



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 9 · Issue 8

August 2024

Journal of
**Ayurveda and Integrated
Medical Sciences**

www.jaims.in

JAIMS

An International Journal for Researches in Ayurveda and Allied Sciences



Maharshi Charaka
Ayurveda

Indexed

Classical Review on *Kashtartava*

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ABSTRACT

Kashtartava (Dysmenorrhea) or painful menstruation is one of the leading causes for maximum absenteeism of females from school or workplace. Though it is not a serious problem but it definitely affects the quality of life and efficiency. In Ayurveda, gynecological disorders are described under *Yonivyapad*, *Aartavadushti* and *Pradara*. Few *Yonivyapads* resemble the clinical presentation of dysmenorrhea. *Pradara* refers to heavy or prolonged bleeding which may or may not be painful. The normal formation and expulsion of menstrual blood is the *Karma* of *Apana Vayu*. Therefore the basic line of treatment is pacifying of *Vayu*. It can be treated at OPD level with the use of oral medication of *Panchakarma* procedures.

Key words: *Kashtartava*, *Yonivyapad*, *Pradara*, *painful menstruation*, *Dysmenorrhea*

INTRODUCTION

Dysmenorrhoea refers to painful menstruation of magnitude sufficient so as to incapacitate day to day activities.^[1] It may be primary or secondary, depending on absence or presence of any underlying pelvic pathology respectively. In *Ayurveda*, gynecological disorders are described under *Yonivyapad*,^[2] *Aartavadushti*^[3] and *Pradara*.^[4] *Yonivyapads* are 20 in number which can be classified according to the dominance of doshas. Further it can be divided into various categories as per the clinical presentation.

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Submission Date: 12/07/2024 Accepted Date: 23/08/2024

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: www.jaims.in

DOI: 10.21760/jaims.9.8.31

Table 1: *Yonivyapad* with clinical presentation^[5]

<i>Yonivyapad</i>	Doshik dominance	Clinical presentation
<i>Vatiki</i>	<i>Vata</i>	Menstrual disorder
<i>Paittiki</i>	<i>Pitta</i>	Menstrual disorder
<i>Shleshmiki</i>	<i>Kapha</i>	Abnormal discharge
<i>Sannipatiki</i>	<i>Tridosha</i>	Menstrual disorder
<i>Raktayoni</i>	<i>Pitta</i>	Abortion
<i>Arajaska</i>	<i>Pitta</i>	Menstrual disorder
<i>Acharana</i>	<i>Vata</i>	Related to sexual intercourse
<i>Aticharana</i>	<i>Vata</i>	Related to sexual intercourse
<i>Prakcharana</i>	<i>Vata</i>	Related to sexual intercourse
<i>Upapluta</i>	<i>Vata Kapha</i>	Pregnancy related
<i>Paripluta</i>	<i>Vata Pitta</i>	Related to sexual intercourse
<i>Udavartini</i>	<i>Vata</i>	Menstrual disorder

<i>Karnini</i>	<i>Vata Kapha</i>	Pregnancy related
<i>Putraghni</i>	<i>Vata</i>	Repeated abortion
<i>Antarmukhi</i>	<i>Vata</i>	Related to sexual intercourse
<i>Suchimukhi</i>	<i>Vata</i>	Congenital
<i>Shushka</i>	<i>Vata</i>	Congenital
<i>Vamini</i>	<i>Vata Pitta</i>	Abnormal discharge or early abortion
<i>Antarmukhi</i>	<i>Vata</i>	Related to sexual intercourse
<i>Mahayoni</i>	<i>Vata</i>	Related to sexual intercourse

Out of these *Yonivyapads*, *Vattiki*, *Paitiki*, *Sannipatiki* and *Udavartini* are disorders related to menstruation.

Vatiki Yonivyapad:

Due to aggravated *Vayu* menstrual discharge is frothy, thin and ununctuous and is associated with sound and pain. This type of *Yoniroga* is also called as *Vattika Pradara*.^[6] In this the blood resembles the juice of *Kinshuk (Palasha)* which may or may not be associated with pain. This type of dysmenorrhea causes excruciating pain in the waist, groins, cardiac region, side of chest, back and hips.

Paittiki Yonivyapad:

Due to aggravated *Pitta* the menstrual discharge becomes blue, yellow or black in colour, in large quantity, hot and has offensive smell of a dead body. It is also called as *Paittika Pradara*.^[7] In this type of dysmenorrhea it is frequently associated with pain. The patient suffers from burning sensation, redness, thirst, unconsciousness, fever and giddiness.

Sannipatiki Yonivyapad:

Due to aggravation of all the three doshas, the menstrual discharge is white in colour and slimy. It is called as *Sannipatiki Pradara*.^[8]

Udavartini Yonivyapad:

Due to aggravation of *Vata*, the woman is afflicted with pain. She gets painful menstruation because of the

tendency of the discharge to move in reverse direction. Immediately after the discharge of menstrual blood she gets relief from pain.^[9]

Kaphaja Pradara:

Chakrapani has mentioned *Kaphaja Yonivyapad* as *Kaphaja Pradara*. The symptoms of former are more similar to abnormal vaginal discharge but *Kaphaja Pradara* describes menstrual discharge as slimy, pale in colour, heavy unctuous, cold, mucus or dense. There is a dull pain and the woman suffers from vomiting, anorexia, nausea, dyspnoea and cough.^[10]

Paripluta Yonivyapad:

If a woman of *Paittik* constitution suppresses the manifested urge for sneezing and eructation during the sexual intercourse the aggravated *Vayu* gets afflicted by *Pitta*, vitiating her gynecic organ. This causes inflammation, tenderness and pain in genital organs and discharge of bluish as well as yellowish blood. She suffers from pain in waist, groin and back and fever. Acharya Chakrapani states there is all around (*Pari*) affliction (*Pluta*) of her genital organs by *Vayu* and *Pitta*, the ailment is called as *Paripluta*.^[11]

Suchimukhi:

This disease of the woman originates at the stage where she is as a fetus in her mother's womb. The pregnant mother resorts to *Vayu* aggravating food and regimen which leads to morbidity in developing genital organs of fetus resulting in stenosis of the opening of latter's genital organs.^[12] Due to cervical stenosis there is obstruction to the normal expulsion of menstrual blood leading to *Kashtartava*.

DISCUSSION

After analyzing of various types of conditions related to *Kashtartava* it is observed that it is due to predominance of *Vata Dosha* along with association of other doshas. Acharya Charaka also states that no gynecological disorder is possible without affliction of aggravated *Vayu*.^[13] Out of the five *Vayu*, basically *Apana Vayu* is involved in elimination of menstrual blood.^[14] Along with it, *Vyana Vayu* is also responsible for normal elimination of *Asrik* (menstrual blood).^[15]

Due to the vitiation of *Vyana Vayu* the normal *Akunchana* and *Prasarana Kriya* of *Garbhashaya* is affected which hampers the proper flow of menstrual blood leading to *Kashtartava*. So the treatment should be in accordance with focus on *Vata Dosha*.

The discomfort related to menstruation manifests only during the bleeding phase but the pathogenesis that produces it develops due to the vitiation of *Vata* arising due to faulty lifestyle throughout the month. The symptomatic relief can be achieved by oral administration of drugs and following the code of conduct during menstruation (*Rajaswala Charya*) as discussed in classics. But to avoid recurrence the basic underlying pathology needs to be addressed.

The first line of treatment is *Nidana Parivarjan* i.e., avoiding the cause which is *Vata Dosha* in this case. Secondly, *Samprapti Vighatana* has to be done using *Shamana* and *Shodhana* together. The vitiated *Vata* should be treated with drugs having *Madhura*, *Amla* and *Lavana Rasa*, *Snigdha Guna* and *Ushna Virya* and should be administered by means of oleation, fomentation, *Asthapana* and *Anuvasana* type of *Basti*, *Nasya* and *Ahara*. It could be given in the form of *Abhyang* (massage), *Utsadana* (unction), *Parisheka* (effusion).^[16]

Kashtartava can be treated by both *Shodhana* and *Shamana*. Since the site of origin of this condition is *Shroni* which is the *Sthana* of *Vata* and also the *Vyadhi* is *Vata Pradhan* so the best option for *Shodhana* is *Basti*. Though all types of *Basti* can be administered but *Matra Basti* is advisable for this condition. The *Matra Basti* can be given with *Tila Taila* as *Taila* is the best *Shamaka Sneha* for *Vata Dosha*.^[17] Apart from this, *Taila* is also indicated for *Yoni Vishodhana*.^[18] *Matra Basti* can be given with oil medicated with *Vatashamaka* drugs like *Dashmula Taila*, *Mahanarayan Taila*, *Shatpushpa Taila*, *Sahacharadi Taila* etc. The combination of *Basti* given with *Vata Shamaka* medicated oil gives a synergistic effect as *Basti* is the best treatment and *Taila* is the best medium for it.

The drugs having *Madhura*, *Amla* and *Lavana Rasa*, *Snigdha Guna* and *Ushna Virya* are capable of pacifying

Vata.^[19] The treatment of *Avrita Apana Vayu* involves the use of drugs having *Agnideepaka*, *Grahi*, *Vatanulomana* and *Pakvashaya Shuddhikara* properties.^[20] Considering this pharmacodynamics, drugs like *Rajahpravartini Vati*, *Hingwadi Vati*, *Kuberaksha Vati*, *Kanyalohadi Vati*, *Lashuna Vati*, *Dashmula Kwath*, *Rasnadi Kwath* etc. can be used for symptomatic relief.

CONCLUSION

Kashtartava is a condition which manifests at the time of menstruation occurring basically due to affliction of *Vata*. Symptomatic relief can be given by administering oral medicines. But for the successful *Samprapti Vighatana* of underlying pathology and to avoid recurrence *Shodhana* should be planned.

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How to cite this article: Neha Mangain, Akansha Anupam. Classical Review on Kashtartava. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2024;8:201-204.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.9.8.31>

Source of Support: Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.
