



Review on Taste disorder – A Siddha Perspective

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Abstract

Suvaiinmai is a taste disorder. According to modern concept, taste disorder is only a symptom. But according to Siddha system, it is a separate disease caused by the disturbance of bodily humors. This article describes the classification, epidemiology and the treatment of the disease.

Keywords: Suvaiinmai, Taste disorder, Siddha Medicine, Suvaigal

Introduction

Suvaiinmai (Agusia) means unwilling to eat food or unable to recognize the taste of consumed food. As per the Siddha Literatures, mostly arise due to psychological factors by the alteration of three bodily humors results in agusia conditions (both physically & mentally). It is classified in 5 divisions as per the disease nature. By nature, it will be in the form of separate humor alteration like *vazhisuvaiinmai*, *azhal*, *iyam* and *Muktram* (combination of all three *vatha*, *pitham*, *kapham*).



According to recent science, loss of taste is a common symptom of Gastro Oesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD), Salivary gland infection, sinusitis, poor dental hygiene or even uncertain medicines. The medical term for complete loss of food is called *Ageusia*. And complete loss of taste is called *Dysgeusia*.

Epidemiology

According to survey conducted by the National Institutes of Health .over a quarter of million people visit their doctors each year complaining of chemosensory disorder. Most causes of perceived taste loss reflect decreased flavor sensations largely due to olfactory loss of 750 consecutive patients presenting to the University of Pennsylvania Smell & taste center with complaints of Chemosensory dysfunction, 68 % reported altered quality of life, 46% reported changes in appetite or body weight, 56% reported adverse influences on daily living

or psychological well being. Out of all systemic illness, depression is most often associated with chemosensory disorders. In some studies, up to one third of patients report chemosensory.

Other names

- *Suvaikedu* (*Suvai*– taste, *kedu*- disturbance)
- *Rusiinmai* (*Rusi*-taste, *inmai*- absence)
- *Arosagam*
- *Suvaimaarunoi* (*suvai* –taste, *maaru* –alteration, *noi* –disease)
- *Arusi* (*arusi*-tastelessness)

Pre Symptoms (*Noi Muthal Kurigunangal*)

This disorder is caused due to the psychological changes such as stress, anxiety, extreme joy. Ageustic salivation, dislike of food, intolerance of seeing food substances.

Pathological condition in which the taste disorder occurs ...

- *Kudalpidipu noi*
- *Peru vayiru* (Ascites)
- *Manjal noi* (Jaundice)
- *Paandu* (Anaemia)
- *Valapaateeral Viruthi* (Hepatomegaly)
- *Idapaateeral Viruthi* (Splenomegaly)
- *Gunmam* (Acid Peptic Disease)

Tongue's Special Disease

According to *Noinaadal* Part 2 (Pathology), Tongue is the main organ which gets affected in all diseases especially cough, fever which produce ageusia. And it gets normal during the convalescence phase of the disease.

Symptoms of *SuvaiInmai*

In this, each classification have separate symptoms which are as follows

Vali SuvaiInmai Noi:

In this disease, the taste of salivation, vomiting becomes astringent.

Apart from it, teeth sensitivity, chest pain, emesis while eating also occurs.



Astringent

Azhal Suvai Inmai Noi :


In this disease, the salivation, mouth & the consumed food & even Vomiting also becomes bitter. Irritation & dryness of the tongue, excessive thirst also occurs.




Bitter

Iya Suvai Inmai Noi:

In this disease the salivation, vomiting & the consumed food becomes Sweeter in taste. In some cases it may be brackishness. Apart from this symptoms the tongue becomes lubricious. There is a presence of Foul smelled drooling & immobility of tongue .

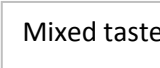


Sweet taste



Mukutra SuvaiInmai Noi:

In this disease the salivation , consumed food & vomiting becomes multi tasted or may be tasteless.



Mixed taste

ManaKalaka Suvai Inmai Noi :

This disease is caused due to excess stress, angry, anxiety, greedy. Due to this imbalance the three types of humor gets increased or decreased causing tastelessness.

Due to alteration of three humors, *Manamkalavarapadal* (Mind gets perplexed), *Mayakkam* (Fainting), *Athiga Kozhai* (excessive expectoration), Unable to recognize the taste, Dislike of food, Impudence of the body occurs.

Curable & Incurable:

The disease which is caused due to the imbalance of any individual humor can be cured.

The disease which is caused by the imbalance of the three types of humor can also be cured by prescribing suitable medications.

The disease which is caused by the psychological changes can be cured only when the normal psychology gets regained.

Causes:

Loss of taste is caused by the interruption in the conduction of impulses related to taste to the brain or if there is any obstruction in the motor and sensory roots in the brain. Burning sensation in the heart or gastric reflux is the common cause of loss of taste. Regurgitation of acidic fluids from the stomach into the mouth produces the loss of normal taste & produces metallic taste.

- Infection of the mouth or tongue
- Poor dental hygiene
- Tongue disorders
- Cancer , mouth ulcer
- Usage of tobacco

Radiation therapy

- *TASTE DISORDER OCCURS IN PATHOLOGICAL CONDITION SUCH AS*

High fever, Difficulty in breathing ,Sudden weakness and Vision changes.

- *GIT SYMPTOMS:*

Abdominal pain ,Bloating ,Cough ,Heart burn ,Indigestion, Decreased ability to open the mouth , Dry mouth ,Fever ,Pain in face / mouth ,Redness over the side of the face / upper neck ,Sore throat ,Swelling of the face / neck ,Nasal sinus symptoms with loss of taste ,Sore throat ,Stuffy nose/ nasal congestion

- *NUTRITIONAL DEFICIENCY CONDITION WITH LOSS OF TASTE:*

Brittle nails , Diarrhoea ,Fatigue ,Hair loss ,Loss of appetite , Rash ,Tongue changes

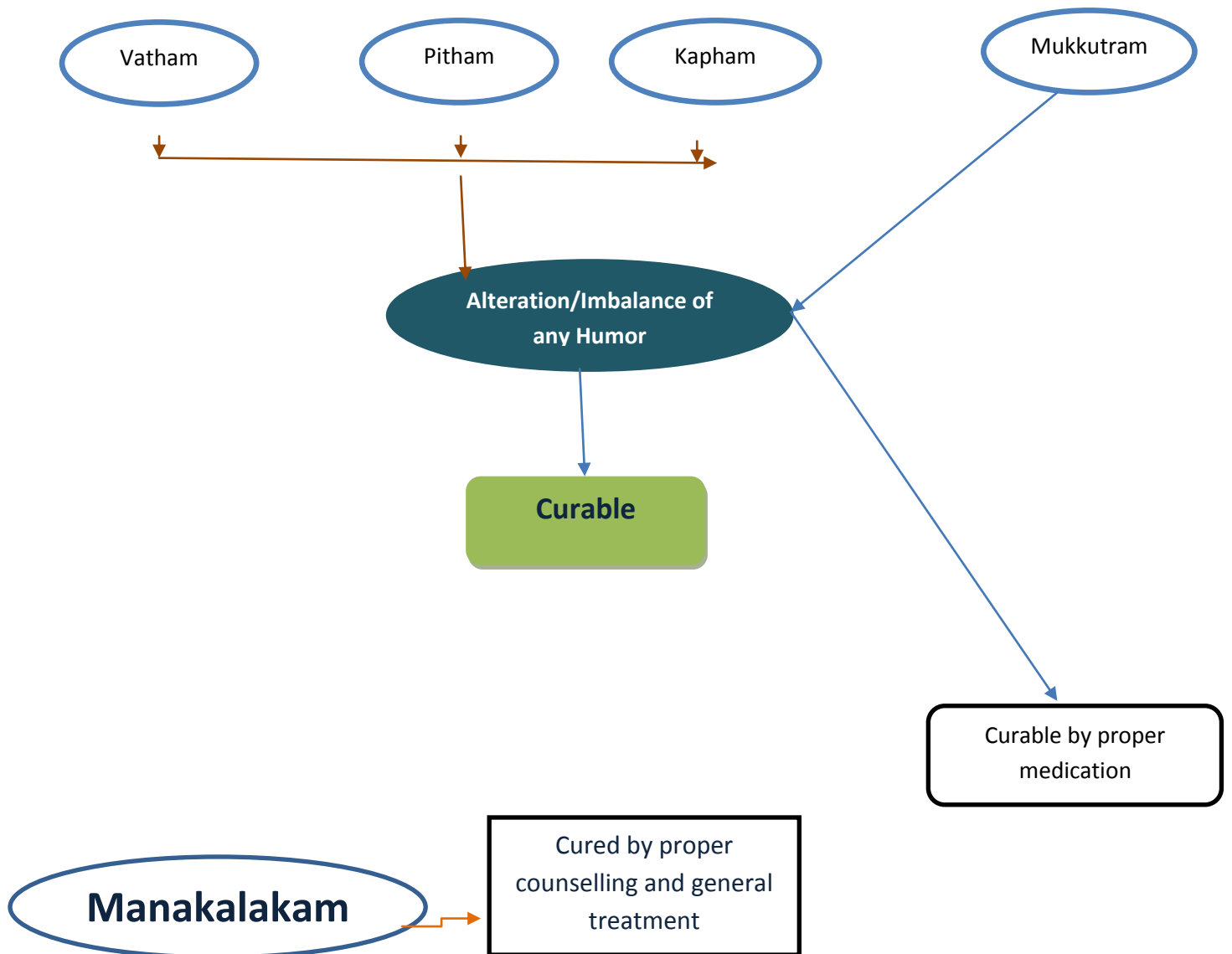
○ *SYMPTOMS THAT MIGHT INDICATE A SERIOUS CONDITON:*

Changes in vision / speech,High fever ,Numbness of the one side of the body,Weakness of the one side of the body

○ *POTENTIAL COMPLICATION OF THE LOSS OF TASTE :*

Dehydration ,Excessive weight loss ,Malnutrition ,Paralysis ,Spread of cancer ,Spread of infection

Figure 1. Graphical Representation of *Suvaiinmai* (Taste disorder) treatment Procedures



TREATMENT

The line of treatment starts with prescribing Laxative medicines in order to regulate the bodily humors. For producing laxative action the following raw drugs are used for preparing decoction. They are as follows,

- Hedyotis corymbosa (*Parpadagam*)
- Tinospora cordifolia (*Seendhil*)
- Anacardium occidentale (*Kottaimundhri*)
- Rosa centifolia (*Paneermottu*)
- Cassia senna (*Nilaavarai*)

Table 1. Drugs used for the treatment of Suvai inmai

Medicine	Main Ingredients	Other indications	References
<i>Talisadivadagam</i>	Abies spectabilis Piper nigrum Black pepper root Piper longum Zingiber officinale	Diarrhoea , Dysentry	<i>Siddha vaidyatiratu</i>
<i>Jathi jambeera kuzhambu</i>	Cinnabar Camphor Ocimum sanctum	Anaemia Hiccup	<i>Siddha vaidyatiratu</i>
<i>Maadhulai Manapaagu</i>	Punicagranatum Rose water Honey	Morning sickness, Anaemia	<i>Siddha vaidyatiratu</i>
<i>Bhavana kadukkai</i>	Terminaliachebula Zingiberofficinale Black pepper root Piper longum Dried ginger	Cough, Stomach pain	
<i>Pirandai Choornam</i>	Cissusquadrangularis Alpiniagalanga Carumcopicum Piper nigrum	Body pain, Mental disorders	<i>Siddha vaidyatiratu</i>

Conclusion

The uniqueness and superiority of Traditional Siddha Medicine lies in identifying and classifying clinical conditions which has comparatively less importance in the main stream Allopathy medicine. In that way, loss of taste which is identified as a symptom in the modern disease has been documented as a separate disease entity by our Siddha Medicine. This review article serves as an eye opener to document the superiority of the Siddhars in documenting a clinical condition known as '*Suvai inmai*'.

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