



## CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF RAJASWALA PARICHARYA IN RELATION TO MENSTRUAL DISORDERS A CROSS-SECTIONAL SURVEY STUDY

Smaran B L<sup>1</sup>, Asha F Hosur<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>B L, IV BAMS, Government Ayurveda Medical College and Teaching Hospital, Shivamogga

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor & HOD, Dept. of Prasuti tantra & Streeroga, Govt. Ayurveda Medical College & T.H, Shivamogga

Corresponding Author: [smaranbcd@gmail.com](mailto:smaranbcd@gmail.com)

<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj4011072023>

(Published Online: July 2023)

### Open Access

© International Ayurvedic Medical Journal, India 2023

Article Received: 10/06/2023 - Peer Reviewed: 18/06/2023 - Accepted for Publication: 12/07/2023.



## ABSTRACT

In women, menstruation is a common phenomenon that periodically repeats. During this phase, there is shedding of the endometrial layer which flows out of the body through the vagina along with blood. Due to these physiological changes and hormonal fluctuations, normal activities become stressful and demand measures to overcome the stress. *Rajaswala Paricharya* explained in *Ayurveda* can be considered as one such measure which is conceptualized to overcome this stress and maintain the health of women. This proposes various indications and contra-indications of foods and activities during this phase. Since this Paricharya helps to overcome the most vulnerable phase of the Menstrual cycle it might conceptually have positive long-term effects on the menstrual and gynecological health. This relation is studied through a cross-sectional survey study with a sample size of 100 women belonging to Shivamogga City, Karnataka. The 24 rules explained under *Rajaswala Paricharya* across different classics were considered and the survey was conducted to collect the data relating to their following of *Rajaswala Paricharya* along with data on menstrual and gynecological disorders. We find a marginal difference in the occurrence of gynecological disorders among women who have followed more than 80% of the mentioned rules. 44.44% of these women have any of the gynecological disorders where as 55.56% have no gynecological disorders. But in consideration of symptoms during menstruation, the women following a higher number of rules have a lesser number of menstrual symptoms. Women following more than 65% of the mentioned rules have an aver-

age of 2-3 symptoms, whereas women following less than 65% of *Rajaswala Paricharya* have an average of 4 menstrual symptoms. This represents the significance of following *Rajaswala Paricharya*.

**Keywords:** *Rajaswala Paricharya*, Menstrual Symptoms, Gynecological Disorders, Menstrual health

## INTRODUCTION

Menstruation is the visible manifestation of cyclic physiologic uterine bleeding due to the shedding of the endometrium following the invisible interplay of hormones mainly through the Hypothalamo – pituitary – ovarian axis.<sup>1</sup> This Menstrual Phase of the menstrual cycle is called the *Rajaswala* period according to Ayurveda. Ayurveda explains various *Paricharyas* – codes of conduct for women during different phases of their life, like

- *Rajaswala Paricharya* – (Menstruation)
- *Garbhini Paricharya* – (Pregnancy)
- *Soothika Paricharya* – (Postpartum)

*Rajaswala Paricharya* is the regimen that must be followed during the *Rajaswala* period which is explained by various *acharyas*. The *Rajaswala Paricharya* helps women adapt well to the physiological changes taking place in the body during menstruation and thus prevents the occurrence of diseases.<sup>2</sup> In *Rajaswala Paricharya*, *Acharyas* mentioned *Aharas* and *Acharas* which are indicated and contraindicated for maintaining health. It explains about avoidance of *Katu*, *Ushna*, *Teekshna ahara*, bathing, indulgence in coital act, etc. It is explained that avoidance to follow this regimen can cause vitiation of *Tridoshas* leading to deformity in the foetus, production of *ama*, and other complications.<sup>3</sup> Not following *Rajaswala Paricharya* not only causes problems for the women but also effects the forthcoming progeny. From ancient times, in Indian culture, the *Rajaswala Paricharya* is under practice among people. But in recent times, the advancements of women in various fields, women empowerment, and due to other reasons, the following of *Rajaswala Paricharya* is declined. Interestingly, recent studies show that there has been a steep increase in the number of cases of menstrual disorders. Globally reproductive ill health constitutes 32% of the total burden of disease among the reproductive age group of women. In India reproductive ill health

constitutes 12.5% of the total burden of diseases<sup>4</sup>. Menstrual symptoms like PMS, lower back ache, lower abdomen ache, nausea, etc. have been so common that they have been considered as associated symptoms of menstruation. But these symptoms are nowhere mentioned in *Ayurveda* as associated symptoms of menstruation.<sup>5</sup> The decreased following of *Rajaswala Paricharya* and the increase in the variety of menstrual disorders might be interrelated. To study the importance of *Rajaswala Paricharya* and to see if there is any interrelation between the increased menstrual problems and decreased following of *Rajaswala Paricharya* this survey study is done.

**Objectives:** To study the importance of **RAJASWALA PARICHARYA** in the present day of modernization.

### Materials and Methods

The current study “**CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF RAJASWALA PARICHARYA IN RELATION TO MENSTRUAL DISORDERS – A CROSS-SECTIONAL SURVEY STUDY**”, is a survey study with a sample size of 100.

#### • Source of Data:

a. The general female population of Shivamogga City.

#### • Sample Size: 100

#### • Study Design: Cross-sectional survey study

#### • Inclusion Criteria:

- a. Female between the age group of 18 – 40 years.
- b. Both married & Unmarried.

#### • Exclusion Criteria:

- a. Patients with systemic illness.

#### • Method of Collection of Data:

1. A detailed & standardized case proforma was prepared specially with questions related to their menstrual health and the practice of *Rajaswala Paricharya*.

2. Awareness and survey camps were conducted across the city of Shivamogga, Karnataka
3. Collected data were compiled and statistical analysis was done.

### Observations

In the sample size of 100, 16% belong to the age group of 18-22 years, 22% belong to the 23-26 years age group, 22% belong to the 26-30 years age group, 8% belong to the 30-34 years age group, 14% belong

to 35-38 years age group and 18% belong to 39-40 years age group. 62% belong to the Hindu religion, 32% belong to the Muslim religion and 6% belong to the Christian religion. 3% were uneducated, 38% were educated up to SSLC and 59% belonged to the higher education category. 12 were students, 10 were teachers, 73 were housewives and 5 belonged to other occupations.

### DISTRIBUTION BASED ON EACH PARICHARYA FOLLOWED

Various Paricharyas mentioned in Classics		The number of women who followed	Percentage
Ahara Indicated	Yava	19	19.00%
	Shali	98	98.00%
	Ghrita	50	50.00%
	Ksheera	63	63.00%
Ahara Contraindicated	Teekshna/Ushna	64	64.00%
	Katu	64	64.00%
	Lavana	67	67.00%
Vihara Indicated	Darbha bed	69	69.00%
Vihara Contraindicated	Diwaswapna	58	58.00%
	Anjana	81	81.00%
	Ashru pata	86	86.00%
	Excessive Talking	86	86.00%
	Excessive Laughing	82	82.00%
	Snana	14	14.00%
	Abhyanga	93	93.00%
	Vyayama	93	93.00%
	Swedana	99	99.00%
	Vamana	100	100.00%
	Nasya Karma	100	100.00%
	Maithuna	100	100.00%
	Ornaments	81	81.00%
	Cutting Nails	82	82.00%
	Atishravana	80	80.00%
	Exposure to Breeze	67	67.00%

In the sample size of 100 72 were Hindu women. Among 72 Hindu women, 14 followed 35-65% of Rajaswala Paricharya, 34 followed 65-85% of Rajaswala Paricharya and 14 followed 85-100% of Rajaswala Paricharya. Among 26 Muslim women, 0 followed 35-65% of Rajaswala Paricharya, 26 followed 65-85% of Rajaswala Paricharya and 6 fol-

lowed 85-100% of Rajaswala Paricharya. Among 6 Christian women, 5 followed 35-65% of Rajaswala Paricharya, 1 followed 65-85% of Rajaswala Paricharya and 0 followed 85-100% of Rajaswala Paricharya. The women belonging to Hindu follow an average of 73.59% of Rajaswala Paricharya, Muslim women follow an average of 79.95% and Christian women follow an average of 60.42% of Rajaswala Paricharya.

### DISTRIBUTION OF SYMPTOMS DURING MENSTRUATION

Symptoms during Menstruation	Frequency	Percentage
Lower Abdomen Pain	46	46.00%
Lower Backache	57	57.00%
Pimples	27	27.00%
Breast Tenderness	11	11.00%
Calf Muscle Cramps	36	36.00%
Loss of appetite	14	14.00%
Hot flushes	10	10.00%
Nausea/Vomiting	3	3.00%
Headache	23	23.00%
Weakness	39	39.00%
Excitability/Depression	20	20.00%

### DISTRIBUTION OF GYNECOLOGICAL DISORDERS

Gynecological Disorders	Frequency	Percentage
Menorrhagia	5	5.00%
Polymenorrhea	1	1.00%
Metrorrhagia	2	2.00%
Oligomenorrhea	15	15.00%
Hypomenorrhea	1	1.00%
DUB	0	0.00%
Fibroid	1	1.00%
Endometriosis	0	0.00%
Infertility	3	3.00%
POF	0	0.00%
PCOS	7	7.00%
Primary Dysmenorrhea	13	13.00%
Secondary Dysmenorrhea	11	11.00%
Carcinoma	0	0.00%

#### Results

Those women who have followed 35-65% of Rajaswala Paricharya have an average frequency of 4 menstrual symptoms which is around 36.36% of the considered symptoms. Those who have followed 65-85% of Rajaswala Paricharya have an average frequency of 2.5 menstrual symptoms which is around 22.73% of considered menstrual symptoms. Those who have followed 85-100% of Rajaswala Paricharya have an average frequency of 2.7 menstrual symptoms which is around 24.55% of considered menstrual symptoms. we can also observe that the number of women having any gynecological disease is less among those who have followed the Rajaswala Paricharya above 80%. There are a total of 36 women

who have followed the Rajaswala Paricharya above 80%. Among these women 16 women i.e., 44.44% of the women have any one or more gynecological disorders whereas 20 women i.e., 55.56% of women have no gynecological disorders.

### DISCUSSION

Rajaswala is the period in the Ritu Chakra where the woman will be more vulnerable. Various physiological changes during this period take place which demands taking rest to comply with the difficulties that the body faces. To cope with this susceptible state of the woman, the Rajaswala Paricharya is explained in the classics which mention various aharas and viharas which are supposed to follow during the Rajaswala period.

### **Ahara:**

Havisya and Yavaka are the food items that are suggested during the Rajaswala period. This mainly consists of Shali, Yava, Ghrita, and Ksheera. The menstrual phase of the cycle is a phase that is high in nutritional demand. Coping with this demand is required to maintain a healthy state. Agni or digestive fire will be low during this period. The food consumed must be easily digestible, so the above food is helpful. It also helps in kindling the digestive fire and thus maintaining health. Food which is Ushna, Teekshna, Katu, and Lavana are contraindicated which might depreciate the health state of the woman.

### **Vihara:**

Since the menstrual phase is the vulnerable phase, some of the activities during this phase might negatively affect the health state of the woman. Activities like running, laughing, and talking excessively might cause the vitiation of Vata dosha which has adverse health effects. The following are some of the mentioned rules among viharas.

**Darbhasamstharashayini** – Rajaswala Paricharya mentions that during Rajaswala the woman must sleep on a bed made of or covered with darbha. This may be due to the purifying properties of Darbha. This phase of the menstrual cycle is more prone to infections, it might help to prevent these infections.

**Divaswapna** – She should avoid sleeping in the daytime. Sleeping in the daytime leads to the production of kapha dosha which further produces Ama, thus leading to diseases.

**Anjanam** - She should avoid the application of Anjana.

**Ashrupata** – Avoid shedding tears during the time of rajaswala.

**Snana** – Acharyas mentioned that ‘*snanam dukhasahatvena*’. If she does *snana*, then the *stambhana* occurs, and menstrual bleeding decreases. That might be the cause to avoid *snana* during the menstrual phase.

**Anulepa and Abhyanga** – Avoid oil massaging and smearing with sandal paste on the body.

**Hasana and Kadana** – Laughing and talking too much is contraindicated.

**Nakhachedana** – Plucking of nails should be avoided. During the time of menstruation, the body became weak.

**Pradhavana and Vyayama** – Running and too much exercise should be avoided. During this time, the body becomes weak due to the *raktha srava* and there will be hormonal changes. Excess exertion leads to *vata prakopa* and *rasa dusti*. If it is repeated continuously, this leads to infertility.

The use of *Swedana karma*, *Vamana*, and *Nasya karma* is contraindicated because it causes *dosha prakopa*.

Coitus is contraindicated during menstruation. Intercourse during this time only going to worsen the condition for the well-being of the women and infections also may occur.

She should not adorn herself with ornaments to avoid sexual attraction.

These regimens are to be followed on the first 3 days of menstruation. Following these regimens might be able to overcome menstrual disorders.

## **CONCLUSION**

*Rajaswala Paricharya* was conceptually considered to maintain the health of the women. From this study, we can conclude that there is a positive relationship between *Rajaswala Paricharya* and the Menstrual health of the woman. Even with the small sample size considered for the survey study, we can observe very good results in terms of the relation between *Rajaswala Paricharya* and Menstrual symptoms. The women who have followed a lesser number of *Paricharyas* have a greater number of menstrual symptoms. Whereas those who have followed a greater number of *Paricharyas* have lesser menstrual symptoms. In terms of Gynecological disorders owing to the challenge of a smaller sample size we only get a marginal positive result. Women who have followed a higher number of *Rajaswala Paricharya* have a slightly lesser disease rate. If the study is conducted with a larger sample size, we are hopeful for a greater positive result in terms of gynecological disorders.

Following the *Rajaswala Paricharya* with some modifications will help to maintain the equilibrium of health during the most sensitive period of menstruation. *Rajaswala Paricharya* helps women respond healthily to the drastic physical and cyclic changes during the menstrual cycle.

## REFERENCES

1. D.C. Dutta, Hiralal Konar, Textbook of Gynecology, 6<sup>th</sup> edition 2013, Jaypee Brothers Medical Publishers (P) Ltd, New Delhi, Pg. no. 82
2. Dr. Pallavi Pai, Dr. Sarita Bhutada, Dr. Prasad Pandkar, 2015, *Rajaswala Paricharya: Effect on Menstrual Cycle and Its Associated Symptoms*, IOSR Journal of Dental and Medical Sciences, Volume 14, Issue 2, PP 82-87
3. Roshni KP, 2019, Concept of Rajaswala Paricharya (Care for Woman during Menstruation) in Ayurveda: Tool to Enhance Fertility, International Journal of Pharmacognosy and Chinese Medicine, Volume 3 Issue 4
4. Murray CL, Lopez A, 1996, The Global Burden of Disease: A Comprehensive Assessment of Mortality and Disability from Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors in 1990 and projected to 2020 (Volume 1). Cambridge: Harvard University Press;
5. Prof. Priyavrat Sharma, Caraka Samhita, Chaukamba Orientalia, Varanasi, 2014, Volume 2, Pg. No. 523

**Source of Support: Nil**

**Conflict of Interest: None Declared**

How to cite this URL: Smaran B L & Asha F Hosur: Critical analysis of rajaswala paricharya in relation to menstrual disorders a cross sectional survey study. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2023 {cited July 2023} Available from: [http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/1718\\_1723.pdf](http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/1718_1723.pdf)