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Conceptual study of *Rutumati paricharya*: A Need of present era

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Abstract

Now a days, the lifestyle of reproductive age group women has become very stressful and hectic. She undergoes physical as well as mental stress which is one of the causes of menstrual disorders like *menorrhagia*, *dysmenorrhea*, PCOS etc. These disorders seriously affect their reproductive system. So this is a need of time to improve her lifestyle during menstrual cycle and educate the society about *Rutumati paricharya* mentioned in *Ayurveda*. *Rutumati paricharya* is a code of conduct mentioned during menstrual cycle. *Rutumati paricharya* is one of the most neglected Paricharya. If women practices

these paricharya definitely she will regain her health, strength and vitality

Key words – *Rutumati paricharya*, menstrual disorder, lifestyle.

Introduction

Ayurved is science of life. The primary aim of *Ayurveda* is to maintain and promote health in healthy person along with treating sickness i.e. Prevention of disease is better than cure¹. There is lots of references which proves that Ayurved helps women in her different phases of life. By following Paricharyas during different phases of her life like *Rutumati paricharya*², *garbhini paricharya*³, *sutika paricharya*⁴. Life journey is divided in three phases these are *balya*, *Madhya* and *vrudha avastha*.⁵ *Madhya*

avastha is particularly longest and most important period in the lifetime of the women as it is a fertile period. She is the important source of new creation.⁶

Findings show that the prevalence of menstrual disorders has been recorded as high as 85% in India.⁷ Menstrual disorders are commonest among women in reproductive age groups.

Today's fast developing world is the world of competition; everyone wants fame, success and self development. Women are the part of society so she also desire to achieve all above quality of life. She manages her careers and household responsibilities of nuclear families. Such demanding lifestyle has made it very difficult for her to follow *Rutumati paricharya*.

Ayurveda has protocol of treating any patient, there is first adopted Paricharya second food form and lastly Aushadha form is given. Ayurved always applied aahar, vihar as first line of treatment.⁸

Aim

To study the *Rutumati paricharya* conceptually.

Objectives

- To study the principle behind *Rutumati paricharya* and its application in present era.
- Ayurvedic management of menstrual disorders

Material

- Review of Ayurvedic literature
- Review of Modern literature
- Review of journal and Website

Literature review

Ayurveda divides the entire monthly cycle into three phases *Rutu-Kala*, *Rutu-Vyateeta-Kala*, and *Rutumati-Kala* and each of these phases are predominated by a different *Dosha*. *Rutu-Kala* refers to the proliferative phase during which follicles inside the ovaries develop and mature in preparation for ovulation⁹. This phase is considered to be of a duration of 12-16 days and is dominated by *Kapha Dosha*, which governs regeneration and growth. *Rutu-Vyateeta-Kala* refers to the Secretary Phase, wherein various hormones and nutrients are secreted in anticipation of nourishing the conceptus (the embryo) if conception were to take place¹⁰. This phase will exist for duration of 9-13 days and is dominated by *Pitta Dosha*, which governs all secretion activities in the body. *Rutumati -Kala* is

the actual phase of menstruation, wherein the menstrual blood along with the *endometrium* is shed from the body.¹¹ This phase exists for a duration of 3-5 days and is predominated by *Vata Dosha* (*Apana vayu*), which governs all movement within the body.¹²

As per *Sushrutacharya* the good qualitative *Aartav lakshana* are as follows, it will be similar to rabbit blood colour and texture similar to the colour of *Laksha* and it will not leave any stains over the cloth.¹³

Ayurveda has prescribed a lifestyle to be adopted by menstruating women – a series of Do's and Don'ts– called '*Rutumati paricharya*'¹⁴, which aims to protect the health of the menstruating woman and prevent any health defects in the child, if any conception happens.¹⁵

Shairisthan is nothing but a blueprint of human being. Understand the Sharir Rachana in much better way is very important, unless knowing a structures in right sense it is very difficult to treat a person in better way.¹⁶ *Rutumati paricharya* is well described in Shariristhan of Bhrahattrayi. This paper emphasis *Rutumati paricharya* mentioned in Sushrut samhita.

Sushruta Samhita Shariristhan elaborate their concept of *Rutumati paricharya* by

following - from the 1st day to 3rd day of menses a woman has to be followed *Bhrahmcharya* during menses women should lie down on a mattress made of bunch of grass (*Darbha*), should take her food from her own blended palms or from earthen sauces or pots, or from plate made of leaves. She should live on a course of *Habishya* diet and forswear during the time, even the sight of her husband. After this period, on the fourth day she should take a ceremonial ablution, put on a new garment and ornaments and then visit her husband after having uttered the words of necessary benediction.¹⁷

Sushruta Samhita Shariristhan stress that intercourse during menses should be avoided, because if a child is conceived (it possible, though less likely) from such an intercourse, then such a child may suffer intra-uterine death or death within few days of the birth, or if alive, then suffer from some deformity. *Sushruta* further elaborates the things which must be avoided during menstruation and how the long-term practice of prohibited elements of *Paricharya*, may have harmful effect on the child, which may be conceived during *Rutu-Kala*.¹⁸

Sr. No.	Don'ts during menstruation	Abnormalities in Child if Don'ts are performed
1	<i>Dvaswap</i> / Sleeping during day time	Over Sleepy like Kumbhakarna
2	<i>Anjana</i> / Use of <i>Collyrium</i> and <i>Rodana</i> / Crying	Blind or Visual Disturbances
3	<i>Snana</i> / Bathing	Painful
4	<i>Abyanga</i> / Oil Massage	Skin disorders
5	<i>Nakha chedan</i> / Nail Paring	Deformity in nails
6	<i>Pradhavan</i> / Running	<i>Untrembling</i>
7	<i>Hasana</i> / Laughing	Discoloration of teeth, lips and tongue
8	<i>Ati kathan</i> / Indulging in long conversations	Over talkative
9	<i>Sravan</i> / Listening to various topics	Deaf
10	<i>Avalekhan</i> / Combing	Bald
11	<i>Maarut sevan</i> / Exposure to wind, Fatigue work	Mental illness

All above mentioned Do's and Don'ts has a significance to alleviate menstruation-related problems. *Ayurveda* is science of life while explaining *Rutumati paricharya* Aacharya apply

fear factor as if a women does not follow *Rutumati paricharya* it may have harmful effect on her child. When any women know something going to happen with kid she become alert and start to

protect her child from all types of hazards.

Discussion

As per review a comparison of *Rutumati paricharya* with Do's and Don'ts prescribed during different medical conditions reveals that menstruation is first and foremost a naturally occurring purification (Shodhan) process, which helps to purify the body and restore health by removing impurities from the body.

Thus the mode of life prescribed for menstruating women is more or less same as those prescribed for people who have undergone *Shodhan* procedure as mentioned in *Ashta-Mahadoshkar-Bhava*¹⁹. The *Ashta-Mahadoshkar-Bhava* are the eight activities, which are to be avoided during any *Shodhan* procedure performed in *Ayurveda*. The eight activities include: Talking in a loud voice, travelling in vehicles, excessive walking, sitting in one place for a long time, having food in *ajeerna awastha*, having non-prescribed food, sleeping during the day, and sexual intercourse. These prohibitions will help in preventing the vitiation of *Vata* and *Kapha Dosha*, restoring the strength of the body, and nourishing the Agni (digestive capacity) of the person.

Therefore, it can be concluded that *Paricharya* prescribed for menstruating women will assist in the natural *Shodhan* process and will restore health to the menstruating women by preventing any imbalance in the *Doshas* and by nourishing the Agni.

During menses women should lie down on a mattress made of bunch of grass (*Darbha*), because *Darbha* has very unique properties. It helps to protect from toxic radiation and negative energies of all types. It energetically shield the area around it from demons, ghosts and negative thoughts, it also protect from radiations induced by electrical appliances²⁰ e.g. Mobile phones. So *Acharya* recommend this *darbha* sacred grass during *Rutumati paricharya*

Menstruation is a state of *Agnimandya* as a result of which menstruating woman experiences decrease in appetite. So *Acharya* mentioned the *Havishya* diet. Sticking to this diet along with other elements of *Rutumati paricharya* like not sleeping during day time, not doing exercises and activities of physical exertion, not anointing the body, etc. will help in reactivate the Agni of the menstruating women and thus prevent unpleasant physiological conditions that may arise due to the *Agnimandya*.²¹

Menstruating woman is a person with a wound. This is because, the body sheds the lining of the uterus during menstruation, and thus indicating an active wound. As a result, the *Paricharya* prescribed for menstruating women includes elements that are prescribed during injury of a person, so as to assist in fast and uninterrupted healing of the wound. Both menstruating women and injured persons are advised to consume light and easily digestible food, avoid intercourse, avoid sleeping during daytime, and avoid physical exertion.²²

Abnormalities seems to be in Women if don'ts are performed-

While elaborating this point *Acharya* may want to mention bonding between mother and her future kid. If she knows that because only she does not follow *Rutumati paricharya* her kid has been developing some disorders this fear may be turned mother to do all *Rutumati paricharya* as mentioned in *samhita*. *Divaswapa* is responsible for kaphavrudhi²³ kaphavrudhi leads to srotorodha and it hamper menstrual flow or cleaning process. Which may reduce or obstruct normal flow. *Anjana* not to be applied because whenever anjana applied tears come through the eyes there is water loss from

eyes this minute water loss may be responsible for water imbalance in Aartav.

Rodana it may lead to water imbalance in Aartav

Snana involves all body muscle making them active. More blood supply is required for these active muscles. This may result in reductions of blood supply to Uterus leading to lower abdominal pain.

Abhanga it increases heat on the body surface it increases blood supply to body surface. Resulting as effect of *snana*.

Nakha chedana - Nakha are mala of *Asthidhatu* paring of nails may causes faster growth initially and once it reaches at certain stages growth will be slow, paring of nails give signals to activate *Asthidatu* that something is lost, *asthi* is *sthana* of *vata*²⁴ *vata* get vitiated in body. It affect the menstrual flow.

Pradhavan increases blood supply of leg muscles, hamper uterine blood supply leads to pain in lower abdomen.

Hasana leads to *vatavrudhi*, vitiated *vata* causes menstrual problems.

Listening to various loud music it leads to *Rasaksyaya*, it responsible for

Aartavkshyaya because *Aartav* is *upadhatu* of *Rasadhatu*.

Maarut sevan leads to *vatavrudhi*, also increases *Raja guna*²⁵ in the body, it affect menstrual flow.

So above mentioned all possibilities can occur in women herself who do not follow *Rutumati paricharya*, instead developing those unsavory conditions.

Conclusion

- It is very clear that the purpose of various Do's and Don'ts of *Rutumati paricharya* is to protect the menstruating women (who are susceptible to various menstrual disorder) by preventing the vitiation of various *Doshas*.
- Adopting *Rutumati paricharya* women has produces best quality *beej* i.e. ovum with having quality *matruja avayava*. so in future offspring doesn't have *Maatruj avayav* disorder. Diseases of heart, kidney, liver etc.
- *Rutucharya* has to be understood first in right sense, then applied in right manner and transported to other in best manner is the need of hour.

- Following *Rutumati paricharya* helps women to become healthy mother. Healthy mother can give birth to healthy baby.

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