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 Yoniyapad in Ayurvedic classics. Most of the Yoniyapad have characteristic features of menorrhagia such as Raktyonih, Rudhirkashara, Putraghni, Apraja etc. Among Ashra-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 Stambhannah 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, Yoniyapad, 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, Vidah, Krisara, Payas, Dahi, Mastu, Guru, Snigdha and other Mithya Ahar Sevana. [2]

Sushruta Samhita: Pittavrita Apana Vayu.[3]


Ashtanga Hridaya: Pittavrita Apana Vayu.[5]

Madhava Nidana, Bhava prakash, Yoga ratnakar: Viruddha Bhojana and Madyadi, Garbhaprapata, Atimaitthuna, Atikarshana, Atimargagamana, Abhignahata, 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] Vridhha Vagbhata has described excessive bleeding during menstrual or intermenstrual period as symptom of Asrigdara.[10]

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]
4. Guhyaroga (diseases of reproductive system) [18] and abortions [19] should be used.
5. An young woman, using congenital diet, having less body ache and pain in Asrigdara.
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 Shatapuspa oil are also beneficial in Asrigdara. [25]
3. Use of Uttarbasti is also beneficial. [26,27,28] In Asrigdara, Chandanodi Nirubhabasti, Rasnadi Nirubhabasti, Madhukadi Anuvasanabasti, Kushadi Asthapanabasti, Rodhradi Asthapanabasti, Rasnadi Asthapanabasti and Mustadi Yapanabasti are used in Asrigdara.

Drugs for internal/oral use

3. Kwath Kalpana (Decoctions): Darvyyadi decoction, [33] Nyagrodhadi Kashaya, [34]
6. Kshirapaka Kalpana: Kshirapaka of stem bark of Ashoka. [37]
8. Kalka and Churna Kalpana: Pestled root of Tundulyaka[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: Ashoka, Kamal, Durva Swarasa, Kutaja, Nagkesar etc.
10. Bhunyamalaki 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 Bhunyamalaki 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. Bhunyamalaki 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

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

*Bhumyamalaki* gives better results in the dysfunctional uterine bleeding. *Bhumyamalaki* effects in excessive or prolonged bleeding by curtailing duration and amount of blood loss, relief in pain and improvement in consistency of blood. Bhumyamalaki 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, Raktastrhapaka and Deepana Pachana Properties. Very significant improvement was observed in symptoms of Asrigdata like Intensity, amount and duration of bleeding.[44]

12. **Shodhana with Virechana 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, *Virechana 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 deocction 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 ‘*Yoniyapada*’: Menorrhagia is found as symptoms in so many *Yoniyapada* such as *Rakta yoni* by Acharya Vagbhata. And *Asriya yoniyapada* described by Acharya Charaka, also have the menorrhagia as main symptom. Acharya Sushruta have described the *Yoniyapada* ‘*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, dysponea, 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, *Raktastrhapana* 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 rogadikar 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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