

Kasa Vyadhi: A Literature review

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Abstract

Kasa is one of the pathological conditions explained in many contexts in *Ayurvedic* texts. *Kasa* may develop as an independent disease, a *lakshana* associative to other disease or as *Upadrava* of a disease. Understanding and differentiating the *Kasa* is most important to treat the condition effectively. In the present era *Kasa* is the most common disease affecting a large aged population. *Kasa* is one of the *Pranava Strotodusthijanya Vyadhi*. The vitiated *Prana Vayu* along with *Udana Vayu* which further gets aggravated in association with other *Doshas* and expelled out forcefully with a “coughing sound” like the broken bronze vessel, called as *Kasa*.

In *Ayurveda*, based on the similarity in signs and symptoms, the *Kasa* nearest correlation is Bronchitis.

Keywords: *Kasa*; *Samprapti*; *Pranavaha strotas*; *Upshaya*

1. Introduction

Ayurveda is the first and foremost spiritual science that offers a scientific approach to live in harmony with nature. *Ayurveda* is the most ancient healing science and ideal approach for an appropriate life style. According to this science, proper choice of *Ahara* and *Vihara* helps to achieve healthy life by maintaining and or restoring equilibrium of the body and mind.

Prana and *Udana Vayu* play a role in maintaining the proper functioning of the respiratory channels (*Pranavaha Strotas*). *Kasa* occurs when imbalanced *Kapha* obstructs the smooth flow of *Prana Vayu* in the throat and chest. This imbalance causes *Kasa*, where disturbed *Prana Vayu* and *Udana Vayu* create sounds reminiscent of striking broken pieces of bronze¹. *Kasa* can be an independent ailment or a symptom of various other diseases.

Acharya Charak, identified five types of *Kasa*: *Vataja*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja*, *Kshataja*, and *Kshayaja*².

Acute bronchitis (AB) is an upper respiratory illness characterized by inflammation of small and large airways and their lining. It is usually a self-limiting disease with symptoms lasting about 2 to 3 weeks. It is one of the most commonly presenting illnesses among outpatients and frequent reasons of visit to primary care physicians.

Kasa is often triggered by factors like exposure to dust, smoke, strenuous exercise, consuming excessively dry food, inhalation of food particles, and suppressing natural urges like coughing and sneezing³. *Kasa* has been described under various categories in the classics of *Ayurveda* as an independent disease, symptom, complication and sequel. Due to the various similarities in clinical presentation, *Kasa* is correlated with cough (Bronchitis)⁴.

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2. Material and method

The *Ayurvedic* classical literatures, contemporary textbooks including the websites, reputed journals and authentic sources would be referred for this literary work. The discussion is mainly based on conceptual part and the effect is made to draw a final conclusion which again depends upon discussion.

Aims and objectives

- To review literature about *Kasa Vyadhi* through classical texts of *Ayurveda*.
- To understand its relevance in present era and preventive care.

2.1. Disease review

Kasa is derived from the root “*Kasri*” i.e “*Shabda kautsanyam*” which means “Unpleasant sound”. *Gangadhara*, the commentator describes *kasa* from the *dhatu* “*Kasri*”, which means “*Bhinnaswara*”.

- **CHARAKA SAMHITA:** Five types of *Kasa* along with their *Poorva roopa*, *Samanya samprapti*, *Vishesh nidana* and *Samprapti*, *Lakshanas*, *Sadhyasadyata*, *Shodhana* and *Shamana chikitsa* had elaborately been explained in *Charaka Samhita*.
- **SUSHRUTA SAMHITA:** *Sushruta Samhita*, mentioned *Kasa* as a symptom as well as a disease. The book describes *Nidana*, *Samprati*, *Bhedhas*, *Poorva roopa*, *Lakshana*, *Samanya* and *Vishesh chikitsa of Kasa*.
- **HARITA SAMHITA:** In *Harita Samhita*, *Kasa* has been classified into eight varieties, along with detailed description of disease and its treatment.
- **KASHYAPA SAMHITA:** The reference of *Kasa* is also available in *Kashyapa Samhita*. Even though not mentioned separately, it is discussed under the context of *Uroghata* Disease.

2.1.1. NIDANA (Etiological Factor)

Nidana (etiology) of *Kasa* mentioned in the classics can be categorized as *Samanya* and *Vishesh Nidana*. *Samanya Nidana* mentioned by *Acharya Sushruta* and *Acharya Madhava* are *Dhoom*, *Dhooli*, *Raja*, *Vyayama*, *Rukhsya Anna Sevan*, *Bhojanvimargaman*, *Chavathu vegavarodh*, *Vishesh Nidana*.

2.1.2. PURVAROOPA (PREMONITARY SYMPTOMS):

Acharya Charaka mentioned *Shooka Poorna Gal Asya* (sensation of in throat and mouth), *Kanth Kandu* (itching in throat), *Bhojyanam Avarodh* (obstruction to the normal flow of food)⁵.

In addition to these *Purvaroopa* (premonitory symptoms), *Sushrut* has mentioned *Kanth Kandu*, *Bhojanavrodha*, *Gala Talu Lepa* (coating in the throat and palate), *Arochaka* (anorexia), *Swasabda Vaishmya* (hoarseness of voice), and *Agnisada* (reduced appetite). Types of *Kasa* (according to *Brihatrayee* and *Laghutrayee*): *Vataj Kasa*, *Pittaj Kasa*, *Kaphaj Kasa*, *Kshaja Kasa*, and *Kshtaja Kasa*, *Kshtaja Kasa* are produced by aggravation of all of the three *doshas*.

ROOPA^{6,7}.

TABLE 1.1 (*Roopa of Kasa*)

VATAJ KASA	PITTAJ KASA	KAPHAJ KASA
<i>Hridyashoola</i> (Chest pain)	<i>Mukha kanth shushka</i>	<i>Nisthivateghanam kapha</i> (Secretion of sticky mucus)
<i>Parshwashoola</i> (Pain in flanks)	<i>Jwara</i> (Fever)	<i>Kantha kandu</i> (Itching in throat)
<i>Udarshoola</i> (Pain in abdomen)	<i>Aruchi</i> (Anorexia)	<i>Utklesh</i> (Nausea)
<i>Shakhashoola</i> (Pain in temporal region)	<i>Chardi</i> (Vomiting)	<i>Peenasa</i> (Coryza)
<i>Kasatishushkamev</i> (Dry cough)	<i>Urovidah</i> (Burning in chest)	<i>Murdhashoola</i> (Headache)
<i>Prasaktvegastu</i> (Continuous bouts of cough)	<i>Pandu</i> (Anemia)	<i>Mandagni</i> (Indigestion)

<i>Bhinnaswara</i> (Hoarseness of voice)	<i>Pitta nisthivan</i> (Yellow sputum)	<i>Guruta</i> (Heaviness in body)
<i>Murdhashoola</i> (Headache)	<i>Trishna</i> (Thirst)	<i>Vaman</i> (Vomiting)
<i>Ksheen bala</i> (loss of strength)	<i>Bhrama</i> (Vertigo)	

UPASHAYA AND ANUPASHAYA

Upashaya is the state of relief from the symptoms which appears on the intake of medicinal, dietary or on making behavioural changes. Opposite to *upashaya* is *Anupashaya*. *Upashaya* is the fourth factor required for knowledge of a disease. It is also useful in differential diagnosis of the *Kasa*. As per *Ayurvedic* texts, *Upshaya* of *Kasa* is not mentioned so the causative factors described in the *Nidana* can be considered as *Anupshaya* & opposite it can be considered as *Upshaya*.

SAMPRAPTI OF KASA

Acharya Charaka explained the *Samprapti* (pathogenesis) of *Kasa*⁸ – as because of *Vata Prakopa*, down ward movement of *Pranavayu* is obstructed and thus attains upward movement with *Udana Vayu* localised in throat and chest. Obstruction at chest and neck region forces them to get filled up in the channels of head and neck. After that sudden extension or jerky movement in areas of *Hanu* (temporomandibular joint), *Manya* (neck) and the whole body accompanied by contraction of thoracic cage and eyes leading to increase in the intrathoracic pressure, all directed towards glottis. Then there is Forceful expulsion of air because of the sudden opening of glottis producing a typical sound is called *Kasa* which is either dry due to absence of sputum or accompanied with sputum. In *Ashtanga Sangraha* *Acharya* explained that due to *Vata Prokopa*, *Apana Vayu* is obstructed and it attains upward movement⁹.

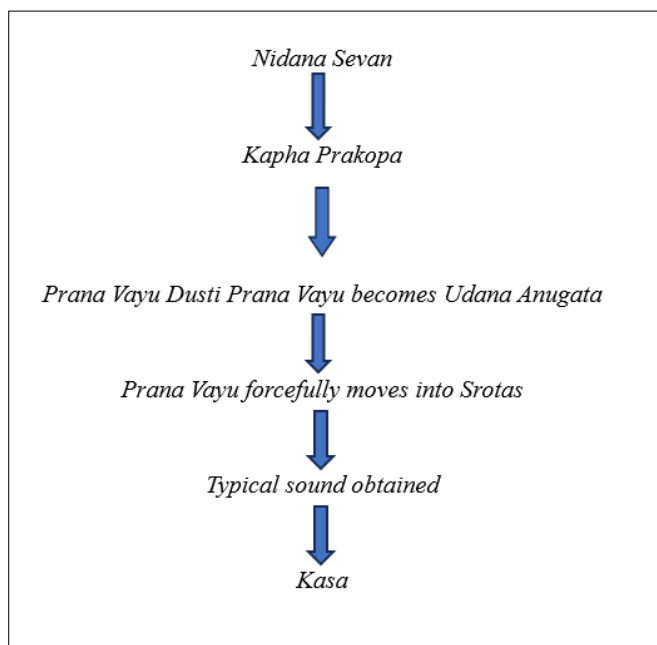


Figure 1 *Samprapti of Kasa*

2.1.3. SAMPRAPTI GHATAKA (PATHOLOGICAL FACTOR)

- **Dosha:** *Vata + Kapha*
- **Dushya:** *Ras, Anna*
- **Srotas:** *Rasvaha + Pranavaha Srotodusti*
- **Lakshna:** *Sanga*
- **Adhithana:** *Ama- Pakwashayotha, Pranavaha srotas, Ura-Kantha*
- **Swabhava:** *Aashukari*
- **Sadhya- Asadhyata:** *Naveen - Sadhya, Jirna – Krichsadhya*
- **Agnidusti:** *Agnimandhya*

2.1.4. CHIKITSA OF KASA (TREATMENT OF COUGH)

Treatment of *Kasa* in children is not discussed in detail, but various *Acharyas* have provided a detailed description of the line of treatment of individual *Kasa* variants in adults. Based on *Rogi* and *Rogabala*, it is necessary to determine the method of treatment. Although *Shodhana* (alleviation) and *Shamana* (elimination) therapies are mentioned for *Kasa Roga* in adults, it is advisable to adopt the *Shamana treatment* line with *Kasa* unless the condition warrants *Shodhana*. Avoiding the causative factors is always the first line of treatment. Planned according to the involvement of *Dosha Nidan Parimarjana* (avoidance of causative factor) – first line of treatment is to avoid the causative factor. If the precipitating factors are not avoided, the *Doshas* involve in the pathogenesis will further be aggravated and the prognosis will be worse. In treatment of *Kasa*, avoidance of causative factors plays a very important role. The *Chikitsa of Kasa Vyadhi* can be done by mean of *Shodhan* and *Shaman Chikitsa*. *Acharyas* mentioned general guidelines which state that the predominant *Dosha* should be identified first and treated initially. *Acharyas* mentioned *Snehan* (oleation therapy), *Swedan* (sudation therapy), *Basti* (enema), *Virechan* (therapeutic purgation), *Vaman* (therapeutic emesis), *Dhumapana* (herbal smoke inhalation) and *Sarsarjana Karama* (post-treatment schedules) after *Shodhan Upakrama* (like *Vamana/Virechana*) for *Kasa* according to *Dosha* predominance. Internal medicine ought to be selected from massive series of formulations in classics after thinking about *Roga-Rogi Bala* and *Samprapti* of the disease.

2.1.5. SADHYA ASADHYATA: (CURABLE AND UNCURABLE)

In Ayurveda, diseases that can be cured are often referred to as *Sadhya* (curable). *Asadhya* (uncurable), as the name suggests is exactly opposite to *Sadhya* (curable). According to *Acharya Charaka* - All the *Doshaja Kasa* are *Sadhya* (curable) because they are due to single *Dosha*. If *Kasa* is present in aged person then it is said to be *Yapya*. *Yapya* is type of *Asadhya*, in which the treatments applied afford relief to the patient, but within a short span, relapse again¹⁰.

3. Discussion

Kasa is one of the most prevalent health conditions which triggers day to day activities. If patient of *Kasa* drops the treatment, disease aggravates again with more severity. The *Bruhatrayi* which forms the basic *Ayurveda* literature have enlisted detail knowledge of *Kasa Vyadhi*. While considering *Hetu* of *Kasa* it can be classified as *Aaharaj* and *Viharaj*. Improper dietary habits, various allergens can lead to manifestation of various types of *Kasa*. *Purvaroop* which is considered as unique feature of *Ayurveda* are also described and can be used in early diagnosis of disease. Taking into consideration the *Dosha-Dushya* of *Kasa*. *Acharyas* have considered it *Dosha* predominant. The *lakshanas* of *Kasa* are specific which will help in proper diagnosis of disease. Studies related to different respiratory diseases are available. Dhar et al reported on Bronchiectasis in India. Salampuria et al reported a case series on Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome during Pregnancy and Post-Partum. World Journal of Pharmaceutical and Medical Research respiratory infections and distress. Studies on post tubercular respiratory problems were also reported¹¹.

4. Conclusion

Kasa Vyadhi is a condition where *Prana Vayu Dusthi* occurs. causes due to *Viruddhaahar* and *Viruddha Vihar*. First line of treatment is *Nidan Parimarjan*. There is detailed and specific knowledge explained for diagnosis and management of various types of *Kasa*.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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