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A Literary Review of *Artavakshaya* in Ayurveda w.s.r. to Oligo-Hypomenorrhea - Review Based on Literary Study

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ABSTRACT:

In *Ayurveda* classics, all Gynaecological problems are described in *Yonivyapada* and *Artava Vikara*. Due to changed lifestyle, the physical and emotional stress increases. This leads to many physiological changes that ends with the disruption of 'H-P-O' axis and may leads to various gynaecological disorders. *Artavakshaya* is one of amongst them. Ratio of Menstrual disorder is raising in gynaecological practice which is a precursor of infertility and other problems. *Artavakshaya* is also seen as one of the manifestation of the *Yonivyapadas* like *Arajaska/Lohitkshaya Yonivyapada* & *Vatala Yonivyapada*, along with *ksheen artavadusti* and *jataharini*. Modern science & *Ayurveda* both offer treatment for the *Artavakshaya*, but in modern science very little options are there like hormonal therapy while *Ayurveda* describes various modalities like life style modification, correction of diet, oral medication and *Panchakarma* procedures so this study is undertaken to through the light on classical reference of *Artavakshaya* with modern correlation & its *Ayurvedic* management.

Keywords: *Artavakshaya*, *Yonivyapada*, diet

INTRODUCTION

Woman's health is the prime consent to be considered for well-being of family, society and culture. Any physical, physiological and psychological disorders can disturb her life. Physiological changes and development occurs right from birth but markedly during the age of puberty. Due to increased physical and emotional stress in routine lifestyle of women alters the physiology of "Hypothalamus-Pituitary-Ovarian-Uterine axis". This may lead to many gynecological problems. Among all gynecological problems, the most common menstrual problem is *Artava*

Kshaya. *Acharyas* has mentioned the age of menarche with normal duration and interval of menstruation. Any deviation from these physiological parameters has been mentioned under different headings by different *Acharyas* like *Artavadushtis*, *Yoni vyapadas*, *Artavakshaya* etc. If we review our classics *Artava kshaya* has not been mentioned as a separate disease but it has been described as a symptom of many gynaecological disorders. *Acharya Sushruta* has explained the symptoms of *Artava Kshaya*.¹ In this condition, menstruation is delayed, menstrual blood is scanty and associated with pain during menstruation.



Artava Kshaya has also been mentioned in *Astha Artava dushtis* as *Ksheen Artava*.² In modern science *Lakshana* of *Artava Kshaya* can be correlated with certain menstrual disorders that are as follows:

- *Uchitakala adarshanam* as delayed menses or Oligomenorrhea
- *Alpata* as Hypomenorrhea
- *Yonivedana* as painful menses

So when we compare the disease *Artava Kshaya* with the modern medical science Oligomenorrhea and Hypomenorrhea can be correlated on the basis of its signs and symptoms. Oligomenorrhea³ is defined as menstrual bleeding occurring more than 35 days apart and which remains constant at that frequency. Hypomenorrhea⁴ is defined as when the menstrual bleeding is unduly scanty and lasts for less than 2 days. Prevalence of Oligomenorrhea is 13.5% in general population⁵ Many causes has been described in modern science for Oligomenorrhoea and hypomenorrhea that includes hormonal factors, ill health of patient, poor nutrition, may be constitutional in origin, may be related to uterine or endometrial origin. Treatment modalities in modern science includes reassurance, improving the general health of patient, hormonal therapy and various other modalities based on the underlying etiology for treating these condition.

Nirukti of artavkshaya –

“*Raktasya pramanahani*” *Rakta – raja/ artava Pramanhani*- decrease in amount.⁶

Praman of artava – 4 anjali (In a healthy person)

References of Artavashaya in Ayurvedic text -

Yonivyapadas related to *Artavakshaya* :

a) *Lohitakshaya*:

Acharya Vagbhata opined that due to vitiation of *vata* and *pitta* the *raja* is decreased and the woman suffers from burning, emaciation and changes in complexion. This condition known as *lohitakshaya*⁷

b) *Arajaska*:

Acharya Charaka says that *pitta* situated in *yoni* and uterus vitiates *rakta* then a woman becomes extremely emaciated and her complexion gets changed. This condition is known as *arajaska*.⁸ *Chakrapani* in his *teeka* described amenorrhoea as a symptom.

c. *Vatala Yonivyapada*:

Charaka writes that a woman of *vata prakriti*, when consumes *Vatapradhan* diet and indulges in other activities capable of aggravating *vayu*, then provoked *vayu* reaching

reproductive system, produces pricking and other pain, stiffness, sensation as if creeping of ants, roughness, numbness etc . local symptoms and fatigue or lethargy etc. other disorders of *vata*. Due to *vata* the menstruation starts with sound and pain, and menses is frothy, thin and dry.⁹

Artava dushti related to artava kshaya:

“*Ksheena artavadushti*” means reduced quantity of *artava* from its normal measurement due to vitiation of *doshas*.¹⁰ [scanty menses] This condition merely co-related with the “*Artava kshaya*”.

Jataharini¹¹ related to Artavakshaya

Kashyapa has mentioned certain menstrual disorders, as *Shushka revati*, *Katambhara*, *Vikuta jataharini* and these are the result of *jataharini graha badha*. These three menstrual disorders can be considered as primary amenorrhoea, because the following *lakshanas* are found in these *jataharini graha badhas*

a) *Shushka Revati*:

When a woman is 16 years old even then the menstrual phenomena does not take place and her *sphikapradesha* is emaciated then she is considered to be suffering from *Shushkarevati graha*.

b) *Katambhara*:

The woman who does not menstruate in the *uchita kala* (appropriate time) and becomes *krisha*, *heenabala*, *kruddha* and ultimately dies is known as *Katambhara*.

c) *Vikuta*:

When the menstrual discharge is *vishama* in *kala* (time), *varna* (colour) and *pramana* (quantity) from the very beginning and there is *balahani* and *glani* in the woman then she can be considered as suffering from *Vikuta jataharini*. From above description one can say that first two can be considered as primary amenorrhoea and last one as oligomenorrhoea.

Nidana of Artavakshaya: -

The *mula* of *artavavah srotas* being *garbhashaya* and *artava vahi dhamani* where injury causes infertility, dyspareunia and amenorrhoea.¹² Different authors have explained their own views regarding the manifestation of menstrual disorder. According to *kasyapa* view, after proper *snehna* and *swedan* in a *mrudokosta vyakti adhika aushadha sevana*, *atiusna annapana sevana jivarakta skalana* occurs. There by causing *vata prakopa* leading to *pralapa*, *unmade*, *hikka*, *bejoupghata* and *pushpopaghat(artava dusti)*¹³

Dalhana, the commentator of *Sushruta* has described the various etiological factors responsible for this condition, they are

- a) *Atisamshodhana*
- b) *Atisamshamana*
- c) *Vega dharana*
- d) *Asat manna*
- e) *Manastaapa*
- f) *Vyayama*
- g) *Anshan*

Samprapti

The *samprapti* (Etiopathogenesis) of *artava kshaya* involves two mechanisms.

- 1) *Marga avarodha janya*
- 2) *Dhatu kshaya janya*

In *marga avarodha janya artava kshaya*, involvement of *doshas* is *vata* and *kapha*. According to *Charaka* the vitiation of *artava vaha srotas* occurs by means of *sanga* (obstruction). This *avarodha* (obstruction) is caused either by *kapha* or *vata* alone or *vata kapha* together. According to *Sushruta*, *vata kapha* are the factors causing *avarana* to *artava vaha srotas*. *Pitta* is not included because it causes *artava vriddhi*. *Sushruta* has also explained that the trauma or injury to *artava vaha srotas* causes *vandhyatwa* (infertility), *maithuna asahishnuta* (dyspareunia) *artava nasha*.¹⁴

The aim of treatment here is to relieve the obstruction caused by *kapha* or/ & *vata* to the *artava vaha srotas*. After performing *Snehana* & *Swedana karmas*. *Vamana karma* in case of *kapha* vitiation can be done. *Niruha* & *anuvasana basti* are indicated in *vata* vitiation. *Uttarabasti* can be indicated in obstruction caused by *kapha* & *vata*.

In *dhatu kshaya janya Artavakshaya*, the vitiation of *doshas* occurs by their respective vitiated *ahara* & *vihara*. These vitiated *doshas* effect *rasadhatu* & its *dhatwagni*. So there is *rakta dhatu kshaya* which is an *anuloma kshaya*. When there is *rakta dhatu kshaya* due to anemic condition, all *prasadansha* of *rasa dhatu* goes to *rakta dhatu* alone and not to other *dhatu*s. So there is decrease in the other *dhatu*s. Due to same reason *artava upadhtwagni* doesn't get *poshak ansha* of *rasa* leading to *artava kshaya*. There is *ashraya- ashryee bhava* between *rakta* and *pitta*. As there is *kshaya* of *rakta dhatu*, ultimately *pitta kshaya* also occurs resulting in *artava kshaya*. *Sushruta* has considered *rakta* as *dosha* and mentioned it also as a vitiating factor of *artava kshaya*. So by its own vitiating *ahara* & *vihara*, *rakta* also gets vitiated and in turns vitiates *artava*.

Chikitsa (treatment)

Nidan parivarjan : -Eradication of the causative factor is the basic treatment of all disorders.

"*Tatra samshodhanameva ca agneyanaam dravayanaam*

vidhiyat upayogah" (*su. su. 15/12*)

Artavakshaya should be treated by use of purifying measures & *Agneya Dravyas*.¹⁵ The *Pittavardhaka* and *vata kapha shamak*, *ushna*, *tikshna*, *dipan*, *pachan*, *dravyas* are used and these *dravyas* can remove *Srotoavarodha* of *artava srotas* and brings up the normal menstrual flow.

"*Samshodhanamih vamanam na virekah etyapare*" *Dalhana* says that for purification, only *Vamana karma* should be used, no *Virechana*, because it reduces *pitta* which in turn decreases *Agneya* nature in body. Consequently *artava* also decreases. *Agneya* substances i.e. *tila*, *masha*, & *sukta* can be used¹⁶

Mahrishi kashyap consider *artavakshaya* as *anuvasna yogya vyadhi*.

Sitakalyana ghrita is also beneficial which is described under *pradar chikitsa* of *yogratnakara*.

Abhyantara Chikitsa (Oral Treatment)

Kwatha

1. *Tila*, *Karvi*, *Guda* in form of decoction.
2. *Krishna Tila Kwath* with *Guda*, *Mishreya Methika*, *muli*, *Gajara*, *Shatpushpa* etc. in form of Decoction.

Churna

1. *Shatapushpa Kalpa* .
2. *Malkangni flower*, *Swarjiksharan*, *Vacha*, *Peeta shal flower* with cold water.

Vati

1. *Rajah pravartini vati*
2. *Nastapushpantaka ras*

Modaka

1. *Aswathamuladi modaka*
2. *Agasti Haritaki modaka*

Taila *shatapushpa taila*

Ghrita *Phala Ghrita, brihat shatavari ghrita, kumar kalyana ghrita, kalyanaka ghrita , shitakalyana ghrita, mahakalyanaka ghrita*

Sthanika Chikitsa (Local Treatment)

Varti *Ikswaku-beeja*, *Danti*, *Chapala*, *Madanaphala*, *Guda*, *Surabeeja*, *Yavashuka*
Snuhikshira in form of *Varti*

Lepa *Intra vaginal use of langali and rasa preparations.*

Basti chikitsa (Enema or Uterine instillations)

1. *Anuvasana Basti – Shatavaryadi*

2. *Uttar Basti-Taila of Jivaniygana dravyas shatapushpa taila*

Pathyapathya:

Pathya:

1. *madya, mamsam* capable of increasing pitta are Beneficial.¹⁷
2. *Fish, kulattha, kanji*(sour substances), *takra, sura* etc. Be used in diet¹⁸
3. *Lasuna*(Garlic) is beneficial.¹⁹
4. *Tila, masha, sura, sukta, etc.*²⁰
5. *Fish, kanji, tila, udaswihcha, curd.*²¹

Apathya:

- *Ahara capable of aggravating nidanas are contraindicated*
- *Diwaswpna, ratri jagarana etc*²²

CONCLUSION

Artava kshaya occurs due to involvement of *vata* and *kapha*, which can be attributed to *marga avarodha* of *artava vaha strotas*. In *Ayurvedic* classical texts, treatment is mentioned to keep the *doshas* in equilibrium. It can be achieved by *Samsodhana* (*vaman* and *basti*) and *Samshamana* (in form of *Agneya dravyas*). Use of *Agneya dravyas* not only relieves the *kapha* which does *avarana* to *apanavata* but also increases the quantity of *artava*.

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