

**AYURVEDIC INTERVENTION IN COMMON AILMENTS RELATED TO  
WOMEN'S HEALTH**

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**Abstract**

Women's health encompasses a wide range of issues influenced by hormonal fluctuations during different life stages such as menarche, pregnancy, postpartum, and menopause. Proper guidance and awareness about personal hygiene, nutrition, and menstruation throughout these stages can help alleviate many health issues. Ayurvedic texts mention *paricharya*, which refers to rituals or regimens to be followed for different stages of women's lives. By following Ayurvedic interventions, maintaining a proper diet and lifestyle, and balancing *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*, women can reduce the severity of diseases. Some common issues include menstrual irregularities (*alpaartava*, *atyartava*, and *kashtartava*), abnormal vaginal discharge, anaemia, and backaches that are exclusive to women. I will discuss these issues, their Ayurvedic treatments, and how these diseases can be prevented with proper diet and lifestyle modifications as mentioned in various *paricharyas*.

**INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda, an ancient Indian science, emphasises personalised care and balance of the body's energies. It offers dietary recommendations, herbal remedies, and lifestyle modifications to support women's health. Ayurveda addresses common issues like menstrual irregularities, vaginal discharge, anaemia, and backaches through tailored approaches. By incorporating *paricharya* principles, Ayurveda provides a holistic framework for managing and preventing these health issues.

## AIM & OBJECTIVES

To explore and elucidate the effectiveness of Ayurvedic interventions in managing and preventing common ailments related to women's health, focusing on menstrual irregularities, abnormal vaginal discharge, anaemia, and backaches through *paricharyas*.

## Ayurvedic Approaches to Women's Health Care

### **RAJASWALA PARICHARYA<sup>1, 2,3</sup>**

To maintain the balance of the female body's doshas and support healthy menstrual function, Ayurveda experts recommend the following guidelines, known as Rajaswala Paricharya:

- Practice celibacy.
- Consume *havishya Anna I.e* meals made of *ghee*, *godugdha*, and *shastikashali*.
- Eat in small quantities
- Eat directly from the palm or serve in vessels made of leaf or clay.
- Steer clear of hot pungent and spicy food items.
- Sleep on a bed made of *darbha*
- Avoid daytime sleeping
- Avoid bath
- Refrain from *Anjana*, *lepana*, *abhyanga*, combing, cutting nails, laughing too much, running, exercise.
- Think about positive things

### **RITUMATI PARICHARYA<sup>4, 5,6</sup>**

It is a set of rituals in Ayurveda that prepares a woman both mentally and physically for conception. Ayurveda stresses the importance of healthy offspring and outlines the steps leading up to conception. The process starts with partner selection. The optimal time for conception is Ritu Kala, 12 days following menstruation. During this time, the woman is referred to as Ritumati. Post-menstruation practices include taking a head bath, reciting prayers, and dressing in floral scents and fine clothes to act as aphrodisiacs and promote conception.

**GARBHINI PARICHARYA<sup>7, 8, 9,10</sup>**

Garbhini Paricharya includes dietary and lifestyle modifications for women after conception. Pregnancy brings about significant bodily changes that influence both the mother's health and foetal nourishment. Ayurveda highlights that the foetus's health is reliant on the mother's diet, lifestyle, and mental well-being. Additionally, the mother's emotional state impacts the development of the foetus's cognitive and motor skills.

Ayurveda provides detailed antenatal care through:

- Vishesha-Masanumasik paricharya: Month-by-month antenatal care.
- Samanya Paricharya: General antenatal care.

Psychological guidelines for pregnant women include:

- Avoid negative emotions like fear, jealousy, shock, and anger.
- Cultivate joy and piety by upholding good morals, praying, and worshipping Brahma.
- Encourage positive emotions by focusing on others' well-being and interacting with satvika individuals.

The pregnancy regimen includes:

- Sleeping on a soft mattress.
- Maintaining cleanliness and wearing light-coloured, clean, decorated clothing.
- Following a diet rich in milk, dairy products, carbohydrates, and easily digestible foods.
- In the final two months, use vaginal *Pichu* and medicated *basti* to soften the birth canal and facilitate a normal delivery.

Garbhini Paricharya focuses on promoting proper foetal growth and development, preserving maternal health, and preparing for a healthy delivery.

**SUTIKA PARICHARYA<sup>11, 12, 13,14</sup>**

Sutika Paricharya is the regimen followed after delivery to address the significant bodily changes occurring at this time.

The goals of Sutika Paricharya include:

- Restoring the Dhatus (tissues).
- Replenishing lost nutrition.
- Preventing sepsis and other illnesses.
- Encouraging healthy lactation.

Key practices include:

- Proper oil massage.
- Taking hot baths.
- Wrapping a cloth around the waist and abdomen to relieve pain and prevent Vata Prakopa.
- Balance metabolism (Agni) by gradually introducing a diet that is high in carbohydrates and easily digestible with herbs like sunthi and pippali.
- Promote pain relief and lactation with:- Milk made using Vidarigandhadhi gana (a group of galactagogue herbs) and Decoctions of Vata hara herbs such as Dashmoola.

## COMMON AILMENTS RELATED TO WOMEN'S HEALTH<sup>15</sup>

Neglecting the prescribed guidelines for different stages of life (paricharya) can result in a variety of common health issues that we encounter daily. These ailments arise from the disruption of the body's natural balance and rhythms. Below are some of these prevalent conditions, along with their corresponding Ayurvedic treatments and preventive measures.

### 1. Menstrual irregularities

#### (I) ALPARTAVA :

- Use purifying measures and *agneya* substances.
- *Dalhana's View*:
  1. Only emetics should be used for purification, not purgatives.
  2. Purgation reduces pitta, decreasing *artava*.
  3. Emesis removes saumya substances, increasing *agneya* constituents, and thereby *artava*.
  4. Recommended *agneya* substances: sesame seeds (*tila*), black gram (*masa*), *sura*, and *sukta*.
- *Chakrapani's View*:
  1. Purifying measures clear srotas (channels).
  2. Emesis and purgation clear upward and downward channels, respectively.

3. Both should be used, considering drug dosages and women's fitness.
  - Treatment for alpaartava-anuvasana basti is considered beneficial.
  - Use substances prescribed by Bhawaprakāśa based on the woman's desires.
  - Sītakalyāṇa ghrita (for pradara) is also beneficial.

#### (II) NASTARTAVA:

- Use of *Bastis*
- Diet and Drinks: Fish, *kulattha*, sour substances (*kanji*), sesame seeds (*tila*), black gram (*masa*), wine, cow urine, buttermilk mixed with water, curd, and sukta.
- Increase Pitta.
- Herbal Use: *Lashuna* (garlic), *shatapushpa* (dill), and *shatavari* are beneficial for all artava disorders.
- Inducing Menstruation: Apply a mixture of *ikshvaku* seeds, *danti*, *capala*, jaggery, and *snuhi* latex to the cervix.
- Herbal Powder: Use powdered leaves of *vyotishmati*, *swarjikshar*, *rajika*, *ugra*, and stem bark of *asana* with cold water for three days.
- Black *Tila* Decoction: Properly prepared black *tila* decoction mixed with jaggery induces menstruation.
- Use of *Phalaghrita* and *Vrihatshatavari* Ghrita in yonirogas (gynaecological disorders).
- *Shatvaryadi anuvasana Basti*.

#### (III) ATYARTAVA:

- Remember to address increased *dhatu*s and *artava* with specific cleansing and balancing techniques.
- Implement methods, dietary adjustments, and lifestyle changes that reduce the excess *dosha* or *dhatu* without impacting the balance of other *doshas*.
- Employ purifying techniques if the imbalance is significant; utilise balancing techniques if the imbalance is minor.

#### (IV) KASHTARTAVA:

- Oleation with *traivrtasneha* (ghrta, oil and fat), sudation, use of meat soup of *gramya* (wild), *anupa* (living in marshy land) and *audaka* (aquatic) animals.

- basti of *dashamoola siddha ksheera* and its oral use, *anuvāsana basti* and *Uttara Basti* with *traivṛtasneha* should be done.
- Except for *vatiki*, in *aticharna* etc. all the *vatika yonirogas* including *udavarta*, all the measures capable of suppressing the *vāta* should be done, besides, a poultice made with pestled barley, wheat, kinva, kushtha, *shatapushpa*, *priyangu*, *bala* and *akhuparni* should be applied locally.
- Use of meat soup of aquatic animals, sudation with milk, oral use or use in the form of *anuvāsna* and *Uttara Basti* of *sneha* (ghṛta, oil and fat) medicated with decoction and paste of *dashamoola* and *trivṛitta* is beneficial.

## 2. ABNORMAL VAGINAL DISCHARGE:

### General Treatment (Samanya Chikitsa)

1. Specific treatment for vaginal diseases based on symptoms.
2. Treatment for vaginal discharge.
3. Therapies for vaginitis.
  - a. Specific treatment for yonirogas as per clinical features.
  - b. Treatment for yonirāva.
  - c. Drugs for excessive unctuousness can also be used.

### Specific treatment :

#### (I) Internal Applications (Abhyantar Prayoga):

1. Take the pestled root of rohitaka with water.
2. Consume pestled kernel or fruit of amalakī mixed with honey and sugar, or take it mixed with water.
3. Consume juice of amalakī mixed with honey and sugar, or with only honey.
4. Take a paste of lodhra mixed with a decoction of the stem bark of nyagrodha.
5. Use dārvyādi decoction to cure leucorrhoea.
6. Use a decoction of the nyagrodha group of drugs for its astringent properties.
7. Use nagakeśara with buttermilk followed by a diet of only cooked rice and buttermilk to cure leucorrhoea within three days.
8. Consume powdered *padawasa* mixed with sesame oil for seven consecutive days to cure leucorrhoea.

9. Drink a mixture of the pestled root of chakramarda with rice water in the morning to cure jalapradara (leucorrhoea).

#### (II) External Applications (Bahya Prayoga)

1. For excessive vaginal discharge, place a flaxen cloth soaked in a decoction of nyagrodha or lodhra stem bark with *vata* in the vagina.
2. Perform vaginal irrigation with a decoction of lodhra stem bark and *vata*.
3. After oleating the vaginal canal, insert a bolus made of powdered plaksa bark mixed with honey.
4. Insert a suppository made from powdered *lodhra*, *priyangu*, and *madhuka* mixed with honey or astringent drugs into the oleated vaginal canal.
5. After oleating the vaginal canal, perform fumigation with a mixture of Sarala, *guggulu*, and *yava* with ample ghee, or with *kaṭu matsyaka* (a type of fish) and oil.
6. Cure watery discharge by insufflating fine powders of *khadira*, *pathya*, *jatiphala*, *nimba*, and *puga*, mixed with mudga soup, or by using powdered *khadira*, *pathya*, *jatiphala*, *Puga*, and mudga flowers.

### 3. BACKACHE

- Use treatments that suppress *vāta* dosha, including irrigation with *vāta*-suppressing decoctions, massage, basti (enema), and vaginal/uterine instillation with medicated oil.
- Apply specific treatments for main diseases presenting as low backache or pain in the sacral region.
- Use treatments prescribed for *vataja* gynaecological disorders.
- Treatments for *yonishula* (vaginal pain) can be utilised.
- *Mustadi yapana*-basti is recommended.

### 4. ANAEMIA:

- Nidana Parivarjana: Avoiding causative factors.
- Shodhana: Eliminating factors responsible for the disease.
- Shamana: Palliative treatment.

General Approach for Pandu Roga:

1. General treatment:

- Snehan Therapy: Begin with Snehan (oleation) therapy.
- Shodhana Therapy: Follow with emetic and purgative therapies using unctuous and sharp medications to eliminate doshas.
- Diet: a wholesome meal made from ancient Sali rice, barley, wheat, and legumes such as Mudga, Adhaki, and Masura, along with the essence of dry-zone animals.

## 2. Specific Treatment:

- Vātika Pandu: Use therapies dominated by Sneha Dravya (unctuous substances).
- Paittika Pandu: Focus on Tikta (bitter) and Shita (cooling) drugs.
- Kaphaja Pandu: Use Katu (pungent), Tikta (bitter), and Ushna (hot) drugs.
- Sannipatika Pandu: Combine all the mentioned ingredients.

## DISCUSSION

The article provides a comprehensive overview of Ayurvedic management for various women's health issues, highlighting the importance of balancing doshas and addressing specific ailments through tailored treatments. It underscores the significance of the Paricharya (rituals and regimens) in different life stages—Rajaswala Paricharya for menstrual health, Ritumati Paricharya for conception, Garbhini Paricharya for pregnancy, and Sutika Paricharya for postpartum care. The treatment strategies include Snehan (oleation), Shodhana (purification), and Shamana (palliative care), with specific recommendations for common conditions like menstrual irregularities, abnormal vaginal discharge, backaches, and anaemia. By integrating internal and external applications, such as herbal decoctions and specific dietary adjustments, Ayurveda aims to restore balance and promote overall well-being. This holistic approach, grounded in Ayurvedic principles, emphasizes the importance of personalized care and preventive measures to address women's health issues effectively.

## CONCLUSION

Ayurveda offers a rich and holistic framework for managing and preventing women's health issues through personalised care and lifestyle modifications. The principles of Nidana Parivarjana, Shodhana, and Shamana provide a comprehensive approach to treating conditions like menstrual irregularities, abnormal vaginal discharge, backaches, and anaemia. By adhering to the Paricharya guidelines at different life stages—menarche, pregnancy, and postpartum—women can achieve better health outcomes and maintain balance among the doshas. The integration of dietary recommendations, herbal remedies, and specific therapeutic interventions underscores Ayurveda's commitment to treating the root causes of ailments and supporting overall well-being. Embracing these ancient practices can lead



to improved health, enhanced vitality, and a deeper understanding of one's body, aligning with the timeless wisdom of Ayurvedic medicine.

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