



Review Article

AYURVEDIC CONCEPT OF LEUCORRHOEA: SWETA PRADARA

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ABSTRACT

Gynecology is the medical practice dealing with the health of the female reproductive system literally means "the science of women". Woman has a unique existence in the universe created by the God. Women's health is the pivot not only for the healthy and happy status for her family, rather to the whole society or even to the nation at large. All women have experienced some short of vaginal discharge in her life span. White vaginal discharges along with the other symptoms like feeling of weakness, pain in the back and calves, loss of vital fluids, pruritis on and around the vulva, thighs and thigh joints etc., comes under the heading of Leucorrhoea, which is described as *Sweta Pradara* in Ayurvedic classics. In *Samhitas* all gynecological disorders comes under the headings of *Yonivyapada*. No any description of *Sweta Pradara* has been described by scholars of *Brihatrayee*. For abnormal white vaginal discharges, the word *Sweta Pradara* has been described in texts during and after medieval period.

KEYWORDS: *Pradara*, Leucorrhoea, *Yonivyapada*.

INTRODUCTION

Women status was expected to reach new horizons both socially and physically with the coming of new millennium. But some of the physiological things like menstruation, pregnancy, vaginal discharges, recurrent urinary infections and other sexually transmitted disorders trouble women making them slow down. Amongst these problems, abnormal vaginal discharge is the most common factor which creates irritation in women freedom.

Normal vaginal discharge may appear clear, cloudy white and without any types of smell. Changes in normal discharge can be caused by many reasons such as menstrual cycle, emotional stress, nutritional status, pregnancy, usage of medications - including birth control pills and sexual arousal. The menstrual cycle affects the vaginal environment i.e. ph of vagina. You may notice increased wetness and clear thick discharge around mid-cycle. The pH balance of the vagina fluctuates during the cycle and is the least acidic on the days just prior to and during menstruation. Infections, therefore, are most common at this time.

Any changes in color, consistency, amount, smell of discharge may be a sign of a vaginal infection. Vaginal infections are very common during reproductive period of women. Ayurveda, an ancient science of life is enriched with the knowledge of gynecological disorders related to vaginal discharges which may be blood stained or pinkish, mucoid, purulent, white-thin, thick, curdy or watery. White vaginal discharges is known as *Swetapradara* in Ayurvedic classics.

The "word" *Sweta pradara* has not described in *Brihatrayee* i.e. *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Astanga Hridaya* and *Astanga Sangraha*. For white vaginal discharge, the word *Sweta Pradara* has described in *Sharangadhara Samhita*, *Bhava Prakash*, *Yoga Ratnakara* and in commentary on *Charaka Samhita* by *Chakrapani*.

Sweta Pradara (Leucorrhoea) is not a disease, but a symptom of so many diseases. Sometimes this symptom becomes so severe and it overshadows the other symptoms of actual disease and patients come to O.P.D. for the treatment of only this symptom.

ETIOPATHOGENESIS

Since *Sweta Pradara* is a symptom, not a disease, hence etiopathogenesis of principal disease would be etiopathogenesis of *Sweta Pradara* also. On the basis of clinical features, it seems to be a *Kaphaja* disorder of female genital organ because *Kapha dosha* is main causative factor for any discharge. So, it may be said that *Kapha* aggravated due to its own vitiating factors, produces white and painless vaginal discharges due dominance of its liquid property by vitiating the *Rasadhatu* of reproductive system in the presence of *Sweta Pradara* causing factors such as excessive coitus, abortion, improper mode of life and dietetics during menstruation and *Ritukala* along with non-cleanliness of vagina.

CLINICAL FEATURES

Swetapradara or Leucorrhoea or white vaginal discharge is a symptom which is found in all *Yonivyapads* (Gynecological disorders) those are arising due to vitiation of *Kapha* and *Vatakapha* (*Atyananda*, *Karnini*, *Acharana*, *Aticharana*, *Sleshmala*, *Upapluta* and *Prasramsini Yonivyapada*). *Swetapradara* is a condition characterized by white vaginal discharges not associated with pain, burning sensation and mixed with other colors, thus it seems to be the description of leucorrhoea. The patient feels weak, run down, has pain in the back and calves, loss of vital fluids, itching pruritis on and around vulva, thighs and thigh joints. In mature ladies, inflammation of uterus (following childbirth) or its displacement or some venereal disease (especially gonorrhoea) may also trigger and hasten leucorrhoeal flow. In young females, thread worms may cause onset of this disorder. Chronicity of disorder may lead to cancerous growth; hence it is necessary that actual cause is fully determined and deduced before initiating treatment.

INVESTIGATIONS

The following investigations should be done to confirm the diagnosis and for proper treatment to cure the disease.

1. Cytological examination (Pap smear)
2. Cervical Punch Biopsy
3. Cervical culture
4. Haematological investigation: Hb%, TLC, DLC, ESR etc.
5. Serological investigations: VDRL, HIV
6. Urine examination: Routine & microscopic

TREATMENT

The principle of Ayurvedic treatment of *Sweta Pradara* is mostly based on its etiopathogenesis. As *Kapha* is main causative factor for vaginal discharge. Restoration of *Agni* (digestive fire) in order to cleanse the accumulated toxins and bring *kapha dosha* back towards equilibrium and tone up the muscles of reproductive organs with the help of rejuvenating herbs are considered main principle of treatment through Ayurveda.

Treatment consists of two headings

1. General treatment (line of treatment)
2. Specific treatment

General treatment

- a. Treatment prescribed for *Yonisrava* under *Yonivyapada* chapter.
- b. Symptomatic treatment of *Yonisrava* and *Yonipachhilya*.
- c. *Nidana parivarjan*
- d. *Kaphanasak* treatment
- e. Uses of Drugs having *Katu* and *Kashaya rasa*
- f. *Balya chikitsa* (use of *Rasayana* drugs)

Specific treatment

(1). Oral medicines

- a. Pestled root of *Rohataka* (*Tecoma undulata*) should be taken with water^[1,2].
- b. Use of *Darvyadi* (*Barberis aristata* etc.) decoction cures *Swetapradara*^[3].
- c. Paste or powder of *Amalaki* or seed of *Amalaki* (*Emblica officinalis* Gaertn.) should be taken with honey and sugar^[1].
- d. Paste of *Lodhra* (*Symplocos racemosa* Roxb.) should be taken with decoction of stem bark of *Nyagrodh* (*Ficus bengalensis* L.)^[1].
- e. Use of decoction of drugs of *Nyagrodha* group is beneficial due to its astringent property^[4].
- f. Use of *Nagakeshar* (*Mesua ferrea* L.) with *Takra* (buttermilk) followed by diet of only cooked rice and *Takra* can cure leucorrhoea only within three days^[5,6].
- g. Powder of root of *Chakramard* (*Cassia tora* L.) should be taken with *Tandulodaka* (rice-water) in the morning hours^[6].
- h. Licking of powdered *Shadawasa* (a variety of *Setaria italica*) mixed with oil of *Tila* for seven consecutive days cures leucorrhoea^[6].

- i. Use of combination of *Praval* (Coral) *Bhasma*, *Trivang bhasma* with rice water relieves the leuorrhoea^[7].
- j. *Pushyanuga churna* should be used with *Tandulodaka* mixed *Madhu*^[8].
- k. *Utpaladi churna* should be used with *Tandulodaka*^[9].
- l. *Pradarantak lauha*, *Pradarantak rasa*, *Pradararipu rasa*, *Pradarari rasa*, *Pradarari lauha*, *Shitakalyanaka ghrita* etc. are *Rasaushadhi*, mentioned in *Bhaishajya ratnavali* to cure the *Sweta pradara*^[10].
- m. **Asava-Arishta:** *Lakshmanarishta*, *Ashokarishta*, *Patrangasava* and *Lodhrasawa*^[11].
- n. **Ghrita-Tail:** *Ashoka ghrita*, *Nyagrodhadi ghrita*, *Vishwavallabha ghrita* and *Priyangwadi taila*^[12].
- o. *Kukkutandatwak bhasma* 250mg with *Madhu* (honey) twice in a day^[13].

(2). Drugs for external or local use:

(A) Yoni Prakshalana

- (I) Vaginal irrigation with decoction of stem bark of *Lodhra* (*Symplocos racemosa* Roxb).^[14]
- (II) Vaginal irrigation with decoction of stem bark of *Vata* (*Ficus bengalensis* L.).^[14]

(B) Yoni Purana

- (i) Use of a bolus of powdered bark of *Plaksha* (*Ficus lacor* Buch. Ham.) mixed with honey after oleating vaginal canal^[15].
- (ii) Fine powders of *Khadira* (*Acacia catechu* (Linn. f.) willd.), *Pathya* (*Terminalia chebula* Retz. & Willd.), *Jatiphala* (*Myristica fragrans* Houtt.), *Nimba* (*Azadirachta indica*) and *Puga* (*Areca catechu* Linn.), triturated with soup of *Mudga* and used in vagina after drying the mixture^[16].

(C) Yoni-Varti

- (I) After oleating vaginal canal, suppository made with powdered *Lodhra* (*Symplocos racemosa* Roxb), *Priyangu* (*Callicarpa macrophylla* Vahl) and *Madhuka* (*Madhuca indica* J.F.Gmel.) mixed with honey or all drugs with *Kashaya* rasa prominence should be used^[17].
- (II) A flaxen cloth impregnated with decoction of stem bark of *Nyagrodha* (*Ficus bengalensis* L.) should be used^[17].
- (III) A flaxen cloth impregnated with decoction of stem bark of *Lodhra*

(*Symplocos racemosa* Roxb) and *Vata* (*Ficus bengalensis* L.). should be used^[17].

(D) Yoni-Dhupana

- (I) *Dhupana* (Fumigation) with *Sarala*, *Guggulu* (*Commiphora wightii* (Arn.) Bhand) and *Yava* (*Hordeum vulgare* Linn) mixed with *Ghrita* should be done after oleating vaginal canal^[18].
- (II) Fumigation with *Katu matsyaka* (a type of fish) along with oil should be done after oleating vaginal canal^[18].

Advised: Garlic, meat soup, all dairy products and rice water.

Forbidden: Sweet and sour fruits, nuts, and excess of salt.

Preventive Measures^[19, 20]

- Be healthy; eat well, get enough sleep, drink enough fluids.
- Patients should wear condoms during sexual intercourse with new partners
- Keep vaginal area clean and dry to prevent fungal infection.
- Wear cotton undergarments.
- Wipe from front to back after urination or bowel movement.
- Avoid using deodorant pads or tampons.
- Don't use petroleum jelly or other oils for lubricants.
- Don't douche.
- Use medication as long as directed.
- Avoid sexual intercourse until treatment is completed and you are symptom free.
- Don't scratch infected or inflamed areas; it can cause further irritation.
- During an infection, use pads rather than tampons if menstruation occurs.
- Avoid vulvo/vaginal irritants, including perfumed or deodorant soaps/body washes.
- If symptoms persist after completing the treatment, an examination is indicated. Call for an appointment, and please use nothing in the vagina for 48 hours prior to your pelvic examination.

DISCUSSION

A woman during her life span may have different types of discharges per vagina. The vagina serves as a passageway between the outside of the body and the inner reproductive organs. The pH balance of the vagina is acidic, which discourages infections from occurring. This acidic environment is created by naturally occurring bacteria. A healthy vagina produces secretions to cleanse and regulate itself, similar to how saliva cleanses and regulates the environment of the mouth. These vaginal secretions are normal vaginal discharge. Any interference with the delicate balance of vaginal secretions sets up an environment conducive to infection. Most common causes of leucorrhoea in modern are cervicitis, vaginitis, cervical erosion and bacterial vaginosis etc. White vaginal discharges is known as *Swetapradara* in Ayurvedic classics.

In Ayurvedic classics, all gynaecological disorders including *Swetapradara* (leucorrhoea) come under *Yonivyapada*. Therefore, *Yonivyapadas* which are caused by *Kapha* or *Vata* *kaphaja doshas* are main causative factors of *Swetapradara*. Treatment of *Swetapradara* is mainly based on the use of drugs which are having predominance of *Kashaya* rasa and *Kapha-shamaka* property. Therefore, the drugs of *Kashaya* rasa dominance are mainly used locally and internally.

CONCLUSION

Sweta Pradara can be put parallel to Leucorrhoea in modern medicine on the basis of different symptoms. By improving the general health of women and increasing personal hygiene, we can prevent the incidence of *Sweta-Pradara*. Treatment of *Swetapradara* is mainly based on the use of drugs which are having predominance of *Kashaya* rasa and *Kapha-shamak* property. *Balya chikitsa* also play important role to prevent the incidence and to treat the present disease.

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