

Infertility in Ayurveda: A Classical and Contemporary Review

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Abstract

Infertility is a significant reproductive health concern affecting couples globally. Ayurveda describes infertility as *Vandhyatva* and attributes it to the imbalance of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, and *Srotas*. The classical concept of *Garbha Sambhava Samagri*—*Ritu*, *Kshetra*, *Ambu*, and *Beeja*—forms the cornerstone of conception. This review integrates classical Ayurvedic principles with contemporary research to explore etiopathogenesis, diagnosis, and management of infertility.

Introduction

Infertility, defined as failure to conceive after one year of regular unprotected intercourse, is increasingly prevalent due to lifestyle and environmental factors. In Ayurveda, it is termed *Vandhyatva* and is extensively described in Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita [1,11,12].

Ayurveda considers fertility as a result of proper coordination of bodily elements and mental well-being.

Materials and Methods

This is a **narrative review study** based on:

- Classical Ayurvedic texts
- Peer-reviewed Ayurvedic journals
- Modern research articles on infertility

Ayurvedic Concept of Conception

“ऋतुक्षेत्राम्बुबीजानां संयोगात् गर्भः स्यात्”

(*Ritu-kshetra-ambu-beejanam samyogat garbhah syat*)

Conception occurs due to the proper union of *Ritu (time)*, *Kshetra (uterus)*, *Ambu (nutrition)*, and *Beeja (gametes)* [11].

Etiopathogenesis (Samprapti)

Dosha Involvement

- **Vata** – Governs ovulation and movement of sperm/ovum
- **Pitta** – Responsible for hormonal metabolism
- **Kapha** – Causes obstruction and cyst formation

“वातादिदोषदुष्टेन बीजं नाशं गच्छति”

Vitiating of Doshas leads to damage of reproductive elements (*Beeja*) [11].

Other Factors

- *Beeja Dushti* (defective sperm/ovum) [9]
- *Artava Dushti* (menstrual disorders)
- *Shukra Dushti* (semen abnormalities)
- Psychological stress and improper lifestyle [5]

Classification of Infertility

- **Vandhya** – Primary infertility
- **Apraja** – Secondary infertility
- **Putraghni Yonivyapad** – Recurrent miscarriage
- **Beejadosha** – Genetic/gamete defects [2]

Diagnostic Approach

“दशविधं परीक्ष्य रोगं चिकित्सेत्”

A physician should examine the patient through tenfold examination before treatment [11].

Assessment Includes

- *Dashavidha Pariksha*
- *Ashtavidha Pariksha*
- Evaluation of:
 - *Artava* (menstrual cycle)
 - *Shukra* (semen)
 - *Agni* (digestive power)
 - *Artavavaha Srotas* [10]

Management of Infertility in Ayurveda

1. Shodhana Chikitsa

- Vamana
- Virechana
- Basti (main therapy for Vata imbalance)

2. Shamana Chikitsa

- Ashwagandha
- Shatavari
- Guduchi
- Gokshura

3. Rasayana Therapy

Improves reproductive tissue (*Shukra Dhatu*).

4. Vajikarana Therapy

“वाजीकरणं नाम यत् शुक्रबलवर्धनम्”

Vajikarana therapy enhances reproductive strength and fertility [11].

5. Panchakarma Procedures

- **Uttara Basti** – Effective in uterine disorders and anovulation [5]

Discussion

Ayurveda provides a **root-cause-based approach** by correcting *Dosha imbalance* and enhancing *Dhatu quality*. Modern research supports Ayurvedic therapies in:

- PCOS-related infertility
- Anovulatory cycles
- Unexplained infertility [1,6]

It emphasizes prevention, detoxification, and rejuvenation rather than symptomatic treatment.

Conclusion

Ayurveda offers a comprehensive and individualized approach to infertility management. Integration of classical knowledge with modern research can enhance treatment outcomes and provide a sustainable solution to infertility.

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