## RAJASWALA PARICHARYA- CLASSICAL WAY OF MENSTRUATION MANAGEMENT

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### ABSTRACT

In today’s era of competition, women stand side by side to men and do every critical job a male can do. So, it becomes quite difficult for a woman to take care of her body while menstruating. Classical ayurvedic Samhitas have prescribed a specific Rajaswala paricharya in order to limit physical work, mental stress and social stigma to the female. However, in today’s lifestyle these regimens cannot be followed and this ultimately leads to varieties of menstrual disorders in adolescents and young females.

**KEYWORDS:** Rajaswala paricharya, menstruation, menstrual management, menstrual hygiene.

### INTRODUCTION

In our day-to-day life we can see two classes of females. Higher class has been much affected by excessive stress, fast foods, unhealthy dietary habits and irregular sleeping cycles while lower socio-economic females have been affected by poor dietary habits, excessive mental as well as physical work and unhygienic environment. These circumstances affect a woman’s menstrual health in both of the conditions. Ancient ayurvedic literature have prescribed a food and lifestyle for a menstruating woman of about thousands of years ago considering the social condition of that era, though many of the principles of the paricharya suggested can be utilized directly for the sake of woman health today.

Ayurvedic literature have mentioned that a menstruating woman is called as Rajaswala. Raja means menstrual flow. Acharyas have given specific guidelines for rajaswala regarding her lifestyle during menstruation to ensure healthy Garbha nirmiti afterwards. These guidelines are-

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<th>Acharya</th>
<th>Suggestions</th>
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| Charak[1] | 1. Avoid coitus for 3 days.  
2. Avoid sleeping on bed.  
3. Eat with a clean and earthen pot in hand  
4. Do not use abnerval.  
5. After scrubbing bath with head wash on 4th day, wear white clothes and ornaments and can be allowed forcoitus. |
| Sushrut[2] | Same as described by Acharya Charak.  
1. Avoid- Sleeping in daytime, using Kajal, crying, Bathing, using face packs or any kinds of beauty treatments, Cuttings nails, Running, laughing loud, Speaking loud, noisy voices, hair styling, exercises.  
2. Use Darbha patra for sleeping.  
3. Eat havishyam- Rice of Shali shasti with Ghee or barley food made in cow milk. |
1. Avoid spicy, sour and saltyfood. |

**Contraindicated-**

1. **Avoid Coitus-**

There is increased risk of PID if a woman who does coitus during menstruation. If a woman does not reach to orgasm during coitus this leads to increased congestion of genital organs leading to dysmenorrhea.[4] Acc to Ayurveda coitus is an act which leads to vaata vruddhi. Menstruation has been considered as physiological way of releasing excess vaata.
of shodhan so acharyas have treated it like a shodhan chiksta and have prescribed all the things which an individual is expected to do during Sansarjan Krama. Ayurvedic Samhitas have given references for baby being born due to coitus during menstruation will be physically and mentally impaired or its life expectancy will be less. This is combined effect of Ashuddha bija and Improper Rituals and kshetra which are essential factors for pregnancy. Possibly some guidelines could have been suggested to avoid couples doing coitus during menstruation- like ‘If copulation takes place on day 1st of MC, the life span of husband shortens etc.’

2. Avoid Sleeping on Bed

Body ache and backache are the most common symptoms for about 50% of woman during menstruation. However, it is not yet proven that sleeping on floor cures backache, but it has been observed that it helps to improve posture and cure posture related backpain. A soft cozy bed allows you to sink in and thereby disturbing spine curve and causing back pain later. In fact, if the mattress is too soft, Harvard Medical School recommends placing plywood beneath the mattress. Acharyas have also mentioned to use Darbha grass- Desmostachya bipinnata for sleeping. Acc to Ayurveda Darbha is a mutrajanan and sheet virya herb. It helps in treatment of raktapradar. So, darbha is used for making mattress. Also, this plant contains some essential volatile oils while acts as antimicrobial component. Darbha has also got mythological and spiritual importance in Vedas and Bhagvad gita.

3. Avoid physical activities like crying, laughing, shouting, physical work or exercise-

Ayurveda advices to avoid any kind of physical work which can cause fatigue to body during menstruation. A menstruating woman already loses about 1.6 mg of Iron per 40 ml of blood loss. Further more the blood loss, more iron stores will be used. This is the important reason an average Indian population of 60-70% menstruating woman develop iron deficiency anemia. Hence It has been suggested to take rest and avoid physical strain during menstruation. Considering social condition of Samhita kaal women have been doing all the farming and related physical works regularly, so to avoid fainting and fatigue, Acharyas have suggested to avoid exercise. Also, all kind of activities like exercise, crying, shouting leads to vaata prakop thereby giving rise to some serious health issues. However, in western countries primary dysmenorrhea have been successfully treated with aerobic exercises.

4. Avoid beauty treatments like lepan- face pack, hair styling, washing hairs, cutting nails-

During periods skin is extra sensitive due to hormonal withdrawal this can lead to easy breaking through of skin epithelium due to beauty treatments. Just like skin, scalp is also more sensitive during menstruation so washing hairs or styling hair with chemicals can lead to hair fall. So, Sashiraskam Snana means bathing with hair washing is to be avoided however general hygiene and washing body parts is recommended. Also, washing hairs have been suggested on day 4th of menstrual cycle for complete hygiene.

Cutting nails would have been tough job during Samhita kaal as there wouldn’t have been nail cutters. So, to avoid injury with blade during menstruation when the woman is already weak, cutting nails are advised to be avoided.

Recommended-

1. Shali Shati rice with Ghee-
Shali shasti have been considered pathyakar ahar and thereby laghu anna which will help in deepan pachan karma easily. Ghrita is used to reduce vaata prakop due to blood loss. Also, it has been observed that Shali shasti has very low glycemic index but rich in multivitamins and minerals which rejuvenates health of the female.

2. Barley Food with milk-
Barley is considered as the laghu and karshaniya dravya which helps in deepan pachan of rajaswala during rajodarshan. 100gms of barley provide 123 kilocalories along with rich source of multivitamins and minerals. Hence barley food along with cow milk preparation is recommended.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

After studying Rajaswala paricharya, it has been observed that Acharyas have treated Rajakala as a natural shodhana kala, which causes agnimandya and karshan. So, it is essential to follow pathyapathyra prescribed under shodhana therapy which are similar to rajaswala paricharya. The basic aim is to avoid vitiation of vata and kapha, prevent formation of aama and restore Bala. Thus, after following rajaswala paricharya women respond healthily to the physiological and psychological changes by keeping balance doshas, agni and bala.

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