



Review Article

AYURVEDIC APPROACH OF MENORRHAGIA: ASRIGDARA

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ABSTRACT

Menorrhagia is a most common gynecological problem found in *Prasuti tantra* OPD. It is not a disease but it is symptom found in many gynecological disorders. Menorrhagia is characterized by the excessive bleeding per vaginum in amount and duration both. In Ayurvedic classics, Menorrhagia is termed as *Asrigdara*, means excessive discharge of blood per vaginum. Backache, pain in lower abdomen and weakness are also present in this disease. All the gynecological disorders come under the heading of *Yonivyapad* in Ayurvedic classics. Most of the *Yonivyapad* have characteristic features of menorrhagia such as *Raktayoni*, *Rudhirkashara*, *Putraghni*, *Apraja* etc. Among *Ashta-artavadushti*, *Raktaja artava-dushti* menorrhagia is also found as prominent symptom. Since, *Asrigdar* is mainly due to vitiation of *Vata* and *Pitta dosha* hence, the treatment should be based on the use of drugs which are having predominance of *Kashaya rasa* and *Pitta – shamak* properties. *Kashaya rasa* is known as best astringent and because of this property *Kashaya rasa* plays important role in relieving bleeding discharge due its *Stambhana* action. There is loss of blood, so, the drugs and diet which increases *Rakta dhatu* (Blood) in body are also effective. Therefore, treatment mainly based on concept of *Raktastambhaka* as well as *Raktavardhaka*.

KEYWORDS: *Asrigdar*, Menorrhagia, *Yonivyapad*, *Artavadushti*.

INTRODUCTION

Normal menstrual bleeding is cyclic, 3-5 days durations and 50-60 ml with its normal color as described in Ayurvedic classics. But when normal menstrual bleeding pattern is altered in reference of duration, amount, color and cycle, the conditions are called *Artavadushti* and Menorrhagia is being one of them. It may also contain white flecks and at times may be thin and stringy. Menorrhagia can occur due to many reasons, including menstrual cycle, emotional stress, nutritional status, infection, pregnancy, usage of medications - including birth control pills, and sexual arousal. The menstrual cycle affects the vaginal environment. You may notice increased wetness and clear 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 or amount of discharge may be a sign of a vaginal infection. Vaginal infections are very common; most women will experience some form of a vaginal infection in their lifetime. *Ayurveda*, an ancient science of life is enriched with the knowledge of gynecological disorders related to vaginal discharges. Blood stained or pinkish, mucoid, purulent, white-thin, thick, curdy or watery, white vaginal discharges is known as *Swetapradara* in Ayurvedic classics.

The word *Asrigdar* has described in *Brihatrayee* i.e. *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Astanga Hridaya* and *Astanga Sangraha*. For excessive bleeding per vaginum, the word *Asrigdar* has described in *Sharangadhara Samhita*, *Bhava Prakash*, *Yoga Ratnakara* and in commentary on *Charaka Samhita* by *Chakrapani*.

Asrigdara (Menorrhagia) 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. Therefore, *Charaka* and *Vagbhata* etc. have described only its symptomatic treatment.

Definition of *Asrigdara*: Due to *Dirana* (excessive secretion) of *Asrik* (menstrual blood) in this disease, it is known as *Asrigdara*. *Asrigdara* is also called *Raktapradara* due to *Pradirana* (excessive excretion) of *Raja* (menstrual blood).^[1]

ETIOLOGY

According to *Acharya Charaka*, *Sushruta* and *Vagbhata* etc. have described different causes of *Asrigdara* in their texts which are given below.

***Charaka Samhita*:** Excessive intake of *Lavana*, *Amla*, *Katu*, *Vidahi*, *Krisara*, *Payas*, *Dahi*, *Mastu*, *Guru*, *Snigdha* and other *Mithya Ahar Sevana*.^[2]

***Sushruta Samhita*:** *Pittavrita Apana Vayu*.^[3]

***Astanga Sangraha*:** Increase in amount of blood (*Ativridhi* of *Rakta*).^[4]

***Astanga Hridaya*:** *Pittavrita Apana Vayu*.^[5]

***Madhava Nidana*, *Bhava prakash*, *Yoga ratnakar*:** *Viruddha Bhojana* and *Madyadi*, *Garbhaprapata*, *Ati-maithuna*, *Atikarshana*, *Atimargagamana*, *Abhighata*, *Divashayana* and *Shoka*.

***Harita Samhita*:** Milk carrying channels of infertile women are filled with *Vata*.

***Kashyapa Samhita*:** *Pittavrita Apana Vata* & *Ativridhi* of *Rakta*.

Pathogenesis

According to *Acharya Charaka*, aggravated *Vata* affects uterine vessels and boosts amount of blood and this increase in blood thus causes increase in menstrual blood and creates *Rakta-pradara*.^[6] *Acharya Bhela* explains that cause of *Raktapradara* is vitiated *Apatya-marga*.

Samanya Lakshana

Charaka says that excessive vaginal bleeding during menstruation is the only symptom of *Asrigdara*.^[7] According to *Sushruta Samhita*, there are body ache and pain symptoms present in all types of *Asrigdara* with excessive vaginal bleeding.^[8] *Dalhana* says in his commentary on *Sushruta Samhita* that burning sensation in lower portion of groin, pelvic region, back, renal region and flanks and severe pain in uterus as symptoms present in *Asrigdara*.^[9] *Vridha Vagbhata* has described excessive bleeding during menstrual or intermenstrual period as symptom of *Asrigdara*.^[10]

Bhava Prakash, *Madhava Nidana*, and *Yoga Ratnakar* have described the same as in *Sushruta Samhita* i.e. body ache and pain in *Asrigdara*.

Classification of Rakta-Pradara

Acharya Charaka has described four types of *Asrigdara* i.e. *Vataja*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja* and *Sannipataja Asrigdara*.^[11] *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned 'all types of *Asrigdara*' along with general clinical features of *Asrigdara* but has not described any classification.^[12] Most of *Acharyas* have mentioned four types of *Asrigdara* in their texts.

Treatment

Treatment of *Asrigdara* has described under following headings:

1. Principles of treatment
2. General treatment
3. Specific treatment according to *Doshas*.

Principles of Treatment/Line of Treatment

1. Use of treatment that is described for *Raktayoni* i.e., use of haemostatic drugs according to *Doshas* diagnosed on basis of color and smell of blood.^[13,14,15]
2. Use of treatment described in *Yonivyapada* chapter according to respective *Dosha*.^[16]
3. Treatment prescribed for *Raktaatisara*,^[16] *Raktapitta*,^[16,17,18] *Raktarsh*^[16]
4. *Guhyaroga* (diseases of reproductive system)^[18] and abortions^[19] should be used.
5. An young woman, using congenital diet, having less complication should be treated on the of *Adhogaraktapitta*.^[17]
6. To cure *Asrigdara*, *Basti* should be used.^[20,21]
7. Purgation cures *Asrigdara* or any other menstrual disorders.^[22]

General Treatment

General treatment consists of external/local and internal/systemic both i.e. some remedies are effective by their local application to cure *Asrigdara* and some are beneficial to treat the disease by their internal i.e. oral use. Both of these i.e. external and internal medicines are

broadly described in detail under different headings and given below:

Drugs For External/Local Use

1. Uprooted the root of *Vyaghranakhi* which is situated in north direction and sacred place during *Uttarphalguni Nakshatra* and tied in the waist of patient. This can cure *Raktapradar*.^[23,24]
2. Inhalation and massage of *Shatapushpa* oil are also beneficial in *Asrigdara*.^[25]
3. Use of *Uttarbasti* is also beneficial.^[26,27,28] In *Asrigdara*, *Chandanadi Niruhabasti*, *Rasnadi Niruhabasti*, *Madhukadi Anuvasanabasti*, *Kushadi Asthapanabasti*, *Rodhradi Asthapanabasti*, *Rasnadi Asthapanabasti* and *Mustadi Yapanabasti* are used in *Asrigdara*.

Drugs for internal/oral use

1. **Rasaushadhi Kalpana:** *Pradararipu Rasa*,^[29] *Bolaparpati*^[30]
2. **Vati Kalpana (Tablets):** *Gokshuradi Guggulu*,^[31] *Chandraprabha Vati*.^[32]
3. **Kwath Kalpana (Decoctions):** *Darvyadi* decoction,^[33] *Nyagrodhadi Kashaya*.^[34]
4. **Arishta & Asava Kalpana:** *Lodhrasava*, *Patranga-sava*, *Ashokarishta*.
5. **Awaleha Kalpana:** *Khandakushmandawaleha*,^[35] *Brihatkushmandawaleha*,^[36] *Khandakushmandaka*, *Khandaamalaka*.
6. **Kshirapaka Kalpana:** *Kshirapaka* of stem bark of *Ashoka*.^[37]
7. **Ghritha and Tail Kalpana:** *Sheetakalyanaka Ghritha*,^[38] *Shalmali Ghritha*,^[39] *Mudgadya Ghritha*, *Shatavari Ghritha*, *Mahatiktaka Ghritha*, *Shatavari Taila*^[40] and *Shatapushpa Tail*.
8. **Kalka and Churna Kalpana:** Pestled root of *Tanduliyaka*^[41] with honey, *Rasanjana* and honey (mixture) should be taken with rice-water, *Pushyanuga Churna*, Powder of *Indrayava* and sugar taken with overnight kept water.
9. **Use of Ekala Aushadhi** (Single drug preparation): *Ashoka*, *Kamal*, *Durva Swarasa*, *Kutaja*, *Nagkesar* etc.
10. **Bhumyamalaki Churna:** 60 patients being diagnosed with *Rakta Pradara* according to inclusion and exclusion criteria were divided in 2 groups of 30 each. Group 1: 30 patients were treated with *Bhumyamalaki Churna* in capsule form. Group 2: 30 patients were treated with placebo. All the patients were assessed by different parameters like color, consistency and interval of menstrual cycle before and after treatment. The results were analyzed statistically before and after treatment, at end of 3 cycles. Finally out of 30 patients in trial group 15 patients were completely cured, 15 patients were improved and none of the patients unchanged. During the treatment no side effects were observed. *Bhumyamalaki* is having an astringent property that's why it improve the uterine tonicity. It is *Sheeta virya* which helped in reducing blood flow and acted as *Pitta shamaka* and *Deepana-pachana* property corrects the metabolic disorders of body and

balances hormonal disturbances. *Bhummyalaki* is excellent remedy for *Rakta pradara* proved by the present study.^[42]

Bhummyalaki gives better results in the dysfunctional uterine bleeding. *Bhummyalaki* effects in excessive or prolonged bleeding by curtailing duration and amount of blood loss, relief in pain and improvement in consistency of blood. *Bhummyalaki* has anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties, which might have influenced vascularity of reproductive system.^[43]

11. Bolbaddha Ras: In the clinical study 15 patients are given *Bolbaddha Ras* 500 mg TID for two menstrual cycles with *Madhu* as *Anupana*. The drug selected has *Pitta Shamaka*, *Vatanulomaka*, *Raktasthapaka* and *Deepana Pachana* Properties. Very significant improvement was observed in symptoms of *Asrigdata* like Intensity, amount and duration of bleeding.^[44]

12. Shodhana with Virechna karma: Ayurvedic management is a good alternative to Hormonal therapy as it has no side effects with minimal recurrence rate. Once, *Shodhana* is done there is less chance of recurrence of the disease. As, vitiation of *Pitta dosha* is there in *Raktapradra* so, *Virechna karma* was advocated according to the general condition of the patient. Moreover, *Kashyapa* has quoted that purgation cures menstrual bleeding.^[45]

13. A gargle made from the bark with the addition of extract of *Acacia Pods* and *Pomegranate flowers* is a remedy in salivation and sore throat and decoction of buds in cough, bleeding piles, haematuria and menorrhagia.^[46]

14. Srotomoola Chikitsa: *Srotomoola Chikitsa* will give better response to cure of any *Dhatu Pradoshaja Vikara*. A total number of 45 patients were registered and randomly divided into 3 groups. Group I was taken under control group and given *Asrigdarahar yoga*, group II was given drug which acted on *Yakrita (Srotomoola)* and group III was given drug that acted on *Pliha (Srotomoola)*. Group II & Group III had statistically extremely significant relief on almost all symptoms of *Asrigdara* as compared to Group I.^[47]

DISCUSSION

In Ayurvedic classics, all gynecological disorders comes under a big heading '*Yonivyapada*'. Menorrhagia is found as symptoms in so many *Yonivyapada* such as *Rakta yoni* by *Acharya Vagbhata*. And *Asrija yonivyapada* described by *Acharya Charaka*, also have the menorrhagia as main symptom. *Acharya Sushruta* have described the *Yonivyapada 'Lohitakshara'* which also consists of menorrhagia as a symptom. *Asrigdara* is very well correlated with menorrhagia in modern medicine. *Asrigdara* is very severe and life threatening disease which may be fatal to the patient if not treated properly and timely. Complications of *Asrigdara* includes weakness, giddiness, mental confusion, feeling of darkness, dyspnea, thirst, burning sensation, delirium, anemia, drowsiness, convulsion and other disorders due *Vata* vitiation because of excessive bleeding per vaginum. Prophylaxis of

Asrigdara is possible only due the avoidance of all etiological factors causing *Raktapradara*. The drugs and formulations used in treatment of *Asrigdara* are mainly rich in *Kashaya rasa* and *Tikta rasa* because both of these rasa have the property of astringent i.e. *Stambhana guna* in *Ayurveda* and thus due to astringent property, bleeding will be checked. Then next aim of treatment should be rising of blood i.e. hemoglobin label in body and for that, *Raktasthapana* drugs should be used. *Maharshi Kashyapa* has described use of purgation (*Virechana*) in treatment of *Asrigdara* because *Virechana* is most appropriate and superior therapy among *Panchkarma* for *Pitta dosha* and *Rakta dosha* have quality identical to *Pitta dosha*, hence *Virechana* therapy will be also effective to treat the disease originated due to vitiation of *Rakta dosha*. *Bhava prakash*, *Yoga Ratnakar*, *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita* and other *Ayurvedic* classics have described formulations of *Prameha rogadhikar* are very effective in *Pradara roga*. This is only based on the fact that Both types of diseases have been characterized by *Atipravriti* type of *Srotodusti*.

CONCLUSION

Asrigdar can be put parallel to Menorrhagia in modern medicine on the basis of different signs & symptoms. By improving the general health of women and increasing personal hygiene, we can prevent the incidence of Menorrhagia. Treatment of Menorrhagia is mainly based on the use of drugs which are having predominance of *Kashaya rasa* and *Rakta-pitta vardhak* properties. *Balya Chikitsa* also play important role to prevent the incidence and to treat the present disease.

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