

ANTHOLOGY OF AYURVEDIC LITERATURE PERTAINING TO PCOS.**Dr. Pooja Ravindra Kadu***

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ABSTRACT

Numerous health problems have emerged in recent years due to sedentary lifestyle. The reality check for this scenario is rise of PCOS, Infertility, Diabetes, Obesity, CVS disorders etc. *Ayurveda* is a traditional medicine where *Archaryas* have explained *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Ahar & Vihar* which are daily regimen to be followed to prevent illness. No application of these regimens in daily life have led to life style disorders. PCOS is one of them characterised by hyperandrogenism, irregular menstruation, polycystic ovaries. Obesity, hirsutism, and acne impair physique in female. Modern medicine is limited till use of hormonal pills. World is looking towards Ayurveda for definite treatment. Ancient ayurvedic texts have a large compilation of diseases. The symptoms of PCOS can be correlated with Ayurvedic disorders like *Artav dushti*, *Nashtartav*, *Puspagni Jatiharini*, *Vandhyatwa*, *Sthaulya*. These can be prevented by adhering to *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, using *Pathya Aahar-Vihar*, and *Aushadhi*, by avoiding *Apathya Aahar-Vihar*, and *Prajnaparadha*. Inclusion of Yoga stabilizes the HPO axis and relieving PCOS. Ayurvedic herbs, *Panchakarma*, Yoga and lifestyle modifications has tremendous result on PCOS.

KEYWORDS: PCOS, *Artav dushti*, *Nashtartav*, *Panchakarma*.**INTRODUCTION**

PCOS - Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome is a multifactorial disease involving endocrine and metabolic aspects. It is also known as Stein - Leventhal Syndrome. Prevalence rate of PCOS is 6.8% - 12.5%^[1] globally effecting women of reproductive age group. Menstrual dysfunction, anovulation, infertility, obesity, excessive hair growth, acne are the characteristics of PCOS. It is a complex disorder debiliting self esteem of a women by changes in physical appearance as well as effecting mental stability. Changing life style, dietary habits, stress and impatience has lead to negative impact on health causing numerous disorders. There is an immense need of Ayurveda to heal up the health loss and prevent further deterioration. *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Bramhacharya* and various other *paricharyas* like *Rajaswala*, *Garbhini* and *Sutika paricharya* are meticulously explained in Samhitas for maintainence of good health and prevention of disease.

PCOS is a classic example of lifestyle disorder which needs to inculcate Ayurvedic modifications. Ancient texts of Ayurveda has described *Artav dushti*, *Anartav*, *Artavkshay*, *Yoni vyapads*, *Vandhyatwa*, *Pushpagni*

Jatiharini, *Sthaulya* etc which can be correlated to multiple symptoms of PCOS. Dietary habits according to *Aharvidhi Vidhan*, *Yoga*, *Pranayama*, inclusion of *Pathya*, avoiding *Apathya* and *Pradnyaaparadha* and following *paricharyas* are the key factors to treat and prevent PCOS.

In this review, we will summarise PCOS with brief pathophysiology, diagnostic criteria and Ayurvedic correlation. Discussion will be done regarding various treatment modalities, dietary habits and lifestyle changes for the same. The study is to emphasise complexity of PCOS with holistic Ayurvedic approach to establish definite treatment protocol for PCOS and avoid recurrence in future.

Aim: To review Ayurvedic theories in correlation to PCOS.**Objectives:** To study PCOS and correlate symptoms with diseases in Ayurvedic texts.

To review on Ayurvedic treatment modalities for PCOS.

METHODOLOGY

Charak Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Kashyap Samhita and other texts were thoroughly studied to compile references.

Review

“*Stri hee apatyanam moolam*”, Ayurveda has given immense importance to a woman because she is the one to propagate human progeny. Hence reproductive health of woman in terms of anatomy i.e *Stri Sharir* and physiological aspects such as *Artav vaha strotas* and its functioning has been markedly explained in Ayurvedic texts. A woman lives through various phases like puberty, menarche, reproductive, menopause and each of these phases has multiple disorders. Any disturbances in this normalcy that leads to any pathology is termed under *Yoni vyapad*. PCOS is a heterogenous disorder mostly affected in reproductive age group. The symptoms of PCOS include menstrual irregularities like Oligomenorrhea or amenorrhea, anovulation, infertility, acne, hirsutism, obesity, Acanthosis nigricans, etc are also mentioned in Ayurvedic texts which can be correlated as *Artavkshay*, *Artavyapad*, *Sthoulya*, *Vandhyatwa*, etc.

PCOS Pathophysiology

PCOS is mainly as a result of Hyperandrogenism that is excess formation of androgens and insulin resistance which leads to deviation in HPO axis causing hormonal imbalance and menstrual irregularities. Due to excess production of androgens, follicular growth is arrested forming multiple cyst making ovaries bulky and lazy.

Diagnostic criteria for PCOS

Patients with 2 or 3 fulfilled Rotterdam Criteria for PCOD.

Rotterdam Criteria^[2]:- (ESHRE/ASRM 2003) requires any two of the following three criteria for the diagnosis of PCOD.

- Oligomenorrhea or anovulation
- Hyperandrogenism
 - clinical (including signs such as Hirsutism, Acne, Hairfall)
 - biological (Sr. testosterone).
- USG suggestive of Polycystic ovaries.

Ayurvedic View

1. Artavkshay^[3]

आर्तवक्षये यथोचित कालादर्शनमल्पता वा योनिवेदना च ।।
सु. सू. १५/११

Acharya Sushrut has mentioned *Artavkshay* in *Sutra sthan* describing the delayed intermenstrual period (*yathochit kal adarshan*), scanty menstrual blood loss (*alpata*) and pain in yoni (*Yoni vedana*).

Oligo-hypomenorrhea or Amenorrhea is the absolute symptom of PCOS. These clinical features can be compared with *Artavkshay* as the *Rajasrava* (menstruation) in both the conditions does not appear in its appropriate time or is delayed.

2. Nashtartav^[4]

दोषैः आवृत्तमार्गत्वादातवं नश्यति स्त्रियाः ।
अत्र दोषाः कफो वायुः वातकफौ च ।

सु. शा. २-१९-टीका

3. Anartav^[5]

वातकफावृतमार्गाणां अप्रवर्तमानं
पित्तलैरुपचारैस्तत्प्रवर्तमानम् ।
अ. सं. शा. १-१३

Nashtartav is described by Acharya Sushrut and *Anartav* is explained by Acharya Vagbhata which means absence of menses resembling with Amenorrhea. It is due to aggravation of *Kapha* and *Vata dosha* causing obstruction to *Artav vaha strotas*. Amenorrhea is one of the common symptom of PCOS.

4. Vandhyatwa^[6]

बंधां नष्टार्तवम् विद्यात् ।

-(सु. उ. ३८/१०)

According to Acharya Sushruta, the destruction of *Artav* would prevent conception is called as *Vandhyatwa*. Here *Artav* is referred as *Stree beej*. *Vandhyatwa* is explained as failure to conceive which is correlated as Infertility. In PCOS there is no follicular growth with no ovulation and hence due to anovulation conception is not achieved.

5. Pushpaghni Jataharini^[7]

वृथा पुष्पं तु या नारी यथाकालं प्रपश्यति ।
स्थूललोमशगण्डा वा पुष्पघ्नी साऽपि रेवती ॥
काश्यपसंहिता कल्पस्थान ६/ ३३

Acharya Kashyap has explained *Pushpaghni jataharini* as *vrutha pushpa* (anovulation), with regular menstrual cycle, *sthoor ganda* which defines obesity and *lomasha ganda* that is excessive hair growth on cheeks. Obesity is associated with PCOS. Hyperandrogenism is classical sign of PCOS showing Hirsutism. Hence the *Pushpaghni Jataharini* can be related to PCOS.

6. Arajaska Yonivyapad^[8]

“योनिगर्भाशयस्थं चेत् पित्तं संद्रवयेत्सूक् ।
साऽरजस्का मता कार्यवैवर्ण्यं जननीभृशम् ॥

च. चि. ३०/१७

Arajaska Yonivyapad is described in *Charak Samhita* under *Yonivyapad Adhyay*.

The *Pitta* in *Garbhashaya* vitiates the *raja* of the woman, causing severe emaciation and discolouration. This causes absence of *Artava*, known as "*Arajaska Yonivyapada*,"

7. Atisthool^[9]

Acharya Charak has mentioned about *Atisthool* in *Ashtanindit Adhyay* explaining *Atisthool* as a person with excessive fat.

Obesity is a medical condition in which there is accumulation of fat leading to various disorders.

The causes for *Atisthool* described in Charak Samhita includes: increased intake of food mainly (*Madhur*) sweet and (*Guru*) heavy, absence of exercise (*avyayam*), sleeping during daytime (*Divaswap*).

The aforementioned causes are the same culprits for Obesity leading to many lifestyle disorders including PCOS.

Obesity leads to insulin resistance causing hyperinsulinemia as well as aromatisation of androgens causing HPO axis deviation and hyperandrogenism which totals down to aggravate PCOS.

8. Atiloma

Atiloma has also been described By Acharya Charak in *Ashtanindit adhyay* which is growth of excess hairs on body.

Hirsutism is a sign of excess androgens being formed in body.

9. Mukhadushika

Acharya Shushrut has explained *Mukhadushika* under *Kshudra Rogas*. It has been described as *Shalmali kantik* *sadhrushya* which has close resemblance to Acne vulgaris.

Androgens are responsible for sebum growth and hence excess of androgens in PCOS leads to Acne formation.

Above enlisted all diseases are compilation from various ancient texts which have resemblance with PCOS.

Treatment

1. Nidan parivarjan

In Ayurveda *Nidan Parivarjan* if half of the treatment done.

Nidan Parivarjan means to avoid the etiological factors aggravating the disease.

Non consumption of *virudhha ahar*, avoiding *apathya ahar* - *vihar*, controlling *Pradnyaparadh* is the key factor of *Nidan parivarjan*.

If cause is not ruled out treatment is not fruitful.

2. Regimens to be followed

Ayurvedic Samhitas have described in detail about

1. Daily regimen – *Dinacharya*
2. Seasonal regimen - *Ritucharya* to avoid any undue illness.

Vyayam is mentioned in *Dinacharya* emphasising on daily exercise.

Weight reduction by exercise of 5% - 10% is the basic treatment of PCOS that helps to revert back the deviation of HPO axis normalising the menstrual cycles.

PCOS is a disorder related to *Artav vaha strotas* and hence *Paricharya* mentioned for *Rajaswala*, *Garbhini* and *Sutika* are important to be followed to prevent menstrual complications.

3. Yoga

Physical as well as mental stability is enhanced by Yoga. *Suryanamaskar*, *Bhujanasana*, *Shalabhasan*, *Makarasan*, *Dhanurasana*, *Pachimotansa*, and many more

Yogasanas are effective for reducing obesity and insulin resistance, balancing hormones and relieving stress.

4. Shaman Chikitsa

Along with Yoga and dietary restrictions medicines are required to revert back the diseased condition.

Principles for management:

- a. *Jatharagni deepan*
- b. *Apan vayu Anuloman*
- c. *Agneya dravya for Artavjanan*
- d. *Apatarpan chikitsa for sthoulya*.

Formulations to be used:

Rajapravartini vati, *Kuberaksha Vati*, *Chandraprapha Vati*, *Sukumarkashay*, *Kanchnar Guggul*, *Lashunadi vati*, *Varunadi Kashay*, *Kumari aasav*.

5. Shodhan Chikitsa

Shodhan Chikitsa is useful to eradicate toxins from the body by *Panchkarma* therapies. Chronic cases of PCOS needs detoxification which can be done by -

1. *Vaman*
2. *Virechan*
3. *Basti*
4. *Uttarbasti*
5. *Nasya*

DISCUSSION

PCOS effects endocrine as well as metabolic factor and hence needs multifactorial management. Ayurveda has described all symptoms of PCOS mostly due to vitiation of *Vata* and *Kapha dosha*, with *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Meda* and *Artav dushti*. Vicious cycle of low metabolism, Insulin resistance and cell inflammation are the root causes of PCOS to be treated with *Jatharagni Sandeepan Chikitsa*. Treating PCOS with Ayurvedic *Shaman aushadhis* and *Shodhan* by *Panchakarma* therapies and preventing further complications by following *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Pathya Ahar-Vihar*, and *Yoga*.

CONCLUSION

Ayurvedic texts have references reviewing PCOS.

Artav vaha strotas dushti along with various disorders can be correlated with symptoms of PCOS like *Artavkshay* as *Oligohypomenorrhea*, *Nashtartav/Anartav* as *Amenorrhea*, *Vandhytwa* as *Infertility*, *Atisthool* as *obesity*, *Pushpaghni Jataharini* and *Atiloma* showing *hirsutism*, *Mukhadushika* as *Acne vulgaris*.

Treatment modalities related to above mentioned diseases can be adapted for management of PCOS.

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