

AN AYURVEDIC OVERVIEW OF RAJONIVRUTTI W.S.R. TO MENOPAUSAL SYNDROME: A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Amenorrhoea of 12 months from the occurrence of last menstrual period defines menopause. Menopausal syndrome is characterized by physical, psychological, neurological and uro-genital symptoms. The figure of women close to menopause or having menopause is increasing nowadays and a majority of the women are living with larger part of their life in postmenopausal phase. The major health concerns after menopause are urogenital atrophic changes, osteoporosis, cardiovascular disorders, dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Treatment includes Hormone Replacement Therapy which has complications like breast malignancy, endometrial malignancy, abnormal genital bleeding, active thromboembolic disease and active liver or gallbladder disease. Hence there is a necessity for ultimate and better management during the menopausal phase to improve the life superiority of individuals. Ayurveda the science of life advocates a holistic treatment of Menopausal syndrome by modification of diet & life style, utilizing various herbs and minerals and offers a reliable option to the convention treatment. Ayurvedahas excellent solution for a safe & happy transition into menopause. Ayurveda, the science of life, advocates a holistic treatment of Menopausal syndrome by modification of diet & life style, utilizing various herbs and minerals and offers a reliable option to the convention treatment. Ayurvedictreatment for menopause involves correcting hormonal imbalance with appropriate diet, Samshamanatherapy, internal detoxification (Panchakarmatherapy), Rasayan therapy and Yoga therapy.

KEYWORD: Menopause, role of hormones, Rajonivruttilakshana, ayurvedic management.**INTRODUCTION**

Menopause is a natural phenomenon occurs at the age of 45-55 years. Menopause means permanent cessation of menstruation at the end of reproductive life due to loss of ovarian follicular activity.^[1] This phase also marks the end of natural fertility in a woman.

Irregular periods, hot flushes, night sweats, vaginal dryness, mood swings, hair loss, digestive disturbance, cystitis vaginitis anxiety, depression, vaginal dryness, excessive sweating, irregular periods, hot flushes, fatigue. Joint pain, tachycardia, tension, Headache, Vaginal atrophy, Irritability, Insomnia, Palpation, loss of interest in most of the thing, loss of memory, Bladder incontinence, Feeling unhappy, excitability, crying, nervousness all these are typical symptoms of menopause.^[2,2a]

Osteoporosis, heart disease and Alzheimer's disease (progressive loss of memory and concentration) are the long-term hazards of menopause.^[3] The group of signs

and symptoms associated with the phase of menopause are termed as menopausal syndrome.

Menopause has become an inevitable phenomenon in a woman's life and many years are spent in the postmenopausal phase. In this millennium, a woman perceives menopause as an opportunity to concentrate on new activities and bring out the best in her. Consequently, treatment of this transitional phase has now gained more importance than ever before.

Ayurvedic View

In Ayurveda, Menopause condition is termed as 'Rejonivrutti' and menopausal syndrome as Rajonivruttianu bandhajavyadhies. In Ayurveda, Menopausal symptoms are regarded as imbalance of the Doshaand Dhatukshyawhich occurs as a natural & gradual consequence of aging.

In Ayurveda, this phenomenon taken in a different way and it is not as a serious health problem. Menopause deals

with Jarapakvaavastha of the body⁴ Rajonivritti is classified under Swavabhavikavyadhi occurring at the end of Praudhawastha and beginning of Jarawastha where vata starts overpowering pittadosha⁵ and causes gradual decline of all dhatus.

Rajonivritti Kala:-(Age Of Menopause)

Though Rajonivritti as a diseased condition is not described separately in the classics, Rajonivrittikalais mentioned by Sushruta and various other references too. 50 years is mentioned as the age of Rajonivritti. Acharya Arundatta opines that the age mentioned above is a probable age and not a fixed one. As Ayurveda has given more importance to Ahara and Viharain the maintenance of health⁶ these factors too, should be considered for this fluctuation.

As it is already mentioned that Rajonivritti is not described in the classics as a separate disease there is no information available regarding its Nidanapanchakaso, to understand this Condition as a disease, certain Basic principles have to be considered here. Some of these factors are mentioned by Acharya in the context of "Rajahutpattihetus", too. These factors can be considered as Rajahutpattihetus also. Besides this, some very specific factors also can be considered as the causative factors for Rajonivritti which all are enlisted below.

1. Kala⁷, 2. Swabhava⁸, 3. Vayu⁹, 4. Dhatukshaya¹⁰ Types of Rajonivritti

Ayurvedic science has divided all diseases into 4 major types. Agantu, Sharira, Manas and Swabhavika¹¹ A group of naturally occurring diseases under the heading of swabhavabalapravrittaincludes Kshudha (Hunger); Pipasa (Thirst), Nidra (Sleep), Jara (Aging) and Mrityu (Death).¹² Although these diseases are naturally occurring diseases, but sometimes they are being acquired also, which is described as "Doshaja". So, they are further divided into two types viz. Kalakrita and Akalakrita.¹³ In the same manner, Rajonivritti too is a naturally occurring condition in every woman as that of Jaravastha etc. Swabhavika Vyadhis. So Rajonivritti also can be divided into two types.

- 1) Kalaja Rajonivritti
- 2) Akalaja Rajonivritti

1) Kalaja Rajonivritti: If Rajonivritti occurs at its probable age (i.e. around 50 years of age) it is called as Kalaja Rajonivritti. The timely Rajonivritti occurs only when the protective measurements of healthcare being practiced.^{14,16} This condition is Yapy by Rasayana etc.

2) Akalaja Rajonivritti: If Rajonivritti occurs before or after its probable age (i.e. around 50 years) it is termed as Akalaja Rajonivritti. Akalaja Rajonivritti takes place due to absence of the protective measurements of health care. According to Acharya Dalhana, they should be treated on the basis of nature of illness (Roga) surfaced due to pathology of Rajonivritti and on the basis of dosha involved in it.^{15,16} This Akalaja Rajonivritti is more likely treatable than Kalaja Rajonivritti.

Lakshanas of Rajonivritti¹⁷

As there is no direct reference available regarding lakshanas of rajonivritti in the Ayurvedic classics, the clinical symptoms manifested by the patients of rajonivritti have to be considered and can be grouped under following Ayurvedic parameters.

(A) Doshajalakshanas. (B) Manasikalakshanas.

(A) Doshajalakshanas

As this condition is characterized by generalized vatavridhi, the Vatajalakshanas are more dominantly observed than other two (Pittaja and Kaphaja) lakshanas

1. Vatadoshatype menopausal symptoms include Sandhi Vedana, Anidra/Alpanidra, Bala Kshaya, Bhrama, Katishula
2. Pittadoshatype menopausal symptoms Yonidaha, Mutradaha, Trisha Daha
3. Swedadhikyata
4. Kaphadoshatype menopausal symptoms include Angamarda, Bhrama,

Raukshaya

(B) Manasikalakshanas

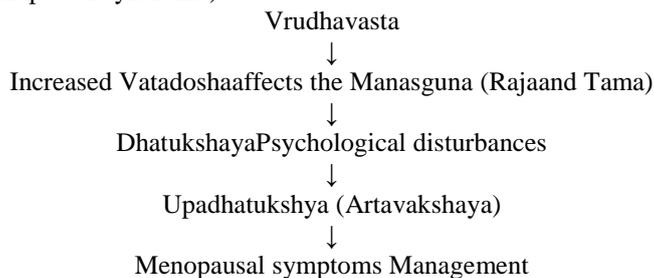
In Rajonivritti, Psychological symptoms also commonly observed due to vitiation of Manovahasrotasthese are- Krodha, Shoka, Bhaya, Dwesha, Smritihras, Shirah Shula, Chinta, Medhahras.

These symptoms are very troublesome to the patients as well as for physician. Some times that disturbed the whole family happiness of the patients. So, it is very necessary to treat these symptoms with proper medical help as well as counseling and family support too.

Probable Samprapti of Rajonivritti

As the pathogenesis of the rajonivritti is not elaborately described in Ayurvedic text. First of all classics have quoted the age around 50 years as the probable age for rajonivritti. This age limit is dominated by "Vatadosha" and obviously it easily is getting vitiated during this time.¹⁸ This dominant vatadosha will have effect all over the female body including all anatomical as well as physiological factors by virtue of its i.e. "laghuta" and "rukshata". At the age about 50 years, the decline process starts in female body due to jaravastha as a natural process.

Sampraptiof Rajonivritti (Menopausal syndrome)^[19]



1 Medicines- Ayurvedic drugs having properties of Rasayana, Vatashamanand Kapha vardhan can be helpful in the management of menopausal syndrome. ARasayanadrug in Ayurveda not only prevents the aging process, but also strengthens the body.

Rasayana also increases life span and memory

Acharya Charaka explains Rasayana Prayojana as life promoter, maintains positive health, preserves health, and preserves youth, and cures morbid sleep, drowsiness, physical and mental fatigue, laziness, weakness. It helps in balancing Tridosha, produces stability, cures smoothness of muscles, stimulates enzymes responsible for digestion & metabolism and brings about excellence in lusture, complexion and voice.^[20]

2 Panchakarma^[21]

Snehan- (Applying medicated oil all over the body) Balaoil, Mahanarayanoil. Swedan- (taking steam) using Dashmuldecoction, Pottalipindsweda.

Shirodhara- Shirodhara found to be effective in the management of disturbed psychological symptoms. Shirodharawith Shatavari oil, Takradhara, Dashmoolkwath can be helpful.

- Nasya- Panchendriyavardhanoil, Anutail.
- Uttarbasti- (medicated oil is instillation through the vaginal or urethral opening) Yastimadhutail.
- Pichu- (medicated tampons kept in the vagina) Shatavaritail, Shatdhautghrita.
- Basti- especially Anuvasan Basti (oil based medicated enema).

3 Diet

A balanced vegetarian diet is most important aspect in preventive management of menopause. Vatashamakand Kaphavardhak dietary constituents help in preventing effects of Dhatukshaya. Vaghbhat quotes that who takes Ghee and milk regularly in diet enters menopause late. Black grams, black sesame seed promotes ovarian

function, green vegetables are important for mineralization of bones. Legumes soya beans are known good source of phyto-estrogens. Ghee, milk and milk products, protein and calcium rich diet, phyto-estrogen rich food like soya, wheat etc. can be helpful.^[22]

4 Yoga, Exercise And Meditation^[23]

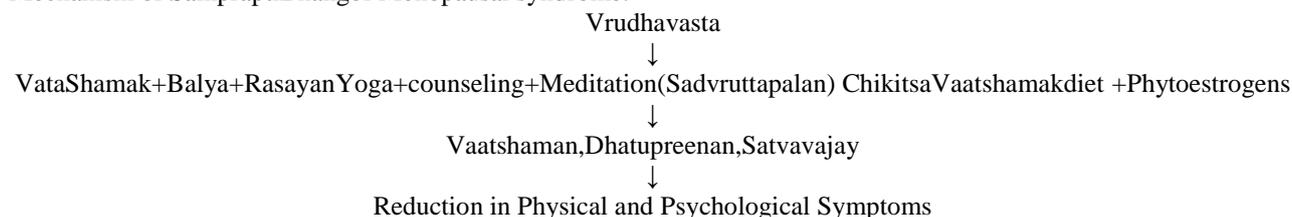
Yoga, Pranayam, Suryanamaskar, Anulomvilom can be beneficial in relieving stress and other psychological symptoms as well as improve the muscle tone. Yoga is helpful to firstly decrease the anxiety, stress, depression of such patients. Along with that, some asana helps in Medopachanand Amapachan, resulting in proper formation of Ras dhatu. Yoga controls Pranvayu which regulates all Panchvata in human body.

5 Counseling It is very important to maintain her physical as well as mental status, many psychiatric symptoms occurs during this period. Sadvritta (Righteous life style) and Swasthvritta (Healthy life style) is key to improve quality of life counseling regarding stress

DISCUSSION

Rajonivrittijanyalakshanis a group of symptoms produced by degenerative process of body tissue. Degenerative changes are explained in Ayurveda as Dhatukshayalakshana. Sushruta Acharya has explained that there is Shareera-shithiltain Vrudha-avastha (old age) and women attain Rajonivrittistage at around 50 years. This age is dominated by Vatadosha, this dominant Vatadosha affects the female body. The dominant Vatadosha specially with Laghuand Rukshaguna results in reduction in Dravata of Rasadhatu. This further leads to Dhatukshyastarting from Rasadhatu, further respective Updhatukshaya takes place. Thus leading to Artavanasha (amenorrhea). The vitiated Vatadosha also disturbs the other Shariras well as Manasdosha (Rajaand Tamadosha) leading to various psychological disturbances.

Mechanism of Samprapti Bhang of Menopausal syndrome.^[24]





Reduction in Menopausal symptoms

CONCLUSION

Menopause is simply not an estrogen deficiency state but it is associated with large number of symptoms which disturbs women's routine life. Menopause is linked with Vata-dosh dominated stage of life. Therefore symptoms in menopausal phase like insomnia, anxiety, urinary symptoms, and osteoporotic changes are due to dominance of Vata-dosh. Along with that Pitta and Kapha-dosh symptoms seen, during this phase.

Ayurvedic diet, yoga, meditation, panchakarma procedures which are exceptionally well proved for their psychological and cognitive better effects as a special line of therapy.

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