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“A LITERATURE REVIEW ON ARTIFICIAL FOOD ADDITIVES AS GARA VISHA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THEIR PREVENTION”**Dr. Agna Kuttikkattil¹, Dr. Sanjay Nandedkar²**

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ABSTRACT:

The rapid urbanization and changing dietary patterns have led to increased consumption of processed foods containing artificial additives such as preservatives, colorants, emulsifiers, and artificial sweeteners. Though considered safe within prescribed limits, chronic exposure to these substances has been associated with metabolic, neurological, and immunological disorders. Ayurveda conceptualizes such cumulative toxicity under Gara Visha. This review analyzes artificial additives through Ayurvedic and modern perspectives and highlights preventive strategies.

KEY WORDS:- Gara Visha, Food additives, Chronic toxicity, Agad Tantra, Prevention

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INTRODUCTION

Modern dietary practices involve increased intake of processed foods containing artificial additives like sodium benzoate, tartrazine, MSG, and aspartame. Ayurveda describes Gara Visha as artificially prepared toxins formed from combinations of non-poisonous substances producing delayed toxic effects. Similar to pesticide accumulation, artificial additives also produce chronic toxicity.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is designed as a narrative literary review integrating classical Ayurvedic concepts of 'visha' with contemporary scientific understanding of artificial food additive toxicity.

Materials

1. Ayurvedic Classical Sources

Primary data was collected from authoritative Ayurvedic texts, including the following:

- *Charaka Samhita* (Visha Chikitsa Adhyaya) – for principles of toxicology, *Dushi Visha*, and systemic effects of chronic toxins
- *Sushruta Samhita* (Kalpa Sthana) – for a detailed description of *Gara Visha*, its formation (*Yogaja Vishatva*), and clinical manifestations
- *Ashtanga Hridaya* (Uttara Tantra) – for symptomatology and management of artificial and cumulative poisons

Relevant commentaries were also reviewed to understand contextual interpretations.

2. Contemporary Scientific Sources

Modern data were collected from:

- WHO and FAO reports on food safety and acceptable daily intake (ADI) of food additives
- FSSAI guidelines on food regulation and labelling in India

- Peer-reviewed journals on toxicology, nutrition, and public health
- Research studies on preservatives, artificial colours, flavour enhancers, and sweeteners

Methods

The study was conducted through a systematic qualitative approach, consisting of the following steps:

1. Conceptual Extraction (Ayurvedic Review):

Classical references related to *Gara Visha*, *Dushi Visha*, *Viruddha Ahara*, *Ama*, and *Agni Dushti* were identified and analysed. Key features such as causative factors (*Nidana*), pathogenesis (*Samprapti*), clinical features (*Lakshanas*), and management principles (*Chikitsa*) were compiled.

2. Data Compilation (Modern Review):

Information regarding commonly used artificial food additives, their chemical nature, metabolic pathways, and documented adverse effects was collected from contemporary literature.

3. Comparative Analysis:

A critical correlation was established between Ayurvedic concepts and modern findings. The cumulative toxicity of artificial additives was compared with:

- *Gara Visha* (artificially induced toxicity)
- *Dushi Visha* (latent, chronic toxicity)

Similarities in pathogenesis, symptomatology, and disease progression were analysed.

4. Integrative Interpretation:

Ayurvedic principles such as *Nidana Parivarjana*, *Deepana-Pachana*, *Shodhana*, *Agada Yoga*, and *Rasayana* were evaluated in the context of modern preventive toxicology.

5. Preventive Framework Development:

Based on the combined analysis, a preventive model was formulated incorporating:

- Ayurvedic dietary and lifestyle modifications
- Detoxification therapies
- Modern food safety practices and awareness

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present review establishes a strong correlation between artificial food additives and *Gara Visha*. These additives show cumulative toxicity similar to *Yogaja Vishatva*. From an Ayurvedic perspective, they act as *Viruddha Ahara* and *Abhishyandi* substances, leading to *Agnimandya* and *Ama* formation. The pathology progresses through *Rasa* and *Rakta Dhatus*, causing *Dosha Dushti* and *Srotorodha*. Clinical features such as fatigue, indigestion, and skin disorders correlate with modern findings like allergies and metabolic disturbances. Prevention includes *Nidana Parivarjana*, *Pathya Ahara*, *Deepana-Pachana*, *Shodhana* therapies, *Agada Yogas*, and *Rasayana*. Modern regulatory measures alone are insufficient, emphasising the need for integrative approaches.

CONCLUSION

Artificial food additives, though widely accepted within regulatory safety limits, exhibit cumulative and slow-acting toxic effects when consumed regularly over a prolonged period. This pattern closely parallels the Ayurvedic concept of *Gara Visha*, wherein non-poisonous substances, when combined and chronically ingested, lead to systemic toxicity. The pathogenesis involving *Agnimandya*, *Ama formation*, *Srotorodha*, and *Dosha Dushti* provides a comprehensive explanation for the multisystem involvement observed in modern addiction-related disorders.

In the current era of increasing lifestyle diseases, metabolic disorders, allergies, and neurobehavioural conditions, the role of such dietary toxins cannot be overlooked. Contemporary research also supports the association of artificial additives with gut microbiome imbalance, endocrine disruption, and chronic inflammation, further validating the Ayurvedic understanding of *Dushi Visha-like* cumulative toxicity.

Ayurveda offers a holistic and preventive approach through *Nidana Parivarjana* (avoidance of causative factors), *Pathya Ahara* (wholesome diet), *Deepana-Pachana* (enhancement of digestion and metabolism), and *Shodhana Chikitsa* (bio-purification therapies). The use of *Agada Yogas* and *Rasayana* drugs further aids in detoxification, immunomodulation, and restoration of physiological balance.

Therefore, an integrative approach combining Ayurvedic dietary discipline, detoxification strategies, and modern food safety awareness is essential to minimise the long-term health hazards of artificial food additives. This highlights the continued relevance of *Agad Tantra* in addressing emerging challenges of chronic, lifestyle-related toxicities in contemporary society.

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