणों में से एक है एवं आठवें स्थान पर है। इसका नाम अग्निपुराण इसलिए है क्योंकि यह अग्नि द्वारा वशिष्ठ को सुनाई गयी कथा है। इस ग्रन्थ में ३८३ अध्यायों में १६००० सूत्र वर्गीकृत है। इस पुराण के काल के विषय में अलग-अलग मत है। अग्निपुराण में वर्णित चिकित्सिकीय जानकारी अष्टांगसंग्रह, वृन्दमाधव और चक्रदत्त से ली गई है। कुछ स्थानों पर श्लोक दोहराये गए हैं एवं कुछ स्थानों पर सार के रूप में ग्रहण किये गये हैं। अग्निपुराण में उपलब्ध मौलिक सिद्धान्त, शरीर रचना, शरीर क्रिया और चिकित्सा से सम्बन्धित जानकारी को इस लेख में प्रस्तुत किया जा रहा है।