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Dr. Parminder Kumar Moudgil
BAMS, MD (Ayurveda, Gold Medalist), PhD, PhD Supervisor (Ayurveda), Desh Bhagat University, Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab, India

Dr. Amrit Pal Singh
MD, PhD, Professor, Department of Dravyaguna, Saraswati Ayurvedic College, Mohali, Punjab, India

Corresponding Author:
Dr. Parminder Kumar Moudgil
BAMS, MD (Ayurveda, Gold Medalist), PhD, PhD Supervisor (Ayurveda), Desh Bhagat University, Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab, India

Clinical perspectives of avarana in the modern era

Parminder Kumar Moudgil and Amrit Pal Singh

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Abstract
Avarana is a unique pathological concept in Ayurveda, described as the obstruction of normal *vata* function by *doshas*, *dhatus*, or *malas*. This phenomenon leads to altered physiology and diverse clinical manifestations depending on the site and nature of obstruction. In the modern era, the relevance of *avarana* can be appreciated by correlating it with conditions involving mechanical, functional, or biochemical obstruction at tissue, organ, or systemic levels. Examples include vascular occlusion, nerve compression syndromes, obstructive uropathy, bronchial asthma, and metabolic disorders such as insulin resistance. The classical descriptions of avarana provide a structured framework for understanding disease progression, prognosis, and therapeutic strategies. Clinically, it emphasizes not only the primary obstruction but also the secondary disturbances caused by altered vata dynamics. Contemporary perspectives highlight the role of avarana in explaining complex pathologies where obstruction is a central mechanism, such as atherosclerosis, intestinal obstruction, and obstructive pulmonary disorders. Integrative approaches that combine Ayurvedic principles with modern diagnostics can enhance the management of such conditions. Treatment strategies described in Ayurveda—including *shodhana*, *shamana*, and specific lifestyle interventions—are highly relevant in reducing obstruction, restoring *vata* function, and preventing complications. Thus, exploring the clinical perspectives of avarana in the modern era provides a bridge between traditional Ayurvedic understanding and contemporary biomedical sciences, offering a holistic view for prevention and management of diseases.

Keywords: Avarana, vata dosha, obstruction, Ayurveda, pathophysiology, modern clinical perspectives, integrative medicine

Introduction
Avarana is one of the most challenging concepts to comprehend, teach, and incorporate into clinical practice. Avarana is one of the mechanisms mentioned in the science of Ayurveda to explain the pathogenesis of diseases, particularly due to the vitiation of Vata. To understand and analyse the Avarana, meticulous knowledge of basic concepts of Ayurveda is essential. All the functions of the body are controlled by three fundamental factors called Tridosha. As per Ayurveda, they are the pillars of the body. They are all in equilibrium and located in their places, performing their normal functions by which the body is sustained free from disorders. If they move on the wrong path or are unbalanced, they afflict the body with disorders relating to their location and functions, and take away life shortly. Any disturbance to their equipoise state leads to diseases. Among these 3 doshas, Vata has very much significance. It plays a key role in the maintenance of the body in a normal, healthy state. Vata is the strongest of all Doshas & it causes a large number of diseases. It is also quick in causing an emergency condition

Components of Avaran
Awaraka- that which covers Vata and obstructs it
Avrita- that which is covered, Vata in this instance
Avarana- the entire pathological mechanism wherein an Awaraka will cover and block the Avrita

Mechanism
Charaka Samhita: Acharya Charaka, in the context of Vatavyadhi, has explained Avarana in detail in Chikitsa Sthana chapter 28. He first explained about nanatmaja vyadhi, i.e., diseases caused due to the vitiation of only Vata. Then he goes on to explain how Pitta and

Kapha associate with Vata to cause disease, and further, he explains about Avarana. Pitta and Kapha when associate with Vata Dosha, symptoms of Pitta and Kapha also prevail with Vata symptoms.
According to Acharya Chakrapani, A Vata disease may be associated not only with Pitta and Kapha but also with Dhatus beginning with Rakta and all malas beginning with faeces. Among all these, the Vat will still be predominant. This shows the authority of Vata in the Avarana.

Causes of vitiation of Vata: Vata vitiates mainly because of two reasons
1. Dhatukshaya, i.e, diminution of tissue elements
2. Margaavaran

Pathological conditions of Vata: Sushruta has mentioned three pathological conditions of Vata, *viz*.
- Kevala Vata,
- Dosha-Yukta Vata and
- Avrita Vata.

Kevala Vata: The word Kevala refers to Dosha-Asamsrista, i.e Pathological state of Vata without association of other Dosha. The etiological factors of Vata are depletion in nature, due to a decrease in the body tissues occurs, resulting in an increase of Akasha (vacuum), and to fill this vacuum, Vata is increased, leading to its Prakopa. In such a condition, the Hetu are of Vata, the symptoms are of Vata, and Upashaya and Anupashaya are of Vata. The treatment also consists of management of Vata only, though certain care has to be taken for the site also. By this path of pathogenesis, it may produce both Nanatmaja and Samanyaja types of its disorders. It's Nanatmaja type of diseases can be initiated and produced only by Vata, and no other Dosha can produce it. On the other hand, its Samanyaja type of disorders can be initiated and produced by the other Dushya, which may be of Vata type only or may be due to Samsarga and Sannipata with other Dosha.

Dosha-Yukta Vata (Samsarga and Sannipata): Doshayukta Vata refers to association (Samyoga) with other Dosha, which is different from Avarana. It is a pathological state of Vata due to the association of Pitta or Kapha, or both, which may be caused by the combined Hetu. Clinical manifestations of Vata, as well as of the associated Dosha, as Anubandha, may be there. In that case, generally the primary Dosha, i.e., Vata, dominates in all the spheres of Hetu, symptoms, and treatment. Generally, with the Vishama Samaveta then there may be some peculiar symptoms, which may not belong to either of the Dosha.

Avrita Vata: Avrana of Vata occurs in two ways
1. By Avarana of Ama, Kapha, Pitta, Mala, etc. It is general or samanya Avarana and,
2. The second type of Avarana is by the other Vata of the pancha vidha Vata. This Avarana of Vata by another Vata is a specific or vishishta Avarana producing severe symptoms. In any type of Avaran, there are two components: one is Avrita Dosha, the Dosha whose function gets affected by obstruction or covering & the second component is the Awaraka, which causes Avarana of peculiar Dosha. Often, the symptoms manifested are comprised of the disturbed function of the obstructing factor as well as the obstructed Vata. The symptoms produced are based on the principles Hani, Karma Vriddhi, which depend upon the intensity of the obstruction, i.e., partial or complete; functional or organic;acute or chronic; transient or persistent. For instance, a less strong obstruction of Vata will lead to its provocation, whereas a very powerful obstruction may make it weak and likewise. The symptomatology of the Avarana depends on the place where Dosha-Dushya Sammurchchharna has taken place. For instance, the symptom of Shula of Avrita Vata may occur in different parts like the head, ears, abdomen, and back, depending upon the organ involved in the process of Avarana. Similarly, clinical manifestations primarily depend on the direction of the movement that is obstructed, anatomical limitation of a particular Dosha or subtype of Vata which is involved in the pathogenesis, nature of obstruction, i.e., Dosha, Dathu, Mala, etc. Visheshasthanhas been explained for each vayu prakar, but at each cellular level we can understand their functional activity, such as assimilation of pran vayu, excretion of apan vayu, circulation and transportationofvyanvayu agnisandukshanordigestion& metabolism stimulants of samaan vayu and prayatna of udanvayu. The concept is important because in the case of paraspara avarana, some symptoms have been explained, which are not specific to their sthan, for eg, in saman avrita apana hridroga has been explained. There is an interplay between the gati of different vata prakar.In normal conditions, they help each other to carry out various functions, but when their gati gets vitiated due to the above hetu, the balwan vata prakar impedes the gati of the other, leading to paraspara avarana. Different pathologies occur in different strotas for the disease appearance. Avarana is one of the pathogeneses in the appearance of diseases. Avarana plays an important part in understanding the samprapti of many diseases. When Dosha or Dhatu obstructs a particular Dosha, then it will give rise to signs and symptoms related to the function of that particular Dosha or Dhatu that has been obstructed. The entity that gets obstructed will show fewer signs and symptoms related to its normal function. For instance, if Pitta obstructs Vata, then the person will suffer in daha, trishna, shoola, bhram, tama, vidah, sheetkamta, which are symptoms of Pitta, and karmhani is observed, which is a Vata symptom. Acharyas have explained many Avaranas and their signs and symptoms will give a clue to the diagnosis of Avarana. The increased signs and symptoms will suggest the Awaraka, and decreased signs and symptoms suggest Avrita. Once the diagnosis is confirmed then the treatment is expected. Many references are available regarding Avarana as a pathology in different disorders. Ex: - In majjavritta Vata, the majjadhatu impedes the gati of Vata (nerve conduction), leading to symptoms like pain, etc. Diffuse bulging of the cord may be considered, as well as spinal canal stenosis. In pittavrita Vata, symptoms like heat stroke where a failure of heat heat-regulating mechanism. Urusthambh is also considered as medasavritta. Vata pathogenesis of kasa is also due to Avarana between prana vayu and udan vayu. Similarly, many disorders are produced due to Avarana. So identification of Avarana is a must in the pathogenesis of Avarana. Atipravritti leads to sangha. Which intern

leads to vimargagaman, due to this hridroga, vidradhi, pleeha, gulm-like complication arises, so diagnosis of Avarana is very important.

Avarana: Diagnosis and Treatment Approach

Diagnosis: Certainly, the diagnostic tools in Avarana are also the Nidana panchaka. Among them, Upashaya and Anupashaya have high importance. In a disease that is assumed to be Avaranajanya, the primary objective must be to identify the Awaraka. This is because even while presenting with many of the symptoms of the Avrita Dosha, there need not be a supporting aetiology for the vitiation of this Dosha. Rather, there would also be etiologies for the Awaraka Dosha, which might need detailed examination for identification. In short, it is important to discriminate if the effect or Kaarya in the patient is associated with the cause or Karana. When there is no certainty regarding the Awaraka, the tools Upashaya and Anupashaya are to be used. Moreover, the chances of error are very high when the lakshanas alone are targeted and treated in such conditions.

Treatment: Proper deciphering of the Awaraka and administering a precise intervention against it is the basic aim of treatment. When the influence of Awaraka is pacified, the Avrita Dosha also gets pacified by itself. If the seat of Avrita Dosha has undergone an insult or injury in the process of Avarana, then the treatment must address the Avrita Dosha too. The Kapha chikitsa mentioned in Kaphavarita Vata, Pramehahara chikitsa, or Medohara chikitsa in Medovrita Vata, etc., are indicative of this line of management. Similarly, in Viddavrita Vata, the indication of Malanulomana, advising Mutrala dravyas in Mutravrita Vata, etc., reflects the importance of Awaraka in chikitsa. Hence, the mainline treatment of each Awaraka is targeted towards the Awaraka. The use of Shita-Ushna-Snigdha-Ruksha alternately is adopted in Pitta-Rakta-related Avarana only. It is not a generalized principle. In short, the knowledge regarding Avarana helps the physician have a better understanding of Samprapti, which makes the treatment precise, simple, and cost-effective

Oushadhakala and Avarana: One of the other advantages of knowing the Awaraka is that it facilitates the precise administration of Oushadhakala. Awaraka is the target here, too.

Table 1: Oushdhakala w.r.t Avarana

Sr. No.	Condition of Avarana	Time of administration of Medicine
1	Kaphavruta Vata	Empty stomach
2	Pittavruta Vata	Middle of the food
3	Apanavruta	Before food
4	Samaanavruta	Middle of the food
5	Vyanavruta	After breakfast
6	Udanavruta	After evening diet

Is avarana confined to vata alone?

Avarana is often considered a pathological process that comes into play in Vatavyadhis alone (probably due to its mention along with Vatavyadhis in Samhitas). But Avarana is mentioned in numerous other Sampraptis too. Some examples for the same are: When the disease Atatvabhinivesha (a psychological problem) is explained, Charaka mentions the word 'Rajomohavrutatmana'. Here, Manas is said to undergo Avarana by Rajas and Tamas, i.e., it must be understood that the Gunas and Karmas of Manas are influenced by Rajas and Tamas. In the context of Jvara, it is explained that Agni undergoes Avarana by Ama, which means that the formation of Ama hampers the normal functioning of Agni or Agnibala. When Charaka explains Vatadi prakritis, he observes that depending on the Dosha that exerts Abhibhava on the site of Agni (Grahani), the Agni of the person varies from Vishama to Manda or Tikshna. This indicates that, depending on the Dosha that influences the Grahani, the Agni, which itself is dependent on Grahani, undergoes similar variation. In these conditions, the influence happening is Abhibhava, or in other words, Avarana.

Conclusion

Avarana is one of the least understood concepts among the basic mechanisms of Ayurvedic fundamentals. After studying Avarana, we are able to approach the various uncommon diseases. The concept of Avarana helps us to explain the pathogenesis of many diseases. The various stages of the disease are better explained by the different types of Avarana. The diagnosis plays a major role in the success of the management. As the principles of management are different for various Avaranas, the protocol varies as per the stage of the condition.

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