



**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 women'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-

Acharya	Suggestions
Charak <sup>[1]</sup>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Avoid coitus for 3 days.</li> <li>2. Avoid sleeping on bed.</li> <li>3. Eat with a clean and earthen pot in hand</li> <li>4. Do not use abnerval.</li> <li>5. After scrubbing bath with head wash on 4<sup>th</sup> day, wear white clothes and ornaments and can be allowed forcoitus.</li> </ol>
Sushrut <sup>[2]</sup>	<p>Same as described by <i>Acharya Charak</i>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>2. Use <i>Darbha patra</i> for sleeping.</li> <li>3. Eat <i>havishyam</i>- Rice of <i>Shali shasti</i> with Ghee or barley food made in cow milk.</li> </ol>
Vagbhata <sup>[3]</sup>	<p>Same as <i>Acharya Sushrut</i>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Avoid spicy, sour and saltyfood.</li> </ol>

**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.<sup>[4]</sup> Acc to Ayurveda coitus is an act which leads to *vaata vruddhi*, Menstruation has been considered as physiological way

of *shodhan* so acharyas have treated it like a *shodhan chikitsa* 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 the combined effect of *Ashuddha bija* and Improper *Ritu* 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 1<sup>st</sup> of MC, the life span of husband shortens etc.'

## 2. Avoid Sleeping on Bed<sup>[5]</sup>

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 backpain later. In fact, if the mattress is too soft, Harvard Medical School recommends placing plywood beneath the mattress.<sup>[6]</sup> 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 *Bhagwad 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.<sup>[7]</sup>

## 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 Shasti 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 *rajadarshan*. 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 *pathyapathya* 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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