

# *Agad Tantra* as Emergency Medicine: Ancient Insights for Modern Emergencies

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**Abstract:** An emergency is a condition that needs to be treated right away, whether the patient is aware or not. The claim that emergency situations are not described in ayurvedic scriptures is untrue. Several terminologies, such as *sadhya*, *asu*, and *twarita*, were employed by ancient Acharyas in emergency situations requiring prompt attention. The specialist area of Ayurveda known as *Agad Tantra*, which deals with poisons (*Visha*) and how to treat them, is highly relevant to contemporary emergency medicine. The goals of modern toxicology and emergency care are well aligned with the fast diagnostic methods, detoxifying techniques, and life-saving therapies provided by *Agad Tantra*, which has historically concentrated on treating natural toxins from plants, animals, and minerals. The ancient Ayurvedic classics, *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Astanga Samgraha*, and *Astanga Hridaya*, provided the information on the emergency conditions in *Visha* pidita purusha (poisoning patients). The philosophical underpinnings of *Agad Tantra* are examined in this article, including the *Trividha Upakrama* (threefold management procedures) in acute toxic circumstances, *Vishalakshana* (clinical signs of poisoning), and *Vishaghna dravyas* (antidotal substances). There is discussion of real-world uses in situations involving food poisoning, insect stings, snake bites, and bad drug reactions. Additionally, comparisons are made between contemporary decontamination and antidote techniques and Ayurvedic practices like *Vamana*, *Nasya*, *Agada Yoga* and *Dhuma* that are strong and effective at stimulating the neurological system. In critical care settings, incorporating these tried-and-true Ayurvedic concepts with modern emergency procedures may improve readiness and expand the treatment toolkit.

**Keywords:** *Agad Tantra*, *Emergency Medicine*, *Visha Chikitsa*, *Ayurvedic Toxicology*, *Vishaghna*, *Trividha Upakrama*, *Acute Poisoning*.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Medical professionals face a hurdle during an emergency. In terms of medical practice, it is a condition where the patient's life is in jeopardy and any failure or delay in treating it could result in the patient's death. Additionally, it encourages the doctor or attendees to be defamed. Therefore, an emergency medical officer who is well-trained, knowledgeable, and committed is regarded as society's property. These days, medical science has a good variety of gadgets to tackle life-threatening emergency circumstances for patients. Although the science of healing has changed throughout the ages, many of the fundamental ideas of traditional medicine are still applicable in the fast-paced world of today. *Agad Tantra*, one such school of Ayurveda, is notable for emphasizing quick, life-saving treatments. *Agad Tantra* (also called *Vishachikitsa*), which has historically focused on toxicology, includes techniques for identifying

and treating poisoning, poisonous bites, and other critical medical situations.

It's interesting to note that several texts, including *Charaka Samhita*, *Susruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Sangraha*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya*, discuss a significant number of emergency circumstances in the branch of *Agada Tantra*, along with their diagnosis, aetiopathogenesis, and therapeutic methods. It is a useful tool for today's healthcare issues since, in current terms, its scope roughly resembles that of emergency medicine. Re-examining the *Agad Tantra* offers a chance to close the gap as the world's healthcare system looks for integrative methods that blend the knowledge of conventional systems with contemporary biomedical science. Ancient Ayurvedic researchers showed a thorough comprehension of pathophysiology, quick evaluation, and prompt treatment—fundamental ideas that strikingly parallel contemporary emergency procedures. The discoveries of

*Agad Tantra* include both practical applications and intellectual depth, ranging from treating sudden unconsciousness and resuscitation-like treatments to handling snakebites and food poisoning.

## II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

In order to gather knowledge about emergency concepts, emergency condition diagnostics, and the guidelines for effectively managing emergency circumstances, in the current study *Charaka Samhita*, *Susruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Samgraha*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya* were all thoroughly studied.

## III. RESULT

The current study's findings from *Samhita's* demonstrated various examples where *Acharya* describes emergency conditions along with its management.

When describing the *Vishavega*, *Acharya Charaka* named eight numerals, the first through the fourth of which had benign signs and symptoms. Serious symptoms like as seeing blue or several strange colors, or complete blindness (*niladinang tamasashcha darshanang*), hiccoughing (*hikka*), head drooping (*bhagah skandhasya*), eventually passes away, start to appear after the fifth *vega*. Therefore, it is crucial to treat a poisoning patient immediately as possible at the fifth, sixth, and seventh *vega*.<sup>1</sup> *Acharya Charaka* described the management procedures (*chaturbingsati upakrama*) of poisoning by mentioning two self-explanatory concepts that demonstrate emergency management knowledge: *sadnyanasangsthapana* (restoration of consciousness) and *mritasanjivana* (restoration of life after death – critical stage).<sup>2</sup>

*Acharya Charaka* described a severe poisoning patient's condition and stated that *srotasangrodha*, which leads to *vayu avarodha*, happens when *kaphamarga* is vitiated with *Visha*. The patient experiences severe respiratory difficulties and becomes dead. At this point, the patient should receive *pradhmana nasya* (application of powdered strong medicine through the nostrils) after *kakapada* (a treatment procedure in which a deep incision is made in the scalp on the vertex and fresh meat is applied on it).<sup>3</sup>

It is recommended that a patient with *Vishaprabhava*-induced blindness (*akshi uparodha*) use *tikshna anjana*, a collyrium made with effective substances.<sup>4</sup>

It is recommended to apply fresh meat over a vertex incision when *Visha*, which enters through the lower section (*adhodashta*), spreads throughout the body. When *Visha* enters the body through the upper portion, the sole should undergo the same procedure.<sup>5</sup>

It is recommended to use strong nasal sprays (*nasya*) when poisoning affects the brain (*sirogata Visha*).<sup>6</sup> If the functioning of the nose, eyes, ears, tongue, and throat are diminished or lost (*nasakshikarnajihbakanthanirodheshu*), the medication should be administered by nasal sprays

(*nasyakarma*) made with medications that restore consciousness (*sadnyasthapak*) and stimulate the mind (*kaphanissarak*).<sup>7</sup>

*Dangsayet pavanashibhih*, or snake bite, is the recommended treatment for a patient suffering from inanimate poisoning (*sthavara Visha*), as poison is the only medication that can neutralize poison (na *Vishapratimang-kinchinnirvishikaranang bishe*).<sup>8</sup>

*Sirovirechana* combined with *pradhmana nasya*, which involves applying a potent powdered medication through the nostrils to remove vitiated dosha from the brain, is recommended for poisoning patients exhibiting symptoms such as eyeball protrusion (*vivritaksha*), unconsciousness (*nastasajna*) and head drooping (*bhagnagriva*). In this case, incisions should be made on the forehead (*sakhalalataja*) and the blood vessels (*sira*) of the extremities. An experienced surgeon should make an incision on the vertex and apply fresh meat (*kakapada*) to it if there won't be any bleeding from the incisions. Making noise with musical instruments is also suggested in order to raise awareness (*vadayet agadairliptwa dundubhih*).<sup>9</sup>

It is also recommended to treat unconsciousness from poisoning in the same manner as someone who becomes unconscious from drowning (*mritamambhashi*), hanging (*udvaddhang*), or falling from a tree, hill, etc. (*brikshaprapata vishamapatita*).<sup>10</sup>

It is recommended that a poisoned patient who exhibits anomalous multicolored vision (*bibarna darshana*), excessive sleeping tendencies (*nidrarta*), abnormal eye color and excessive dirtiness (*bibarnabilalochana*), or swelling of the eyelids (*sunakshikuta*).<sup>11</sup>

Patients with poisoning symptoms such as headache (*siroruk*), head weight (*sirougaurava*), lathergy (*alasya*), jaw stiffness (*hanustambha*), obstructed throat (*galagraha*), stiff neck (*manyastambha*), etc. are recommended to receive treatment with *sirovirechana* (administration of medication through the nostrils to remove vitiated dosha from the brain).<sup>12</sup>

Poison should be applied with milk, honey, and ghee to treat poisoning. The term "*kshirakshaudraghritayuktang*." For poisoning patients, poison applied with *Vitex trifolia/Vitex nigundu (sindubara)* and *Vreleriana hardwicirii (tagara)* is like nectar (*mritasanjeevana*).<sup>13</sup>

When a lethal spider bite occurs (*lutadashta*), the poison should be administered topically as well as orally because it functions similarly to nectar in this situation.<sup>14</sup>

Poisoning patients may experience 16 complications (*upadrava*) that are neglected and ultimately result in death. Antidote (*prativisha*) should be utilized if a poisoning patient does not recover from treatments such as mantras, etc., and enters a state of *panchama vega*. However, the seventh *vega* denotes the ultimate stage, from which recovery is nearly difficult, so the doctor should note that the patient shouldn't enter it before administering *prativisha*.<sup>15</sup>

#### IV. METHODS OF TREATMENT IN *AGAD TANTRA*

Decontamination protocols: *Agad Tantra* stresses that in order to reduce poison absorption and stop more damage, early decontamination is crucial. Decontamination techniques that cause vomiting include gastric lavage to eliminate ingested poisons from the body, *vamana*, and the administration of purgatives (*virechana*). Toxins in the digestive system can also be adsorbed by activated charcoal.

*Agad Tantra* uses detoxification treatments in order to get rid of toxins from the body. Medicinal products like *triphalā*, a blend of three fruits, may be used as part of these treatments to promote liver function and accelerate up the detoxification process. Toxin removal may also be aided by panchakarma, a group of Ayurvedic treatments that includes methods like enemas (*basti*), herbal steam therapy (*swedana*), and oil massage (*abhyanga*).

*Agad Tantra* acknowledges the significance of individual antidotes for specific toxins as well as specialized cures. The Ayurvedic ancient books have an immense amount of information about antidotes and how to apply them. For instance, certain herbal formulations or preparations, such as *chyanprash*, may be suggested in situations of heavy metal poisoning in order to prevent the toxic effects.

Supportive care and complications management: *Agad Tantra* highlights the significance of delivering supportive care to treat potential poisoning-related problems. This entails taking care of organ-specific issues, preserving electrolyte balance, and making sure you're properly hydrated. *Agad Tantra* acknowledges the connection between the mind and body and stresses the value of counselling and psychological help in coping with the psychological and emotional effects of poisoning episodes.

*Agad Tantra's* therapeutic modalities seek to rid the body of toxins, restore equilibrium, and enhance the body's natural methods of healing. The care of poisoning situations can be approached holistically by combining contemporary medical procedures with ancient Ayurvedic therapies.

#### V. DISCUSSION

Both *Agad Tantra* and contemporary emergency care share the idea that the first steps in treating an emergency are stabilizing the patient and determining what is causing their discomfort. However, by emphasizing early prevention and a method that balances the body's energies at a fundamental level, *Agad Tantra* adds value. For example, even in dire circumstances, Ayurveda stresses the importance of the digestive system (*Agni*) in preserving general health. *Agad Tantra* offers methods for reestablishing equilibrium when trauma or poisons disturb the *Agni*. This emphasis on the body's innate capacity to preserve homeostasis is frequently absent from modern emergency medicine, which instead relies on symptomatic measures. According to *Agad Tantra*, many toxic responses and medical catastrophes can be

avoided by detoxifying the body and reestablishing equilibrium in the digestive system.

In addition to identifying certain states in poisoning patients as emergencies, the ancient Ayurvedic scholars provided a detailed explanation of how to handle these situations. According to the account of *Vishavega*, the fifth, sixth, and seventh *Vegas* are regarded as severe or urgent situations. The signs include drooping of the head, loss of vision, and defective vision. The significant pathological alterations in the body's critical regions are reflected in these diseases. The worst prognosis is indicated by the sequences of *Visha's* effects, *sadnyanasha* and *mrityu*. Two intriguing therapeutic methods—*sadnyasangsthapana* and *mrityasanjivana*—are presented to address these two circumstances. An intriguing technique for treating a poisoned patient's severe condition involves applying medication to an incision made on the vertex or sole. According to the classics, this treatment should be used on patients who are near death.

A thorough investigation is required to assess this procedure. *Nasya*, or the application of medicine through the nose, is justified because at certain points, oral medication application becomes nearly impossible and there is a need to directly stimulate the higher center. Similarly, *anjana*, or the application of strong medicine around the eyes, is also recommended. In modern medicine, it is suggested to identify an emergency situation in a poisoning patient by assessing the condition of the eyes, consciousness, respiration, speech, and the ability to maintain the stability of the body, all of which are considered indicators and should be thoroughly examined.

Poisoning is usually a dangerous condition, as is readily apparent. Any neglect or delay in treating poisoning can be demonstrated to be terminated with the patient's demise in a matter of minutes. The use of antidotes at random has not been recommended by Ayurvedic experts. They claimed that using an antidote excessively could hurt the patient. Therefore, it should only be applied when the doctor is certain that the patient is poisoned. The idea of using poison to cure poisoning is admirable and commendable. The method explained for extracting poison from deadly snakes and making powdered edible meat also catches the interest of the knowledgeable. On numerous Ayurvedic concepts, it appears to be challenging to provide a contemporary explanation. However, it can be presumed that the facts are unquestionably supported by thorough, long-term observation and research. Since there are no records of the documentation practices used by the ancient scholars or the documents they gathered, only in-depth research and scientific analysis can persuade the present population.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

The wealth of information provided by *Agad Tantra* has the potential to greatly improve contemporary emergency medicine, especially in fields like toxicity, trauma treatment, and prevention. Modern medicine can handle crises more integratively by embracing Ayurveda's holistic philosophy, which places a strong focus on prevention, detoxification, and

tailored therapy. To confirm the efficacy of Ayurvedic medicines in the context of modern healthcare, additional scientific research is necessary. Future studies could examine the ways in which these antiquated medical systems can be integrated with contemporary practices to enhance patient outcomes during crises.

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