

A CONCEPT OF UDAVARTAYONI VYAPAT (GYNAECOLOGICAL DISORDER - DYSMENORRHOEA): AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

Pournima Araknalalle S*

Residential Medical Officer, Dept. of Striroga Prasuti tantra, Ashtang Ayurved College & Hospital, Pune, Maharashtra, India.

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Abstract

Classics of Ayurveda have described most of the gynaecological problems as yoni vyapat. Some of the menstrual disorders such as asrigdara (menorrhagea), etc. have been described individually, although to get thorough knowledge regarding menstrual disorders; the understanding of yoni vyapat (gynaecological disorders) concept is necessary. Ayurveda classics have described twenty kinds of yoni vyapat (gynaecological disorders). By reviewing concerned quotes from classics, it reveals that udavarta yoni vyapat (dysmenorrhoea) is caused by vitiated vata dosha. Classically described udavarta yoni vyapat (dysmenorrhoea) matches with the all types of dysmenorrhoea. On the grounds of explanation of Charaka that the pain symptom is immediately relieved after discharge of menstrual blood, it can be concluded that udavarta yoni vyapat (gynaecological disorders) is close to spasmodic or true dysmenorrhoea.

Key words: Udavarta Yoni vyapat; Ggynaecological disorders; Dysmenorrhoea; Ayurveda.

*Address for correspondence:

Dr. Pournima Araknalalle S,
Residential Medical Officer,
Dept. of Striroga Prasuti tantra,
Ashtang Ayurved College & Hospital,
Sadashiv Peth, Pune, Maharashtra, India - pincode.
E-mail: striroga.ayu@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda classics have described eight specialized branches. Among these, kaumarbhritya tantra (paediatric) branch deals with paediatrics and gynaecological disorders. Ayurveda has well explained about various gynaecological disorders. Classics have described yoni vyapat (gynaecological disorders) term which reveals most of gynaecological disorders. According to description of Chakrapani, yoni means reason, causative factor of various diseases or it is an organ which gives rise to variety of diseases.^[1] According to scholars of Ayurveda, yoni vyapat (gynaecological disorders) indicates twenty kinds of different disorders which are observed in yoni.^[2] Classics of Ayurveda have described most of the gynaecological problems as yoni vyapat. Some of the menstrual disorders such as asrigdara (menorrhagea), etc. have been described individually, although to get thorough knowledge regarding menstrual disorders; the understanding of yoni vyapat (gynaecological disorders) concept is necessary.

Classification and names of yoni vyapat (gynaecological disorders)

Charaka, Sushruta and Vagbhata have described twenty varieties of yoni vyapat.^[3] (Table 1) Vataja yoni vyapat (gynaecological disorders caused by vitiated vata dosha) described by different Ayurveda classics were mentioned in Table 2.

Udavarta yoni vyapat (Dysmenorrhoea)

Ayurveda classics have mentioned udavarta yoni vyapat (dysmenorrhoea) in twenty kinds of yoni vyapat (gynaecological disorders). According to Charaka, it is purely predominated by vata dosha. He has explained that aggravated vata which moves in reverse direction, discharges raja (menstrual flow) with much difficulty. The lady feels relief immediately following discharge of menstrual

flow.^[7] Sushruta has explained in few words that besides painful and frothy menstruation, there is pain due to vata dosha.^[8] In Ashtanga hridaya and Ashtanga sangraha both the Vagbhata(s) have described that pain in Udavarta yoni vyapat (dysmenorrhoea) is due to aggravated vata moving in reverse direction, there is discharge of frothy menstrual blood with difficulty.^{[9][10]} Commentator Indu over Ashtanga sangraha samhita has described that disordered vata dosha cause udavarta yoni vyapat (dysmenorrhoea).^[11] Madhava nidana has followed Sushruta description, while Madhukosha and Atanka-darpana commentaries over Madhava nidana mentioned that round movement of vata causes pain. It also added that there is painful and frothy menstruation.^[12] Yogaratnakara has mentioned that the discharge in udavarta yoni vyapat (dysmenorrhoea) is frothy with difficult and associated with kapha. He has discussed kapha and vata involvement in this disorder.^[13] By reviewing these quotes, it reveals that udavarta yoni vyapat (dysmenorrhoea) is vataja (caused by vitiated vata dosha) disorder.

Etymology of Udavarta yoni vyapat (Dysmenorrhoea)

Udavarta yoni vyapat (dysmenorrhoea) is one of the yoni-roga (gynaecological disorder) which happens because of pratiloma gati (reverse movement) of vata.^[14] In which pain, frothy menstrual bleeding is present. As menstrual bleeding is released out of body, the symptoms of patient subside.^{[15][16]}

Synonyms

Udavartini, udavarta, udavritta.

Definition

In this disorder the aggravated vata moving in reverse direction occupies yoni (uterus), causes pain, initially throws or pushes the

menstrual bleeding upwards, then discharges it with great difficulty as well the lady feels relief immediately following discharge of menstrual blood. In this condition the raja moves upwards or in reverse direction, hence it is termed as Udavarta yoni vyapat (dysmenorrhoea).^[17]

General causative factors of Udavarta are summarized in Table 3.

Specific causative factors

Charaka has quoted that woman of vata prakriti (constitution) when consumes vata increasing diet and does activities which aggravates vata, provokes vata which reaches in reproductive system and produces pain during menstruation.^[23]

Symptoms

Ayurveda classics has enlisted symptoms like movement of flatus and natural urges in reverse direction, yoni seizes with pain, menstrual blood discharge with great difficulty, immediate relief after discharge of menstrual blood.^[24]

Samprapti (pathogenesis)

When vata dosha aggravating diet and behaviour is followed by woman then vata dosha is aggravated which created obstruction in functioning of vata dosha. It vitiates rasa dhatu and maked artava-vaha srotasa (reproductive system) abnormal. Apana vata moves in upward direction influences menstrual bleeding by causing pain. According to association of dosha three types can be observed, viz. Vata-pitta-kaphaja (Congestive dysmenorrhoea), Vata-kaphaja (Membranous dysmenorrhoea) and Vataja (Spasmodic dysmenorrhoea).^[26]

Bheda (types)

1. Vataja (spasmodic dysmenorrhoea)

2. Vata-kaphaja (membranous dysmenorrhoea)
3. Vata-pitta-kaphaja (congestive dysmenorrhoea)

Chikitsa sutra (general line of management)

Disorders of yoni never take place without vitiation of vata, hence first vata should be regularized then management for other dosha should be done.^[26]

Role of vata dosha in udavarta yoni vyapat (Dysmenorrhoea)

Menstruation is a natural physiological process; when it is accompanied with pain it is called as udavarta yoni vyapat (dysmenorrhoea). To understand the pathogenesis of this disorder, we should understand the role of vata dosha. Menstrual bleeding is a function of apana vata.^[27] Apana vata assists in all excretory activities such as passing of stool and urine, ejaculation of semen, natural delivery of foetus, etc. Classics have also quoted that vata is responsible for all downward activities occurring in reproductive system. Artava (menstrual blood) gets excreted each month cyclically in women, comes under apana vata activity.^[28] Charaka has mentioned location of apana vata as lower back, urinary bladder, genital organs, etc.^[29]

Dysmenorrhoea

Udavarta yoni vyapat (gynaecological disorders) is analogues with dysmenorrhoea disorder from modern texts.^[30]

Etymology

The word dysmenorrhoea has a Greek origin. Dis-men-o-re'ah; Dis: Prefix meaning difficult, bad, painful; men: Month; rein: To flow. Thus, dysmenorrhoea – means painful or difficult menses.^[31]

Table 1: Classification and names of yoni vyapat (gynaecological disorders)

Causative Dasha	Classics		
	Charaka Samhita	Sushruta. Sushruta Samhita.	AshtangaSamgrahaSamhita
Vata	Vatiki, Acharana, Aticharana, Prakcharana, Udavartini, Putraghni, Antarmukhi, Suchimiukhi, Sukshma, Shandhya, Maha = 11	Udavarta, Vandhya, Vipluta, Paripluta, Vatala = 5	Vatiki, Aticharana, Prakcharana, Udavritta, Jataghni, Antarmukhi, Suchimukhi, Sukshma, Vamini, Shandha, Maha = 11
Pitta	Paitiki, Raktayoni, Arajaska = 3	Rudhirakshara, Vamini, Sramsini, Putraghni, Pittala = 5	Paittiki, Raktayoni = 2
Kapha	Shlaishmiki = 1	Acharana, Aticharana, Shlaishmika = 5	Shlaishmiki = 1
Tridosha	Sannipatiki = 1	Shandha, Phalini, Mahati, Suchivaktra, Sravaja = 5	Sannipatika = 1
Vata-Pitta	Paripluta, Vamini = 2	-	Lohitakshya, Paripluta = 2
Vata-Kapha	Upapluta, Karnini = 2	-	Upapluta, Karnini = 2
Krimi (parasites)	-	-	Vipluta = 1

Table 2: Classification and names of yoni vyapat (gynaecological disorders)

Classic name	Number	Yoni vyapat
Charaka Samhita ^[4]	11	Vatiki, acharana, aticharana, prakcharana, shushka, <u>udavartini</u> , putraghni, antarmukhi, suchimukhi, shandha yoni, mahayoni
Sushruta Samhia ^[5]	5	Udavarta, vandhya, vipluta, paripluta, vatala
AshtangaHridaya Samhita ^[6]	11	Vatiki, aticharana, prakcharana, <u>udavartini</u> , jataghni, sushka, antarmukhi, suchimukhi, vamini, shandhyayoni, mahayoni

Table 3: General causative factors of Udavarta

Causative factors	Charaka samhita ^[18]	Sushruta samhita ^[19]	Ashtanga sangrahas ^[20]	Bhava-prakasha ^[21]	Madhava-nidana ^[22]
Mithya-ahara (abnormal dietetics)	+	+	+	+	+
Mithya-vihara (abnormal mode of life)	+	+	+	+	+
Artava-dushti (abnormalities of ovum)	+	+	+	+	+
Beejadosha (abnormalities of sperm)	+	+	+	+	+
Daiva (curses or anger of God)	+	+	+	+	+
Vishamasthanashayana (having coitus in abnormal postures of body)	-	-	+	-	-
Praviddhalinga (excessive coitus with man having big sized penis)	-	+	-	-	-

‘+’ Mentioned; ‘-’ Not mentioned

Definition

Dysmenorrhoea literally means painful menstruation. But a more realistic and practical definition includes cases of painful menstruation of sufficient magnitude so as to incapacitate day-to-day activities.^[32]

Types

Dysmenorrhoea has been classified as primary and secondary.^[32] But some texts have mentioned few other types like membranous dysmenorrhoea, ovarian dysmenorrhoea etc.

Primary dysmenorrhoea

In this disorder, the pain has uterine origin and directly because of menstruation. This is true dysmenorrhoea and is also described as primary, spasmodic, intrinsic, essential and functional. Primary dysmenorrhoea is the more common type of dysmenorrhoea and is due to the production of prostaglandins. The prostaglandins made in uterus makes the uterine muscles contract and help the uterus to shed the lining that has built up during the menstrual cycle. If excessive prostaglandins are produced, the woman may have excessive pain or dysmenorrhoea with her menstrual cycle. Prostaglandins can also cause headache, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea.

Prevalence

In general most of the women are suffering from primary dysmenorrhoea. It occurs mainly in young age. It is also more common in woman who never had children. There is no identifiable pelvic pathology.^[32]

Causes of primary dysmenorrhoea

The real causative mechanism for primary dysmenorrhoea is not known, but it appears that a major role is played by prostaglandins, which are present in various body tissues including the uterus.^[32]

1. Environmental factors causing nervous tension
2. General ill health
3. Faulty outlook
4. Hormonal imbalance
5. Psychogenic cause
6. Imbalance of autonomic nervous system.
7. Intrauterine contraceptive device
8. Stenosis at internal Os.
9. Unequal development of mullerian ducts
10. Inappropriate low of polarity
11. Uterine hypoplasia
12. Vasopressin
13. Prostaglandins

Theories of possible causes of pain

1. Hormonal Imbalance: Spasmodic dysmenorrhoea has some connection with the hormone stimulus to the uterus. Progesterone stimulates myometrial contraction of the smooth muscle of the cervix and causes narrowing of the cervical canal. Progesterone further stimulates the production of prostaglandin F₂ alpha which in turn accentuates pain.
2. Myometrial Activity Theory: It is not adequately explained that myometrial contraction produces pain, as all myometrial contraction is not found painful.
3. Myometrial Ischemic Theory: Rapid distension of the uterus due to any cause, increases muscular activity and metabolism and decreases blood circulation to it. Lack of blood supply causes myometrial ischemia thus producing painful stimuli.
4. Psychogenic Causes: Psychogenic causes are the most common and important in cases of primary dysmenorrhoea. All these will produce fear. Fear lead to anxiety and depression which may be manifested as pain.

5. Un-ovulatory Cycle: Despite the fact that un-ovulatory cycles are painless, some women with un-ovulatory cycle to have dysmenorrhoea.
6. Prostaglandins (PGs): The most favoured view is that dysmenorrhoea is associated with an excess of prostaglandins specially (PG F_{2α}) or of their activity in the uterus.
7. Muscular In-coordination: It could be explained by an imbalance in the autonomic nervous control of muscle, one in which an overactive sympathetic system leads to hypertonus of the circular fibers of the isthmus and internal Os.
8. Vasopressin: This increases PG synthesis and also increases myometrial activity directly. Systemic Disease and General Ill Health: Severe malnutrition, acute and chronic illness may be associated with dysmenorrhoea.
9. Abnormal Anatomical and Functional Aspects of Uterus: Unequal development of mullerian ducts, hypoplastic uterus, cervical obstruction, Deficient polarity.
10. Poor Posture: Poor posture leads to primary dysmenorrhoea in poor asthenic women whose pain threshold is low and generative organs are functionally faulty.
11. Inadequate Liquefaction of The Menstrual Clot: Due to deficiency of thrombolysin menstrual blood become scotted. To expel out those clots uterus contracts vigorous lythus painful menstruation arises.^[32]

Spasmodic Dysmenorrhoea

The majority of case of dysmenorrhoea falls into this group, and it is probable that nearly 50% of the adult female population suffer at some time from varying degree of this symptom, though less than 10% will seek medical advice. The patient history is very characteristic. The pain develops on the first

day menstrual period. This sever pain is intermittent and spasmodic and may cause faintness, collapse, vomiting or nausea. The severe attack of pain is followed by a similar but less pronounced type of pain, left in the lower abdomen and pubis often down the antero-medial area of thighs. Such pain persists usually for not more than 12 hours. It is important to realize that there is much variation in the type of pain experienced by patients with spasmodic dysmenorrhoea sometimes considerable discomfort starts on the day before the menstrual flow and may persists after menstruation.^[32]

Mechanism of pain production in the dysmenorrhoea

Both parietal and visceral afferent pain may be transmitted from the uterus. The lower abdominal cramping pains of dysmenorrhoea are mediated through sympathetic afferents and hence may be referred to appropriate segments.^[32]

Pathophysiology of primary dysmenorrhoea

1. Associated with ovulatory cycles
2. Associated with increased production and release of uterine prostaglandins, especially prostaglandin F₂.
3. Women with dysmenorrhoea can produce 10 times as much prostaglandin F as a asymptomatic women.
4. Majority of prostaglandin are released during the first 48 hours of menstruation, thus explaining timing and limitation of symptoms.^[32]

DISCUSSION

Charaka has described that due to movement of flatus, etc. natural urges in reverse direction, the aggravated apana type of vata dosha moving in reverse direction fills yoni (uterus). This yoni seized with pain, initially

pushes raja (menstrual blood) upwards, and then discharges it with great difficulty. The lady feels relief immediately following discharge of menstrual blood. Since in this condition raja moves upwards or in reverse direction, hence, it is termed as udavartini. Sushruta has explained this topic briefly, by concluding that besides painful, frothy menstruation, there are other pains of vata such as body ache, general malaise, etc. Both Vagbhata(s) followed Charaka, while Indu has mentioned discharge of clotted blood. Sushruta lines are followed by Madhavanidana and Bhavaprakasha. Yoga-ratnakara has quoted that the discharge of frothy menstrual blood with difficulty and associated with kapha dosha.^[33]

CONCLUSION

Classically described udavarta yoni vyapat matches with the all types of dysmenorrhoea. Charaka has described that the pain symptom is immediately relieved after discharge of menstrual blood in udavarta yoni vyapat which resembles to spasmodic or true dysmenorrhoea. Discharge of clotted blood is mentioned by Indu, matches with special form of spasmodic dysmenorrhoea characterized with expulsion of big clots of blood. Yoga-ratnakara has mentioned association of kapha dosha which can be compared with another form of membranous dysmenorrhoea.

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