



Review Article

YOGASANAS IN SPASMODIC DYSMENORRHOEA W.S.R TO UDAVARTHA YONIVYAPATH

Anisha A

Specialist Medical Officer, Dept of Prasuti tantra and Sthree Roga, Govt. Ayurveda Hospital, Mavelikkara, Alappuzha, Kerala, India.

Article info

Article History:

Received: 15-11-2022

Revised: 01-12-2022

Accepted: 19-12-2022

KEYWORDS:

Udavarta,
Apanavata
vaigunya,
Spasmodic
dysmenorrhoea,
Yogasanas.

ABSTRACT

Many women are familiar with the experience of spasmodic dysmenorrhoea, one of the commonest gynaecological conditions that affects the quality of life of many in their reproductive years. This condition manifested as painful menstruation, is the most frequently encountered gynaecological complaint and it can be included under *Udavarta yonivyapat*, caused by *Apanavata vaigunya* described in Ayurvedic classics. This situation not only has a significant effect on quality of life and personal health but also resulting in loss of work hours and depression. Scholastic backwardness and work absenteeism as a result of dysmenorrhoea is common nowadays. Most of the medical therapies for painful periods like analgesics, antispasmodics, NSAID, and anti-prostaglandins are having many side effects. Hormonal and surgical therapies are also not advisable to all type of patients, especially teenagers as it may harm their future reproductive capacity. Here comes the importance of *Yoga*, which provides good approach to treat primary dysmenorrhea. *Yoga asanas* helps in stretching muscles of pelvic cavity and increases the blood circulation to the pelvic organs and also helps to neutralize *Apana vayu*, which help in normal menstrual flow. The practice of *Asanas* has a beneficial impact on the whole body systems and helps in relaxation of both body and mind. This study is undertaken to find out the *Yogasanas* having pain relieving capacity in spasmodic dysmenorrhoea as it doesn't cause any side effects but improve the quality of life. A thorough literary survey was done in *Yogic* classics especially *Asanas* for women's health, *Asanas* for reproductive health and tried to compile the *Asanas* together having the pain relieving capacity in primary dysmenorrhoea.

INTRODUCTION

As reproduction is the fundamental requirement for the maintenance of human life, Ayurveda elucidate due importance for the care of mother at every phase of her life. As a woman bears a child and is the foundation of a society, her health should be given utmost importance and care.

- According to Sabdakalpadruma, *Stree* is said to be the root cause of progeny. "*Sthrayathi garbho yasyamithi sthree*".
- According to Raja nighantu, *Stree* is stated as 'one who discharges *Arthava*'. "*Sthree cha arthava bhavathi sravathy ithi sthree*".

From the above statements we can conclude that, *Acharyas* have denoted the single term '*Arthava*' in our classics to cover the entire female reproductive physiology. Menstruation is considered as a land mark of homeostatic condition of reproductive system. The same menstruation can create hell situation, if it is associated with unbearable pain as we are observing in cases of dysmenorrhoea. Though dysmenorrhoea literally means painful menstruation, a more realistic and practical definition includes painful menstruation of sufficient magnitude so as to incapacitate day to day activities.

Dysmenorrhoea in which there is no identifiable pelvic pathology is seen is called spasmodic dysmenorrhoea^[1]. A biochemical derangement is seen there in the pathogenesis of pain production.

Spasmodic dysmenorrhoea is one of the most common gynaecological complaints affecting more than 70% of teenagers and out of this, 30-50% of menstruating women suffers from varying degrees of

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



<https://doi.org/10.47070/ijapr.v10i12.2587>

Published by Mahadev Publications (Regd.)
publication licensed under a Creative
Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-
ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

discomfort. This situation not only has a significant effect on quality of life and personal health but also resulting in loss of work hours and depression. Scholastic backwardness and work absenteeism as a result of dysmenorrhoea is common nowadays.

In the classics of Ayurveda painful menstruation find its role as a sole symptom in *Udavartha yoni vyapath*. *Udavartha* is one among the twenty *Yoni vyapath*, described by various authors. According to *Acharya charaka Arthavesa vimukthe tu tat kshanam labhate sukham* described in the features of *Udavartha yoni vyapath*– there will be an immediate relief of pain once the flow is established, is a characteristic feature which is seen in spasmodic dysmenorrhoea. Normal menstruation is the function of *Apanavayu*, therefore painful menstruation is considered as *Apanavata dushti*.

According to modern medicine, there is no permanent cure for spasmodic dysmenorrhoea. Marriage, child birth and psycho therapy etc helps to reduce the severity of the condition. Most of the medical therapies like analgesics, antispasmodics, NSAID, and anti prostaglandins are having many side effects. Hormonal and surgical therapies are also not advisable to all type of patients, especially teenagers as it may harm their future reproductive capacity. Here comes the importance of *Yoga*, which provides good approach to treat primary dysmenorrhea. The practice of *Asanas* has a beneficial impact on the whole body. "*Asana*" is the positioning of the body in various postures, with the total involvement of the mind and self, in order to establish communication between our external and internal selves.

Asanas tones the basic building block of the body like muscles, tissues, ligaments, joints, and nerves. *Asanas* helps in the proper and smooth functioning of all systems of the body. *Asanas* helps to relieve fatigue or weakness of body and mind and it helps in relaxation of both body and mind. *Asanas* boost metabolism, lymphatic circulation, and hormonal secretions, and bring about a chemical balance in the body. *Yoga* not only helps in attaining physical fitness but also helps in reduction of the sympathetic nervous system tone and increases vagal activity, both of which could have favorable endocrine and immune consequences, including lowering inflammation^[6,7]. Most of the studies show that *Yoga* is an effective intervention for alleviating menstrual pain in women with primary dysmenorrhea.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A thorough literary survey was done in yogic classics especially *Asanas* for women's health, *Asanas* for reproductive health and tried to compile the *Asanas* together having the pain relieving capacity in primary dysmenorrhoea.

Description

A pain which is of uterine origin and directly linked to menstruation but with no visible pelvic pathology is called spasmodic dysmenorrhoea. A biochemical derangement is seen there in the pathogenesis of pain production.

The mechanism of initiation of uterine pain in spasmodic dysmenorrhoea is difficult to establish. But the following causes are enlisted in medical books.

- Behavioural and psychological factors
- Abnormal anatomical and functional aspect of myometrium
- Imbalance in the autonomic nervous control of uterine muscle
- Hormone imbalance
- Role of prostaglandins
- Role of vasopressin
- Endothelin
- Platelet Activating Factor (PAF)
- Neuritis of presacral nerve

The characteristic of pain in spasmodic dysmenorrhoea is, it begins a few hours before menstruation or just with the onset of menstruation. The severity of pain usually lasts for few hours, it can extend to 24 hours but never beyond 48 hours. The pain is spasmodic and felt mainly in the hypogastrium and is often referred to the inner and front aspects of the thighs, it never extend below the level of the knee and is never experienced in the back of the leg. Associated symptoms like nausea, vomiting, back ache, fatigue, diarrhoea, constipation, headache, giddiness, tachycardia etc can also be seen.

Treatment for spasmodic dysmenorrhoea includes the following

1. General measures
2. Medical management
3. Surgery
4. Non-pharmacologic pain management

Exercise increases the endorphins and serotonin (natural painkillers) levels. So exercise during menstruation to get rid of menstrual pain.

- Cure menstrual cramps with simple and not too heavy exercises as the uterus is weak during menstruation.
- Doing mild exercises like stretching, walking, or biking- exercise may improve blood flow and reduce pelvic pain.
- Walking is an effective exercise to reduce menstrual cramps. Walking for 30 minutes every day increases the endorphins level which provides relief.
- Slow running can help get rid of menstrual pain. Go for running three times in a week.

- Abdominal crunch exercise helps reduce menstrual cramps. Lie flat on the floor with hands on sides and lift the legs up few inches from the ground and then bend the knees. Now bring the knees and chin close to the chest and hold the position for 10 seconds. Relax and repeat 5 times.
- Butterfly stretching helps cure menstrual cramps. Sit on the floor with knees bent and spread on two sides and the soles joined together. Move the legs up and down in the same speed for a minute and then relax. Repeat for 2-3 minutes in the beginning.

Udavartha is one among the twenty *Yoni vyapath*, described by various authors. Also the following descriptions by various authors substantiate the similarity between *Udavartha* and spasmodic dysmenorrhoea. According to *Acharya charaka* "Arthavesa vimukthe tu tat kshanam labhate sukham" described in the features of *Udavartha yoni vyapath* – there will be an immediate relief of pain once the flow is established, is a characteristic feature which is seen in spasmodic dysmenorrhoea.

- **Krchrarthava:** Painful menstruation [2]
- **Rajasogamanadurdhwam:** Obstruction leading to upward movement of menstrual blood.[3]
- **Badha raja:** Presence of clots.[4]
- **Samanthath varthanam vayo:** Irregular uterine contractions.[5]

At each stage of a woman's life, her body undergoes physical and psychological changes. The practice of *yoga* can be modified and adapted to suit

her changing needs in each phase, helping her to achieve peace of mind and bodily poise. In childhood, the practice of *Yoga* is a playful one where new rhythmic and challenging movements are enjoyed. At adolescence, young girls undergo many changes in body and mind. This period of sudden change is an ideal time to begin the practice of *Yoga asanas and Pranayama*, both of which can help to maintain a healthy and regular menstrual cycle. The practice can be tailored to concentrate on poses that help to strengthen emotional stability, regulate mood swings, and avoid menstrual disorders. *Yoga* is also beneficial during this period of growth as it helps to develop muscular strength, avoid obesity, assist the development of the reproductive organs, and balance hormones.

Yoga asanas help in stretching muscles of pelvic cavity and increases the blood circulation to the pelvic organs and also the spinal twisting *Asanas* help in relieve spinal muscle spasm and help to neutralize *Apana vayu*, which help in normal menstrual flow. *Yoga* is also found to have encouraging effect on increasing pain threshold capacity in individuals.

Yoga has beneficial effects on physical and mental health problems through down regulation of hypothalamo pituitary adrenal axis and the sympathetic nervous system, which may also be useful for managing primary dysmenorrhoea by reducing menstrual pain [8]. *Yoga* helps in increasing flow of vital energy to the reproductive organs and establishes a balance among hormones regulating menstruation.

Asanas which are Found to Relieve Pain in Spasmodic Dysmenorrhoea

Virabhadrasana (Warrior Pose) [9]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relieves backache, Strengthens the back muscles • Tones the abdominal muscles • Relieves pain and heavy flow during menstruation. (In such cases, practice this pose in the time between menstrual periods- avoid during menstruation). (Do not practice this <i>Asana</i> in case of high blood pressure or a cardiac condition)
Badhakonasana (Fixed angle Pose) [10]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulates the heart and improves circulation in the pelvic region • Tones the spine, and the abdominal and pelvic organs • Reduces menstrual pain, irregular periods, and leucorrhea
Adhomukha Virasana (Downward facing Hero Pose) [11]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretches and tones the spine, relieving pain in the back and neck • Alleviates menstrual pain and depression associated with menstruation (Do not practice this asana in case of incontinence)
Ustrasana (Camel Pose) [12]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves blood circulation to the ovaries and tones them. • Relieves menstrual pain and the symptoms of menopause (Do not practise this pose during menstruation)
Suptha Badhakonasana (Reclining Fixed Angle Pose) [13]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves blood circulation in the ovarian region, and is particularly beneficial during puberty and menopause • Alleviates menstrual pain and leucorrhea • Corrects a prolapsed uterus.

Suptha Virasana (Reclining Hero Stretch) ^[14]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretches the abdomen, back, and waist. • Reduces menstrual pain, and helps treat disorders of the ovaries (Women should place a bolster under the back during menstruation)
Urdhwa Dhanurasana (Bow Pose) ^[15]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens the abdominal and pelvic organs • Stimulates pituitary, pineal and thyroid gland • Helps prevent excess menstrual flow and eases menstrual cramps. (Do not practice this <i>Asana</i> when blood pressure is too high or too low, constipation or diarrhea, or feeling tired. Do not practice during a migraine attack or a severe headache. If cardiac condition or ischemia presents, practice <i>Viparita Dandasana</i> instead of this pose.)
Utthita Trikonasana (Extended triangle pose) ^[16]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It tones the pelvic and abdominal organs • Helps relieve menstrual pain and menstrual disorders (Do not practice during menstruation)
Upavishta Konasana (Seated wide angle Pose) ^[17]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Massages the organs of the reproductive system • Stimulates the ovaries, regulates menstrual flow, and relieves menstrual pain and disorder. • Corrects a prolapsed uterus or bladder
Bhujangasana ^[18]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This <i>Asana</i> tones the female reproductive system and alleviate the menstrual disorders.

DISCUSSION

- Dysmenorrhoea is one of the commonest gynaecological conditions that affect the quality of life of many women in their reproductive years.
- Dysmenorrhoea when present solely as a complaint without association of any other pelvic pathologies it is called as a spasmodic or primary dysmenorrhoea.
- *Nidanasamprapthi* and *Rupa* of *Udavartha yonivyapat* can well explain the etio pathogenesis and clinical features of spasmodic dysmenorrhoea.
- Patient and family education, life style modifications, encouraging physical activities like exercise, *Yogasanas*, low fat vegetarian diet, etc have a major role in the treatment aspect.
- From adolescence through to motherhood, menopause, and old age, women undergo many life changes. Throughout, *Yoga* helps women to strengthen both body and mind and create a state of balance and harmony.
- *Yoga Asanas* helps in stretching muscles of pelvic cavity and increases the blood circulation to the pelvic organs and also the spinal twisting *Asanas* help in relieve spinal muscle spasm and help to neutralize *Apana vayu*, which help in normal menstrual flow. *Yoga* is also found to have encouraging effect on increasing pain threshold capacity in individuals.
- S.Shah et al. studied the effect of exercises on primary dysmenorrhoea in young females and had found that abdominal, pelvic and groin region stretching programmes reduced pain in primary dysmenorrhoea.^[19]
- BR Ganesh et al. suggest that yoga has massaging effects on pelvic organs. This helps in blood supply to the pelvic organs there by promoting oxygen supply. This decreases cramps experienced in dysmenorrhoea.^[20]
- *Yoga* has beneficial effects on physical and mental health problems through down regulation of hypothalamo pituitary adrenal axis and the sympathetic nervous system, which may also be useful for managing primary dysmenorrhoea by reducing menstrual pain
- *Yoga* helps in increasing flow of vital energy to the reproductive organs and establishes a balance among hormones regulating menstruation.

CONCLUSION

From this review it is concluded that *Virabhadrasana*, *Badha konasana*, *Ustrasana*, *Bhujangasana*, *Adhomukha virasana*, *Suptha badha konasana*, *Urdhwa dhanurasana*, *Upavishta konasana*, *Uthitha trikonasana*, *Suptha virasana* have pain relieving capacity in primary dysmenorrhoea.

REFERENCES

1. Dutta DC. The text book of Gynaecology, 6th edition, Jaypee brothers medical publishers (P) LTD, New Delhi; 2013, p 178.
2. Vagbhata, Ashtanga Hridayam, English translation by Prof K R Srikanta Murty, Uttarasthana, Chapter 33, verse 33, Varanasi; Choukamba Krishnadas Academy, Reprint 2005, p311.
3. Agnivesa, Charaka Samhita, Text with English translation by Dr. RK Sharma and Bhagvan Dash, Chikitsa sthana; Yonivyapath cikitsa adhyaya:

- chapter 30, verse 26, Varanasi; Chaukambha Sanskrit Series; Reprint 2005, p135.
4. Vagbhata, Ashtanga Samgraha with Sasilekha Commentary by Indu, edited by Sharma S, Utharasthana, Guhyaroga vinjaneeya, Chapter 38, Verse 36, 3rd edition, Varanasi; Chowkhambha Sanskrit Series; 2012, p 829.
 5. Madhavakara. Madhava Nidana with madhukosha commentary of Vijayraksita & Sreekanthadatta, Yonivyapat nidanam, chapter 62, verse 2, 3rd edition, Varanasi; Choukamba Sanskrit sansthan; Reprint 2012, p379.
 6. Kiecolt-Glaser, J.K., Christian, L., Preston, H., Houts, C.R., Malarkey, W.B., Emery, C.F., Glaser, R., Stress, inflammation, and yoga practice. Psychosom. Med.2010; 72 (2): 113-121.
 7. Usha Nag, M.D, [Obg], Pg Dip, M.Sc [Yoga], Madhavi Kodali, M.D.,D.P.M. Effect of Yoga on Primary Dysmenorrhoea and Stress in Medical Students. IOSR Journal of Dental and Medical Sciences. 2013 Jan- Feb; 4(1): 69-73.
 8. Kanojia S, Sharma VK, Gandhi A, et al. Effect of yoga on autonomic functions and psychological status during both phases of menstrual cycle in young healthy females. Journal of Clinical and Diagnostic Research. 2013; 7: 2133-2139.
 9. B.K.S.Iyengar. Yoga the Path to Holistic Health; Virabhadrasana; Dorling Kindersley limited; 2008, Page 96-99
 10. B.K.S.Iyengar. Yoga the Path to Holistic Health; Badhakonasana; Dorling Kindersley limited; 2008, Page 208
 11. B.K.S.Iyengar. Yoga the Path to Holistic Health; Adhomukha virasana; Dorling Kindersley limited; 2008, Page 220-221
 12. B.K.S.Iyengar. Yoga the Path to Holistic Health; Ushtrasana; Dorling Kindersley limited; 2008, Page 240-241.
 13. B.K.S.Iyengar. Yoga the Path to Holistic Health; Suptha Badhakonasana; Dorling Kindersley limited; 2008, Page 244-245
 14. B.K.S.Iyengar Yoga the Path to Holistic Health; Suptha virasana; Dorling Kindersley limited; 2008, Page 166-67.
 15. B.K.S.Iyengar Yoga the Path to Holistic Health; Urdhwa Dhanurasana; Dorling Kindersley limited; 2008, Page 160-61.
 16. B.K.S.Iyengar. Yoga the Path to Holistic Health; Utthita trikonasana; Dorling Kindersley limited; 2008, Page 192-193
 17. B.K.S.Iyengar. Yoga the Path to Holistic Health; Upavishta konasanam; Dorling Kindersley limited; 2008, Page 213
 18. Sampurna Swasthavrtta Vigyan, Vd.V.G. Patrikar, Asana, Chapter 21, 6th edition, 2016, Page no.332.
 19. Shah S, Verma N, Begani P, Nagar H, Mujawar N. Effect of exercises on primary dysmenorrhoea in young females. Int J Physiother Res. 2016; 4(5): 1652-7
 20. Ganesh BR, Madhushree PD, Andrea RH. Comparative study on effect of slow and fast phased pranayama on quality of life and pain in physiotherapy girls with primary dysmenorrhoea: Randomized clinical trial. International Journal of Physiotherapy and Research. 2015; 3(2): 960-5.

Cite this article as:

Anisha A. Yogasanas in Spasmodic Dysmenorrhoea w.s.r to Udavartha Yonivyapath. International Journal of Ayurveda and Pharma Research. 2022;10(12):69-73.

<https://doi.org/10.47070/ijapr.v10i12.2587>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

***Address for correspondence**

Dr. Anisha. A

Specialist Medical Officer
Prasuti Tantra and Stree roga
Govt. Ayurveda Hospital,
Mavelikkara, Alappuzha, Kerala.
Email: dranisha.ani@gmail.com

Disclaimer: IJAPR is solely owned by Mahadev Publications - dedicated to publish quality research, while every effort has been taken to verify the accuracy of the content published in our Journal. IJAPR cannot accept any responsibility or liability for the articles content which are published. The views expressed in articles by our contributing authors are not necessarily those of IJAPR editor or editorial board members.