

A Critical Analysis of *Dantodbhed* and *Dantodbhedjanya Vyadhi* in Ayurveda: A Review

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Abstract

Teething (dentition) is a physiological milestone marked by the eruption of primary teeth. Although normal, this period is frequently associated with several local and systemic symptoms in infants. Ayurveda identifies these manifestations as *Dantodbhedjanya Vyadhi*, a distinct pathological entity described extensively in classical texts.^[1,2] To critically review Ayurvedic and contemporary scientific literature on *Dantodbhed* (teething) and *Dantodbhedjanya Vyadhi*, and to reinterpret classical concepts in the context of modern pediatric understanding. A narrative review was undertaken using major Ayurvedic classical texts, including Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, Ashtanga Sangraha, Kashyapa Samhita, and Sharangadhara Samhita, along with contemporary pediatric literature retrieved from Google Scholar and PubMed. The historical, conceptual, and clinical aspects were systematically compared and analyzed. Classical Ayurvedic literature describes *Dantodbheda* as a process governed by Rakta, Asthi, and Majja Dhatu^[1,3] and influenced by the state of Dosha equilibrium. Symptomatic disturbances such as fever, diarrhea, irritability, cough, and ocular problems correlate with the modern understanding of teething-related discomfort. Ayurvedic management emphasizes Deepana, Pachana, Sangrahana, immune modulation, and hygiene maintenance to minimize systemic disturbances, particularly diarrhea. Several traditional formulations and procedures documented by Acharya Vagbhata and others show potential clinical applicability.^[4,5] The Ayurvedic concept of *Dantodbheda* presents significantly detailed observations comparable to modern pediatrics. Classical descriptions of eruption timing, symptomatology, complications, and management demonstrate strong scientific relevance. Further research and clinical validation of Ayurvedic interventions are needed to develop evidence-based guidelines for managing teething-related disorders.

Key words: Ayurveda, *Dantodbheda*, *Dantodbhedjanya Vyadhi*, Deepana, dentition, Pachana, pediatrics

INTRODUCTION

Teething is an important developmental milestone, typically beginning around 6 months of age. Epidemiological studies report that 68–95% of children experience disturbances during primary tooth eruption.^[4,6] This phase coincides with the waning of maternal passive (humoral) immunity and the gradual maturation of the child's own immune responses, predisposing infants to ailments such as diarrhea, fever, and respiratory infections.

Ayurveda describes teething as *Dantodbheda* and attributes associated morbidities to disturbances in Dosha, Dhatu, and Mala.^[1] According to classical texts, *Dantodbhedjanya Vyadhi* arises

due to the vitiation of Rakta, Asthi, and Majja Dhatu^[1,2] during eruption. Kashyapa Samhita provides an exceptionally detailed description of the physiological and pathological aspects of dentition, including eruption timing, quality of teeth, complications, and management.

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Modern science similarly acknowledges a variety of symptoms during teething but does not classify them under a distinct pathological entity, unlike Ayurveda.^[7-9] The present review attempts to critically analyze and correlate classical Ayurvedic concepts with modern scientific understanding.

Objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze and reinterpret classical Ayurvedic references on dentition and diseases occurring during tooth eruption
2. To review classical Ayurvedic management strategies for *Dantodbhedjanya Vyadhi*
3. To correlate classical descriptions with modern pediatric understanding of teething-related symptoms.

A narrative review approach was adopted. Sources included:

- Classical Ayurvedic scriptures: Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, Ashtanga Sangraha, Sharangadhara Samhita, Kashyapa Samhita
- Ayurvedic commentaries and English translations
- Modern pediatric literature indexed in PubMed, Google Scholar
- Historical documents citing ancient views on teething.

AYURVEDIC REVIEW

Description of teeth in classical texts

Charaka Samhita^[8]

Acharya Charaka includes *Danta* under *Asthi Gana*, considering teeth as a specialized form of bone.

Sushruta Samhita^[10]

Sushruta mentions teeth as *Pitruja Bhava* and classifies them as a variety of *Ruchaka Asthi*, indicating structural hardness.

Ashtanga Hridaya and Ashtanga Sangraha^[1,11]

Acharya Vagbhata provides an elaborate description of *Dantodbheda*, its causes, manifestations, complications, and management.

Sharangadhara Samhita^[10]

Describes the definition, number, and functions of teeth. Children possess 24 teeth, while adults have 32 teeth.

Kashyapa Samhita^[11]

The most comprehensive explanation appears in *Dantajanmika Adhyaya*, covering:

- Number of teeth
- Eruption timing
- Variations
- Auspicious versus inauspicious dentition

- Sex-based differences in eruption
- Factors influencing tooth quality.

Kashyapa's descriptions are strikingly parallel to modern pediatric insights.

Dantotpatti Kala (Timing of dentition)^[1-3,11]

Ayurvedic texts provide month-wise characteristics of erupting teeth.

e.g.,

- 4th month: weak, decaying teeth
- 5th month: unstable, hypersensitive
- 6th month: prone to caries
- 8th month: ideal dentition – compact, white, disease-free teeth.

Mechanism of teething

According to Ayurveda:

- Rakta, Asthi, and Majja Dhatu initiate eruption
- The process causes *Uttsedha* (gum elevation), splitting of gum fibers, local itching, and pain
- Vitiated Vata, then Pitta, spreads systemically causing multi-organ disturbances.

This holistic understanding strongly resembles the modern pathophysiological interpretation.

DantodbhedjanyaVyadhi (Teething disorders)

Classical symptoms mentioned include:

- Jwara (fever)
- Vidbheda/Atisara (diarrhoea)
- Kasa (cough)
- Chardi (vomiting)
- Abhishyanda (conjunctivitis)
- Trishna (thirst)
- Shwasa (breathing difficulty).

MODERN REVIEW

Historically, physicians like Hippocrates, Aristotle, and Celsus documented teething-associated symptoms such as diarrhea, fever, irritability, convulsions, and respiratory distress.^[4,6]

Modern pediatrics acknowledges:

- Gum swelling, irritability
- Drooling
- Diarrhea due to swallowed saliva
- Low-grade fever
- Increased susceptibility to infections due to reduced maternal immunity
- Onset of hand-to-mouth coordination leading to pathogen exposure
- Gut microbiome immaturity.

Table 1: Dantodbhedjanyaroga^[2,11]

“Dantodbhedjanyaroga”	“Asthangaharidya”	“Asthangasangraha”	“Bhava prakash”
“Jwara”	+	+	+
“Vidbheda/atisara”	+	+	+
“Kasa”	+	+	+
“Chardi/vamathu”	+	+	+
“Shiroruja”			+
“Shirobhitapa”	+	+	
“Abhishyanda”	+	+	+
“Pothki”		+	+
“Kukkunaka”	+	+	
“Visarpa”		+	+
“Trishna”		+	
“Bhrama”		+	
“Shwasa”		+	

This aligns closely with Ayurvedic descriptions of disturbed Dosha, Dhatu, and immunity (Vyadhikshamatva).

The classical symptoms of Dantodbhedjanyaroga described in various Ayurvedic texts are summarized in Table 1.

The literature review indicates that infants commonly experience:

- Irritability
- Drooling and cough
- Diarrhea
- Loss of appetite
- Respiratory symptoms
- Skin rashes
- Sleep disturbances.

Factors include:^[5]

- Excess saliva
- Unhygienic mouthing behaviors
- Gut microbiome immaturity
- Immune development lag.

These findings correlate with the Ayurvedic concept of Doshic vitiation during *Dantodbheda*.

Both Ayurveda and modern pediatrics recognize teething as a vulnerable period marked by increased susceptibility to infections and systemic disturbances. Ayurveda attributes these manifestations to the involvement of Rakta, Asthi, and Majja Dhatu and the vitiation of Vata and Pitta.^[1,3]

Ayurvedic management focuses on:

- Deepana–Pachana to support digestion
- Sangrahana to manage diarrhea
- Immunomodulatory herbs to enhance Vyadhikshamatva
- Local gum application (Nadihingu, Yashtimadhu)
- Hygiene maintenance
- Weaning modifications.

These principles align with modern evidence stressing hygiene, gut maturation, and nutritional support.

The integrative perspective may help reduce morbidity in infants during teething.

CONCLUSION

Teething is a universal physiological process with potential local and systemic disturbances. Classical Ayurvedic texts, particularly Kashyapa Samhita,^[2,11] provide exceptionally detailed and scientifically relevant descriptions of dentition. The Ayurvedic approach to managing *Dantodbhedjanya Vyadhi* – focusing on digestive strength, immunity, and hygiene – holds significant therapeutic value.

Revisiting and scientifically validating traditional Ayurvedic practices may contribute to developing effective, safe, and holistic strategies for managing teething disorders in infants.

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ETHICAL APPROVAL

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