

AYURVEDA PERSPECTIVE ON DIFFERENT STAGES OF RITUCHAKARA: A
REVIEWDr. Pallavi Lahanu Nibe*¹, Dr. Prasad Navanath Ghanawat^{2a,b}, Dr. Kiran Gavajirao Wagh³, Dr. Ankush
Dattatraya Khedkar⁴ and Dr. Sachin Ramesh Dukale⁵¹Assistant Professor in Sharir Rachna Department, PMT's Ayurved College, Shevgaon, Dist
Ahmednagar (Maharashtra), India.^{2a}Assistant Professor in Rog Nidan Evum Vikriti Vigyan Department, PMT's Ayurved College, Shevgaon, Dist-
Ahmednagar (Maharashtra), India.^{2b}Ph.D. Scholar in Rog Nidan Evum Vikriti Vigyan Department, Dr. D.Y. Patil Ayu. College and Hosp. Pune (MS)
India.³Associate Professor in Rog Nidan Evum Vikriti Vigyan Department, PMT's Ayurved College, Shevgaon, Dist-
Ahmednagar (Maharashtra), India.⁴Assistant Professor in Rachana Sharir Department, at PMT's Ayurved College Shevgaon Dist-Ahmednagar
(Maharashtra) India.⁵Assistant Professor in Swasthavritta Department, PMT's Ayurved College, Shevgaon Dist-Ahmednagar (Maharashtra)
India.***Corresponding Author: Dr. Pallavi Lahanu Nibe**

Assistant Professor in Sharir Rachna Department, PMT's Ayurved College, Shevgaon, Dist Ahmednagar (Maharashtra), India.

Article Received on 19/03/2021

Article Revised on 09/04/2021

Article Accepted on 29/04/2021

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda term Rituchakra resembles menstrual cycle which mainly comprises three phases including Rajahsravakaal, Ritukaala and Rtuvyatitkaala. Rituchakra shows periodicity of 28 days (Chandramasa). Abnormality in menstruation is one of the common causes of gynecological disorders in female. The female of reproductive age group mainly faced problems related with the menstrual disturbance including Aartavadushti, Bandhya and Yonivyapat, etc. Rituchakra is considered as important physiological events in women's life, since normal state of Rituchakra can bring healthy progeny and maintain reproductive physiology. This article explored various phases and some other aspects of Rituchakra.

KEYWORDS: Rituchakra, Ayurveda, Rajahsravakaal, Menstruation.

INTRODUCTION

Menstruation cycle occurs in females it is termed as *Rituchakra* in Ayurveda. The menstruation is considered as natural phenomena while its absence in female of reproductive age group considered as abnormal condition. The 28 days cycle divided into three phases; *Rajahsravakaala*, *Ritukaala* and *Rituvyatitakaala*. The *Rituchakra* not occur in girls before menarche during phase of reproductive development. As girl grows their physical systems becomes matured and menstruation starts as signs of puberty. This stage called as *Prathamrajodarshankaala* while cessation of menstruation when reproductive life ended then this condition called as menopause. As per Ayurveda *Rituchakra* starts when girl reaches ages 12 years (approx.) and this cycle remain continue up to 45-50 years of age.

The cycle begins between age group of 12 to 16 years, state of menses associated with hypothalamo-pituitary-

ovarian axis, functioning of ovaries, responsive endometrium and presence of uterovaginal canal. As per medical science there are some factors (**Figure 1**) which can control onset of puberty and reproductive health of female. As depicted in figure 1, hormonal regulation, genetic factor, mental stress, dietary and daily regimen play vital role towards the healthy occurrence of menstrual cycle. Therefore Ayurveda suggested that healthy and nutritious diet helps to restore normal period while mental relaxation and disciplinary daily regimen boost overall health including reproductive health of female. On other hand lack of nutritious diet, disturbed hormonal regulation, anxiety, stress and awful conduct of daily regimen can disturb normal pattern of *Rituchakra*.

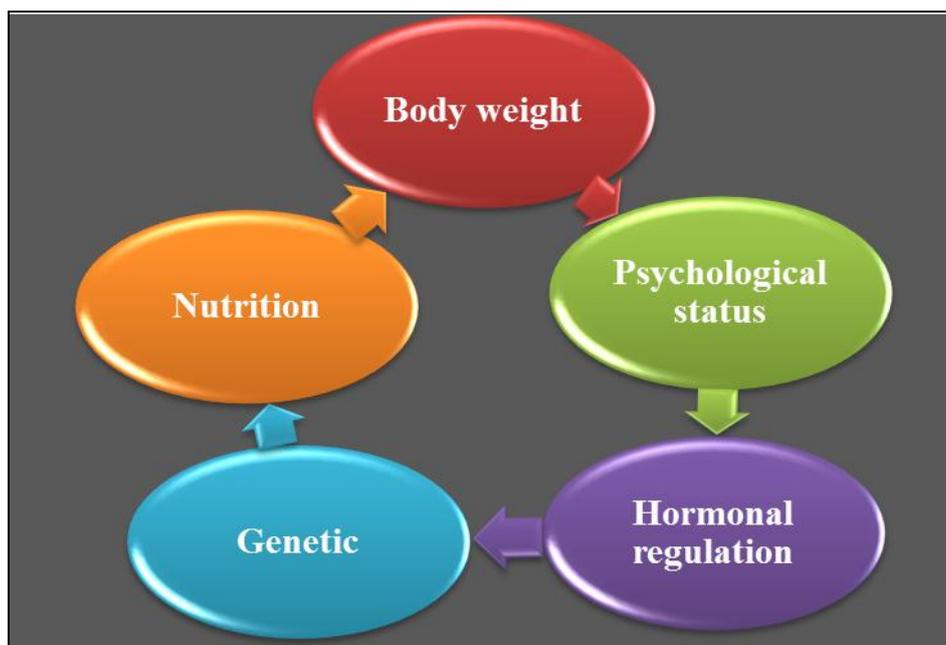


Figure 1: Factors affecting state of puberty and reproductive health of female.

The three phase of *Rituchakra* are as follows:

1. *Rajahsraavakaala*
2. *Ritukaala*
3. *Rituvyatitakaala*

Rajahsraavakaala

Rajahsraavakaala (the menstrual phase) comes during interval of month, this state generally remain for three to five days. *Acharya Sushruta* mentioned that in *Garbhashaya* dark coloured blood collected by *Artavvimochinidhamani* and this blood expelled out through *Yonimukha* under the influence of *Apanavayu*. As per *Acharya Charak* normal state of menstruation has one month interval and duration of five days in which bleeding persisted. The absence of pain and burning sensation considered as normal sign of menstruation. The expulsion of non-scanty blood possessing *Gunjaphala* colour resembles normal state of menstruation. *Acharya Sushruta* described that expulsion of *Shuddhaartava* which does not stain clothes is state of normal physiology while menstrual blood vitiated with *Doshas* may stain cloth resembles abnormal physiology of menstruation in which high amount of blood expelled out from *Yonimukha*. Ayurveda mentioned specific *Aaharvihara* for *Rajaswalacharya*, however sexual intercourse contraindicated during this stage. As per modern science during this phase menstrual flow occurs and fertilization not possible since it is secretory phase.

Ritukaala

Ritukaala is comes after *Rajahsraavakaala*, this remains for twelve days to sixteen days, during this phase there is chances of fertilization between ovum and sperm therefore termed as *Ritukaala*. The chances of conception occur in *Ritukaala* if woman's *Garbhashaya* receives seeds from male partner. It is believed that *Yoni* gets constricted after *Ritukaala* due to which entry of

Shukra or *beeja* into uterus or fallopian tubes gets restricted therefore chances of fertilization decreases after *Ritukaala*. *Ritukaala* is considered as proliferative phase in which restoration of the endometrial epithelium take places. It is stated that during this period women feel happy, attracted towards the male partner and happily involved in sexual intercourse.

Rituvyatitakaala

Rituvyatitakaala is phase that arises after *Ritukaala* and it resembles end of *Rituchakra*. This phase involves constriction of the *Yoni* so that successful conception does not take places. *Rituvyatitakaala* considered as preparatory phase of uterus for implantation of fertilized ovum.

Related disorders

There are many gynaecological diseases related to the abnormal physiology of menstruation including *Ashtaartavadushti*, *Kunapagandhiartavadushti*, *Granthibhutaartavadushti*, *Putipuyanibhartavdushti*, *Artavakshaya* and *Nashtartava*. *Vatajaartavadushti* involves secretion of red and dark black colour *Artava* with piercing pain. *Pittajaartavdushti* associated with vitiation of *Artava* by *Pitta* due to which it turned to yellowish or bluish in colour, smells like pus, burning sensation and heat flares during menstruation. *Kaphajaartavdushti* associated with whitish or yellowish colour secretion, thick, slippery and unctuous *Artava*.

Kunapagandhiartavadushti is *Artavadushti* caused by *Rakta*, increase in blood discharge during menses and condition associated with burning sensation etc. *Granthibhutaartavadushti* another pathological condition involving clotted appearance, associated with pain and unctuousness. *Ksheenartavdushti* *Artavadushti* involves

delayed menstruation, scanty secretion and painful sensation in vagina.

Artavakshaya is condition in which menstruation not occurs at appropriate time or delayed, scanty secretion with pain in vagina. *Nashtartava* is condition involving obstruction of passage of *Artavavaha srotas* due to which *Artava* not appear regularly or get disturbed permanently. *Artavaativridhi* another condition in which *Artava-ativridhi* (excess of menstruation) occurs accompanying with body-ache, bleeding, foul smell and fatigue. *Asrigdara* is pathological condition related to menstrual abnormality involving excessive excretion of *Asrik* (menstrual blood) can be correlated with menorrhagia, frothy and rough blood comes out, may be painful and sometimes associate with burning sensation and heat flares.

CONCLUSION

Menstruation is normal physiological process in female of reproductive age group, it is considered as gynaecological process in which uterine bleeding occurs due to the shedding of endometrium. Ayurveda defined menstrual cycle as *Rutuchakra* which is a cycle of fixed periodic interval. *Rutuchakra* mainly comprises three phases *Rajahsravakaala*, *Rutu kaala* and *Rutuvyatita kaala*. *Rituchakra* is considered from age of onset (menarche) to cessation of menstruation (menopause), during this period first phase involve secretion of fluid, second phase considered as phase of conception or fertilization while third phase considered as preparative phase in which repairing occurs. The cycle mainly involves formation and secretion of *Artava* which is an *Upadhatu* of *Rasa dhatu*. The secretion of menstrual fluid take places for 3-5 days in every month and same process repeated in next month sequentially. The physiology of menstruation, age of initiation of cycle, age of termination of menstruation, duration of menstrual bleeding, amount of discharged blood, colour & smell of menstrual blood and frequency of cycle, etc. are some factors which resemble normal or abnormal state of menstrual cycle. The abnormality of cycle may lead gynecological problems including temporary or permanent infertility. Ayurveda suggested proper *Ahara* and *vihara* along with uses of natural medication for the management of menstrual disturbance.

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