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A thematic review on *Pandu* with reference to Iron Deficiency Anaemia

Dr. Suvidha M. Pazare¹, Dr. Achal M. Doye², Dr. Aditi A. Gandhare³, Dr. Virendra Kodape⁴,
Dr. Madhavi Charmore⁵

^{1,3}Post Graduate Scholar, Dept. of Kayachikitsa, ²Post Graduate Scholar, Dept. of Panchakarma, ⁴Assistant Professor, Dept. of Shalaky Tantra, ⁵Associate Professor, Dept. of Swasthavritta, M. S. Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Gondia, Maharashtra, INDIA.

ABSTRACT

Iron deficiency anemia (IDA) is common nutritional disorder; the incidence of Iron Deficiency Anaemia in India is very high. Iron deficiency anemia arises when there is reduced intake of iron, imbalance in iron stores and according to Ayurvedic classics, it develops due to reduction of Rasa Dhatu which in turn becomes unproductive to produce Rakta Dhatu. The patients of *Pandu Roga* can be given *Tikshna Shodhana* of the body by emetic and purgative drugs for the elimination of vitiated *Doshas*. There are various Ayurvedic herbal and herbomineral preparations are mentioned in Ayurvedic classics for the management of iron deficiency anaemia, in many studies Ayurveda formulations are found safe and effective against IDA.

Key words: *Pandu, Tikshna Shodhana, Rakta Dhatu, Iron Deficiency Anemia.*

INTRODUCTION

The Ayurvedic system of medication is based on many centuries of experience in medical practice handed down through generations. The disease *Pandu* is named as per *Varna*, mixture of peeta and Shweta *Varna* observed in patients of *Pandu*.^[1] In *Shabdakalpdruma Pandu Varna* is considered as the combination of shweta and peeta.^[2] Iron-deficiency anemia (IDA) is the most common type of anemia and is caused by insufficient dietary intake and absorption of iron, also due to iron loss from body. *Pandu*, is a

disease characterized by pallor of body which amazingly resembles with 'Anaemia' of modern science, disease to reduction in number of RBC's per cu.mm of Blood and quantity of Hb resulting in pallor like other symptoms.^[3]

Prevalence of Anemia

World wide, more than a third of women and approximately half of pregnant women suffer from anaemia. This reduces physical productivity and increases the risk of childbirth for women and newborns. Throughout the developing world, nutritionally related iron deficiency and the exacerbation of anaemia during pregnancy is a widespread problem. 30%-50% of anemia in children and other groups is caused by iron deficiency.^[4] Nutritional iron deficiency is the maximum common cause of anemia in India.^[5] Iron deficiency is common nutritional disorder and is known to affect approximately one third of the global population, the incidence of Iron Deficiency Anaemia in India is very high. According to National Family Health Survey (NFHS) III data, the incidence of anemia in urban children is 71%, rural is 84%, and overall is 79%.^[6] The

Address for correspondence:

Dr. Suvidha M. Pazare
Dept. of Kayachikitsa,
M. S. Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Gondia, Maharashtra, INDIA.
E-mail: sunder147@gmail.com

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highest prevalence figures for iron deficiency are found in infants, children, teenagers and women of child bearing age. Hence it is a major public health problem with adverse consequences especially for women of reproductive age and for young children.^[7]

Iron Deficiency Anaemia

Iron deficiency anemia arises when there is reduced intake of iron, imbalance in iron stores, and the body's loss of iron are insufficient to fully support production of erythrocytes.^[8] According to Ayurvedic classics, signs and symptoms of *Pandu Roga* are like Iron deficiency anemia. It develops due to reduction of *Rasa Dhatu* which in turn becomes unproductive to produce *Rakta Dhatu*.^[9]

Blood is the very essence of life and nature has devised a very resourceful method to continuously make available blood to every part of the body, in fact every cell of the body. Oxygen along with other nutrients is supplied continuously by the circulating blood, with the heart at the center of this system. Oxygen is required for all metabolic functions of the cells and production of energy for these activities. The predominant cause of iron deficiency worldwide is nutritional, the diet failing to provide for the body's requirement of iron. A low intake of iron and its poor absorption then fails to meet the enhanced demands for iron and anaemia results.

In pregnant women iron deficiency contributes to maternal morbidity and mortality, and increases risk of fetal morbidity, mortality, and low birth weight. Long-standing iron deficiency in general terms also results in a reduction in physical working capacity and productivity of adults both in agricultural and industrial sector. In India 95% of anaemia is due to iron deficiency anaemia and becoming most widespread micronutrient deficiency in many adults. Preschool Children and adolescent are at the greatest risk of developing Iron deficiency anaemia.

Pandu Samprapti

The word Samprapti refers to Dosha-Dooshya sammurchana and the subsequent appearance of the disease, every factor related with the sequence of

sickness at different stages is considered in Samprapti. In samprapati of *Pandu*, Tridosha dushti and among them it's the Pitta Dosha is dominant in manifestation of the Disease.^[10]

This Pitta, which gets vitiated because of nidana sevana and causes agnimandya, aruchi, rasa pradoshha and further can produce dhatu shaithilya.^[11,12] During samprapti of *pandu*, Tridoshas vitiates rakta dhatu "Raktam vidushya" and produce *panduta* in *twacha*.^[13] Both *raktalpata* and *rakta pradoshha* can cause *Pandu*.^[14]

DISCUSSION

Rakta has been considered as a key factor for the Jeevana, Prinana Dharana and Poshana Karma of the body. Many a times it is seen that Rakta gets vitiated by Doshas, mainly by Pitta dosha as Rakta is Pittavargiya and disease like *Pandu* appear. In Ayurveda, *Pandu* is considered as a specific disease with its own pathogenesis and treatment.

According to Ayurveda "*Pandu*" is Rasapradoshaja and pitta pradhoshaj Tridoshaj vyadhi. Daurbalyata (weakness), Aruchi (anorexia), Bhrama, Gatrashul, Vaivarnata (pallor), Shrama (fatigue), Kopana or Adhirata (irritability), Shwasa (dyspnea), Hridayaspandana (palpitation), and Shotha (edema) are the signs and symptoms found in *Pandu*. The disease is more prevalent in the Pitta Prakriti. As *Pandu roga* is Pitta dominant tridoshaja vikara and it also affects the person having Mandagni and Madhyam koshta.^[15]

Ayurveda management

The patients of *Pandu Roga* can be given Tikshna shodhana of the body by emetic and purgative drugs for the elimination of vitiated Doshas. After Shodhana, patient should be given Pathya Ahar (food) containing old shali (type of rice), Yava, Godhuma mixed with the Yusha of mudga, Masura etc.^[16] For Vataja type of *Pandu*, the drug or intervention should have dominated by Sneha dravya, for Paittika *Pandu*, it should be dominated by bitter and cooling drugs, for Kaphaja type of *Pandu*, the therapy should be dominated by Katu, Ruksha, Ushna drugs and for

Sannipatika Type of *Pandu*, comprehensive ingredients should be combined of all properties.^[17]

There are various Ayurvedic herbal and herbo-mineral preparations are mentioned in Ayurvedic classics for the management of iron deficiency anaemia. Viz. Navayasa Lauha, Pittantaka Lauha, Pippaladhya Lauha, Punarnavadi Mandura, Rohitaka Lauha, Amalapittantak Lauha, Chandanadi Lauha, Dhatri Lauha, Pradarantaka Lauha, Pradarari Lauha, Saptamrata Lauha, Triphala Lauha.^[18]

It is observed that most of the Ayurvedic formulations studied for their efficacy against IDA proved effective. Another advantage of these Ayurvedic formulations are that they are safe and effective against IDA at all ages.^[19]

CONCLUSION

Iron Deficiency Anaemia is a major public health problem with adverse consequences especially for women of reproductive age and for young children. The major cause of iron deficiency worldwide is nutritional, the diet failing to provide for the body's requirement of iron. As per the Ayurveda etiology, signs and symptoms *Pandu Roga* can be correlated with Anaemia. Most of the Ayurvedic formulations like Nawayas loha, Punarnava mandur, Dhatri Lauha studied for their efficacy against IDA and proved effective. The advantage of these Ayurvedic formulations are that they are safe and effective against IDA. Ayurveda drugs could be chosen for drug of choice in preventing Iron Deficiency Anaemia.

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