



A REVIEW ON SHUKRA DUSHTI AND DISORDERS OF DIFFERENT PHASES OF SEXUAL RESPONSE CYCLE

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, the science of life deals with every aspect of life through *Ashtangas* of Ayurveda and *Vajeekarana* is one among them. *Vajeekarana* promotes the sexual potency and performance as well as improves the physical, psychological and social health of a man. According to Mahabharata, man is said to acquire debt of *Pitri* as soon as he enters the samsara, so to fulfil his debts towards his forefathers he has to produce offspring. The idea that a *Santana Heena Purusha* is *Nindita* in *Loka* is accepted even in Ayurveda. Reproduction and sexuality are the major parts of life on earth. Sexuality and sexual act are a complex physiology involving harmony of mental, emotional, endocrinal and neurological functions in the couple unitedly and individually. The complexities of the sexual act are studied and divided under different phases of sexual response cycle. Naturally any bodily process involves its own pathological manifestations, and pathologies of the sexual response cycle are enlisted as sexual disorders. The Sexual disorders in various stages of sexual response are one of the major causes of infertility. The correction of these is of utmost importance. Sexual life plays a major role in human bonding, usually been solely used for pleasure and improves the emotional bonding in humans. A healthy and satisfied sexual life results in a psychological and social well-being of humans. An attempt has been made to understand the different sexual disorders occurring in various stages of sexual response cycle and its probable ayurvedic understanding.

Keywords: *Vajeekarana*, sexual response cycle, sexual disorders, *Shukra Dushti*.

INTRODUCTION

Vajeekarana is one of the 8 main branches of Ayurveda. It is described and studied extensively by our acharyas. Acharyas had a vast arena of knowledge on the importance of male fertility in the formation of healthy progeny. They realized the need for studying and exploring this aspect of life. As *Shukra* is a main component of *Garbhadana* and *Sudhha Shukrata* is of equal importance in having a normal, healthy, wise, and a desired progeny. *Shukra Dosha*, *Klaibya*, *Dhwajopaghata* are major causes of male infertility. Male infertility is equally a cause for infertility in the couple and is estimated to about 40% -50% of infertile couples. Hence this branch of medicine was formed and explained extensively in our classics.

Male infertility is caused by various factors like, hormonal causes, immunological, genetic, physiological, psychological, infective, anatomical, traumatic, systemic diseases like mumps, malignancies, etc. In physiological and psychological causes, sexual dysfunction has incidence estimated to about 31% in causing infertility. The sexual dysfunctions are the manifestations of various psycho-physical changes occurring before, during and after the sexual activity. Human sexuality is a manifestation of complex interactions of social, emotional, biological, psychological, and interpersonal elements. In human's sexuality is not just of reproductive value but also of expansion of self-awareness, experience of tenderness, increase of self-affirmation and pride and emotional intimacy and oneness with the partner.

Aim and Objectives -

- To understand different phases of sexual response cycle and their disorders.
- To compile the contents on *Shudhha Shukra* and all *Shukra Dushti* in relation to sexual disorders.

To understand the concept of *Vajeekarana*

Materials and Methods –

For understanding of the different phases of sexual response cycle and its dysfunctions 'A Comprehensive Textbook of sexual medicine' was referred. The Ayurvedic classical references were explored for

finding the probable classical correlation of the sexual disorders.

Concept of *Shudhha Shukra* –

Shukra is formed from *Prasada Bhaga* of *Majja* and is *Sarva Shareera Vyapi*. It is composed of 4 *Mahabhutas*, *Vayu*, *Agni*, *Aap* and *Pruthvi*; it is *Madhura Rasa Yukta Shweta Varna*.¹ *Sarva Shareera Vyapi Shukra* is responsible for various other features like; *Soumyata*, *Ksheerapurna Lochana*, *Bhrajishnuta*, *Prasanna-Snigdha Varna*, *Snigdha-Vruttasamhata Dashana*, *Mahasphik*, *Stripriya*, *Balavana*, *Sukha*, *Aishwarya*, *Arogya*, *Vitta*, *Sammana*, *Dhairya Yukta*.² Its prime function is *Garbhadana* when expelled in the form of *retah*. A healthy wealthy and wise progeny is the aspiration of all, and these qualities are inherited to the baby only when both the partners are healthy and possess healthy genomes i.e.. *Shudhha Shukra* and *Shudhha Artava*. The physical properties of *Roopadravya Shukra* (*retah*) called as *Shudhha Shukra* are- *Sphatikabha*, *Drava*, *Snigdha*, *Bahu*, *Bahala*, *Madhugandhi*, *Sara*, *Ghruta*, *Kshaudra*, *Taila*, *Nibha*. *Shukra* with these attributes is *Garbha Prada*.^{3,4,5,6} A sexual act is pleasurable and satisfactory when the man is with the features of *Shukra Sara Purusha* like *Chyavana* (motion or promoting delivery), *Preeti* (any pleasurable sensations or satisfaction), *Harsha* (erection of the genital organs or sexual excitement), *Sankalpa* (determination or desire).⁷ *Chyavana* here could be co related to the strength of sexual performance. *Preeti* can be considered as the attainment of orgasm. *Harsha* in this context is related to the ability to attain sexual excitement and the ability to withstand the same. Similarly, the sexual act starts with the determination or the desire to indulge in a sexual relation or excitement is *Sankalpa*. As complete physical, mental and emotional involvement along with longing towards his female partner is equally important for attainment of orgasm.

Details of Sexual Response Cycle⁸ –

The sequence of physiological and emotional changes experienced by both the partners before, during and

after sexual intercourse is termed as human sexual response cycle. It is divided into 4 stages i.e. excitement, plateau, orgasm and resolution⁹.

Two basic physiological processes are associated with sexual activity.

- 1) *Vasocongestion* with an increased amount of blood getting concentrated in genitals and breasts in females.
- 2) Neuromuscular tension or Myotonia all over the body in response to sexual arousal.

The precursor of the 4 phases is the

Appetitive phase¹⁰-

Sexual desire is a complex construct of physiological, cognitive, behavioral components and shaped by the individual's developmental and cultural influences. The essence of the appetitive phase is the motivation and desire of the individual for sexual interaction. It is also called the desire phase.

The excitement phase¹¹-

It is also called the arousal phase, may be induced by direct physical contact, memories, fantasies, as well as olfactory, visual and auditory sensations. This phase is all about the subjective sense of sexual pleasure and marks the beginning of the physiological responses to the sexual stimuli.

The most notable change in this phase is the erection of erectile bodies of corpus cavernosa in both the partners caused by vasocongestion. In women excitement is marked by lubrication of vaginal barrel by pH neutralizing secretions.

Plateau phase¹² –

The changes of the excitement phase are sustained at and intense level in the plateau phase. It is the heightened state of excitement attained mainly due to continued stimulation. There is marked sexual tension in this stage and that sets stage for orgasm. Maculopapular rash starting from abdomen to anterior chest, neck, face and shoulder are seen with semispastic contraction of chest which is described as myotonia.

Orgasmic phase¹³ –

This is the briefest phase characterized by rhythmic muscular contractions accompanied by intense pleasurable sensations. Duration of this phase ranges from 3-15 seconds. In men ejaculation is the major occur-

rence of this phase. The sexual flush is well developed.

Resolution phase¹⁴-

In this phase both partners return to the unaroused phase.

It includes an additional refractory phase in men. This phase can last up to 10-15 minutes, but if orgasm has not occurred then this phase can continue for 12-24 hrs. Full involution of erection occurs in 5-30 seconds.

Shukra Dushti –

Like all other *dhatu*s, *shukra dhatu* also gets affected by *dushita doshas* to undergo various pathologies. Indulgence in activities like excessive coitus, excessive physical activities, *asatmyahara*, *shukravega dharana*, *akaal yoni gana*, *ayogya stree sahavasa*, *na gachatam cha*, *naarinam arasagnanam gamana*, *jara*, *vegadharana*, *kshata*, *chinta*, *shoka*, *anya dhatu kshaya* etc.¹⁵ causes vitiation of *vataadi doshas* leading to *shukra dushti*, which are enlisted by *charakacharya as – phenila*, *tanu*, *ruksha*, *vivarna*, *pooti*, *pichhila*, *avasadi* and *anya dhatu sanshrushta*¹⁶. While *sushrutacharya* has mentioned 11 types of *shukra dushti* which are *vataja*, *pittaja*, *kaphaja*, *raktaja*, *kunapagandhi*, *granthibhuta*, *pooti-puya yukta*, *ksheena*, *mutra purisha yukta* and *sannipataja*¹⁷. These *shukra dushti* may not directly cause any defect in sexual performance, but such long standing disorders can make a man mentally disturbed and ultimately lead to sexual dysfunctions.

klaibya¹⁸- *Kleeba* word itself means impotent, weak or emasculated (apte).

Here we will try to correlate *Klaibya* with the sexual dysfunctions. Acharyas have classified *Klaibya* based on its cause into *Shukrakshayaja*, *Beejopaghataja*, *Jaraja*, and *Dhwajabhangaja*. Common symptoms of *Klaibya* is described as incapability to perform the coitus even in the presence of desire to do so; even if he rarely attempts for coitus, he fails to ejaculate or performs unsatisfactorily due to improper erection or lack of erection.¹⁹ These are the main manifestations of any sexual disorder. Hence, we have correlated *Klaibya* with sexual disorders. Though the disease *Klaibya* is described for infertility, but the main cause

for infertility in a *Kleeba* is being unable to perform sexually due to either *Shukra Kshaya* (any organic reproductive disorder), *Beejopaghata* (congenital), *Jara* (age related) or *Dhwajopaghata* (traumatic).

disorders of sexual response cycle²⁰-Various disorders can occur in every phase of this cycle. Changes in one phase might progress to affect the successive phases or sexual act as a whole.

Problems occurring in any phase of the sexual response cycle refer that prevents the individual or couple from experiencing satisfaction from sexual activity is called sexual dysfunction. Sexual dysfunctions majorly affect 3 important phases of the cycle i.e. Desire phase, Arousal phase and Orgasmic phase.

Disorders of desire phase²¹ –

Disorders in this phase are mostly secondary to any relevant disorders or psychological or cognitive. It manifests as sexual aversion, amotivation, disinterest, or even lack of desire for sexual activity. Conditions like hypoactive sexual desire disorder, sexual aversion disorder, hyposexual disorder are seen in this phase,

Disorders of excitement phase²²-

Significant manifestation of this phase is failure of genital organs to respond to stimuli. It causes erectile disorders in men and vaginismus, dyspareunia in women.

Disorders of orgasmic phase²³ –

Specific disorders of this phase are inhibited orgasm, sexual anhedonia, anorgasmia. Conditions like anorgasmia, delayed or retarded ejaculation and premature ejaculation, male and female dyspareunia can be seen in this phase.

concept of vajeekarana²⁴ –

Vajeekarana is a unique concept described only in Ayurveda with the sole purpose to make the man potent enough to produce a healthy offspring. While this is of great deal, it also has various other effects like to treat all kinds of *Shukra Dushtis*, *Klaibya*. It also brings about instantaneous sexual excitement, causes and improves sexual performance and also satisfaction, nourishes and enriches the immediate ejaculate. *Vajeekarana Aushadhis* are the best promoters of a man's sexual strength and vigor, to such an extent that

his strength is personified to that of an eight years young horse.²⁵

Vajeekarana Chikitsa has a prime role in enhancing the virility and fertility of a man. It is broadly classified by most of the acharyas into 3 categories based on the action of drug as *Shukra Shrutikara*, *Shukra Vridhikara*, and *Shukra Shrutivrudhikara*.^{26,27} whereas Acharya Sharangadhara alone has categorized them into 6 types as *Shukrala*, *Shukra Pravartaka*, *Shukra Janaka Pravartaka*, *Shukra Rechaka*, *Shukra Sthambaka*, *Shukra Shoshaka*.²⁸ Those that are only aphrodisiac in nature and cause improvement in the virility and potency of a man, and others are those that change the quality sperm and its motility and fertility, and those that bring about both sexual potency of the man and reproductive capability of the semen. It also has its effect of orgasm as it also induces an immediate sense of pleasurable excitement and satisfaction.

These formulations have both immediate and long-term effects. In short term, it causes sexual excitement, increases vigor and improves performance and finally brings about a sense of satisfaction in the couple. In long term, it could be used to correct the quantitative and qualitative defects in the semen and sperm as well. Classically apart from having these properties, it is also claimed to give effects of good fertility in the offspring produced to the couple with the use of *Vajeekarana Aushadhis*.

DISCUSSIONS & CONCLUSION

Sexual cycle is a complex physiological process and its harmony in both the individuals aids in attaining a healthy and satisfactory sexual life. Excessive indulgence or practice of *Katu Tikta Lavana Amla Dravyas*, *Ati Vyayama*, *Ati Manasika Vega Pravrutti Like Chintita Shoka Etc. Mithya Achara* of *Maithuna* leads to *Dushti* of *Shukra*²⁹ which in turn causes psychosomatic disorders of the male reproductive system leading to disorders of sexual cycle and unhealthy and unsatisfactory sexual performance. As a *Shukra Sara Purusha* alone possess the qualities of *Chyavana Preeti* and *Sankalpa* needed for the successful and satisfactory performance sexually, hence proper health of the male reproductive system is important not just for a

healthy conception but even for a healthy sexual life. This was very well understood in the ancient times. They also understood that disorders of *Shukra* will lead to sexual disturbances. Though they are not very elaborately discussed in our classics, Acharyas knew in depth about these disorders and hence have elaborately described *Vajeekarana Chikitsa* for managing the same.

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