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# A CONCEPTUAL STUDY ON PUSHPAGHNI JATAHARINI IN AYURVEDA

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#### **ABSTRACT**

In the Kashyapa Samhita Revatikalpa Adhyaya, Acharya Kashyapa describes Jataharini as a group of disorders that affect women, attributed to the influence of the Revati at different stages of a woman's life. These afflictions are believed to cause severe disruptions in the menstrual cycle, complications such as recurrent abortions, stillbirths, intrauterine fetal death, neonatal deaths, or serious conditions that reduce the lifespan of the fetus. According to Acharya Kashyapa, Adharma is identified as the primary cause for the onset of Jataharini. In the context of modern times, Adharma can be interpreted as the lifestyle changes brought about by modernization, which contribute to a variety of reproductive disorders in women. This conceptual study offers about Pushpaghni Jataharini, focusing on its specific causes, clinical features, and both general and specific symptoms. By examining these aspects, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how contemporary lifestyle factors contribute to menstrual and reproductive health issues in women, drawing parallels with the traditional understanding of Jataharini.

KEYWORDS: Pushpaghni Jataharini, Pushpam, Sthaulya, Lomash, Nidana, Chikitsa.

# INTRODUCTION

In the "Revati Kalpaadhyaya" chapter of KalpaSthana in the Kashyapa Samhita, Acharya Kashyapa explains the concept of Jataharini (or Revati), which causes various reproductive abnormalities and infertility in women. It disrupts the female reproductive cycle, affecting menstruation, fertility, pregnancy, and different stages of childbirth. Jataharini can harm or destroy the ovum, embryo, fetus, or neonate, impacting the woman during the antepartum, intrapartum, or postpartum phases. Additionally, Acharya Kashyapa outlines the specific conditions and time periods when Jataharini is most likely to afflict a woman. [1]

## ORIGIN

He describes *Jataharini*, also known as Revati, as a mythologically rooted entity that impacts women during their reproductive years and pregnancy. According to the mythological account, *Prajapati* was the supreme being who first created time (*kāla*), followed by gods, *asuras*, humans, animals, plants, and herbs. Upon creation, hunger arose within him, making him reluctant to act. To counter this, *Prajapati* consumed medicinal herbs, and by digesting them, he overcame his hunger, thus enabling living beings to work after consuming herbs.

Prajapati then transferred this hunger into kāla (time), which started consuming the gods and asuras. These beings, in turn, sought refuge with Prajapati, who offered them nectar. After churning the ocean for the nectar, the gods consumed it first, becoming immortal and ageless. By drinking the nectar, they overcame hunger and  $k\bar{a}la$ . However, kāla (time) took the bhutas from Prajapati and engaged in a war with the gods. The daughter of the demons, Dirghajihvi, weakened the gods' army. In response, the gods called upon Skanda to stop her and protect their strength. The narrative describes Revati, who, after impersonating a she-jackal, kills a devilish army, starting by consuming Dirghajihvi. She then assumes the form of a sakuni (vulture) and defeats the devils using a barrage of destructive forces, such as meteors, thunderbolts, and stones. The devils, upon being killed, transform into foetuses of both humans and nonhumans. Revati, now taking the form of Jataharini, sees and eliminates these foetuses. Jataharini is said to destroy menstruation, body mass, foetuses, and both born and unborn children, particularly those who are the offspring of devils or non-religious beings. She is portrayed as a force that eradicates those associated with non-religiousness.[2]

# CLASSIFICATION<sup>[3]</sup>

# On the basis of prognosis

Prognosis	Condition Name		
Sadhya (Curable)	Sushka Revati, Katambhara, Pushpaghni, Vikuta, Parisruta, Andaghni, Durdhara,		
	Kalaratri, Mohini, Stambhani, Krosana		
Yapya (Difficult to	Nakini, Pisachi, Yakshi, Asuri, Kali, Varuni, Sashti, Bhiruka, Yamya, Matangi,		
Cure)	Bhadrakali, Raudri, Vardhika, Chandika, Kapalamalini, Pilipicchika		
Asadhya	hya Vasya, Kulakshayakari, Punyajani, Paurusadini, Samdamshi, Karkotaki,		
(Incurable)	Indravadava, Badavamukhi		

# On basis of division of universe<sup>[7]</sup>

- 1. Daivi (divine),
- 2. Manusi(human): Varna, Varnantara, Linguini and Karuki
- 3. *Tirascina* (female animals, birds, plants): *Sakuni* (birds), *Chatuspadi* (four legged animals),

Sarpa (reptiles), Matsi (fishes) and Vanaspati (plants).

# CAUSES OF SUSCEPTIBILITIES OF MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN FOR SEIZURE BY $JATAHARINI^{[8]}$

The woman exhibiting a series of negative traits are more susceptible to get affected by jataharini, - including religious neglect, where she abandons worship, cleanliness, and auspicious ceremonies. Her jealousy extends to gods. Brahmanas, cows, teachers, and respected figures, fostering hostility. Immorally, she engages in reckless and destructive behaviors such as arrogance, instability, and indulgence in harmful actions like murder, excessive sleep, and eating meat. Her behavior is often violent and unpredictable, marked by sudden mood swings, frequent lying, and a lack of fear. She displays negative personality traits, such as an insatiable appetite and a disregard for beneficial activities like spiritual practices, even causing harm to others, including killing children. She is also disrespectful and abusive, failing to love her son, insulting family members, cursing others, and mistreating children. Lastly, she speaks inauspicious words and neglects essential spiritual rituals, engaging in inappropriate actions when there is a chance to behave properly.

# GENERAL FEATURES OF WOMEN SEIZED WITH $JATAHARINI^{[9]}$

A woman afflicted by *Jataharini* experiences various physical, mental, and social consequences. Physically, her body becomes withered, and she suffers from anxiety, weakness, and a decline in endurance. She experiences abdominal pain and other illnesses, and her inability to eat at proper times leads to a loss of nourishment. Mentally, her behavior becomes erratic, with inconsistent actions and a lack of focus or clarity in her tasks. The negative effects extend to her personal and financial life, where she faces failure in financial matters, losing wealth and property. Her livestock, including calves, goats, and buffalo, die, and she may face social consequences such as defamation, widowhood, or the destruction of her family.

# TREATMENT<sup>[10]</sup>

Although the *Acharyas* classify *Jataharini* as treatable (*Sadhya*), manageable (*Yapya*), and incurable (*Asadhya*), no specific treatments are outlined. Instead, it is stated that the eradication of *Jataharini* can be achieved through religious and virtuous practices.

#### PRESENT IMPORTANCE OF JATAHARINI

The modern era has seen a significant rise in non-communicable or lifestyle disorders, which may closely mirror the causes of *Jataharini* described by Acharya Kashyapa during reproductive phase of women. The factors contributing to *Jataharini*, such as excessive food intake, consumption of incompatible foods, sedentary lifestyle, and negative thoughts, are directly linked to the development of endocrine and metabolic disorders like diabetes, PCOS, and other related conditions.<sup>[11]</sup>

In particular, *Jataharini*'s influence on women of reproductive age is evident in conditions like *Pushpaghni*, *Sushka Revati*, *Katambhara*, *Parisruta*, and *Vikuta*, all of which stem from inadequate nutrition and environmental factors. *Acharya Kashyapa's* description underscores the critical role that daily habits and nutrition play in maintaining reproductive health in women.

Furthermore, *Mithyachara* (a disturbed lifestyle) is identified as a significant cause of *Yonivyapada* (female reproductive disorders), indicating the importance of balanced living for preventing such health issues.<sup>[12]</sup>

## PUSHPAGHNI JATAHARINI

The symptoms described regarding *pushpaghni Jataharini* in the *Kashyapa Samhita* are as follows:

वृथा प्ष्पं- absence of antaha pushpa (beeja rahit Artava),

यथाकालं- regular menstruation at regular intervals,

स्थ्ललोमशगण्डा- hairy and corpulent cheeks.

The specific combination of symptoms seen in *Jataharini* is not found in any other condition. However, *Vritha Pushpam* or *Beeja Rahita Artava* (absence of a fertile ovum during menstrual flow) can also occur in other female reproductive disorders like

Artava dushti, Artava vaha sroto dushti, Bandhya yonivyapada, Artava kshaya, NashtaArtava.

	आर्तव क्षय14	बन्ध्या योनीव्यापद <sup>15</sup>	नष्टार्तव <sup>16</sup>	आर्तव दुष्टि <sup>17</sup>	आर्तववह स्रोतों दुष्टि <sup>18</sup>
वर्णन	सुश्रुत संहिता	सुश्रुत संहिता, भा.प्र.	सुश्रुत संहिता,अ.स.	सुश्रुतसंहिता,अ.स., अ.ह.	सुश्रुत संहिता
दोष	वात	वात	वात-कफ	त्रिदोष	-
निदान	उपधातु आर्तव क्षय	मिथ्याचार, प्रदुष्ट आर्तव , बीज दोष	दोषो द्वारा मार्ग अवरोध	दोष प्रकुपित निदान	स्रोतो वेध
आर्तव संबंधी लक्षण	यथोचितकालादर्शन, अल्पता	नष्टार्तव,निरार्तवा, रजोहंति	दोषरावृत मार्ग, आर्तव नश्यति , अप्रवर्तमान	समस्तैश्र्चोपसृष्टमबीज भवति, प्रजोत्पादने न समर्था	आर्तवनाशश्र्च, बन्ध्यात्वं

#### The symptoms are discussed below as mentioned by acharyas

The signs and symptoms of *Pushpaghni Jataharini* are explained and interpreted in detail below.

The symptoms described in *Pushpaghni Jataharini* can be comprehensively understood by exploring key concepts related to the female reproductive system.

#### 1. VRITHA PUSHPAM

The term *Pushpa* is used by the *Acharyas* to denote the bleeding that occurs through the vaginal passage, referring specifically to menstruation. It is one of the synonyms for *Artava* and is associated with the physiological process of monthly menstrual flow in women. Synonyms for *Pushpa* or *Artava* include *Rajah*, *Rakta*, *Shonita*, *Lohita*, *Antahpushpa*, *Bahirpushpa*.

#### FORMATION OF RAJA

The formation of *Raja* (menstrual blood) is derived from the essence of *Rasa*, as explained by various ancient texts. According to *Charaka*, *Susruta*, *astanga hridya*, *Dalhana*, and *Chakrapani*, *Raja* is formed from the essence (Sara) of Rasa. This *Rakta* (blood) reaches the uterus and is discharged over three days each month, referred to as *Artava*.<sup>[19]</sup>

However, Astanga sangraha provides a slightly different view, stating that Artava is blood accumulated in the uterus and then expelled, with Raja being derived from the essence of Rasa. Despite this difference, both descriptions are essentially describing the same process: Rakta, whether in the form of raja or artava form or rakta as a dhatu, originates from Rasa. The discrepancy arises because Susruta and others describe the earlier stages of Raja formation, while Astanga sangraha discusses the later stage of its discharge.

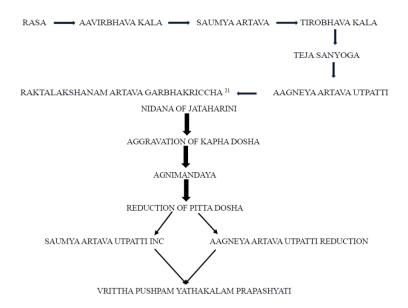
Chakrapani clarifies that *Artava*, during *avirbhava kala* is formed as *Saumya* due to the influence of Rasa, undergoes changes and becomes Agneya during *tirobhava kala*(excretion), due to the effect of *pitta* dosha leading to the formation of *agneya beeja rupa artava* which takes part in *Garbha nirma*.

The *Nidana* of *Jataharini* affliction led to *Agnimandya* due to aggravation of *Kapha Dosha*<sup>[20]</sup>, and a reduction

in the functioning of the *Pitta Dosha*. As a result, the *Saumya Artava* (gentle menstrual blood) present during the *Avirbhava Kala* does not undergo the usual transformation into the *Agneya* form during the *Tirobhava Kala*. In some cases, the *Tirobhava Kala* phase may be skipped or occur abnormally in *Pushpaghni Jataharini*, causing the *Artava* to bypass this phase and proceed directly into *Artava Visarjan Kala* (menstrual discharge phase) or *Raja Srava Kala* (blood flow phase).

This disruption explains the condition of Yatha Kalam Prapashyati—regular menstruation, which occurs as expected in normal cycles—and Vritha Pushpam, referring to the absence of Beejotsarga (ovum release), which happens due to the abnormality or absence of the Tirobhava Kala. This absence or irregularity in the Tirobhava Kala phase leads to the failure of proper ovulation and the associated disturbances seen in Jataharini.

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#### 2. STHOOLA LOMASHA GANDA

The condition described as *Pushpaghni Jataharini* in females suggests two distinct pathophysiological states. The first is characterized by unusually heavy and thick cheeks, similar to those typically found on a male face, with noticeable facial hair. The second condition, *Sthaulya*, refers to an abnormal increase in body mass or obesity. Both of these conditions may stem from an underlying pathology that wasn't fully understood by the ancient scholars, who attributed it to *Daiva Yoga* (the influence of fate or divine forces).

The appearance of masculine features in females can be explained by an imbalance in the function of *Shukra Dhatu*. While both men and women possess *Shukra Dhatu*, the quantity and balance of this tissue play a significant role in determining secondary sexual characteristics. An increased amount of *Shukra Dhatu* in females could explain the manifestation of these malelike traits.

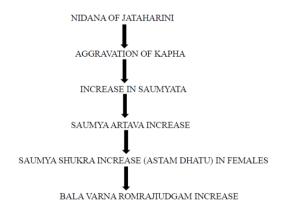
#### Role of shukra dhatu in females

Acharya Bhavmishra mentions that women possess an additional Dhatu, similar to the extra Aashaya present in their body, specifically the Garbhasaya (womb). As a result, women are said to have Artava as the seventh Dhatu and Shukra as the eighth. While Shukra Dhatu is present in both males and females, it does not play a direct role in reproduction in women. [22]

The primary functions of *Shukra Dhatu* are related to overall physical vitality, including *Bala* (strength), *Varna* (complexion), *Pushti* (nourishment), and *Romarajiudgama* (hair growth) during the transition from childhood to adulthood.

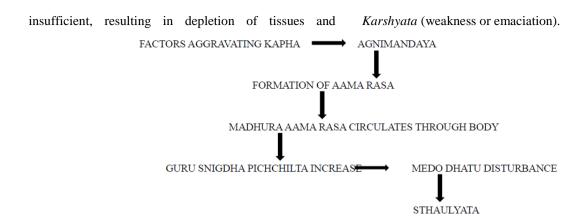
However, when the balance of *Shukra Dhatu* is disrupted, it may lead to symptoms similar to those seen in males, as a result of an excessive presence of this Dhatu. The cause of this imbalance is typically an overabundance of

*Shukra Dhatu* in the female body. The *Shukra* Dhatu is considered to have a *Saumya* nature<sup>[23]</sup>, and as explained in the context of *Vritha Pushpam* an excess of *Saumya Artava* can trigger the production of male-like *Shukra* in women that include increase in hair production.



## 3. STHAULYA

The factors that aggravate Kapha in Jataharini contribute to the disturbance of Medo Dhatu Dushti, which can also lead to Sthaulya (obesity). This is often due to the consumption of improper food or lifestyle choices (Nidana Sevana). The underlying causes of Jataharini disrupt digestion, causing an imbalance in Kapha Dosha and the formation of Aam Rasa. This Madhura Aam Rasa then circulates throughout the body, and because of its thick, sticky nature (atisnigdha), it accumulates in the Medo Dhatu. This results in an increase in body fat and contributes to the development of Sthaulya. [24] Impaired digestion can lead to the improper formation of Ahara Rasa (the essence derived from food), which in turn contributes to conditions like Sthaulya (obesity) and Karshyata (emaciation). When digestion is weak, the body fails to properly transform food into nourishing essence, causing an imbalance in the tissues. This improper *Ahara Rasa* either accumulates as excess fat (Medo Dhatu), leading to Sthaulya, or is



#### SAMPRAPTI GHATAKA

A			
Dosha	Vata-kapha		
Dushya	Rasa dhatu, rakta dhatu, mansa, dhatu, meda dhatu, shukra dhatu		
Srotas	Rasavaha, raktavaha, mansavaha, medavaha, artavavaha		
Rogamarga	Abhyantara		
Dushtiprakara	Sanga		
Agni dushti	Mandagani		

Agnimandya, or weakened digestive fire, is considered the root cause of all diseases in Ayurveda. It results from poor diet, lifestyle imbalances, stress, Ama in the body. When there is *mandaagni* (weak or impaired digestive fire) in Ayurveda, it leads to improper digestion and the formation of *aadya dhatu rasa*. As a result, *aadya dhatu rasa* is not formed properly, causing a disruption in the subsequent *dhatus* and their *updhatus*. [25]

## CHIKITSA SIDDHANTA

Ayurveda follows an individualized treatment approach, emphasizing that the best physician is one who tailors the use of medicines to suit the unique condition of each patient. [26]

While there isn't a specific treatment outlined for Jataharini other than religious practices, treatments can be based on the symptoms presented. In the case of Pushpaghni Jataharini, the treatment can be customized by evaluating the specific symptoms and applying the appropriate Ayurvedic principles and remedies accordingly. This personalized approach ensures that the treatment addresses the root causes and imbalances unique to each individual. Since Jataharini has multiple symptoms and causes, its treatment in Ayurveda involves addressing various aspects of the condition. This often requires a combination of herbal remedies, diet, lifestyle adjustments, and specific therapies to balance the *doshas* and target the individual's unique needs. The approach is holistic, aiming to correct underlying imbalances and restore overall health.

Eradication of the causative factors<sup>[27]</sup>: In Ayurveda, managing disease involves *nidana parivarjana*, which means avoiding or eliminating the factors that cause illness.. For disorders like Jataharini, it's crucial to avoid factors that increase Kapha, disturb Vata, or increase fat,

such as irregular eating habits. Adhering to Ayurvedic practices like *dinacharya* (daily routines), *ritucharya* (seasonal routines), and *rajaswala-paricharya* (guidelines for menstruation) helps improve lifestyle and prevent disease.

a. <u>Sanshamana chikitsa:</u> Shamana refers to treatments that do not expel or stimulate the *doshas* but work to reduce excess *doshas* and restore balance within the body. It helps maintain the normalcy of the *doshas* by mitigating their imbalances. There are seven types of *Shamana* therapies:

# Pachana, Dipana, Ksut, Trishna, Vyayama, Atapa, Maruta<sup>[28]</sup>

These therapies work together to bring the *doshas* back into balance. *Shamana* therapy is a palliative approach aimed at normalizing the *Doshas* within the body at their site of imbalance, rather than expelling them. This therapy helps balance the *Doshas* through internal medications, bringing excess *Doshas* back to their normal state.

Excessive consumption of heavy foods leads to indigestion, which results in the formation of *ama*. This *ama* mixes with an elevated *kapha* (caused by the etiological factors of *Jataharini*) at the tissue level, weakening the tissues and increasing fatty tissue. At the same time, blocked channels allow *vata* to move into the gastrointestinal tract, boosting digestive power. This increased digestive activity causes excessive hunger, leading to overeating and ultimately resulting in obesity.

Shamana therapy is indicated for the persons suffering from diabetes, ama dosha, excessive unctuousness in the body and obesity. *Deepana* and *pachana* by *agneya dravyas*, which are known for their ability to balance Vata and Kapha, are also considered beneficial for

Pitta. [29] These substances are recommended for treating amenorrhea, as they reduce Vata and Kapha, remove blockages (*srotorodha*) and obstructions (*avarna*), and decrease *medo dhatu* (fat tissue). Their *ushna* (hot) and *tikshna* (sharp) qualities help improve digestion (*agni*), clear *ama*, and enhance overall tissue metabolism. By improving *agni*, Agneya dravyas help prevent diseases.

# b. Sansodhana chikitsa

As mentioned *sushruta Samhita Sutra Sthana*: In the treatment of *Artava Kshaya*, *Sansodhana* (purification therapy) is an essential approach.<sup>[30]</sup>

When palliative treatments (*Shamana*) are ineffective, the next step in Ayurvedic treatment is *Sansodhana* (cleansing), aimed at expelling excess doshas and waste from the body. The primary method of *Sansodhana* is *Vamana* (therapeutic emesis), especially for conditions where Kapha is predominant. Vamana helps to expel excess Kapha, and *Basti* (medicated enemas) is also used to balance Vata and aid in detoxification. Together, these therapies work to remove blockages, restore dosha balance, and promote overall health by cleansing the body.

Through the process of *Vamana* (therapeutic emesis), digestive power (*agni*) is enhanced<sup>[32]</sup>, which helps pacify the aggravated doshas. This process primarily eliminates excess Kapha dosha, followed by Pitta and Vata doshas.<sup>[33]</sup>

According to Ayurveda, *Basti* is considered "half the treatment" (*Ardha-chikitsa*)<sup>[34]</sup> and plays a vital role in managing various conditions, especially related to menstrual health. By regulating Vata, particularly *Apana Vata*, a subtype of Vata, is particularly responsible for the production of *artava* (menstrual fluid). By administering *Basti* through the rectum (*pakwashaya*), it helps to eliminate the aggravated *doshas* from the entire body, restoring balance and normal function. This therapy not only detoxifies but also supports the proper flow and function of *artava* by regulating *Vata*.

#### DISCUSSION

Pushpaghni Jataharini, as defined by Acharya Kashyapa in the Kashyapa Samhita, is a distinct and complex illness impacting women's reproductive health. It is distinguished by abnormalities such as artava vyapada, infertility, menstruation problems, which may lead to complications of pregnancy and labor reproductive phase of women. This illness, which has mythological and metaphorical roots, is claimed to affect women due to a variety of negative circumstances such as immoral behaviour, jealousy, and a lack of religious or ethical activities. Jataharini are classified as Sadhva (curable), Yapya (difficult to cure), and Asadhya (incurable) based on their prognosis. Its impact can be far-reaching, impacting women of all ages as well as animals and plants, indicating a greater cosmic influence. Women who exhibit signs such as unpredictable

behaviour, physical weakness, and reproductive failure are frequently diagnosed with this illness. Common causes include unhealthy lifestyle, negative emotions, and inappropriate behaviour that disrupt the body's internal balance and doshas (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha). The emergence of lifestyle related metabolic disorders like diabetes and PCOS, which have similar underlying causes like poor food, stress, and hormone imbalances, demonstrates the relevance of Jataharini in the present era. That modern medical conditions may share similarities with the symptoms described in the Ayurvedic concept of *Pushpaghni Jataharini*, especially the lack of ovulation (Vritha Pushpam) and other reproductive problems. The treatment of Jataharini. while often tied to religious practices, can be better understood through an Ayurvedic lens by addressing the dosha imbalances (Vata, Pitta, Kapha). Individualized care is the main focus of Ayurvedic treatment, which aims to restore doshic balance through dietary changes, lifestyle adjustments, and particular therapies like Sansodhana and Shamana (palliative care). The underlying reasons of Jataharini are frequently addressed with herbal medicines, better digestion, and detoxification techniques including Basti (medicated enemas) and Vamana (therapeutic emesis). Avurveda aims to restore reproductive health and stop more issues by addressing imbalances in the digestive fire (Agni) and doshas.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Jataharini offers a comprehensive understanding of reproductive health, linking lifestyle, behavior, and emotional states to physiological outcomes. The treatment of Jataharini, though often associated with religious practices, can be understood through an Ayurvedic perspective when considering the doshas involved. Ayurvedic chikitsa (treatment) focuses on restoring balance through a combination of herbal remedies, dietary adjustments, lifestyle modifications, and therapeutic treatments like Panchakarma.

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