



AYURVEDIC CONCEPT OF LEUCORRHOEA

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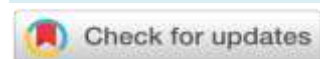
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ABSTRACT

Leucorrhoea is one of the most common and burning problems faced by women all around the globe. Leucorrhoea may be physiological but when turning into a pathological condition, produce associated symptoms like itching vulva, backache, and anxiety in females suffering from the entity. Various factors like fungal, parasite, bacterial, and sexually transmitted diseases are responsible for the causation of this disease. Leucorrhoea in *Ayurveda* known as *Shweta Pradar* is predominantly due to *Kapha Dosha* and which is a symptom that is not a disease. Leucorrhoea can be treated both by external applications and internal medications as described in the literature. In this article, an effort has been made to compile the etiology, pathogenesis, diagnosis, and all non-conventional therapies available to treat Leucorrhoea. The nature of this work is reviewing type based on traditional Indian wisdom; the materials were collected from *Ayurvedic Samhitas* like *Charak & Sushruta Samhita* etc. The texts books on Gynecology were also reviewed to make the work relevant. Various research on leucorrhoea was reviewed using search engines like Pubmed to assess the efficacy of various interventions used for leucorrhoea.

Keywords: *Sweta Pradara*, Leucorrhoea, *Yonivyapad*.

INTRODUCTION

Women's status was expected to reach new horizons both socially and physically with the coming of the new millennium. But some of the physiological things like menstruation, pregnancy, vaginal discharges, recurrent urinary infections, and other sexually transmitted disorders trouble women making them slow down. Amongst these problems, abnormal vaginal discharge is the most common factor which creates irritation in women's freedom¹. Excessive discharge of white, sticky, and foul-smelling material from the vagina is called leucorrhoea². Leucorrhea is very common among Indian women with an incidence of 24.47% females. The incidence is more in married women especially among lower socio-economic status³. It may be physiological but when turning into a pathological condition, produce problems like itching vulva, backache and so as to anxiety for a female suffering from the entity⁴. Physiologically, some amount of vaginal discharge may be noted in various phases of the menstrual cycle of a female depending upon the changes in the vaginal epithelium, bacterial flora and pH of the vagina. Anyhow, when physiological, it is not associated with any other symptoms apart from discharge. But when it turns into a pathological condition, the female complains of associated problems like itching and burning sensation of the genitalia, lower abdominal pain, urinary disturbances, dyspareunia, discomfort, low back ache, etc. On microbiological examination, infections with organisms like *Trichomonas vaginalis*, *Candida albicans*, mixed bacterial infections; Monilial infections, etc have all been associated with leucorrhoea. Though this disease condition does not cause morbidity or mortality in a female, the health and efficiency of women are affected at large. The response to treatment is also not quick and requires constant consultation. The concept of leucorrhoea is explained under *Shweta pradara* in *Ayurveda*. Several approaches are explained in *Ayurveda* regarding the same⁵.

Etiopathogenesis-Leucorrhoea is a symptom, not a disease, thus etiopathogenesis of the principal disease would be etiopathogenesis of this condition also. However, based on clinical features, it appears to be a

disease of vitiation of *kapha*, thus etiopathogenesis may be considered in the following way. So, it may be said that *Kapha* is aggravated due to its vitiating factors, influences, or vitiates the *rasa dhatu* of the reproductive system, already influenced by excessive coitus, abortion, improper mode of life and dietetics during menstruation and *Ritukala* along with non-cleanliness-and-then-produces-white-and-painless-vaginal-discharges-due to the dominance of its liquid property⁶.

Diagnosis- Pathological leucorrhoea must be differentiated from physiological ones. A detailed case history taking can give us a clue about the frequency, time, and nature of the discharge. Examination of external genitalia may also provide clues for the site and type of leucorrhoea. Leucorrhoea must be distinguished from specific vaginitis by bacteriological examination⁷.

Investigations- The following investigations should be done to confirm the diagnosis and for proper treatment to cure the disease⁶.

1. Examination of blood- Hb % total count, differential count.
2. Blood sugar.
3. Urine examination: Routine & microscopic.
4. USG (Abdomen& Pelvis).
5. Pap Smear, VDRL (Venereal disease research laboratory test), HIV.

Treatment- The principle of Ayurvedic treatment of *Sweta Pradara* is mostly based on its etiopathogenesis. As *Kapha* is the main causative factor for vaginal discharge Treatment consists of two headings

1. Samanya chikitsa (General line of treatment).
2. Vishesha chikitsa (Specific line of treatment).

General Treatment

- a. *Nidana parivarjana* - It is the basis of the management of all diseases. Nidana facilities treatment if the causes of the treatment of diseases are traced out. Further in most cases when the cause of the disease is removed, the disease subsides naturally. In *Sweta pradara*, the causative factors should be avoided to get permanent relief. For example- *Mithya ahara* and *vihara*.

- b. *Kaphashamana* treatment- If discharge per vagina is especially white in colour, *pichila srava*, *Kanduyukta* 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 *Usna*. While administering various *Kaphaghna* drugs accompanying *Dosha dushti* and *Dhatu- Veishamy* must be considered.
- c. Symptomatic treatment of *Yonisrava* and *Yonipaichhilya*.
- d. *Balya chikitsa* - It plays an important role to prevent the incidence and treat the disease.
- e. Usage of *Katu* and *Kashaya Rasa Dravyas*- These *dravyas* alleviate *kapha*.

Specific treatment

(1) Oral medicine

1. Paste or powder of *Amalaki* or seed of *Amalaki* should be taken with honey and sugar.^[8]
2. The pestled root of *Rohataka* should be taken with water.^[8,9]
3. Use of *Darvyadi* decoction cures *Swetapradara*.^[10]
4. The use of a decoction of drugs of the *Nyagrodha* group is beneficial due to its astringent property.^[11]
5. Use of *Nagakeshar* with *Takra* (buttermilk) followed by a diet of only cooked rice and *Takra* can cure leucorrhoea only within three days.^[12,13]
6. Powder of the root of *Chakramard* should be taken with *Tandulodaka* (rice-water) in the morning hours.^[13]
7. The use of a combination of *Praval Bhasma*, and *Trivang bhasma* with rice water relieves leucorrhoea.^[14]
8. *Pushyanuga churna* should be used with *Tandulodaka* mixed *Madhu*.^[15]
9. *Pradarantak lauha*, *Pradarantak rasa*, *Pradararipu rasa*, *Pradarari rasa*, *Pradarari lauha*, *Shitakalyanaka ghrita* etc. are *Rasaushadhi*, mentioned in *Bhaishajya ratnavali* to cure the *Sweta pradara*.^[16]
10. *Asava-Arishta*: *Lakshmanarishta*, *Ashokarishta*, *Patrangasava*, and *Lodhrasawa*.^[17]
11. *Ghrita-Tail*: *Ashoka ghrita*, *Nyagrodhadi ghrita*, *Vishwavallabha ghrita* and *Priyngwadi taila*.^[18]

12. *Kukkutandatwak bhasma* with *Madhu*.^[19]

(2) Drugs for external or local use

(A) *Yoni Prakshalana*: Vaginal irrigation with a decoction of stem bark of *Vata \Lodhra*.^[20]

(B) *Yoni Purana*

(i) Use of a bolus of powdered bark of *Plaksha* mixed with honey after oleating the vaginal canal.^[21]

(ii) Fine powders of *Khadira*, *Pathya*, *Jatiphala*, *Nimba*, and *Puga*, triturated with soup of *Mudga* and used in the vagina after drying the mixture.^[22]

(C) *Yoni-Varti*

(I) A flaxen cloth impregnated with a decoction of stem bark of *Nyagrodha* should be used.^[23]

(II) After oleating the vaginal canal, suppositories made with powdered *Lodhra*, *Priyangu*, and *Madhuka* mixed with honey or all drugs with *Kashaya rasa* prominence should be used.^[23]

(D) *Yoni-Dhupana*

Dhupana (Fumigation) with *Sarala*, *Guggulu* and *Yava* mixed with *Ghrita* should be done after oleating the vaginal canal.^[24]

Advised – Garlic, meat soup, all dairy products, and rice water. Forbidden: Sweet and sour fruits, nuts, and an excess of salt. Preventive Measures.^[25,26] Be healthy; eat well, get enough sleep, and drink enough fluids. Wear cotton undergarments. Keep the vaginal area clean and dry to prevent fungal infection. Patients should wear condoms during sexual intercourse with new partners. Wipe from front to back after urination or bowel movement. Don't use petroleum jelly or other oils for lubricants. Avoid using deodorant pads or tampons. Use the medication as long as directed. Avoid sexual intercourse until treatment is completed and you are symptom-free. During an infection, use pads rather than tampons if menstruation occurs. Avoid vulvo /vaginal irritants, including perfumed or deodorant soaps/body washes. If symptoms persist after completing the treatment, an examination is indicated. Call for an appointment, and please use nothing in the vagina for 48 hours before your pelvic examination.

DISCUSSION

Leucorrhoea is a condition that troubles almost every woman at least once in a lifetime. At the same time,

there are a lot of myths about white discharge. Therefore, the physician must rule out normal or physiological white discharge so that unnecessary intake of antibiotics can be prevented. As a result of this review work, it becomes evident that if prudent differential diagnosis is employed, a majority of cases of white discharge can be categorized as physiological. This not only will reduce the burden on health care but will also provide freedom from the fear of white discharge created due to prevalent misconceptions. Ancient *Ayurvedic* texts provide vast information about the effective treatment of leucorrhea. On the other hand, *yoga*, if practiced regularly under guidance offers supreme prophylactic care owing to its wide range of benefits on whole psycho-physiological machinery. *Ayurvedic* treatments have been proven efficient & safe in controlling most cases of leucorrhoea whether presented as a chief complaint or associated with other complaints. Along with the above, Counseling also has proven effective in therapy.

CONCLUSION

Leucorrhoea not only disturbs the physical health of women but also affects their mental status. *Ayurveda* has given a number of effective remedies to treat white discharge. These *Ayurvedic* formulations have given miraculous results and should be used in treating various gynecological conditions associated with white discharge. Once the etiology has been ruled out it is very easy to treat the women with satisfying results and there is no recurrence of the disease.

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