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Review Article

### A CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF VIBANDHA (CONSTIPATION)

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**Abstract:**

*Vibandha/vibaddha/baddhapurisha means obstruction or constipation .i.e. sanga and which indicates one of the state of srotodusti especially in Purishavaha srotas. The word **constipation** comes from the Latin constipare meaning "to press, crowd together". According to Medilexicon's medical dictionary, constipation is "A condition in which bowel movements are infrequent or incomplete". Constipation is also known as costiveness, and irregularity. Vibandha (Constipation) is one of the most common gastrointestinal complaints, resulting in over 2 million physician visits per year and accounting for more than 1 billion in sale of over the counter laxatives. In India, the normal stool frequency is 1 per day in contrast to 3 per week in West. Constipation may be the end result of many gastrointestinal and other medical disorders. People think that it's a simple problem but in reality it may hindered a day to day life. Ignorance of Vibandha may generate groups of disease which are very painful condition and make life disturbed. Treatments include changes in dietary habits, laxatives, enemas, biofeedback, and in particular situations surgery may be required. Insufficient dietary fiber intake, inadequate fluid intake, diminished activities; side effects of medications, hypothyroidism and obstruction by colorectal cancer are the possible causes in elderly for constipation. Constipation is usually easier to prevent than to treat. Following the relief of constipation, maintenance with adequate exercise, fluid intake, and high fiber diet is recommended.*

**Keywords:** Vibandha, Constipation, Purishvaha srotas**Corresponding Author:****Byadgi P. S**

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## INTRODUCTION

Body is originally composed of *dosas*, *dhatu*s and *malas* [1]. Consumed food as well as *dhatu*s manifest *malas* during the process of digestion and metabolism for example ; *vida* or *Varcha* or *purisha* (Stool) and *Mutra* (Urine) are the waste product of *anna* (food) etc.[2]. It is called *mala* because of having a tendency to vitiate others [3]. When *mala* excessively increased than its normal amount it became *shalya* (Foreign body) which causes painful disorder in body[4,5]. The Words *Vibandha/vibaddha/baddhapurisha* is similar to constipation and it means obstruction or constipation .i.e. *sanga* and which indicates one of the state of *srotodusti especially in Purishavaha srotas*. In Description of classification of *srotodusti*, example of *sanga* (complete or partial obstruction of *srotas*) is *vibandha* etc, are given [6]. The sites of origin of the channels carrying feces are the colon and the rectum. The characteristic manifestations of their vitiation are the voiding of small quantity of feces with difficulty, voiding of large quantity of very watery and very scybalous stool associated with sound and pain [7]. *Varchovahasrotansi* (channels carrying feces) get vitiated by the suppression of the urge for defecation, intake of food in large quantity, intake of food before the digestion of the previous meal specially in those who are emaciation and having weak power of digestion [8]. *Purisha* or *Faeces* support the body and maintain the equilibrium of *vayu* and *agni*[9].

**Material and Method:** This study is based on a review of *Ayurvedic* text. Materials related to *Vibandha*, Constipation and their relation have been collected and compiled. The main *Ayurvedic* texts used in this study are *Charak Samhita*, *Susruta Samhita*, etc.

### Constipation:

Constipation (also known as costiveness or dyschezia ) refers to bowel movements that are infrequent or hard to pass. Constipation is a common cause of painful defecation [10].

It is defined (ROME II criteria) as the presence of any two or more of the following symptoms for at least 3 months:

1. Infrequent passage of stool (3 bowel movements/week)
2. Hard stools
3. Straining at stool
4. Incomplete evacuation

In India, the normal stool frequency is 1 per day in contrast to 3 per week in West [11].

### Constipation Vs Kosta:

Bowels (*Kosta*) are three types- *mridu* (soft), *krura* (hard) and *madhyama* (medium). The soft bowels have abundance of *pitta* and are purgated even by milk; the hard bowels have predominance of *vata* and *kapha* and are purgated with difficulty while the medium bowels have balanced *dosas* and as such are moderate [12]. **According to Acharya Sharangadhara**, the individuals who have more *pitta* are of mild type of alimentary canal (*mridukosta*), those with more *kapha* are of medium type of alimentary canal (*Madhyam kosta*) and people with more *vata* are graded as having wild type of alimentary canal (*krura kosta*) and are constipated [13].

### Description of Vibandha (Constipation) in Ayurveda:

*Vibandha* is *vyapada* of *Vamana* and *Virechana* [14]. It is side effect of *sansodhan* (*Vamana* or *Virechana*) in *Ajirna* [15], symptoms of *parikartika* (fissure in ano) [16]. It is *apatarpanjanya roga* (Diseases caused by nutritional deficiency) [17], and one of the complications of immediate haemostasis in *Raktarsha* (bleeding piles) [18].

### Causes of Vibandha (Constipation):

A frequent functional cause of constipation is irregular bowel habits that have developed through a lifetime of inhibition of the normal defaecation reflex [19]. According to Acharya Charak, If one holds the urge for defecation it causes colic pain, headache, retention of faeces and flatus, cramps in the calf muscles and distension of abdomen [20].

Constipation may be the end result of many gastrointestinal and other medical disorders. The causes (Table 1) may be luminal (obstructive) or functional (abnormal motility).

**Table 1: Causes of Constipation**

Causes of Constipation	
A. GASTROINTESTINAL	B. NON-GASTROINTESTINAL
(1)Dietary	(1)Drugs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low fiber, Inadequate food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opiates</li> <li>• Calcium antagonists</li> <li>• Iron Supplements</li> <li>• Anticholinergics</li> <li>• Aluminium containing antacids</li> </ul>
(2)Motility	(2)Neurological
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slow transit</li> <li>• Irritable bowel syndrome</li> <li>• Drugs(given in non-gastrointestinal causes)</li> <li>• Intestinal Obstruction and Pseudo-Obstruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple Sclerosis</li> <li>• Parkinsonism</li> <li>• Spinal Cord Disease</li> <li>• CVA</li> <li>• Autonomic neuropathy</li> </ul>
(3) Structural	(3)Metabolic /Endocrine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colonic carcinoma</li> <li>• Megacolon e.g., Congenital or acquired</li> <li>• Diverticulosis of colon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diabetes mellitus</li> <li>• Pregnancy</li> <li>• Hypocalcaemia</li> <li>• Amyloidosis</li> <li>• Hypothyroidism</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (4) Defecatory disorders</li> </ul>	(3)Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obstructive</li> <li>• Anorectal Disease e.g., fissure, piles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schizophrenia</li> <li>• Depression</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Different presentation of mala or Purisha according to Ayurveda which are form of vibandha(constipation)**

Type of presentation of Purisha	Causes
<b>Baddha Purisha</b>	Ajirna Lakshan, Vistabdhajirna, Alasaka, Pravridha Amavata Purishaja Anaha, Arsha Purvaroop, Vataj Arsha, Vataj Asthila, Atisara Purvaroop, Vatadushtastanyapaanaj Balaroga, Gudagat Vata, Gulma Roga, Antarvega Jwara, Sannipataja Jwar, Vataja Jwara, Kaphavrita Samaan, Kosthashrita Vata, Kostha Vrana, Purishaja Krimi, Pandu Ashadhya Lakshana, Paramad, Vataj Parinamshoola, Vataj Prameha Upadrava, Pratyashthila, Sanniruddha, Kaphaj Shool, Vataj Shoola, Mahashwasha, Baddhagudodar, Udar Roga Lakshana, Purishaja Udavarta, Vataj Udavarta, Kosthagata Vata, Pakvashayagat Vata, Vatavyadhi Upadrava, Vistabdhajirna
<b>Ghan Purisha/ Grathit Purisha</b>	Smgrahani Vataja Arsha
<b>Sushka Purisha</b>	Udavarta, Vataj Grahani Dosh
<b>Stoka Purisha</b>	Vaataj Arsha

**Investigation:**

Digital rectal examination, evacuating proctoscopy and sigmoidoscopy are useful investigations to know the exact cause of constipation. Blood Biochemistry e.g. serum calcium and thyroid function tests. Colonic transit studies by radio opaque markers help to distinguish slow transit constipation from normal transit constipation. If symptoms persist, then barium enema and colonoscopy should be carried out to look for the structural disease [21].

Different presentation of mala or *Purisha* according to *Ayurveda* which are form of vibandha(constipation) given in Table 2:[22].

**MANAGEMENT****Treatment According To Ayurveda:**

In nutshell, the management consists of elimination of etiological factors [23]. Treatment of constipation which having cause to hold defaecation urge is-fomentation [24], massage, tub bath, suppositories and enema should be given and one should take foods and drinks which are laxative in nature [25].

**Rasa's role in stool evacuation:**

Owing to their unctuousness drugs and diets having sweet, sour and saline tastes are useful for the elimination of stool. On the other hand ,drugs and diets having pungent, bitter, and astringent taste creates difficulty in elimination of stool [26]. So, drugs and diets should be managed accordingly to rasa help to alleviates *Vibandha* (constipation).

In treatment of *Vibandha* (constipation), purgation eliminates pitta. There are three types of virechan (purgation): (1) *Sukha Virechana* (causing easy purgation) e.g; Trivrit (*Operculina turpethum*), (2) *mridu virechana* (causing mild purgation) e.g; *Aragvadha* (*Cassia fistula*) (3) *Tikshna Virechana* (causing strong purgation) e.g; Milk of snuhi (*Achyranthes aspera*) [27]. Luke warm water is indicated in *vibandha* [28]. If *vayu* is occluded by feces, then castor oil and oleation therapy as indicated for *udavarta* [29].

*Vibandha* is one of the *Apatarpana janya roga* and in its treatment, drinks prepared of roasted corn flour, alcohol, honey and sugar which help in elimination of faeces [30].

**Mode of action of drug in constipation:**

**Anulomana Drug:** The drug which helps in proper formation of malas (excreta) and also breaks the obstruction and brings them downwards is known as *anulomana* (aperients). *Haritaki* (*Chebulic myrobalan*) is an example for this action [31].

**Bhedana:** The drug which breaks down either constipated or loose faecal matter or the vitiated *dosas* and expels them out is known as *bhedana* (purgative) as in the case of *katuki* (*Picrorrhiza kurroa*) [32].

**Rechana:** The excreta, whether formed or unformed, is liquefied and expelled from the body by the effect of a *rechana* (cathartic) drug as in the case of *trivrt* (*turpeth*) [33].

**Sramsana and Basti: Sramsana (purgation)** eliminates either *pitta or kapha* or both of them from the *pittashaya* (lower portion of the stomach and small intestine) [34], *kritmala* (*Cassia fistula*) is the example for this [35]. *Basti* eliminates all the three *dosas* lodged in the *pakvashaya* (colon).<sup>[36]</sup> Administration of *anuvashana basti* ,when there is *ununctuousness* (*rukshatva*) and adhesion (*baddhatva*) in the feces [37].

According to *Maharshi Charak*, for purgation in the event of the vitiated *dosas* of the colon, the physician should prescribe *Trivrut* (*Operculina turpethum*), *Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula*), *Amalaki* (*Embellica officinalis*), *Bibhitaki* (*Terminalia bellerica*), *danti* (*Baliospermum montanum*), *Nilini* (*Indigofera tinctoria*), *Saptala* (*Acacia cocinna*), *vacha* (*Acorus calamus*), *Kampillaka* (*Mallotus philippinensis*), *Gavakshi* (*Citrullus colocynthis*), *Kshirini* (*Mimosops hexandra*), *Udakiryaka* (*Pongamia pinnata*), *Pilu*(*Salvadora persica*), *Aragvadha* (*Cassia fistula*), *Draksha* (*Vitis vinifera*), *dravanti* (*Jatropha glandulifera*), *Nichula*(*Borringtonia acutangula* [38], *Shatavaryadi Ghrita* [39], *Yavanishadav* [40], *Astashatarishta* [41], *Pippalyadi ghrita*,[42], *Phalarishta*, [43], *Dvitiya Phalarishta* [44], *Mustadi enema* [45], *Patala* (*Stereospermum suaveolens*) for *asthapana vasti* (A variety of enema) in the treatment of Constipation etc [46]. *Vibandha* (constipation) must be treated in the beginning by drugs that promote digestion [47]. Administration of milk (boiled with *trikantaka*, *bala*, *vyaghri*, *guda* and *nagara*) and *Niruha basti* is useful to remove malas (waste products) [49, 50].

**Pathya in Constipation:**

*Sidhu* (made of uncooked juice) [50].

*Phalavarga* : *Matulunga* [51, 52], *ambira* [53], *Draksha* (*Grape*) is laxative [54].

*Shakavarga*:*Puspaphala*(*Kusmanda*), *alabu*, *kalinda* [55].

*Harita varga*: Plant that are use in salad form.

*Ginger juice* cures *vibandha*( constipation) [56].

*Vataghni madira* *Sauviraka* and *Tushodaka* and sour *kanji* are laxative [57]. *Sauvarchal* (black salt with smell) is light in digestion , alleviates constipation [58],

*Vibandha* (Constipation) is instantaneously cured by the administration of *Bhallataka* [59], *Rasona* (garlic) is laxative [60].

**According to Modern text:**

The basic aim of treatment is to find out the cause and treat it.

1. **Dietary adjustment:** Fiber supplementation is the first line therapy for normal or slow transit constipation. Wheat bran is the most effective supplement followed by vegetables, fruits, mucilages, corn and cellulose. This adjustment is suitable for simple constipation and not for obstructive constipation and faecal impaction.

2. **Behavioral therapy:** Habit training is important to achieve regular defecation. The patient is advised to attempt defecation after meals when colonic motility is maximum. Once post-prandial defecation was regularly, the laxative is gradually withdrawn.

3. **Drug Treatment:** Laxatives are used for short-term therapy of severe constipation. Most laxatives lose their effect over time. Long term use of laxatives produces laxative misuse syndrome characterized by brown discoloration of the colonic mucosa resembling 'tiger skin', which resolves when result in mega colon or 'cathartic colon'.

Osmotic laxatives (increase the flow of fluid into stool and soften them) are preferred over the stimulatory laxatives (they stimulate colonic contractions and also increase intestinal secretion). The suppositories are helpful in some patients with defecatory disorders. The use of enema is restricted to elderly, infirm and immobile patients and those with neurological disorders. Prokinetic agents e.g., Mosapride or Itopride has been found useful in most cases of slow transit constipation (idiopathic).

**Surgery:** Patients with structural lesions like strictures and/or obstruction require surgery. Surgery is the treatment of choice Hirschprung's disease. It is also indicated in defecatory disorders with rectocele, intussusceptions, rectal prolapsed, pelvic floor dyssynergia (anismus).

#### **Complications of Vibandha (Constipation):**

Faecal impaction refers to impaction of a hard mass of stool that fills the rectum.

Treatment includes adequate hydration and digital evacuation after softening the impacted stool with softening enema. Stimulant laxative are contraindicated [61]. Hemorrhoids (piles) [62], Anal fissure [63], Hernia[64] : etc.

**In Ayurveda faecal impaction may be correlated with occlusion of vayu by stool:** Absolute constipation; gripping pain in the colon (abode of stool); Instantaneous digestion of the ingested fat; abdominal distension after the digestion of food; Because of the pressure of the (undigested) food, the patient voids after a long time. The voiding is painful and the stool is dry; pain in the hips, groin and back; Upward movement of vayu (flatus or gas) in the abdomen; and Uncomfortable sensation in the cardiac origin [65].

## DISCUSSION

Surprisingly in Ayurveda, there is no description of *vibandha* independently as a disease but it has been described as *apatarpana janya gada (roga)* in *Charak Samhita* and treatment is described in association with many disease and result of complication of much disease. By the definition of constipation, with Rome II criteria, we can correlate it with the *vibandha* which are given below: *Malakshaya* may come under the one of the point of constipation i.e, Infrequent passage of stool. The symptoms of *malakshya* is pain in cardiac region and sides and wind, with gargling sound goes upward and moves around in the belly [66]. In *Charak Samhita* it is described that Various types of diseases occur by the suppression of urges. Thus, by suppression of defecation reflex, retention of faeces occur which result in hard stool. Hard stool is another one of the point of Rome II Criteria. If once there is hard stool, incomplete evacuation of bowel which results in straining during defecation leads to several complications like haemorrhoids, etc. It can be hypothesized that concept of *vibandha* is similar to constipation.

## CONCLUSION

After overall description, lastly it may be consider that *vibandha*(Constipation) is independently a disease and also a complication of some diseases. Its management should be according to type of *kostha* (Alimentary canal). In nutshell, it may be concluded that treatment according to its cause along with plenty of fluid, physical exercise, many more form of laxative like *anulomana*, *bhedan* etc which should be given according to state of *dosa* and *kostha*.

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