

ANARTAVA (AMENORRHEA) AND ITS MANAGEMENT- AN AYURVEDIC REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Anartava literary means the absence of *Artava*. In *Ayurveda* classics *Acharyas* have mentioned various terms for absence of *Artava*, *Nashtartava* by *Sushruta*, *Anartava* by *Vagbhata*, and absence of *Raja* by *Bhela* & *Rajonash* by *Bhavaprakash*. It is described as a symptom but not as a disorder by our *Acharyas*. Though it is so described, it drastically affects the fertility in woman. So the condition of *Anartava* needs to be understood clearly & needs the attention for the sake of fertility. *Anartava* is also seen as one of the manifestation of the *Yonivyapadas* like *Arajaska/Lohitkshaya Yonivyapada*, *Shushka Yonivyapada*, *Shandhi Yonivyapada* & *Vandhya Yonivyapada*. Modern science & *Ayurveda* both offer treatment for the *Anartava*, but in modern science very little options are there like HRT while *Ayurveda* describes various modalities like oral medication, *Panchakarma* procedures, life-style modification & correction in diet. So this study is undertaken to through the light on classical reference of *Anartava* with modern correlation & its *Ayurvedic* management.

Keywords: *Anartava*, Amenorrhea, *Yonivyapada*, *Ayurvedic* management.

INTRODUCTION

Anartava itself indicates that there is absence of *Artava* i.e. absence of menstruation. It may be primary or secondary. The prevalence of amenorrhea not due to pregnancy, lactation or menopause is approximately 3 – 4 %^{1,2}. All though there are various factors causing amenorrhea but the majority is of four conditions that are: polycystic ovarian syndrome, hypothalamic factor, hyperprolactinemia & ovarian failure. Other causes are seldom, in highly

specialized referral secondary amenorrhea³⁻⁵. As it affects the fertility in woman, it needs the further attention for the sake of fertility. In our classics *Anartava* is described as the symptom but not as the disorder. *Raja*, *Masikastrava*, *Rutustrava*, *Asruka* & *Shonita* are the synonyms of *Artava*.

ANARTAVA definition: Aggravated *Vata* & *Kapha* obstruct the passage of *Artavavaha Strotasa* or orifices of channels carrying *Artava*, thus *Artava* is not

evident leading to *Anartava*. Though *Artava* is not finished completely yet it is not discharged monthly due to obstruction of *Artavavaha Strotasa* by *Doshas*. The roots of *Artavavaha Strotasa* are uterus & uterine arteries, thus the endometrium is not supplied by uterine arteries so there is absence of menstruation. The condition is termed as *Nashtartava* by *Sushruta* & *Anartava* by *Vagbhata*. *Acharya Bhela* opines that, though blood circulates (in whole body) for 7 nights (day & night) yet being scanty and abnormal does not circulate (in reproductive system) leading to desiccation of *Artava* & body of a woman resulting in absence of menstruation. *Acharya Bhavamishra* has included *Rajonash* among 80 specific disorders of *Vata*. *Anartava* occurs as a manifestation in *Yonivyapadas* namely *Arajaska/Lohitkshaya Yonivyapada*, *Shushka Yonivyapada*, *Shandhi Yonivyapada* & *Vandhya Yonivyapada*. **ARAJASKA YONIVYAPADA** – The *Pitta* situated in *Garbhashaya* vitiates the *raja* of woman leading to extreme emaciation & discoloration of the woman. Due to this there is absence of *Artava* or menstruation termed as ‘*Arajaska Yonivyapada*’⁷. **LOHITAKSHAYA YONIVYAPADA** – Due to vitiation of *Vata* & *Pitta* there is decrease in quantity of *Raja*, the lady suffers from burning sensation, emaciation & discoloration. As there is *Kshaya* of *Raja* so termed as ‘*Lohitakshaya*’^{8,9}. **SHUSHKA YONIVYAPADA** – Due to suppression of natural urges during coitus or menstruation there is aggravation of *Vata* producing retention of urine & feces, dryness of whole vagina or orifices of vagina associated with severe pain termed as ‘*Shushka Yonivyapada*’¹⁰. **SHANDHI YONIVYAPADA** – According to *Acharya Charaka* due to abnormalities of *Beeja* uterus of the female fetus is influenced by *Vata*. The born child in later life has absence or very slight development of breast and dislikes the coitus¹¹. According to *Acharya Sushruta* the woman suffering from *Shandhi Yonivyapada* does not have *Artava* and breast. Her vaginal canal feels very rough, dryness, burning sensation, unctuousness & itching also present¹². **VANDHYA YONIVYAPA** –

Artava is destroyed in *Vandhya Yoni* according to *Acharya Sushruta*. Further *Dalhana* explained that the difference between *Vandhya Yoni* & *Shandhi Yoni* is presence & absence of breast respectively¹².

CHIKITSA: The condition of *Anartava* is due to *Kshaya* of *Artava* so the Principle of treatment is – *Samshodhana*, *Shaman* in the form of *Agneya Dravyas*, use of *Swayonivardhana Dravyas* & *Nidana Parivarjana*¹³. All these treatment modalities works on vitiated *Dosha*, *Dhatu* & established pathophysiology of *Sharira*. Here in *Anartava* / *Nashtartava* there is vitiation of *Vata*, *Kapha* and in some conditions *Pitta Dosha* & can consider *Kshaya* of *Rasa* and *Rakta dhatu*.

Samshodhana: According to *Acharya Charaka* without the vitiation of *Vata Yonirogas* are not formed so first of all *Vata* pacifying treatment should be given in the form of *Shodhana* & *Shamana*. As *Vata* is *Pravartaka* for other *Doshas*, the regulation of *Vata* indirectly regulates the remaining *Doshas*. In *Samshodhana* *Snehana*, *Swedana*, *Vamana* & *Basti* are useful. As there is *Kapha Avarodha* so *Vamana* is beneficial and for *Vata*, *Basti* is the best treatment¹⁴. *Shatavaryadi Anuwasana Basti*¹⁵, *Baladi Yamaka Anuwasana Basti*¹⁵, *Palash Niruha Basti*¹⁶ & *Dashamuladi Niruha Basti*¹⁷ is beneficial. *Acharya Dalhan* says that for purification only *Vamana* should be used not the *Virechana*, because *Virechana* reduces *Pitta*, which in turn decreases ‘*Artava*’, while *Vamana* removes *Saumya* substances, resulting into relative increase in *Agney* constituents of the body, consequently *Artav* also increases. Commentator *Acharya Chakrapani* says that by use of purifying measures *Srotasas* are cleared. *Vamana* and *Virechana* clear upward and downward directed *Srotasas* respectively. Thus both should be used.

Use of Agneya Dravyas: According to *Acharya Sushruta* use of *Agneya Dravyas* pacifies the *Vata* & *Kapha* as these are known to be antidote for increased *Vata* and *Kapha*. *Agneya Dravyas* like *Matsya*, *Kulattha*, *Krishna Tila*, *Masha*, *Sura*,

Gomutra, Ardhodaka takra, Dadhi & Shukta should be included in diet⁶.

Shamana Chikitsa includes following preparations-

- *Shatapushapa Churna, Shatavari Churna, Yashtimadhu Churna & Pushyanuga Churn*¹⁸.
- Use of powdered leaves of *Jyotishmati, Swarjikaksara or Rajika, Ugra* and stem bark of *Asana* with cold water for three days induce menstruation positively¹⁹.
- Use of properly prepared decoction of *Krishna Tila* mixed with *Jaggery* in the morning, induces menstruation in a woman having amenorrhoea for a very long time²⁰.
- *Yonivarti* made with powdered seeds of *Ikshawaku, Danti, Chapala, Jaggery, Madanphala, Kinva* and *Yavashuka* mixed with latex of *Snuhi* should be placed in *Yoni* (cervix), this induces menstruation²⁰.
- Use of cooled decoction made with *Krishna Tila, Selu & Karavi* mixed with *Jaggery* positively induces menstruation²⁰.
- Use of *Japapushpa* mixed with *Kanji*²¹.
- Use of *Ghrithbharjit* leaves of *Jyotishmati* with *Durva Swaras*²¹.
- Use of white *Durva Swaras* or *Dadimkalika Swaras*²².
- Use of decoction of *Manjishtha* and *Lavang*²².
- Use of *Kumari Swaras* with sugar²².
- *Phala Ghrita*²³, *Laghuphala Ghrita*²³, and *Brihat Shatavari Ghrita* described under *Yonirogas* are also beneficial.
- *Rajpravartini Vati, Kanyalohadi Vati, Vijayadi Vati, Kumarika Vati, Vrushya Vati, Nashtapushpantka Ras, Jirakadi Modaka, Maharasnadi Quath* are useful.
- *Dashamularista, Draksharishta, Maharasnadi Quath* are also useful.
- Milk medicated with drugs of *Jivaniya Gana* is beneficial²⁴.
- *Uttarbasti* of oil medicated with drugs of *Jivaniya Gana*².

Use of *Swayonivardhana Dravyas*: *Swayonivardhana* drug means the drugs that have

same *Yoni* i.e. same seat of origin. They have approximately same *Guna*²⁵. Here we have to use the *Dravyas* that increases the *Artava* i.e. *Artavajanana* drugs. Ex. *Karpas Mula, Krishna Tila, Jyotishmati* etc.

Pathya: According to predominance of *Doshas Sura, Asava & Arishta* should be used. *Lashuna* should be included in diet, diet made with barley, milk, *Mamsarasa, Sidhu*, powdered *Pippali & Bala Taila* are beneficial in *Yonirogas*.

Apathya: *Manda* is *Apathy* according to *Acharya Kashyapa*.

Life style modification & *Yoga* therapy: Articles capable of increasing *Pitta* are beneficial. Milk is beneficial in all types of *Artava Doshas*. *Yogic* management is very important for women experiencing amenorrhoea. Most importantly it includes relaxation and minimizes the amount of stress that is part of their everyday lives.

1. *Padmasana*
2. *Halasana*
3. *Dhanurasana*
4. *Saravangasana*
5. *Shalabhasana*
6. *Bhujangasana*
7. *Paschimottanasana*.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

Ayurveda classics, text books of Gynecology and internet publications were reviewed for carrying out present study.

DISCUSSION

Our *Acharyas* have included all gynecological disorders under the heading of '*Yonivyapada*'. The condition of *Anartava* also comes under the *Yonivyapadas* namely *Arajaska Yonivyapada/ Lohitakshaya Yonivyapada, Shushka Yonivyapada, Shandhi Yonivyapada* and *Vandhya Yonivyapada* as *Anartava* is the manifestation of these *Yonivyapadas*. In *Nashtartava, Artava* is not totally destroyed but it is not evident due to obstruction of orifices of *Artavavaha Strotasa*. The roots of *Artavavaha Strotasas* are uterus & uterine artery. Thus in this

condition endometrium is not properly nourished by uterine arteries so menstruation does not occur. This can be correlated with Amenorrhoea due to Endometrial Abnormalities. 'Arajaska' described by Charaka is called as 'Lohitakshaya' or 'Lohitakshara' by both Vagbhata. It is the condition marked by amenorrhoea along with emaciation, discoloration & burning sensation which can be correlated with Secondary amenorrhoea due to tuberculosis or anemia. In *Shushka Yonivyapada* there is an amenorrhoea associated with the dryness of the vagina which can be correlated with the Secondary amenorrhoea due to Hypo estrogenic state. Suppression of natural urges etc. causes may influence hypothalamus & pituitary which may produce hypo estrogenic condition resulting in to dryness of vagina. *Shandhi yonivyapada* is the condition characterized by amenorrhoea, absence or slight development of breast, *Nara Dweshi* & with roughness of vagina which can be correlated with Amenorrhoea due to congenital absence of ovarian hormones. In *Vandhya Yonivyapada* there is destruction of *Artava* i.e. due to *Beeja Dosha* there is abnormal formation of the uterus or ovaries in female fetus, which can be correlated with the Primary amenorrhoea due to congenital abnormality. *Shandhi Yonivyapada* is incurable according to *Acharya Sushruta*.

In treatment *Shaman* and *Shodhana Chikitsa* is described, by *Shodhana Strotasas* are purified in upward & downward direction by *Vamana* & *Virechana* respectively. *Vata* is the main *Dosha* for *Yonirogas* so *Basti* is the main treatment for the pacification of *Vata*. As *Adhobhga* is the place of *Apana Vata*, by giving *Basti* it pacifies and its functions are regulated so there will be ultimately regulation of *Artava*. *Artava* is *Agneya Gunatmaka* in nature so the use of *Agneya Dravyas* increases the *Artava* as a rule '*Sarvada Sarva Bhavanam Samanyam Vriddhi Karanam*'. *Swayonivardhana Dravya* means the *Dravyas* that have same seat of origin i.e. they resemble in *Guna* or are *Samana Gunabhuyishta* or possess same *Karma*. Here we have to use the *Artavajanana Dravyas* for the decreased quantity of

Artava. Articles described in *Pathya* are *Vata Shamaka* & *Agnipradipaka* so they increases *Agni* by correction of *Agnimandya* and does the *Rasa Dhatu Poshana* which helps in *Artava Vriddhi*. Thus according to predominance of *Dosha* and condition of patient treatment should be given. Ayurveda is a holistic science it describes various modalities for the treatment of disease so the lifestyle modification & *Yoga* therapy also helps to overcome the disorder in certain extent.

CONCLUSION

For the treatment of *Anartava* there are many options in Ayurveda while in modern medicine we have very few options like HRT which have certain limitations for its use and have side effects. In sum *Ayurveda* offers treatment for *Anartava* (amenorrhoea) that beyond what modern medicine allows.

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