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## ARTAVAKSHAYA- AYURVEDIC AND MODERN PERSPECTIVE

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### ABSTRACT

Artavakshaya literally means scanty and irregular menses. Scanty menses means hypo menorrhoea which means blood flow occurs less than normal. Irregular menses means an abnormal variation in length of menstrual cycles In the present Era of Globalization due to sedentary lifestyles and lack of physical exercise also due to excessive stress, high caloric foods and indiscriminate dietary habits this disorder is probably the most common hormonal abnormality in reproductive age group and certainly a leading cause of infertility. Thus discussion about artavakshaya is given in detail.

### INTRODUCTION

Normal menstrual cycle has a length of 21-35 days (mean 28 days) and Blood flow up to 70ml.

Duration of normal menstruation is for 3 -7 days.

*Artavakshaya* literally means scanty and irregular menses. Scanty menses means hypo menorrhoea which means blood flow occurs less than 70ml or less than normal menstrual days (<5 days approx.). Irregular menses means an abnormal variation in length of menstrual cycles i.e. less than 21 days or more than 35 days. In contemporary science *artavakshaya* compares with Oligohypomenorrhoea and its incidence rate is 22.5%.

In the present Era of Globalization due to sedentary lifestyles and lack of physical exercise also due to excessive stress, high caloric foods and indiscriminate dietary habits this disorder is probably the most common hormonal abnormality in reproductive age group and certainly a leading cause of infertility. The women nowadays become so fast, so that proper health care cannot be taken. Amongst all diseases that affect women's health world wise, *Artavakshaya* is one of the most common conditions affecting unique motherhood.

Poor choices in nutrition, fitness and today's lifestyle affects women's health. As a result many problems like Infertility, PCOS, cancer, osteoporosis, menopausal symptoms etc. are arising. *Artavakshaya* is a leading disorder nowadays. It causes infertility, Anovulation or recurrent spontaneous abortion. It is becoming a common health problem among adolescent, developing

soon after puberty. Medical intervention includes hormonal therapies which have long term health consequences. Hence researchers are looking for herbal medicines for the treatment of *Artavakshaya* in alternate medicine which do not cause any side effects. Medical science has developing day by day. Our system of medicine Ayurveda-the science of life, makes use of the advanced modern techniques in the diagnosis and symptom analysis through the Nidana Panchakas helps in assessing the nature, course and chronicity of any disease. Numerous causes and treatment of menstrual cycle's irregularities & anovulation has been given in Ayurvedic literature.

### AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE OF ARTAVAKSHAYA

**आर्तवक्षये यथोचितकालादर्शनमल्पता वा योनिवेदना च ॥**

**(सु.सं.सू. १५/१२)**

1) Yathochitakala Artava adarshana - It means that Artava does not appear at the appropriate time or it may be delayed. It means the duration will be less than or more than normal menstrual cycle (Normal- 21 to 35 days). There is irregular interval between the two menstrual cycles. Apart from the above meanings, another meaning which can be inferred is few cycles occur regularly and few cycles occur irregularly.

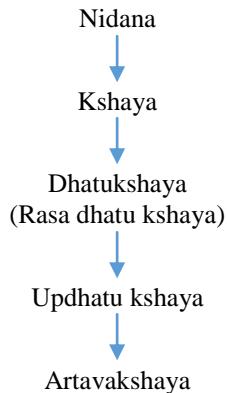
(2) Alpata: This is second cardinal symptom of *Artavakshaya*. The word Alpata means Kshudra pramana or less in amount. Here the amount of menstrual blood flow is less than 80ml/day or less than 2 pads/day.

(3) Yonivedana: Due to *Artavakshaya*, Vedana occurs in Yoni. Vedana cannot occur without Vata. Kshaya occurs due to Vata so vedana does.

There are two types of samprapti for *Artavakshaya*—

### 1. Kshayatmak

In Ayurvedic classics Artava is taken as Upadhatu of Rasa. The factors which are responsible for Kshaya of Dhatus and Upadhatus are also responsible for *Artavakshaya*. Kshaya of Dhatus occurs either in Anuloma (from Rasa to Shukra Kshaya) or Pratiloma Kshaya (from Shukra to Rasa Kshaya). In *Artavakshaya* the Kshaya of Uttaradhatu is because of Kshaya of Purva Dhatu i.e. Rasa Kshaya leads to Uttara Dhatu Kshaya along with *Artavakshaya* as Artava is Upadhatu of Rasa. Hence Rasa Kshaya is one of the causative factors for *Artavakshaya*.



### 2. Rodhatmak

Vata Kapha vaydhaka ahara vihara have been taken as vishesha nidana of *Artavakshaya*. Vata and kapha vriddhi causes strotorodh which causes scanty menses.



**दोषः आवृत्त मार्गत्वात् आर्तवं नश्यति स्त्रीयः॥**

Here Doshai refers to Vata Kapha Prakopa and Pitta Kshaya. Prakupita Kapha does the Rasa Dushti. Artava is Upadhatu of Rasa. So Rasa Dushti leads to Artava Dushti. This is the primary pathology in *Artavakshaya*.

Further Prakupita Vata and Kapha does the Avarana to Artavavaha Srotas and takes Sthana Samshraya in Garbhasthana. There by Sthanika Artava agnimandya takes place by vitiated Doshas as well as due to Dhatu Dusti. The Khavaigunayata is also established by Nidana Sevana and the Dosha Dushya Sammurchhana takes place in Artavavaha Srotas. Due to Khavaigunya in the Artavavaha Srotas Utpatti of Artava occurs less in quantity resulting in *Artavakshaya*. The aetiopathogenesis of Anartava which also points towards the Sanga (obstructive condition) of Rasavaha and Artavavaha Srotas. Further Rasa does the Dooshana of

Meda (Rasa Nimittameva Sthoulyam karshyam cha) and takes Sthanasamshraya in Koshta which leads to Sthoulya (obesity) which is one of the major complaints or complication in PCOS which has scanty and irregular menses as a main symptoms.

### Hetu for *Artavakshaya*

Aharaja Hetu --Vata Prakopakara Nidana, Kapha Prakopakara Nidana

According to Rasa--Ati Katu, Tikta, Kashaya, Ati Madhura, Lavana

According to Guna--Excessive intake of Sheeta, Laghu, Ruksha Excessive intake of Guru, Abhishyandhi, Picchila

According Dravya--Paryushita Anna, Ati Shushka Anna

According Pramaṇa --Abhojana, Vishamashana, Atibhojana, Adhyashana

Viharaja hetu--Ati Vyavaya, Vyayama, Jagarana, Vegadharana, Divaswapna

Manasika hetu--Chinta, Shoka, bhaya

Aharaja Nidan like Ati Katu, Tikta, Kashaya Sheeta, Laghu, Ruksha pradhana ahara, Paryushita Anna, Ati Shushka Anna, Abhojana, and Vishamashana leads to Vata Prakopa. Excessive intake of Guru, Abhishyandhi, Picchila, Atibhojana, and Adhyashana leads to Kapha Prakopa. Viharas like Ati Vyavaya, Vyayama, Jagarana, Vegadharana and Divaswapna leads to Vata Kapha Prakopa which leads to Ksheena of Artava and it is an important symptom in *Artavakshaya*.

### Modern perspective of *Artavakshaya*

**Hypo menorrhoea**-- uterine bleeding may be slight in amount, short in duration, or both. Bleeding which lasts 2 days or less is unusual, if not pathological, and is termed hypo menorrhoea.

### Causes —

- 1) Constitutional – Constitutional scanty menstruation is due to the presence of an unusual arrangements, or relative insensitivity of the endometrial vascular apparatus.
- 2) Uterine – Scanty loss sometime occurs because of bleeding surface become smaller than normal due to myomectomy, by intrauterine adhesions or by chronic endometritis, e.g. Tubercular
- 3) Hormonal –A long term use of low dose oral contraceptives, results into endometrial atrophy and causes scanty menstruation.
- 4) Nervous and emotional – Psychological factors sometimes suppress ovarian and uterine cycle causing reduction in amount of menstrual flow.

**Oligo menorrhoea** – Menstruation may be both infrequent and irregular, or may be regularly infrequent.

### Causes –

- 1) Constitutional and physiological – It can be familial. Irregular menses are because the ovarian cycle gets

arrested at some phase or the follicular phase get lengthened or slow to commence.

2) Hormonal – It is mainly due disturbances in ovaries. The ovarian disturbance is often secondary to hypothalamic, pituitary, thyroid or adrenal dysfunction which also causes obesity, squat figure, hirsutism and low fertility.

Obesity and oligo menorrhoea are close companions.

### **Management of Artavakshaya**

In modern unless a significant causal abnormality is found, no treatment is given other than reassurance in majority of cases, that is, those in which the condition appears to be constitutional and is associated with impaired fertility.

1) Weight loss - When oligo menorrhoea is associated with obesity, reduction of weight can always be achieved by strict adherence to a low calorie diet. An intake of not more than 1,000 kcal a day will cause a loss of 15-20 kg in 3 months.

2) Hormone Therapy –

Some patients are diagnosed with hypothyroidism; the replacement of thyroxine in these women produces a dramatic relief in symptoms.

Some may give cyclic treatment with oestrogens and progestogens to regular menstrual cycle. But the use of oral contraceptive preparations is relatively contraindicated in patients with amenorrhoea and oligo menorrhoea because it temporarily masks the symptom and is then followed by post pill amenorrhoea.

But in Ayurveda we work on nidana and samprapti of disease and eradicate it from its root.

Management of artavakshaya according to samprapti –

1) Kshayatmak – Brunhana (बृहण)

2) Rodhatmaka – Bhedana (भेदन)

### **Shodhana**

सर्वा व्यापन्नयोनिं तु कर्मभिर्वमनादिभिः।

मृदुभिः पंचभिर्नारीं स्त्रिजग्धस्त्रिवन्नामुपाचरेत्॥ (Ch. Chi 30/45)

Vata is considered to be the main Dosha in all Yoni Vyapada. So the general principle of treatment for all disorders is Vata shaman.

**Basti** – as mentioned above, Vata is the main dosha involving in any disorders of yoni. As Artava Pravritti is the function of Apana Vayu, its dysfunction is considered as main factor in any Artava Vyapada. Basti will be the best treatment for restoring normal menstrual function because it mainly works on Vata dosha. Yoga basti or Matra basti have shown excellent results in cases of *Artavakshaya*.

Basti can be useful as a both brunhanatmak and bhedanatmak. Such as shatavari basti causes brunhan and shatpushpa basti causes bhedana.

Shatpushpa and Shatavari -- They are very effective in Artava vyadhi.

They can be used Orally, in basti, nasya, abhyanga as mentioned in shatpushpa Shatavari kalpadhyaya of Kashyap samhita (Ka Kalpa 10/13).

Yoga basti or Matra basti of Shatpushpa and Shatavari tail have shown very effective in Artavakshaya.

Uttarbasti – Uttarbasti of Shatpushpa tail (Reference Kashyap Samhita Shatpushpa Shatavari Kalpadhyaya) have shown encouraging results in Anartava or Artava Kshaya because of ovarian factor. Uttarbasti of Phalaghrita improves endometrial thickness. Apart from these, Uttarbasti of Dashmoola tail can be given in Vataja conditions.

**तत्र संशोधनम् आग्नेयम् च द्रव्यानाम् विधीवत् उपयोगः। (सु सू 15/12)**

While mentioning the treatment of *Artavakshaya*, Sushrut has mentioned Shodhana and use of Agneya dravya as general principle of treatment

Use of Agneya dravyas –

Tila, Masha, Sura, Shukta, Dadhi, Matsya, Kulattha, Amla kanji, Gomutra are agneya dravyas used in Artavakshaya. These dravyas should be used when there is artavakshaya because of Avarodha (Vata kapha janya). (Su Sha 2/22, Bhavprakasha Yoniroga).

Different Yogas - Rajapravartini vati, Dashmoolarishta, Dashmoola kwath, Kumariasava, Phala ghrita, Phala kalyanaka ghrita, Shatavari ghrita.

Apart from these classical treatments, researches on Rasona, Kuberaksha, Guduchi, Rasa Pachak and Rakta Pachak yoga (Vagbhat – Dhatu gata Jwara chikitsa) improves Rasa dhatu and Rasa dhatvagni especially in malnourished conditions with Anartava.