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TO STUDY CLINICAL EVALUATION ON EFFECT AMALAKI IN TREATMENT OF MENSTRUAL DISORDERS

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ABSTRACT

Women's health is of prime importance to have a healthy society. In Ayurveda, gynecological disorders have been described under the umbrella of *Yonivyapad*. Menstrual disorders ranging from amenorrhea, dysmenorrhea and menorrhagia can be successfully treated by understanding the underlying causative factors. In this context, simple herbal formulations given in the classical texts of Ayurveda are of potential therapeutic value which is quite often undervalued. In this article we are discussing regarding the evaluation effect amalaki in treatment of menstrual disorders.

Keywords: Menstrual disorders, amalaka treatment

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the science which deals with maintenance of health and cure of disease. It stands on the frame work of Tridoshas, Saptha Dhathus and Trimalas. Ayurveda examine the menstrual cycle as a window into the human body. Artava is considered as the Upadhathu of the first and foremost dhathu ie the Rasa dhathu. Rajapravrithi is a normal physiological process in women as sleep, bowel activity etc. As the nature and pattern of all the physiological and psychological processes are dependent on the inherent constitution of doshas ie the Prakruthi, the pattern and nature of Rajapravrithi should also show some relation to the Prakruthi of the individual. . It is produced cyclically and being directed by Vata and is expelled through the vagina 3 . As far as modern science is considered, menstruation is the process where there is flow of blood from the uterus through the vagina occurring primarily in humans, determined by a complex interaction of hormones 4 . Prakruthi is the innate constitution of an individual based on the predominance of Dosha determined at the time of conception which cannot be changed till death 5 . Qualities of Dosha are expressed on body due to its predominance and it is called Deha Prakruthi. It is the enumeration or consideration of body features internal as well as external. Depending on the Dosha that is predominant in the Sukra and Shonita at the time of union, the food and activities of the pregnant women, uterus and season Prakruthi is determined 6 . Human body is made up of Doshas

and all physiological functions are depending on Doshas. Prakruthi of each individual is determined from the time of consumption itself. So each individual is specific in his/her own constitution of Prakruthi . If every physiological function depend on Doshas, then there will be a relation between the characteristics of all physiological functions with individual Prakruthi and so with menstruation also. Ayurvedic understanding of the cycle of Doshas during the whole lifespan is important particularly in the case of menstrual health in women. During the earlier stages of life ie. from the life in vitro through young adulthood it is the Kapha Dosha which predominates. Pitta increases dramatically during adolescence and tends to dominate the body processes until early thirties. Later stages the Vata Dosha dominates mainly during sixties and seventies. So the period of time where Pitta is dominant is more prone to get disorders such as high blood pressure, noncongestive heart disease, hyperthyroidism etc. It is also a high risk of time for many female disorders. Present generation females are facing many problems related to their menstruation like painful menstruation, irregular cycles, irregularity in bleeding patterns etc in their adolescent age without any specific pathology in their reproductive system. As long as the Doshas function in their normal state and are not affected or overshadowed by another Dosha, the menstrual cycle happens optimally. In a specific Prakruthi person there will be predominance of that particular Dosha which may interfere with the normal or

optimal functions of the other Doshas. So according to the Prakruthi there are chances that there will be variations in the characteristics of Rajapravruthi. For example, pain is a feature where Vata is responsible, so in Vata Prakruthi individuals there is an increased chance for painful menstruation, Pitta Prakruthi individuals may get subjected more to mood variations, Kapha Prakruthi individuals may have more clots in their menstrual blood etc. During the period of menopause also, different symptoms can be seen in women with different intensities, that may be due to the variations in bodily constitution. Mostly premenopausal symptoms are due to increased Pitta which will get exhibited as hot flushes, rashes over skin, intolerance to heat etc. Paittika menstrual flow Pitta is hot and sharp. So it brings more fluidity to the blood so that it flows easily. Pitta resides in blood and in excess it may cause heavy bleeding. As it causes tendency for swelling, it leads to tender, swollen breasts, acne etc that women experience during their premenstrual period. Kaphaja menstrual flow: Kapha is dull, heavy and sticky. Stronger the influence of Kapha Dosha, the more likely to get a prominent growth of the endometrial tissue. As more blood vessels grow to supply this growth, the Kapha cycle is more likely to experience a heavier flow than Vata cycle. General Menstrual Care: Menstrual cycle is an effective monthly cleanse. So it is essential to support the process of cleansing. All cleansing actions are giving importance to rejuvenation, rest and kindling of Agni. Guidelines for healthy menstrual cycle

1. Consume simple, freshly prepared and hot food items. Try

adding spices such as Ginger, Cardamom, Cumin, Coriander and Cinnamon

2. Cleansing involves the downward movement of wastes out of the body. So the direction of flow should not be interrupted by any upward movements like excessive talking, thinking, sexual intercourse and even Pranayama and Yoga. All these activities need energy and our body needs to use all its reserve energy towards cleansing
3. Suppression of urges like urination, defecation and sneezing should be avoided. All these will cause the upward flow of Vata which will disturb the free flow of cleansing action
4. Meditation will bring peace of mind which again assists the action of Vata
5. Hydrate the body with warm teas such as ginger tea, lemon tea with honey, cumin, coriander and fennel teas
6. Maintaining the balance of Doshas even at the time without menstruation is also important. The better way to maintain Doshas in equilibrium is to do yearly cleanse. Seasonal cleansing is highly effective way to balance and rejuvenate all bodily tissues so that they function optimally
7. Practicing Pranayama for balancing the mind as it helps to equalize the right and left sides of the brain and Yoga as per constitution will keep your body strong and energetic.

Causes of menstrual disorders

1. Dietary factors:

- Food and beverages that are excessively hot in potency cause disturbances in the physiology of menstruation especially in the growth and development of follicles/ovum. (andopachaya). [Ka. Sa. Kalpa Sthana 7/32]

- Consumption of excessive salty, sour, heavy, pungent substances, those producing burning sensation (vidahi), excessive use of unctuous substances, meat of domestic, aquatic and fatty animals, mixture of cooked rice and pulses (krushara), curd, vinegar, curd-water (mastu) and wine leads to excessive menstrual bleeding. [Cha.Sa. Chikitsa Sthana 30/204]

2. Lifestyle factors:

- The daily activities in general and those during menstruation influence reproductive health. [Cha. Sa. Chikitsa Sthana 30/7-8], [Su.Sa. Sharira Sthana 2/24-25]
- Suppression of natural urges (vega dharana) of micturition, defecation etc. leading to aggravation of "apana vayu" cause menstrual disorders. [Cha. Sa. Chikitsa Sthana 30/25-26].

A case control study in 300 subjects has proven the association of suppression of urges of micturition and defecation with primary dysmenorrhoea.^[4]

- The specific activities like continuous travelling especially in jerky vehicles, continuous sitting or standing in one position, excessive walking and exertion cause vitiation of "apana vayu" and lead to menstrual disorders. [A. Hr. Nidana thana 16/27]

- Use of artificial objects for sexual pleasure are considered as risk factors for menstrual disorders. [Cha. Sa. Chikitsa Sthana 30/7-8] [A. Hr. Uttara Sthana 33/27-28]

3. Psychological factors:

- Mental stress, anxiety and excessive thinking causes vitiation of channels of transportation of rasa dhatu and lead to disturbances in the physiology of menstruation. [Cha. Sa. Vimana Sthana 5/13] Stress is a major cause for hormonal disturbance in HPO axis leading to menstrual abnormalities.

4. Improper use of therapeutic interventions:

- Administration of nasal medication (nasya) during menstrual phase, administration of strong medication for purification therapy (shodhana) in a woman who is sensitive to mild purgatives (mrudu koshtha) leads to disorders of menstruation. [Ka. Sa. Siddhi Sthana 4/6] [Ka. Sa Siddhi Sthana 3/20]

5. Congenital factors:

- The defects in gametes (beejadosha), especially in the ovum of mother can cause congenital anomalies related to female reproductive system. [Cha. Sa. Sharira Sthana 4/30].

It is responsible for altering the reproductive physiology and causing menstrual abnormalities. [Cha Sa Chikitsa Sthana 30/7-8], [Cha Sa Chikitsa Sthana 30/34-35]

CONCLUSION

Being the natural cleansing process of the body menstruation needs assistance from the individual. The unobstructed flow of menstrual blood will be possible only by the optimal assistance of the Tridoshas. Any disturbance in the equilibrium of Doshas will create problems in menstrual cycle. In a particular Prakruthi there is a physiological increase in the level of that particular dosha, which may show its effect on the characteristics of menstruation. Such effects due to the Prakruthi of the individual may cause some ailments which can be considered physiological. So understanding the Doshic play and adequate application of medication, control of diet and regiments is needed to restore the optimal action of menstrual cycle which is very crucial to maintain the health of a women.

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