



SHWETA PRADAR IN AYURVEDA

¹Neeshu Kumari, ²Pramod Kumar Maghi

¹ms (Ay) Prasuti Tantra & Stri Roga, Assistant Professor, Dr Prakash Chandra Ayurvedic Medical Collage Hospital Bela, Naubatpu, Patna – Bihar

²ms (Ay) Ph.D Pr

Stri And Prasuti Tantra & Stri Roga, Principal Cum – Medical Director, Phoukse College of Ayurved Research Center & Hospital, Lal Khadan, Bilaspur – Chhattisgarh.

Corresponding Author: deepakruddu@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Shweta Pradara is one of the most common and burning problems faced by women all around the globe. No woman is an exception to this illness. Many of the gynaecological disorders present *Shweta pradara* as the significant complaint which, if neglected, may lead to ascending infections harming the general health and disturbing the women psychologically. *Shweta pradara* can be a symptom of many diseases and an independent entity. The white discharge with foul smell makes it embracing to get into social gatherings and even engage in her personal affairs. The white discharge may start as a simple problem and end in severity up to infertility if not treated at the right time. Many treatments are prescribed for this problem but are not free from side effects and recurrence. Hence, the selection of appropriate treatment without disturbing the other system is essential. The present study has been designed to substantiate the *Nidana* and *Samprapti*, *Samprapti Vighantana* of *Shweta Pradara* so that an alternative better form of therapy can be made available in those suffering from *Shweta Pradara*. She was taking into account the complications of untreated *Shweta Pradara*, like infertility, etc. Therefore, this condition must be actively treated, and the quality of life must be restored.

Keywords: *Shweta Pradara*, Vaginal Discharge, Infertility, White Discharge.

INTRODUCTION

Today, when we are stepping into the 21st century, we can see remarkable societal changes. The noteworthy is women stepping out of their homes and playing key roles in various fields. However, because of the present quick and changing way of life, women are going towards so many unwholesome lifestyle modifications and not maintaining proper hygiene due to fast living conditions. That's why she can't give careful consideration to her well-being and gets up with physical and mental health problems. In the present scenario, every woman wants to become an efficient multi-tasker, which is why she has become so busy that she cannot demark that this busy lifestyle implies stress. Stressful modern lifestyle, food habits, social status, and occupation affects the local envi-

ronment of the vagina, which leads to higher incidences of Shweta Pradara.

Nirukti of the term Shweta Pradara:

Shweta means anything white in colour. Pradara means excess or in increased quantity, which indicates excessive flow. (1) Hence the combined term Shweta pradara means excessive white discharge per vagina.

Different varieties of vaginal discharges are explained under different contexts of pradara. An attempt is made to summarise the various types of vaginal discharge based on consistency, colour & smell etc, in Table 1.

Table No. 1 - Types of Vaginal discharge as explained in Ayurvedic classics

<i>Tanu</i> (thin) ⁽²⁾	The discharge is thin or watery and is noticed when Vata dosha is vitiated.
<i>Shweta</i> (White), <i>Sakapha</i> ⁽³⁾	The discharge is thick and mucoid. It involves the vitiation of <i>kapha dosha</i> .
<i>Snigdha</i> (unctuous) ⁽⁴⁾	The discharge is unctuous.
<i>Vidagdha</i> (burnt like), <i>peeta</i> ⁽⁵⁾	The discharge is mucopurulent. It mainly involves vitae of <i>kapha</i> and <i>pitta</i> .
<i>Picchhila</i> (slimy) ⁽⁶⁾	The discharge is slimy. It is found when kapha is vitiated <i>and</i> accompanied by <i>vata</i> .
<i>Durgandhi</i> (purulent) ⁽⁷⁾	The discharge is a purulent one. She was noted in vitiation of all three <i>doshas</i> .

There is no reference for the terminology "Shweta Pradara" in the Brihatrayee - the three leading treatises of Ayurveda. Anyhow, Cakrapanidatta, the commentator of Charaka Samhita, has explained Shwetapradara as pandura pradara (8), and Indu, the commentator of Ashtanga Sangraha, explains it as Shukla asrigdara. (9) There is a mention of Shweta pradara in the later textbooks of Ayurveda like Sharangadhara Samhita(10), Bhava Prakash,(11) Yoga Ratnakara (12) in the context of yoni srava. In all these refer-

ences, it has not been explained as a separate disease entity but as a symptom of an underlying pathology. Despite this, Shweta pradara seeks maximum attention from the physicians as, irrespective of the underlying pathology, patients seek treatment, giving utmost importance to this symptom. Moreover, it remains a challenge to the gynecologists. The various disorders in which Shweta pradara exhibits itself as a symptom are explained in Table 2.

Table 2: Disorders where Shweta pradara is a main symptom

<i>Yoni vyapat</i>	<i>Lakshanas</i>
<i>Kaphaja yonivyapat</i> ⁽¹³⁾	<i>Picchhila</i> (slimy), <i>kanduyukta</i> (associated with itching), <i>atisheetala</i> (cold) <i>and alpavedana</i> (less pain)

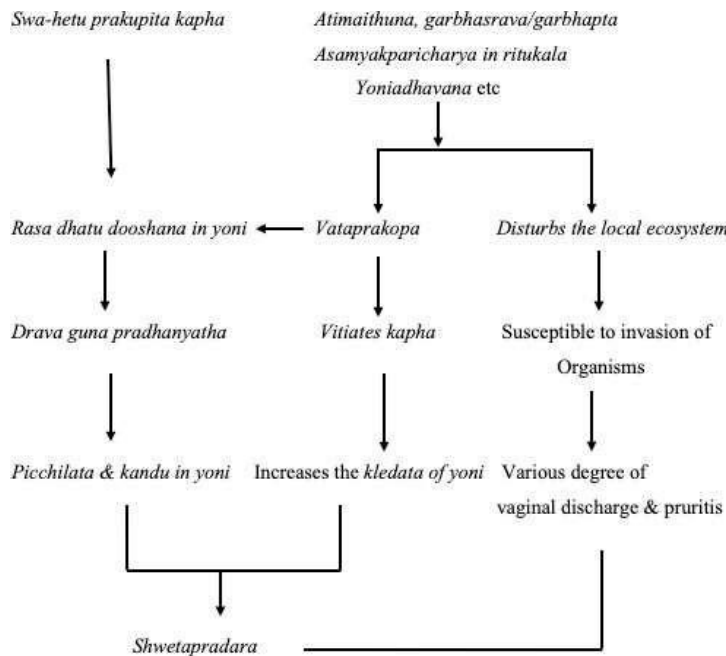
<i>Sannipatika Yonivyapat</i> or <i>Tridoshaja</i> or <i>Sarvaja yonivyapat</i> ⁽¹⁴⁾	When the condition involves all the <i>doshas</i> (biohumours), it presents with <i>Shweta</i> (white) and <i>picchila</i> (slimy) discharge along with <i>daha</i> (burning sensation) and <i>shola</i> (pain).
<i>Upapluta yonivyapat</i> ⁽¹⁵⁾	White mucoidal discharge (<i>shweta, sakapha</i>) white (<i>Pandu</i>) discharge associated with pricking pain.
<i>Aticharana yonivyapat</i> <i>Acharana yonivyapat</i> <i>Atyananda yonivyapat</i> <i>Karnini yonivyapat</i> ⁽¹⁶⁾	Even though the cardinal symptoms of the four yonivyapat are different, kandu (itching) and paicchhilya (sliminess) are in common as all these are due to the predominance of <i>kapha</i> , and the term “ <i>paicchhilya</i> ” refers to discharge.
<i>Prasramsini yonivyapat</i> ⁽¹⁷⁾	One of its features includes- <i>Syandate</i> - meaning- <i>sravati</i> - indicating towards vaginal discharge.
<i>Pittala yonivyapat</i> ⁽¹⁸⁾	It may be associated with purulent vaginal discharge.

Shweta pradara is usually the main presenting symptom of an underlying pathology; hence, its etiopathogenesis is the principal disease. However, based on

its clinical features, the following etiopathogenesis may be considered.

Samprapti of Shweta pradara: (Etiopathogenesis)

The *samprapti* can be explained as depicted in the flow chart below:



Samprapti ghataka: (Component of Pathogenesis)

Dosha : Kapha, Vata.

Dhatu: Rasa, Rakta

Srotas: Artavavaha srotas.

Rogamarga : Abhyantara.
 Adhistana: Yoni, Garbhashaya
 Sroto Dusti : Atipravritti
 Vyakthasthana: Yoni

Chikitsa (Treatment)

The treatment modality of Shweta pradara involves the Abhyantara (internal administration) and Bahya prayogas (external administration). The drugs used for internal administration are described in Table 3.

Table 3: Drugs used in Abhyantara prayoga (Internal administration):

S. No	Drug	Scientific source	Reference
1	Amalaki choorna with Honey	<i>Emblica officinalis</i> Gaertn	Charaka Samhita, Chikitsa sthana, 30/117
2	Rohitaka mula kalka (paste of root powder) with water	<i>Tecomella undulata</i> (Sm.)	Bhava prakasha, Chikitsa sthana 69/7
3	Amalaki beeja kalka (paste of seed powder) mixed with honey and sugar	<i>Emblica officinalis</i> Gaertn	Bhava prakasha, Chikitsa sthana 69/7
4	Nagakeshara with takra (buttermilk)	<i>Mesua ferrea</i> Linn.	Yoga Ratnakara, Soma roga chikitsa
5	Lodhra kalka (paste of bark powder), along with Nyagrodha Kashaya (decoction)	<i>Symplocos racemosa</i> Roxb. <i>Ficus bengalensis</i> Linn	Charaka Samhita, Chikitsa sthana, 30/118
6	Chakramarda moola with tandulodaka	<i>Cassia tora</i> Linn	Yoga Ratnakara, Soma roga chikitsa

The different formulations used in Shweta pradara are described in table.4

Table 4: Formulations used in Shweta pradara

S.No	Formulation	Reference
1	Darvyadi kwatha	Sharangadhara Samhita, Madhyama khanda 2/112
2	Nyagrodhadi kashaya	Sushruta Samhita, Sutrasthana 38/49
3	Pushyanuga churna	Charaka Samhita, Chikitsa sthana, 30/90-96
4	Ashokarishta	Bhaishajya Ratnavali, Striroga adhikara 114-116
5	Lakshmanarishta	Bhaishajya Ratnavali, Pradara roga 565/115-117
6	Patrangasava	Bhaishajya Ratnavali, Pradara Chikitsa 122-126
7	Lodhrasava	Ashtanga Hridaya Chikitsa, 12/24-27
8	Ashoka ghrita	Bhaishajya Ratnavali, Pradara Chikitsa 17-21
9	Kalyanaka ghrita	Ashtanga Hridaya Uttarantra 6/26-28
10	Sukumara grhrita	Ashtanga Sangraha Chikitsasthana 15/20
11	Kadali Kanda Ghrita	Yoga Ratnakara, Somaroga chikitsa

Bahyaprayogas: (External administration): (19)

- Yoniprakshalana (Vaginal Irrigation) – done with drugs like Lodhra (Symplocos racemosa Roxb.) & Vata (Ficus bengalensis Linn) twak kashaya, Triphala kwatha (Terminalia chebula Retz, Terminalia bellirica. Roxb and Emblica officinalis Gaertn decoction) with takra (buttermilk) etc.
- Vartidharana (Suppository) – After oleating the vaginal canal, suppository made with Lodhra (Symplocos racemosa Roxb), Priyangu (Callicarpa macrophylla Vahl) & Madhuka (Madhuca indica J.F.Gmel.) should be kept in yoni (Vaginal canal).
- Avachurnana (Sprinkling with powder)- Khadira (Acacia catechu (Linn.f.), Pathya (Terminalia chebula Retz), Jatiphala (Myristica fragrans Henlt.), & Nimba (Azadirachta Indica A.Juss) churna, Panchavalkala churna (Vata (Ficus bengalensis Linn.), Ashwatha (Ficus religiosa Linn.), Udumbara (Ficus glomerata Roxb), Plaksha (Ficus lacor B u c h - H a m .), Parish (Thespesia populenea Soland. ex-Correa.) Though it is mentioned under avachurnana, it is best used as prakshalana (Vaginal irrigation).
- Pichudharana (Tampoons)- Nyagrodha or Vata (Ficus bengalensis Linn) & Lodhra (Symplocos racemosa Roxb), twak kashaya is placed in the yoni (Vaginal canal) as pichu or tampon.
- Yoni Dhupana - Dhupana (Fumigation) with Sarala (Pinus roxburghii Sarg), Guggulu (Commiphora mukul Hook. Ex Stocks), and Yava (Hordeum vulgare Linn) mixed with Ghrita (ghee) should be done after oleating the genitals.

Chikitsa of Shweta Pradara- Chikitsa of Pandura Asrigdara is given in Charaka, and Commentator Chakrapani says Pandura Asringdra is a Shweta Pradara, but when we take it as a separate disease, then management of Shweta Pradara can be done in three ways-

1. **Nidana Parivarjana-** Nidana Parivarjana is the base of managing all diseases. Nidana facilitates treatment if the causes of the treatment of the diseases are traced out. Further, in most cases, when

the cause of the disease is removed, the disease subsides naturally. In Shweta Pradara, the causative factors should be avoided to get permanent relief. For example–Mithya ahara vihara etc.

2. **The management of disease in which Shweta Pradara is found-** Hence, the curative treatment for any vaginal discharge is to remove the underlying disease. All other methods are more or less applicable to relieve the symptoms.
3. **Management of Shweta Pradara itself-** Management of Shweta Pradara depends upon the Prakriti of the patients, involvement of Doshas, etc. For example -if discharge per vaginum is predominantly white, Pichchila Srava, Kandu Yukta, then it is due to disordered Kapha; the main aim would naturally be to bring Kapha to its normal state. For this, various Kaphaghna drugs are advised. The main characteristics of these drugs are Ruksha and Ushna. While administering various Kaphaghna drugs, the accompanying Dosha dushti and Dhatu-Veishamya must be considered. Varti Kalpana, Kalka, and Dhooma Chikitsa are all employed for local drug action. Dhooma Chikitsa is specially mentioned for Upapluta and Kaphaja yoni but can be used in all cases of Styana and Pichchila sravas.

The selection of a drug depends on the type of Srava, the accompanying symptoms, and the pathology of the condition. As in varti Kalpana, the drugs vary according to the type of discharge; in this method of douching also, the decoction used varies according to the kind of discharge. Generally, the drugs used should have an action of decreasing Kleda, diminishing Kapha and absorbing water. Hence, Katu, Kashaya, and Tikta Rasa medications are used.

Treatment of Shweta Pradara is based on the use of drugs, which are Tridosha shamaka, especially Kapha Shamaka, Krimighna, Kledaghna, Putihara and Kanduhara. The principle of Ayurvedic treatment of Shweta Pradara is mostly based on its aetiopathogenesis. As Kapha is the main causative factor for vaginal discharge, restoration of Agni to cleanse the accumulated toxins and bring Kapha dosha back to-

wards equilibrium and tone up the muscles of reproductive organs with the help of rejuvenating herbs are considered the main principle of treatment through Ayurveda.

The world is looking towards Ayurveda with hope for remedies because the treatment modalities in allopathic medicine have unsatisfactory results. They have also some side effects. So, there is a great scope for research to find a safe, potent, effective, and less costly remedy for Ayurveda to manage Shweta Pradara. A detailed description of Nidana Panchaka helps in the selection of drugs to treat the Shweta Pradara because the ideal drug breaks or reverses the Samprapti without producing side effects.

Preventive Measures

1. The preventive aspects of Ayurveda consist of the following disciplines. First is personal hygiene, i.e. Swastha Vritta. By improving women's general health and increasing personal hygiene, we can prevent the incidence of Shweta Pradara, Rasayana, and Vajikarana. Balyachikitsa also plays a vital role in preventing and treating the incidence of the disease. From the Vedic period, the Indian physicians were well aware of the presence of microorganisms, but they gave prime importance to soil and not to seed¹⁴. Acharya Chakrapani has also said that Sahaja and Vaikarika krimis are present in the body. Many microorganisms remain present in various body parts but produce disease only when the body's resistance breaks down. This shows the importance of soil in comparison to seed. Ayurveda emphasises the importance of immunity or Vyadhi virodhi Bala and Pratyanka Bala.
2. Ayurvedic classics mention that vitiation of Manasa may lead to psychological, somatic, or psychosomatic disorders. So, these psychological factors may produce Shweta Pradara directly or may interfere with the normal function of Jatharagni, leading to Agni Mandya and thus forming Ama, which is the root cause of all diseases. These Bhavas also provoke Vata and are crucial triggers for the initiation of the disease. Modern

science also accepts that psychological stress influences reproductive health. So, calmness has been considered the best factor for reproductive health.

3. The Prakriti of a person generated by the prevailing state of Doshas in Shukra and Artava at the time of conception. Prakriti is of prime importance to both healthy and diseased people. One of the causes of Shweta Pradara is Mithya Achara (Mithya Aahara and Vihara both). The Prakriti of a person provides physical, psychological, and immunological knowledge of that person and also indicates the physiological strengths and weaknesses, even the susceptibility of that individual to various diseases. So, the Ayurvedic concept of Prakriti helps maintain health and understand disease and its management. Knowledge of one's own Prakriti can help keep one's health through proper diet and regimen because when etiological and constitutional factors are not of the same type, the disease is not produced; when etiological and constitutional factors are of the same kind in all respects, the disease is manifested fully with all its clinical features.

In the description of Deha Prakriti, it has been stated that particular Doshic Prakriti people are prone to develop that type of Doshaj Vikara (Charaka). Acharya has also described measures for avoiding the occurrence of this disease by modification in Aahara and Vihara. So, analysis of Prakriti of patients of Shweta Pradara should be done so that with the help of Prakriti assessment, the physician may be able to direct the patient about prevention of the disease, avoid its recurrence because recurrence nature of Shweta Pradara puts a challenge in front of the medical fraternity to develop some extra protocol for proper management of the disease. It is possible that failures in Ayurvedic therapy can be reduced by advising treatment as per Prakriti and Doshaprakopa. While describing Sadhya-Asadhya, Acharya has described the Prakriti of the patient as one of the factors required to categorise the disease as Sukha Sadhya, Kricchra Saadhya, Yapya and Asadhya. It is

also emphasised that while suffering from similar diseases, patients do not respond to the same treatment modality because of variations in their constitution. This stresses the fact that the strategy of treatment modalities is different in diverging patients. Thus, prakriti will help physicians in the following aspects-

Early prediction of disease susceptibility

Prevention of possible diseases

Successful prognostication in the disease state

Selection of appropriate and specific treatment for a given disease

Shweta Pradara is a common disease of females that affects women's efficiency. The disease's recurrent nature challenges the medical fraternity to develop an extra protocol for proper disease management. With the help of Prakriti assessment, physicians may be able to direct the patient to prevent the disease, which can help shorten the duration of treatment.

DISCUSSION

Apart from attending natural processes of menstruation and pregnancy, one of the most inconvenient diseases in females is Shweta pradara, with the symptoms of discharge per vagina, vulval itching, burning vulvae, backache, infertility, ultimately leading to psychological problems. Vaginal discharges are one of the most common and troublesome disorders. Usually, a lady complains about having a slight discharge to keep her vagina moist and clean; when the discharge increases in quantity, it becomes irritating and malodorous, and it disturbs the woman. It has been estimated that nearly 60-80% of women suffer from this at some time or other. It is not a medical emergency, but if not treated properly, it leads to complications like malignancy, infertility and others. In day-to-day practice, Shweta Pradara is one of the most common disorders. A change in lifestyle due to rapid urbanisation, faulty dietary habits, excessive workload, and individual habits like negligence, shame, and hesitation to submit to a doctor all contribute to high incidence. Shweta pradara or white vaginal

Discharge afflicts women of all age groups, particularly those belonging to the reproductive age group.

The word leucorrhoea is very often used in white vaginal discharge, but this is often a misnomer. There is a considerable difference of opinion in the use of the word leucorrhoea. According to some authors, the word Leucorrhoea indicates a simple physiological increase in vaginal secretion. It is not pathological, whereas the word Shweta pradara indicates an abnormal form of vaginal discharge. To be classified as white discharge, the discharge should be white in colour, non-irritating, non-odorous, never contain blood, and constantly present throughout the cycle irrespective of the cycle phase. However, many other authors used the word in a more flexible manner to include all types of abnormal vaginal discharges, which are whitish in colour.

Shweta pradara is not a disease but a symptom of many diseases. However, sometimes, this symptom is so severe that it overshadows the symptom of the actual disease, and women come for the treatment of only this symptom. Leucorrhoea may also be noticed without any evident disease. Probably due to these reasons, Charaka, Vagbhata, etc., have prescribed only symptomatic treatment.

CONCLUSION

Stress is also the main factor producing Dosha prakopa and leading to Shweta Pradara. So, calmness has been considered the best factor for reproductive health. Failures in Ayurvedic therapy can be reduced by advising treatment as per Prakriti and Dosha prakopa. By improving women's general health and increasing personal hygiene, we can prevent the incidence of Shweta Pradara. Balya Chikitsa also plays an essential role in controlling the incidence of the disease and treating its present condition.

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