

LITERARY STUDY OF *PANCHAKARMA* USED IN *STREE VANDHYTAVA* i.e. FEMALE INFERTILITY – A REVIEW ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

In India infertility is not a disease but a social stigma to a person and often female is considered as culprit. According to WHO overall prevalence of primary infertility in India is between 3.9 to 16.8%. It varies according to states. Main goal of *Ayurved* while treating the patient is to achieve anatomical and physiological improvement of reproductive system. Healthy reproductive system depends upon healthy tissue metabolism as well as nutrition. Unhealthy tissue can hamper the reproduction. Therefore for the purification of system *Ayurved* has mentioned *Panchkaram* therapy. It provides a base for further *Shaman Chikitsa* (alleviation treatment). In this study the references of *Panchakarma* for female infertility mentioned in *Samhitas Ayurvedic* texts written by renowned *Ayurvedic* masters is studied. *Ayurved* says infertility is not a disease but a group of symptoms. So here the mode of action of *Panchkarma* according to *Ayurved* and in which conditions we can use them is described.

Keywords: *Stree Vandhytava, Panchkarma, Yonivyapad, Rutuchakra- Dosh* relation.

INTRODUCTION

Motherhood is a blessing. It transforms girl into woman. In process of giving birth to a child mother is also reborn. Reproduction is an ultimate gift given by God to all the living beings. Human female carries most active role in an intra-uterine as well as extra-uterine growth of a child. Having a baby completes the family.

In today's era various factors are leading to complexities and difficulties in conceiving a child. Many times these factors lead to infertility. Some of these factors are change in life style, increased stress

levels in routine life, lack of physical exercise, wrong eating habits, delayed marriages due to career oriented mentality.

The study says infertility is affecting almost 15% of reproductive aged group couple worldwide ^[1]. According to WHO, prevalence of primary infertility in India is between 3.9 % to 16.8%. It varies from with States. In Indian society infertility is not only a physical problem but a social stigma especially for a woman ^[1]

For treating infertility, many people are in search of hopes in *Ayurvedic* treatments. *Panchakarma* treatments have unique importance in *Ayurved*. It is mostly known as body detoxification treatment. There are five main treatments in *Panchakarma*. *Panchakarma* treatments play equally important part in treating the patient alongside oral medicines. Here is the study about different *Panchakarma* treatments which could be used for treating infertility. This study is based on literature available on this topic in different *Ayurvedic* texts written by renowned *Ayurvedic* masters.

Aim:

To study literary aspect of *Panchakarma* treatment that can be used in the management of *Stree-Vandhyatva*.

Objectives:

1. To study various *Panchakarma* treatments this can be used in *Stree-Vandhyatva*.
2. Literary review of *Stree-Vandhyatva*.

Material and Method:

Information related to female infertility was reviewed from -

- Classical *Ayurvedic* texts.
- Modern text books of Gynaecology.
- Article related to female infertility.

Definition:

In *Ayurved* except *Acharya Harit* no one has mentioned *Stree-Vandhyatva* as a separate disorder. Everyone has mentioned it in symptoms of *Yonivyapad* i.e. Gynaecological disorder or *Artav Dushti* i.e. symptoms related to menstrual cycle or ovulation.

On the basis of six types of *Vandhyatva* mentioned by *Harit* we can say ‘failure to achieve the child rather than the pregnancy is called as *Vandhyatva*’ [2]. As *Harit* has mentioned *Mrutavatsa* i.e. still birth and *Garbhstravi* i.e. miscarriage or spontaneous abortion as a type of *Vandhyatva* [3].

According to modern science only failure to achieve conception by a couple of mature age having normal coitus during appropriate period of menstrual cycle, regularly at least for one year is said as infertility.

Causes:

Acharya Sushrut has mentioned 4 main factors which are required for the healthy conception as follows [4]

1. *Rutu* – the *Rutukal* i.e. period near to ovulation or healthy menstrual cycle.
2. *Kshetra* – *Garbhashaya* i.e. healthy uterus.
3. *Ambu* – healthy *Rasa Dhatu*. Healthy food.
4. *Beeja* – *Stree Beej- Artav* i.e. ovum and *Purush Beej* – *Shukra* i.e. sperm

Also *Aacharya Charak* says if couple is suffering from following conditions then it is hard to conceive [5] for them –

1. *Yonipradosh* – Any defect in reproductive organ. In *Ayurved Yoni* female reproductive organ is described as *Tryavarta Yoni*[6] i.e. there are 3 parts of it which include all the reproductive organ in female body starting from vagina up to uterus. So any defect in *Yoni* may lead to infertility. There are 20 different type of *Yonivyapad* (gynaecological disorders). Secondary complication (i.e. *Updrava*) of these disorders is said as *Vandhyatva* i.e. infertility [7].

2. *Mansobhitap* – It consist of Psychological factors like stress, depression. Excess workload, family responsibilities, financial problems etc. are the main causes of stress. The inability to get conceived naturally increases stress level further. It also stimulates feeling of guilt, low self-confidence, and anxiety.

3. *Shukra-Asruk Dosh* – unhealthy *Artav* i.e. ovum and *Shukra* i.e. sperm.

4. *Ahar-Vihar Dosh* – sedentary life style with change in food habits.

5. *Akalyog* – coitus at inappropriate time. *Rutukal* i.e. ovulation period is said as most proper period to get conceive. It includes ovulatory phase. Normally for menstrual cycle of 28-29 days it is from 12th to 14th day of cycle [8]. But due to the problems like PCOS or irregularity in cycle the appropriate time of ovulation is difficult to find. Also most of the time due to lack of knowledge also this period is missed. Before or after this period, chances of getting conceive are less.

6. *Bala Kshay* – loss of *Bala* i.e. strength.

Treatment –

Treatments which are mentioned in literatures does not specifically describe anything for *Vandhytava*. They rather describe the procedure for the healthy conception. According to *Acharya Kashyap* the line of treatment is oleation, sudation, emesis, purgation and enema. They should be used in order. After that male should be given milk with *Ghritha* (butter) and female should be prescribed *Masha* (black gram) with oil^[9]. *Acharya Bhel* has suggested that after giving treatment like *Vaman* (emesis), *Virechan* (purgation) and *Asthapan* (enema) woman can easily conceive and deliver normally^[10].

1. *Kshetra Dosh or Yonidosh (defect in reproductive organ):*

All *Acharyas* have talked about *Yonivyapad* (gynaecological problems). Complications of *Yonivyapad* is said as *Vandhytava* i.e. infertility by *Charak*. *Acharya Charak* says that *Yoni* (reproductive system) of a female affected with *Dosha* or any disease doesn't retain the *Shukra* (sperm) hence that female remain infertile^[7]. There are some *Yonivyapad* where *Acharya* has specifically mentioned infertility and their complications. They as follow^[11].

1. *Aticharana* (vaginitis with infertility due to excessive coitus) – *Vata Dusthi* i.e. vitiation of *Vata Dosh*
2. *Putraghni/Jataghni* (repeated abortion) – *Vata Dushti*. Excessive *Vata Dosh Dushti* of *Artav*.
3. *Vamini* (Effluvium seminis) – *Vata-Pitta Dushti*. i.e. vitiation of *Vata* and *Pitta Dosh*
4. *Vandhya* (Primary infertility)

In basic line of treatment, *Acharya* has mentioned use of *Vataghna Chikitsa*. As per him main reason for *Yonidushti* is vitiated *Vata Dosh*. *Vandhytava* is also mentioned as one of the *Vata Vyadhi* by *Acharya Kashyap*^[12]. *Acharya Bhel* says that excessive *Vata Dosh* expels out the *Purush Beej* (sperm) from uterus^[13].

So, main reason for vitiation of *Kshetra* is vitiation of *Vata Dosh*. For vitiated *Vata Dosh Basti* i.e. enema is suggested as main *Shodhan Chikitsa*^[14]. Most of the reproductive organs are situated in place where *Vata Dosh* has main presence. So considering vitiation of *Vata Dosh* as main reason for infertility, *Basti* plays

an important role in treatment. *Bastis* which are suggested to be used in *Yonivyapad* are as follow –

1. *Palasha Niruha Basti*^[15]
2. *Shatavaryadi Anuvasan*^[16] / *Guduchyadi Rasaynik Basti*^[17]
3. *Baladi Yamak Anuvasan*^[16]
4. *Shatvaryadi Rasayan Basti*^[18]
5. For *Vataj Yonivyapad* – *Uttarbasti of Guduchyadi Tail*^[19] or *Amla Rasa Yukta Tail*^[20].
6. For *Pittaj Yonivyapad* – *Uttarbasti of Madhur Dravya Siddha*^[20]/ *Madhuka Siddha Shira Basti*^[21]
7. 7. For *Kaphaj Yonivyapad* – *Katu Pradhan Dravya Yukta Niruha Basti* by adding *Gomutra* in it^[20].
8. *Putraghni* – *Kashmari or Kutaj Kwath Siddha Tail* – *Uttarbasti*^[22]
9. *Aticharna* – *Shatapak Tail Uttarbasti*^[23], *Vataghna Drvya Siddha Tail Uttarbasti*^[23].

2. *Rutu and Beeja – (Rutuchakra i.e. menstrual cycle and Beeja – Ovum)*

There is no clear differentiation between *Artav* and *Raja* i.e. ovum and menstruation flow. In many quotes *Aartav* is considered as *Raja* and vice a versa. *Rutuchakra and Dosh* relation^[24]:

1. *Rajah Kal* (menstrual period)

In *Rajstrav Kal* there is a predominance of *Vata Dosh*. *Apan Vayu* one of the types of *Vata Dosh* is mainly responsible for it. Its functions are described as expelling *artav* and foetus during delivery. So vitiation of *Vata Dosh* leads to the symptoms like *Sakashta Rajastrav (dysmenorrhoea)*, *Artava Kshaya (oligomenorrhoea)*, *Vataj Artav Dushti*. Excessive *Vata* during pregnancy may lead to habitual abortion. For treating the problems related it we can use *Basti as prime treatment*.

Anuvasan Basti i.e. enema where oil is main content or only content – can be used in oligomenorrhoea, scanty menstruation.

Niruha Basti enema where decoction of medicinal plant is main content can be used in oligomenorrhoea with dysmenorrhoea. *Due to its effectiveness* it is recognized as *Amrutopamam*^[13]. *Vandhya Stree* can easily conceive after this treatment.

Uttarbasti is the type of enema in which medicated *Ghee* (butter) or oil is administered in uterus through vagina in female or through urinary tract in bladder in both. It helps to normalise the excess *Vata* which increase the chances of conception. It also helps in following conditions ^[25]-

1. *Yonivibhransha* (Utero-vaginal prolapse)
2. *Yonivyapad* (gynaecological problems)
3. *Yonishool* (severe vaginal pain)
4. *Asrukdar* (meno- metrorrhagia)
5. *Aartav Ruja* (conditions like amenorrhoea, dysmenorrhoea etc)
6. Retention of placenta

Medicines which can be used for *Uttarbasti* are *Kushadya Tail*, *Phalaghrit* and *Phalakalyanak Ghrit*. Recommended time for *Uttarbasti* administration is *Rutukal* i.e just after the menstruation.

2. *Rutukal*: It contains proliferation of endometrium followed by ovulation. The reconstruction or proliferation or regeneration of tissue is done by *Prithavi* and *Jala*, which are *Bhautik* components of *Kaph*. *Aartav* in its stage of generation is of *Sheeta Guna* or it has characteristics like *Kapha Dosh* thus this stage is dominated by *Kapha Dosh*. Also *Kapha Dosh* has *Asharayasharyi Sambandha* (mutual interdependence or inseparable relationship between *Dosh* and *Dhatu* i.e. tissue) with *Rasa Dhatu* ^[26]. It is also the *Mala* (excretory) *Bhaga* of *Rasa Dhatu*. *Raja* is said to be *Updhatu* (a subsidiary tissue secondary tissue product) of *Rasa Dhatu*. So, all the three are connected with each other in some manner. So whenever we find the gynaecological condition in which all of these 4 are involved we can consider giving *Vaman* as *Shodhan Chikitsa*. *Vaman* is considered as the prime treatment for the *Kapha Dosh*. In following conditions *Aacharya* has specifically mentioned to use *Vaman* –

1. *Kaphaj Aratav Dushti* – *Madanphal Kashay Vaman* ^[27].
2. *Artavkshaya* – The symptoms like irregular menses, scanty menstruation & pain in abdomen comes under this topic. In commentary on *Susharut* for this condition *Aacharya Dhalhan* suggests to use *Vaman* (emesis) specifically and not *Virechan* (purgation) ^[28]. *Artav* is said to be of *Agneya Guna*. Here in this

condition, *Agneya Guna* is reduced. So if we use *Virechan* it will cause further decrease in *Agneya Guna*. *Vaman* will help to increase *Agneya Guna*.

3. PCOS: It is one of the most common reproductive endocrinological disorders. It is best known and most extensively studied cause of an ovulatory infertility in aged reproductive women. It mainly point outs the features of *Artav Kshaya*, *Kapha – Meda Dushti* ^[29]. *Vaman* treatment acts on both. So *Vaman* treatment can be taken as *Shodhan* treatment in PCOS.

3. *Rutuvyatit Kal* – It is secretary phase of the cycle. In this stage there is predominance of *Pitta Dosh*. *Pitta Dosh* is important while ovulation. Through *Dhatavagni* it helps in the generation of ovum and sperm i.e. *Artav* and *Shukra*. Impaired *Pitta Dosh* may cause *Dhatavgni Mandya* which leads to improper formation of *Artav* and *Shukra*. For vitiated *Pitta Dosh* *Virechan* is said to be main treatment. It also helps to cover vitiated *Kaph* and *Vata Dosh*. Impaired *Dhatavagni* caused due to vitiated *Pitta* is normalised using *Virechan*. It also helps in the regulation of *Apan Vata Dosh* which is important for the expulsion of *Artav* during *Rajakal*.

3. *Mansoabhitap* – Psychological factors are also considered important for the reproduction. In conditions like stress, depression and insomnia we can use *Shirodhar*. In this medicated oil, decoction of herbal medicine, medicated milk or butter milk is poured at forehead continuously for minimum 30 min with relaxing music on background which helps to relive above mentioned psychological factors. Some of the medicines used are, *Jatamansi Kwath* (decoction of spikenard),

4. *Ambu* – It can be considered as either *Ahar Rasa* or local secretions of vagina. For the healthy conception health of mother is also important. Female has to carry the responsibility of baby from the beginning till the end of pregnancy. So health of mother is very important. Nutrition to foetus depends on mother. We can use *Yapan Basti* (type of enema), *Anuvasan Basti* to increase *Bala* i.e. health or strength. If local secretions from vagina are acidic then it kills most of the sperm before entering into its destined site. It can be avoided by using different types of medicinal oil or

Ghrit (medicated butter) through *Uttarbasti* (type of enema) [30].

DISCUSSION

Ayurved does not focus only on diseased person but also gives different treatment modalities for the healthy person to maintain his health. One of this is *Panchkarma*. *Panchkarma* holds a unique importance in *Ayurvedic* treatment. It is very well known as body detoxification treatment. *Ayurvedic* texts do not specifically mentions about *Panchkarma* that can be used in infertility but *Aacharyas* have mentioned various treatments for both male and female for the healthy conception. *Panchkarma* is required for body detoxification and for providing healthy environment to the embryo. As discussed previously, there are 4 main factors which are required for the healthy conception. So here in this study *Stree-Vandhyatva* (female infertility) is discussed on the basis of default in these factor and treatment is reviewed accordingly.

In *Ayurved* there are three basic body components named as *Dosh Vata, Pitta, Kapha*. According to *Aacharyas* vitiation of *Vata Dosh* plays an important role in infertility. Normal areas where *Vata Dosh* lives in body are abdomen, lumbar region, pelvis, bones. All the reproductive organs are situated mainly in pelvic region which is one of the main places of *Vata*. So any disturbance in its normal function plays an important role in infertility.

For this vitiated *Vata, Basti* (enema) is told as main treatment. Drugs administered through *Basti* gives a universal action in whole body through ENS (enteric nervous system). The endogenous opioids in the ENS specifically endorphins are influenced which release GnRH which might help in regulating the HPO axis regulating the ovarian cycle and ovulation^[31]. *Uttarbasti* one of the types of *Basti* where medicated drug is directly administered in uterus acts directly on uterus so it also gives a good result.

Where there is obstructive pathology with *Kapha* predominance and if patient is healthy one can think of *Vaman* i.e. emesis. The combination of medicines use in *Vaman* with their properties they help to remove *srotoavrodha* (obstruction in channels).

Excessive *Pitta Dosh* also leads to disturbance in formation of *Artava* (ovum) and *Raja* (menstruation flow). It plays important role as *Dhatvagni* (digestive factor in the production of tissue) which is required for the formation of *Dhatu*. So the conditions where there is default in production of healthy ovum one can think about vitiation of *Pitta Dosh* as a reason and give treatment accordingly including its *Shodhan Chikitsa* which is mentioned as *Virechan*.

Although it is quite easy to deal with any physical abnormality but if we consider psychological factor it is hard to cure it only by counselling. For this *Shirodhara* plays an important role. It helps to calm down the mind which helps to relive stress.

CONCLUSION

From the overall review it can be said that *Panchkarma* can be called as *Ardhachikitsa* half treatment in female infertility which gives support and provides base to *Shaman Chikitsa* alleviation treatment. It not only purifies the reproductive system but also whole body providing mental as well physical fitness to woman who is going to get conceive. It can also be consider as pre conception treatment for normal couple to have healthy pregnancy.

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