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Understanding the role of *Vata* in treatment of Female Infertility - A Literary Review

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Infertility is defined as failure to conceive within one or more years of regular unprotected coitus. Infertility is faced worldwide affecting 8-10% of all the couples. As per WHO data, the estimated prevalence of primary infertility among reproductive age group women in India is 11.8%. *Vandhyatwa* is the inability of the couple to achieve conception. It is considered as one among the 80 *Nanatmaja Vyaadhis* by *Acharya Kashyapa* of the three *Doshas* described in *Ayurveda*. *Vata* has a prime factor in causing infertility and various disturbances in the reproductive health; hence it is essential to understand the role of *Vata Dosha* in *Vandhyatwa*. **Methodology:** To review, analyze and interpret the *Guna* and *Karma* of *Vata* and its subtypes, to study *Vata* as an important *Garbha Sambhava Samagri* (essential factors for conception) as described in various *Ayurveda* classics and its further implication in treatment of infertility. Hence for healthy reproductive system and healthy progeny controlling *Vata* is one of the essential factors. **Discussion:** The balance of *Tridosha*, *Saptadhatu* and *Trimala* is required for healthy progeny - *Supraja*. Controlling *Vata* is described as the main line of treatment in *Yoni Vyapat*. *Vandhyatwa* is one of the complications of *Yoni Vyapat* and *Vata Vyadhihara Karma* can be adopted in treating the same.

Key words: *Vata*, *Vandhyatwa*, *Infertility*, *Garbha Sambhava Samagri*.

INTRODUCTION

Vata is an important humoral factor in the body responsible for maintaining the fertility of the women. It is *Pravartaka*, initiator of all the functions, it motivates the *Manas*, stimulates the sense organs towards its perception, it helps in formation of all the body tissues. Most importantly it is the *Karta* for

Garbha^[1] the formational activity of *Garbha* is done by the *Prakrutha Vata*.

Vandhyatwa is the inability of the couple to achieve/conceive *Supraja*. It is considered as one among the 80 *Nanatmaja Vyaadhis*.^[2] Hence it is essential to understand the role of *Vata Dosha* in *Vandhyatwa*. From the scattered references of *Ayurveda*, *Vandhyatwa* can be understood as a congenital anomaly, as a *Yoni Vyapath* or as infertility.

Vata is derived from the root word - *Gati* (movement) and *Gandhana* (senses).

Vata Sthana

Pakvashaya^[3] is considered as the main site of *Vata*. The pelvic area where the major organs of reproductive system such as uterus, vagina, cervix, broad and round ligaments are located are considered as the main sites of *Vata* especially the *Apana Vata*.

Vata is subdivided into 5 types^[4]

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1) Pranavata

The main site of this type of Vata is *Murdha* and *Uras*. *Karma* of *Prana Vata* is *Buddhi Hrudaya Indriya Chitadrik*. "*Soumanasya Garbhadharanam*"^[5] where the state of *Manas* is the causative factor for conception. Hence *Pranavata* controls the *Garbhadharana* and its regulation is important in achieving pregnancy.

Vibhramsa of *Dhi*, *Dhruti* and *Smriti* causes *Manasika Rogas* due to disturbances of *Prana Vata* which are the causative factors for many *Arthava Dushti*. *Prana Vata* maintains hypothalamo-pituitary-ovarian axis, regulated by pituitary gland which is the main physiological pathway influencing the menstrual cycle, ovulation is situated and controlled by *Prana Vata* helping in achieving conception.

2) Udana Vata

The main site of *Udana Vata* is *Uras*, and functions of *Udana Vata* such as *Prayatna* and *Urjas* is considered as an important factor in achieving pregnancy.

3) Samana Vata

The site of this Vata is *Koshta* and stays next to *Agni*. The main functions are *Anna Grahana*, *Pachana*, *Vivechana* and excretion. Proper *Pachana* of *Ahara* leads to formation of *Rasadi Dhatus*, *Upadhatus* and *Mala*. *Arthava* being the *Upadhatu* of *Rasa* is nourished by the quality of food intaken. Hence *Samana Vata* plays an important role in formation of *Rasadi Dhatus* and *Beejarupi Arthava* helping in conception.

4) Vyana Vata

The site is *Hrudaya* and it moves all over the body. *Hrudaya* is considered as the seat of *Manas*, *Ojas* and *Atma* and also *Mulasthanas* of *Rasavaha Strotas*, and *Upadhatu* of *Rasa* is *Arthava*. Hence any disturbances in the *Vyana Vata* leads to *Beejarupi Arthava Dusti* leading to infertility. There is also reference quoting that *Vyana Vata* carries *Shukra* to the *Antar Yoni Marga*

Vyana Vata does the function of nourishing the *Sarva Shareera* including the *Garbha*. It is this subtype of

Vata which is responsible for fertilization by fusion of gametes. Its *Vaigunyata* will affect the components residing in *Hrudaya*, where *Manas* and *Atmaja Bhavas* are essential for *Garbhotpatti*.

5) Apana Vata

Main sites include pelvis region and this particular Vata is responsible for *Shukra Arthava Utpatti* and *Garbha Nishkramana Kriya*. Among all the *Pancha Vata*, *Apana Vata* is considered as a pivotal subtype of Vata which governs all the reproductive activities of the body. Its vitiation will affect these organs and leads to *Vandhyatwa*, *Nashtarthava*, *Garbhapata*, *Garbhasrava* and *Moodagarbha*.

During labour the same *Apana Vata* is called as *Prasuta Maruta* which controls the mechanism of labour.

Role of Vata during various stages of life**During menarche**

Prana Vata and *Vyana Vata* is responsible for maintaining the healthy HPO axis hence leading to attain menarche and release of *Arthava* monthly at regular intervals^[6] under the influence of *Pitta* and *Samana Vata*, good quality of *Arthava* is formed. The aggravated *Rakta* formed by *Rasa Dhatu* is expelled every month under the action of *Apana Vata*.

During menstrual cycle

The stages of *Arthava Chakra* are divided into 3 stages

- 1) *Rajasrava Kala*
- 2) *Rutukala*
- 3) *Rutuvyatita Kala*

The *Rajas* which is accumulated in *Garbhashaya* after *Rutukala* is termed as *Purana Rajas*, this accumulated *Rasa* is eliminated from *Garbhashaya* during *Rajah Kala*. The predominant *Dosha* during this stage is *Vata*.

During menopause (Arthava Nivrutti)

The menopause is attained at the age of 50yrs, which is the period of *Vata Vriddhi* and during this stage there is slow deterioration of *Raja* and *Stanya*. *Vata*

should be controlled during this stage as it causes various *Shareerika* and *Manasika Rogas* controlled by *Vata*.

During formation of Garbha

There are various factors responsible for conception - *Ritu*, *Kshetra*, *Ambu*, *Beeja*^[7] *Shat Bhavas*, *Marga*, *Hrudaya/Manas*^[8] *Vata*.

- 1) 'Shudhe Garbhashya Marge...Anale ^[9]proper functioning of *Vata* is considered as one of the important *Garbha Sambhava Samaghri* for conception.
- 2) *Ritu Kala* - implies the *Garbha Grahana Smartha Kala* which is suitable for conception. *Vata* vitiation leads to unfavorable conditions in *Yoni* affecting during implantation, fertilization and ovulation.^[10]

During fertilization

Vata along with *Kala Sampat* is responsible for division and association of *Beeja*, maturation of gamete takes place by the action of *Vata* by facilitating cell division. The *Tejas* generated during coitus activates the *Vata* and due to combined action of *Vata* and *Tejas*, the *Shukra* is ejaculated into the female genital tract where fertilization takes place.

- 3) *Ambu* - here *Ambu* refers the nourishing *Rasa Dhatu* and which helps in formation of *Beejarupi Arthava* helping in conception.
- 4) *Kshetra* - here *Kshetra* refers to healthy reproductive system, *Vata Vikruti* in *Kshetra* causes *Vandhyatwa*^[11] various congenital and anatomical defects such as septate uterus, arcuate uterus, bicornuate uterus, uterus prolapse, stricture of the fallopian tubes etc. *Dwiretas*, *Samskaravaha*, *Patanendriya* are the effects of *Prakupita Vata*
- 5) *Beeja* - healthy ovum and sperm is referred as the *Beeja* which is essential for conception. At the level of production of ovum - *Beeja Utpati*, *Beeja Utsarga* and *Beeja Bhaga* is influenced by *Vata*.^[12] Later movement of ovum from ovaries to uterus via fallopian tube is controlled by the *Chala Guna*

of the *Vata* helping in implantation. *Prakupita Vata* during this stage causes various *Beeja Dustis*. *Yoni Vyapats* are explained which are caused due to *Beeja Dosh* such as *Shandi Yoni Vyapat*, which is caused by *Vata*.

Garbhavyapat - *Sharangadara* mentions 8 *Garbha Vyapats*, they are *Upavistaka*, *Nagodara*, *Makkala*, *Mudhagarbha*, *Vishkambha*, *Gudhagarbha*, *Jarayudosh*, *Garbhapata* etc.

Garbhasrava & Garbhapata refers to expulsion of fetus being more in liquid form upto 4th month and after 5th & 6th month it is termed as *Garbhapata* as it attains stability (Su. Ni 8/10). *Vata* gets aggravated due to *Nidana Sevanas* such as excessive indulgence in the intercourse, travelling by chariot with jerky movements, horse riding, walking, falling from height, compression, running, injury due to weapon, lying down or sitting in uneven surface, fasting, suppressing natural urges, consuming *Ruksha*, *Katu*, *Tikta* foods, grief, and *Garbha* gets detached as a fruit detaches from the stalk due to trauma and produces *Garbhasrava* Which is associated with *Vata Lakshanas* such as pain in the *Garbhashaya*, *Kati*, *Vankshana*, *Vasti Pradesha* with bleeding.

This is basically due to vitiated *Vata* and *Rakta Srava* is due to *Ama Garbha* which opens up the *Arthavavaha Srotas*. (*Sushruta Shareera* 10/57 *Dalhana Teeka*). Treatment of *Garbhasrava* focuses on stabilizing the fetus which is done by *Vatahara Ahara*, *Vihara* and *Aushadha*.

- *Vatabhipanna Garbha/ Garbha Shosha* - when *Garbha* is afflicted with *Vata* it dries up, decreasing the *Ojus* and either the *Rasa* does not nourish the body or it flows slowly in *Garbha Nadi*, hence nourishment is hampered and the *Garbha* develops slowly and the abdominal height is less than the corresponding gestational age, quivering is feeble ('*Garbha Spandanam Mandameva Cha*')
- *Leena Garbha* - due to obstruction of *Vata* the *Garbha* shrinks ('*Vatopadrava Gruheetavtvat Srotasam Leeyate garbha*') and stays there for longer time and adheres to the *Srotas*.

- *Garbhashayanta Mrutagarbha* (IUD) - 'Vayu Kupitastu Vinihanti Garbha', whenever there is excessive accumulation of *Doshas*, usage of more *Teekshna*, *Ushna Ahara*, suppression of *Vega*, *Vata*, *Mutra*, *Vishamasana* and *Mansika Bhavas* such as *Shoka*, *Bhaya*, *Trasa Vata Prakopa* takes place and leads to over exertion and causes intra uterine foetal death.

Nahi Vatadrute Yonim Naarinaam Sampradushyate^[13] there cannot be any *Yoni Vyapat* or vitiation of *Yoni* without the influence of *Vata* hence the following *Yoni Vyapat* due to *Vata*,

Acc. to Charaka	Acc. to Sushruta	Acc. to Vagbhata
<i>Vatika Yoni Vyapat</i>	<i>Vatala Yoni Vyapat</i>	<i>Vatika Yoni Vyapat</i>
<i>Acharana Yoni Vyapat</i>	<i>Vipluta Yoni Vyapat</i>	<i>Aticharana Yoni Vyapat</i>
<i>Aticharana Yoni Vyapat</i>	<i>Vandhya Yoni Vyapat</i>	<i>Prakcharana Yoni Vyapat</i>
<i>Prakcharana Yoni Vyapat</i>	<i>Paripluta Yoni Vyapat</i>	<i>Udavarta Yoni Vyapat</i>
<i>Udavarta Yoni Vyapat</i>	<i>Udavarta Yoni Vyapat</i>	<i>Jataghni Yoni Vyapat</i>
<i>Putraghni Yoni Vyapat</i>		<i>Antarmukhi Yoni Vyapat</i>
<i>Antarmukhi Yoni Vyapat</i>		<i>Sushka Yoni Vyapat</i>
<i>Suchimukhi Yoni Vyapat</i>		<i>Shandi Yoni Vyapat</i>
<i>Sushka Yoni Vyapat</i>		<i>Mahayoni</i>
<i>Shandi Yoni Vyapat</i>		<i>Vamini Yoni Vyapat</i>
<i>Mahayoni</i>		

- Here *Vatala Yoni Vyapat* occurring due to consumption of *Vatala Ahara Vihara* causes *Stabdata*, sensation of ants crawling around and other *Vata Vyadhis* related to *Yoni*, it can usually

be associated with anovulation leading to infertility.

- *Acharana Yoni Vyapat* caused due to unhygienic condition creating *Kandu* in the *Yoni Marga*, *Krimi Udbhava* takes place and favors ascending infections, leading to dysperunea.
- *Prakcharana Yoni Vyapat*, caused when coital act is performed with very young girl there is excoriating pain in the low back, limbs, by the vitiation of *Vata*. This condition is usually associated with pelvic pathology leading to infertility.
- *Udavartini Yoni Vyapat*, caused by suppression of *Vegas*, and *Pratiloma Gati* of *Vata* which creates pain and pain during menses, soon after the women attains menses, she feels relieved and this condition is associated with hypoplasia of the uterus and these pelvic pathology and hormonal imbalance causes infertility.
- *Putraghni Yoni Vyapat*, caused due to consumption of *Ruksha* and *Vatakara Ahara Vihara*, the *Garbha* gets destroyed by the *Dushita Vata* and *Rakta* leading to repeated abortions both post-natal and prenatal loss, leading to infertility.
- *Antarmukhi Yoni Vyapat* causes retroversion of uterus and in severe cases like 3rd degree retroversion makes the OS occluded by anterior vaginal wall and leads to infertility
- *Suchimukhi Yoni Vyapat* which is caused by the consumption of *Ruksha Ahara* during ante-natal period carries as *Matru Dosh* and causes pin hole cervix and makes it difficult for the sperm to ascend upwards leading to infertility.
- *Sushka Yoni Vyapat* caused by suppression of *Vegas* during the intercourse, vitiates the *Apana Vata Dosh* and causes dysuria and dyschezia. Here there will be estrogen deficiency and atrophy of vagina and dyspareunia which favors infections.
- *Shandi Yoni Vyapat* is *Marutopahata Beeja Dusti* occurs and leading to congenital disorders.

- *Phalini /Andini Yoni Vyapat* there will be congestion due to displacements leading to infertility.
 - *Karnini Yoni Vyapat* can be correlated to cervical erosion and cervical pathology where copious secretions form a thick mucous plug and obliterates the sperm ascent.
 - *Asrija Yoni Vyapat* there is excessive bleeding and early loss of pregnancy leading to infertility.
 - *Vipluta Yoni Vyapat* there is constant pain and pathologies like endometriosis and other psychological disorders leading to infertility.
 - *Vandhya Yoni Vyapat* is secondary amenorrhea condition leading to infertility.
- 6) *Manas - 'Soumanasya Garbhadharanam'*^[14] it is the *Vata* that regulates the *Manas*^[15] and healthy mental status is only considered as the essential factor in achieving conception.
- 7) *Shad Bhavas - the Matruja, Pitruja, Rasaja, Satvaja, Satmyaja Manasa Bhavas* are easily affected by vitiated *Vata* and as the *Garbha* is completely dependent on the mother, *Vata* vitiation in the mother affects the developing embryo.

RESULTS

Vata is called to be *Tantra, Yantra Dhara* (instrument and functional units of the body), it helps to initiate the physiological process, and has a control over the *Manas* and sense organs. *Vata* has the properties of creating the *Garbha*. *Pitta* and *Kapha* is considered as *Pangu* and does not have the motility^[16] *Vata* by its action of *Chala Guna* is considered as the one which controls all the activities of the body and carries *Kapha* and *Pitta* along to its sites and performs the physiological functions. In order to correct *Vandhyatwa* the balanced state of other *Doshas, Ritu Kshera, Ambu, Beeja* and *Shad Bhavas* free from vitiation by the *Pancha Vata* is essential.

DISCUSSION

The balance of *Tridosha, Saptadhatu* and *Trimala* is required for healthy progeny - *Supraja*. All the

Purusharthas are attained through a child and continuation of the progeny.^[17] *Vandhyatwa* has been described as one of the *Nanatmaja Vyadhis* and hence controlling *Vata* by adoption various *Vatahara* line of treatment is essential to achieve conception. After purifying by all other methods, *Vata Vyadhihara Karma* is considered as the main *Chikitsa Sutra* for treating *Yoni Vyapat* and complications arising due to it.^[18] The treatment principles of *Vatahara* includes *Snehana, Swedana, Mrudu Samshodana*, intake of *Madhura, Amla, Lavana, Ushna Ahara, Deepana Pachana. Vataghna Ahara Sevana. Basti* is considered as the *Ardha Chikitsa* for *Vata*^[19] *Niruha, Anuvasana* and *Uttara Basti*. Therapies such as *Yoni Abhyanga, Pichu Dharana, Mardana, Veshtana, Seka, Dhara* can be adopted.

CONCLUSION

Vata is controller of *Ayu*, and gives strength to the body, *Vata* is considered as the '*Vishwa*' and all should worship *Vata*^[20] because of its omni-present, *Ashukari* action, strongest, it is *Swatantra* (independent) and causes many disease conditions, if not kept under control. Hence *Vata* is considered as *Shreshtha* among the *Tridosha*, hence by controlling *Vata* by various measures prescribed in classics *Vandhyatwa* can be treated.

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