

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY OF MENSTRUATION IN PERSPECTIVE OF AYURVEDA CLASSICS

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ABSTRACT

The physiology of *artava* formation & regulation is mentioned in every Samhita. The disorders of *artava* are responsible for cause of each & every diseases in females. Hence separate chapter with title *Yoni vyapat* has been mentioned in every classic which constitute all gynecological problems aroused due to *artava*. In present scenario, menstrual disorders from menarche up to menopause, troubles the women due to change in lifestyle & their activities. With the help of classical reference it is necessary to know about the pathophysiology of these disorders in order to help the patient to get rid of diseases, & also to achieve success in treatment. Pathophysiology explains about the functional changes taking during onset of disease. This is explained as *dosha-dushya samurchana*. So it is important to know about the *samprapti ghatakas* in order to understand the pathology, & treat disease by applying *samprapti vighatana chikitsa*. Majorly in menstrual disorder the commonly involved *ghatakas* are *Agni, srotas, tridoshas* as these play important role in formation & regulation of *Artava*.

Keywords: patho-physiology, *agni,srotas, Tridoshas*, menstrual disorder

INTRODUCTION

Artava is considered as *upadhatu* of *rasa*¹. various references are found in many of *samhitas* regarding the creation of *artava* where there is wide description about this giving the knowledge about importance of its formation & expulsion. On compiling each every description clears the concept of *artava utpatti* & its expulsion. There is common complaint regarding the view of ovulation, not been explained in Ayurveda? But collection of various descriptions regarding *artava* clears this concept.

The disorders of *artava* are responsible for cause of each & every diseases in

females². Hence separate chapter with title *Yoni vyapat* has been mentioned in every classic which constitute all gynecological problems aroused due to *artava*. But before knowing the pathology it is necessary to clear the physiological concepts regarding the *artava utpatti* & various factors influencing this process. Then only it is possible to treat all *Yoni vyapat* with the help of *samprapti vighatana chikitsa*.

Review on ovulation in Ayurveda:

Which gives birth to another object by removing its covering or secrecy is called *Beeja (Seed)*. *Beeja (Seed)* has capability to

produce another thing. While describing essential factors for conception, it is quoted that *Beeja* is one of the four essential factors of conception contributed by mother and father³.

Beeja according to origin is of two types, *Stree beeja* –*Artava beeja* (ovum), *Pum beeja*- *shukra*. *Sushruta* opines that *beeja* gets nourishment through *raktavaha siras* & moves to *garbhashaya* gets *artava* qualities due to action of *dhatwagni* & is accumulated in *garbhashaya*⁴.

In *sushruta* it is mentioned that *artava beeja* is formed from *ahara rasaroopi rakta* which reaches the *garbhashaya* through *sukshma-siras*. The *upachaya* of this *rakta* forms *beeja* & due to *artava dhatwagni*, *beeja* is converted to *artava*⁵.

In similar way contemporary science explains it as Ovulation, the phase of a menstrual cycle in which a mature egg is released from the ovarian follicles into the oviduct and is available to be fertilized. The process of ovulation is controlled by Hypothalamic pituitary Ovarian Axis⁶.

Review on menstruation in Ayurveda:

Artava classified as *dustartava* & *adustartava*⁷.

Drustartava: which newly formed & has capacity to fertilize? *Drustartava* constitutes *artava* in *Dhatu roopa* that which does *dharana* of *deha* formed through *dhatwan-taragata parinama*, i.e from *ahara rasa* to *rasa dhatu* & respective formation of *dhatu*s. This *artava dhatu* nourishes the body until the attainment of maturation.

The *artava* formation takes during the *garbhakala* but is exhibited only after the *paripurnata* of *dhatu*s i.e complete maturation of *dhatu*s⁸. So until attainment of maturation *Artava* in form of *Dhatu* nourishes the body. So, *artava dhatu* is 7th *dhatu* in female body

which is inward going process to nourish female body and the *artavavaha siras* suck the *sarabhaga* & create *beeja rupi artava*. After *dhatu paripurnata avastha*, the *beeja rupa artava* attains maturation, & results in monthly discharge in form of *rajas*.

As smell of flower is perceived only after blooming and not during stage of flower bud, in similar way, due to *kalantara parinama* attainment of maturation results in enhancement of growth along with secondary sexual characters like development of breast, growth of auxiliary hair due to *upachaya* of *rajas*⁹.

Drustartava is *rutukala*¹⁰. The *upachaya* of newly ongoing formation of *artava* takes place with help of *beejaraktavaha siras*.

Adrustartava: which is old in origin & has to be expelled out & which is formed after collection of every month i.e “*mase mase upachiyante*”¹¹,

On knowing this classification it clears that menstruation depends on that specific time or duration. Depending upon this time i.e *kala*, specificity of time for formation of *garbha* or failure of attaining of conception is decided. This *kala* is termed as” *Rutu kala* “.

DISCUSSION

Depending on *dosha-dusti* or derangements of *doshas*, *dosha-dushya sammurchana* takes place causing *vyadhi*. This process is termed as “Patho physiology”, which explains the functional changes in causing diseases. The importance of *samprapti* – *vighatana chikitsa* lies here. Because the treatment have to be given for its root cause rather than treating only symptoms. As in present days women are affected more with menstrual disorders it made us to think about the disorders from their root level.

Importance of Agni:

The root cause for any *artavavaha sroto vikara* would be *Agni dusti*. . As Agni place important role in formation of *artava*. This is cleared when we understand the process of *Artava* in relation with its *utpatti*, *vahana* & *Niskramana*. Any disturbance in this process leads to *dusti* of *artava* leading to many disorders of women.

Dhatwantargata parinamana from rasa to artava: The *sara bhaga* that is formed out of *rasadi dhatusneha parampara* in female body is *artava*. *Artava*, is that which is regularly formed after one month. The *garbhashaya* gets its nourishment through the *siras*. The *sara bhaga* of some part of *rasa dhatu* is carried through these *siras* to *garbhashaya*. This *sarabhaga* gets accumulated on inner lining of *garbhashaya* (endometrium formation), helps in nourishment of *beeja rupi artava* (development of *graphian* follicle). If conception occurs, it helps in growth of fetus. If there is no conception, with the help of *apana vata* it is discharged through *vagina* for 3 days.

Charaka Samhita explains that flow for five days without excess or scanty flow is considered as *shuddha artava*. But these days, the following conditions are found:

- 1.Scanty bleeding observed only on first day & then completely stops.
- 2.Excessive flow observed in girls for around seven days, without any structural deformity, usually considered due to hormonal disturbances

These symptoms are observed due to failure of proper formation of *sarabhaga* from *rasa dhatu*. So due to *ama* formation, *siras* around the *garbhashaya* do not receive enough supply of *rasa*. Hence there is failure in proper formation of *beeja rupi artava*. In these conditions, the process of digestion

has to be given importance, as there would be *Agni dusti*.

Pitta as the *ushma* influences the process, helps in conversion of *beeja* to *artava*. This explains the concept of ovulation & clears that for proper ovulatory cycles the *pittoshma* in form of *Agni* is necessary. The impairment in this process lead to Anovulatory menstruation.

Importance of Srotas.

Artava utpatti, *vahana*, *niskramana* process takes in its respective *srotas* I.e *artavavaha srotas*, having its *moola* as *Garbhashaya*. *Susruta samhita* mentions that any injury to these *srotas* it results in infertility, etc. The *sara bhaga* enters the *garbhashaya* through *siras* & also as *rasa sara bhaga* which is *saumya guna*, gets converted to *artava* by attaining the *agneya* quality, *artava* gets nourishment in its respective *srotas* i.e *artavavaha srotas* & is expelled in form of “*raja*” through *srotas*.

So any obstacle formed in *siras* or *srotas*, it gives arise to problems like irregular menstruation, PCOD, infertility etc..due to *srotorodha*, *dusta vata* & *kapha* are active in *artavavaha srotas*.

Importance of Tridoshas: *Nishkramana* (Expulsion) of *artava* after *Upachaya vriddhi* of *artava*, from *ahara rasa* due to *Agni paka kriya*, in form of *shuddha artava* is regulated by *apana vata*. .so any abnormality due to *udavarta* (upward movement of *vata*) resulting in improper expulsion of *artava*, causing *artava kshaya*.

As it is mentioned that there is no *yoni vyadhi* without involvement of *vata* because, it is the *vata* which is *shareera sandhanakara*. The functional health of reproductive system of women mainly depends upon *vayu*. When *vayu* is properly functioning without derangement it brings about healthy

process. When *vayu* is deranged or becomes defective, these processes also are hampered.

It is not enough to consider only *pittadosha* responsible for *artava* formation. It is essential to think about the *vata dosha*. When *vata dosha* normalizes, the transportation process of *sara bhaga* of *rasa* travels without any obstruction. So because of this *garbhashaya* receives *sara bhaga*, through *sira*, *artava* is produced & then healthy menses is regulated.

In these days, common complaint about the heavy bleeding, more than 7 days, around the age group 30-40 years. Generally women with *pitta prakruti*, experience heavy bleeding. Also in young age i.e from 16-30 years, more bleeding experienced naturally, taking into consideration of woman or girl *prakruti*.

When *pitta dosha* has increased & there is *anubandha* of *vata*, results in heavy bleeding.

At around 40 years & around, all dhatus have attained full maturation. *Dhatukshaya* takes place normally after this age. Gradually the period of *sarvadehika vata* begins. If we analyze *doshas* in & around this year, *pitta* is predominant along with increasing state of *vata*, *kapha* is in weak state. So women overall physical strength & her capacity reduces. Some women have natural menopause, some undergo menopausal troubles like *atyartava*, *aniyamita rajasrava* etc based on *vyadhi kshamatva* of female.

CONCLUSION

The knowledge of pathophysiology plays important role in every aspect of treating & to understand the symptoms exhibited. It's necessary to know every prose & con factors responsible for manifesting the disease. Here in this article an effort has been made

to understand the factors involved in causing the menstrual disorders. As there is no manifestation of disease without overruling the involvement of *tridoshas*, the role of these in causing menstrual disorders cannot be neglected. *Agni*, the *prana* of *shareera*, plays important role in formation & regulation of *artava*. In case of *Agni dusti*, it hampers the process of regulation of menstruation. The *vahana* (transportation) & *nishkramana* (expulsion) of *artava* is mainly carried through *Adusta srotas & siras*. If obstruction in these results in *alpa artava*, or *artava kshaya*. Hence mainly Role of *Tridoshas*, *Agni, srotas & siras* have been explained in accordance with the role of these playing in pathophysiology of various menstrual disorders. Further there is scope for elaboration of subject in same with other perspectives.

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