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

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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. Artavakshaya is also seen as one of the manifestation of the Yonivyapadas like Arajakshalohitkshaya Yonivyapada & Vatala Yonivyapada, along with ksheen artavadusti and jataharini. Modern science & Ayurveda both offer treatment for the Artavakshay, but in modern science very little options are there like hormonal therapy while Ayurveda describes various modalities like lifestyle 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
Artava Kshaya has also been mentioned in Astha Artava dushtis as Ksheen Artava.\textsuperscript{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. Oligomenorrhea\textsuperscript{3} is defined as menstrual bleeding occurring more than 35 days apart and which remains constant at that frequency. Hypomenorrhea\textsuperscript{4} 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 population\textsuperscript{5} Many causes has been described in modern science for Oligomenorrhea 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 artavakshaya** –

“Raktasya pramanahani” Rakta – raja/ artava
Pramanahani- decrease in amount.\textsuperscript{6} 

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

**References of Artavashaya in Ayurvedic text -**

Yoniyapadas 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\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{8} Chakrapani in his teeka described amenorrhea as a symptom.

c. Vatala Yoniyapada:
Charaka writes that a woman of vata prakriti, when consumes Vatapradhana 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 leathargy etc. other disorders of vata. Due to vata the menstruation starts with sound and pain, and menses is frothy, thin and dry.\textsuperscript{9}

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

**Jataharini\textsuperscript{11} 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 amenorrhea, 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, krudhda and ultimately dies is known as Katambhara.

c) Vikuta:
When the menstrual discharge is vishuma 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 dharmi where injury causes infertility, dyspareunia and amenorrhoea.\textsuperscript{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, unnade, hikka, bejoupghata and pushpopaghat(artava dusti)\textsuperscript{13}

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

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**Notes:**

\textsuperscript{2} Vagbhata, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka

\textsuperscript{3} Vagbhata, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka

\textsuperscript{4} Vagbhata, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka

\textsuperscript{5} Vagbhata, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka

\textsuperscript{6} Vagbhata, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka

\textsuperscript{7} Vagbhata, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka

\textsuperscript{8} Vagbhata, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka

\textsuperscript{9} Vagbhata, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka

\textsuperscript{10} Vagbhata, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka

\textsuperscript{11} Vagbhata, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka

\textsuperscript{12} Vagbhata, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka

\textsuperscript{13} Vagbhata, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka, Sushruta, Dhanwantri, Charaka
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 sangha (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 vridhdi. 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, Vanama karma in case of kapha vitiation can be done. Niruha & anuvasaan 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 dhatus. So there is decrease in the other dhatus. Due to same reason artava upadhwagni 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 dravyanaam 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, draywas are used and these draywas can remove Srotavarodha of artavaha srotas and brings up the normal menstrual flow.

“Samshodhanamih vamanam na virekah etyapare” Dalhana says that for purification, only Vanama 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 used 16
Mahrshi 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, mali, Gajara, Shatpushpa etc. in form of Decoction.

Churna
1. Shatapurusha Kalpa.

Vati
1. Rajah pravartini vati
2. Nastupashpantika ras

Modaka
1. Aswathamuladi modaka
2. Agasti Haritaki modaka

Taila shatapushpa taila
Ghrita Phala Ghrita, bihart shatavari ghrita, kumar kalyana ghrita, kalyanaka ghrita , shitakalyana ghrita, mahakalyanaka ghrita

Shhanika 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 Jivaniyagana dravyas shatapushpa taila

Pathyapathya:
Pathya:
1. madya, mamsam capable of increasing pitta are Beneficial.\textsuperscript{17}
2. Fish, kulattha, kanji(sour substances), takra, sura etc. Be used in diet\textsuperscript{18}
3. Lasuna(Garlic) is beneficial.\textsuperscript{19}
4. Tila,masha, sura, sukta, etc.\textsuperscript{20}
5. Fish, kanji, tila, udaswihcha, curd.\textsuperscript{21}

Apathya:
- Ahara capable of aggravating nidanas are contraindicated
- Diwaswma, ratri jagarana etc.\textsuperscript{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 Samsothana (vaman and basti) and Samshahanam (in form of Agneya dravyas). Use of Agneya dravyas not only relieves the kapha which does apanavaran to apanavata but also increases the quantity of artava.

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