

A LITERARY REVIEW OF ARTAVAKSHAYA IN AYURVEDA W.S.R. TO OLIGO-HYPOMENORRHEA – REVIEW BASED ON LITERARY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Menstrual irregularity is one of the most frequent Gynecological disorders among women during reproductive period. Due to changes in lifestyle like no time for self, use of mobiles or other electronic gadgets, busy schedule, stressful lifestyle, change in food habit (junk food or fast food) etc. As a Result, our body doesn't get adequate nutrients required and consequently, stress or depression causes hormonal imbalances which causes menstrual irregularities. Artavakshaya is one of the most common menstrual irregularities. Artavakshaya is characterized by irregularities of cycles and scanty menstruation. Artavakshaya can be compared to Oligomenorrhea or Hypomenorrhea. Artavakshaya is also seen as one of the manifestations of the Artavadushti like Vataj Artavadushti and Ksheenartava dushti. Our Ayurvedic classics describe various modalities like lifestyle modification, Pathyapathya, Oral medication and Panchakarma procedure (Basti) for the management of Aartavakshaya.

Keywords: Artavakshaya, Artavadushti, Ksheenartava, Pathyapathya.

INTRODUCTION

God has gifted women with rare and unique phenomenon of giving birth to new life. As we see today, many gynecological problems have developed because of drastic changes in lifestyle and diet in modern civilization. There is daily interaction with unhealthy foods, polluted environment, mental stress, more use of mobile and no physical activities that result in several clinical manifestations. There are certain abnormal conditions where the capability of fertility is hampered. This may lead to many gynecological problems, the most common problem is Artavakshaya, PCOS and Infertility etc.

In ayurveda, importance is given to the health of a women most because a healthy family, a healthy society and a healthy nation is completely depending on the health of the women. Acharya Manu has mentioned that women are the origin of progeny.

In Ayurveda, **Acharya Charaka** has mentioned the shuddha Artava lakshana that Artava comes after one month and with this period no pichhilata, no Vedana, no burning sensation and duration of Rajah srava is five days, **NA ATI ALPA NA ATI BAHU**¹. The color resembles Gunjaphala, padma Alakta, indragopa, shasharik and Laksharas². This is considered as normal menstruation in ayurveda. Artava is essential for the origin of Garbha, and it commences when women attain puberty. The abnormal menstrual flow indicates scanty menstrual flow both in amount and duration with associated symptoms of pain in lower abdomen, back, vagina and can be counted as **Artavakshaya**³ or **ksheenartava**⁴ or **vataj artavadusti**⁵.

Artavakshaya is explained by **Acharya Sushruta** and is characterized by **Yathochitakala - adarshanam, Alpartava** and **Yoni vedana**⁶.

Menstruation is an integral part of women in her reproductive life. Normal & regular menstruation represent the gynecological health of a female reproductive system. The normal menstruation is that which has interval between two menstrual cycles is of one month, duration of flow for five days without any pain and burning sensation. Menstrual blood should not be very scanty or excessive in amount.

In ayurvedic classics Artava is taken as an update of Rasa dhatu. Rasa kshaya is one of the causative factors for Artavakshaya because of kshaya of Uttar dhatu (Rakta) and which is because of kshaya of purva dhatu and we know that Artava is updhatu of Rasa.

Artavakshaya has not been mentioned as a distinct disease, but it has been described as a symptom of many gynecological disorders. Acharya Sushruta has explained the symptoms of Artavakshaya. Artavakshaya has also been mentioned in Ashta artava dushti as Ksheena Artava.

Artavakshaya can be compared with **Oligomenorrhea** and **Hypomenorrhea** based on their signs and symptoms. Menstrual bleeding occurring more than 35 days apart and occurs continuously at that frequency is called **Oligomenorrhea**⁷ and when, the menstrual bleeding is unduly scanty and lasts for less than 2 days, it is called **Hypomenorrhea**⁸. Normal and regular menstrual cycle is regulated by proper functioning of Hypothalamo – pituitary - ovarian axis and its imbalance causes menstrual disorders.

Acharya Sushruta said **Artavakshaya** should be treated by use of purifying measures (*sanshodhana*) and *Agneya* substance⁹. *Shodhan chikitsa* as explained by **Acharya Dalhan** includes only *vaman karma*. **Acharya Charakrapani** explains that both *vaman* and *virechan karma* can be administered. **Acharya kashyapa** has mentioned that it is an *Anuvasan Sadhya vyadhi*. In *Shaman chikitsa*, *Agneya dravya* should be used as they are *pittavraddhikar*.

According to **Acharya Charak** "**Basti Vata haranam**¹⁰". *Vata* plays key role in all types of *yonis roga*. *Basti* treatment is mentioned as the best treatment for menstrual disorders of women in Ayurvedic literature.

According to Ayurveda, Oligo-Hypomenorrhea doesn't occur without vitiation of *vata* thus it has been told that first *vata* should be normalized and then treatment for other *doshas* should be done.

Pakvashaya is the seat of *vata*. **Basti** can be considered as the closest path to reaching **pakvashaya** than other treatment procedures.

Nirukti of Artavakshaya – **‘Raktasayea pramanahani’**

Rakta – raja / artava

Pramanahani – decrease in amount¹¹.

Praman of artava – 4 anjali (in a healthy person)

Nidan Sevan –

The mula of artavakshaya srotas are garbhashaya and artava vahi dhamni where injury causes Bandhatva, maithuna asahishnuta and artavanasha¹². According to Kashyapa, after proper snehana and swedana in a mradukoshata vyakti adhika aushad sevana, atiusna annapana sevana jivarakta skalana occur thereby causing vata prakopa leading to pralepa, unmad, hikka, beejopaghata and pushp aghat (Artava Dusti)¹³.

Lakshana -

Acharya Sushruta briefly described the *Lakshana* and *Chikitsa* of *Aartavakshaya*¹⁴ but While describing the *Aartavadosha* he has used the word *Kshinartava*¹⁵. आर्तवक्षये यथोचितकालादर्शनमल्सा वा योनिवेदना च । (सु.सू.१५/१२)

1- *Yathochitkaladarshanam*: It means delay from normal duration in menstrual cycle.

2- *Alpata*: Decrease in either duration or Amount of flow.

3- *Yoni vedana*

Acharya Sushruta, while explaining about *Nashtaartava*, says that the vitiation of *vata* and *kapha* does *Avarana* to the passage of *Artava* leading to *Sroto Avrodha* of *artavaha srotas* causing *Artavakshaya*¹⁶.

Acharya Vagabhatta did not use the word *Artavakshaya* clearly but used word.

*Kshinartava*¹⁷.

According to *Sharangadhara* – He has mentioned *Ksheenartava* as synonyms of *Aartavakshaya*¹⁸.

As in our classics, *Aartavakshaya* has not been explained as a different disease, but it has been explained as a symptom for many of the *Yonivyapada* (*Vatala & Shushka*)¹⁹ and *Artavadushti* (*Vataja & Kshina*)²⁰

Samprapti –The samprapti of artavakshaya involves two mechanisms.

1. Marga avarodha janya

2. Dhatu kshaya janya

In marga avarodha janya artavakshaya, involvement of doshas is vata and kapha. According to Charaka the vitiation of artavavaha srotas occur by means of sanga. The avarodha is caused either by kapha or vata alone or vata kapha together. According to Sushruta, vata kapha are the factors causing avarana to artava vaha srotas. Pitta is not included because it causes artavavraddhi. Sushruta has also explained that the trauma or injury to artavavaha srotas causes vandhyatwa, maithuna asahishnuta and Artavanaasha.

In dhatukshaya janya Artavakshaya,

nidan sevan -> vat prakopa -> agni vaishmya ->

aam utpatti -> ras dusti -> **Artavakshaya**

AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF ARTAVAKSHAYA

Nidan parivarjan – Eradication of the causative factor is the basic treatment of all disorders.

‘Tatra samshodhanameva ca agneyanam dravyanam vidhiyay upayogah’ (su.su.15/12)

□ *Acharya Sushruta* mentioned that *Aartavakshaya* should be treated by *Samshodhan* (*Virechana and uttarbasti*) and *Agneya Dravya*²¹.

□ *Agneya dravya*²² are used as they are *pittavradhikar*. With the help of this, *Agni* is stimulated which helps in digestion of *Ama* and formation of *Ahara Rasa* which later on form the *Ras dhatu* which form the *Artava* (*Artava is updhatu of Rasa*).

□ *Acharya Sushruta* also mentioned *Ahara dravya* for the management of *Artavakshaya* i.e., consumption of fish, kulatha, kanji, tila, masha, sura, Gomutra, udashvita, shukta, dadhi etc²³.

□ The use of *Swayoni Vardhaka Dravya* (i.e., having the same properties of *Dravya*, *Guna* and *Karma*)²⁴.

‘Sanshodhaniya vamanam na virekah etyapare’

Dalhana says that for purification, only *vaman karma* should be used, no *virechana*, because it reduces pitta which in turn decreases *agneya* nature in body. Consequently, *artava* decreased. *Agneya* substances i.e., tila, Musha and sukta can be used.

□ *Acharya Chakrapani* instructed both *Vaman* and *Virechana karma* can be used in the management of *Artavakshaya*.

□ Acharya Kashyap has mentioned that it is an Anuvasan Sadhya Vyadhi²⁵. In all disorders of artava, use of Lasuna, Satpushpa and Shatavari is helpful.

□ The Drugs capable of increasing the Rakta should be used (**Raktakari chikitsa**)²⁶.

□ Vatasamaka Chikitsa may be considered because according to Acharya Charak, Vata play key role in all types of yonis roga. It means a woman never suffers from yoni roga without vitiation of Vata. So, first of all Vata should be normalized then treatment for other doshas should be done²⁷.

Abhyantara Chikitsa –

Kwath –

1. Til, shelu, karvi and guda in the form of decoction.
2. Krishna tila kwath with guda, mishreya, methika, Muli, Gajar, shatpushpa etc. in the form of decoction.
3. Tila and guda in the form of decoction

Churna –

1. Jyotishmati patra, sarjika kshar or rajika, ugra and asan grind together then taken with sheetal water.
2. Shatapushpa kalp

Vati –

1. Rajah pravartini vati
2. Yograj guggul
3. Chandraprabha vati

Taila – Shatpushpa taila

Ghrata – Phalghrata, Brihat shatavari ghrata

Sthanika Chikitsa –

Varti-

Ikswakubeeja, Danti, Chapala, Madanphala, Guda, Surabeeja, Yavashuka, Snuhikshira all grinding together used in the form of Varti.

Basti Chikitsa –

1. Anuvasana Basti – Shatavaryadi
2. Uttar Basti – Shatpushpa Taila

Pathyapathya –

Pathya -

1. Matsya, kulattha, kanji, takra, sura, gomutra, ardhaudak takra, dadhi and chukra are beneficial²⁸.

2. Use of Lasuna, shatpushpa and shatavari²⁹.

Apathya –

1. Ahara capable of aggravating nidanas are contraindicated.
2. Diwaswapna, ratri jagarana etc³⁰.

CONCLUSION

Artavakshaya occurs due to imbalance of vata and kapha which leads to marga avarodha of artava vaha srotas and also occur by dhatukshaya janya. In ayurvedic classical texts, according to Sushruta, Artavakshaya should be treated by sanshodhan.

(Virechana and uttar basti) and Agneya dravya. Use of Agneya Dravya followed by Pathyapathya not only relieves the kapha which does avarana to apanavata but also increases the quantity of Artava.

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