



**ROLE OF AYURVEDA IN WOMEN'S HEALTH**

**Dr. Ankita Pareek\*<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Vikash Bhatnagar<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Sandeep Madhukar Lahange<sup>3</sup>, Dr. Anjali Sharma<sup>4</sup>,  
Dr. Bhumika Rudani<sup>5</sup>**

<sup>1,4,5</sup>PG Scholar, <sup>2</sup>Professor, <sup>3</sup>Associate Professor,

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Rachana Sharir

<sup>1,2</sup>National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

**\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Ankita Pareek**

PG Scholar, Department of Rachana Sharir, National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

Article Received on 08/09/2023

Article Revised on 29/09/2023

Article Accepted on 20/10/2023

**ABSTRACT**

“Within a female lies the miracle of creation, a sacred vessel of life, where a woman embraces the divine essence of motherhood and she is nurturing life with her every beat”. In Sanatani Dharm women are revered as symbols of purity and auspiciousness; playing vital role in procreation and passing on the legacy of health to future generation however with the advent of globalization and changing societal norms women's role have evolved during to increase stress and health challenges. Ayurveda; the ancient Holistic science, has long emphasized the significance of women's health during different life stages. It provides guidelines for daily routines (*Dincharya*) and dietary practices (*Ahar vidhi visheshayatan*) to maintain optimal well-being. These practices are particularly important during menstruation (*Rajaswala Paricharya*) when women experience hormonal fluctuations and increased vulnerability to oxidative stress. Modern scientific research supports several Ayurvedic practices including avoiding spicy foods, sexual activity and excessive exertion during menstruation. Maintaining mental wellbeing and positive thoughts also contribute to hormonal balance. Ayurveda addresses broader societal impact of Women's health as healthy mothers contribute to equitable societal development. However, many socio cultural restrictions and taboos surrounding menstruation still prevail across different cultures and religion. Ayurveda plays a crucial role in maintaining the health and well being of female especially during menstruation by adhering to these ancient practices and dispelling misconception, society can promote physical mental and spiritual wellbeing of women ensuring the creation of a healthy and prosperous future generation.

**KEYWORDS:** Female health, dincharya, ashta ahar vidhi visheshayatan, rajaswala paricharya.

**INTRODUCTION**

In *Sanatana dharma*, Women is given prime importance as women are considered sacred vessels of life, feminine energy is considered most powerful as it has ability to give birth. Shiva, a powerful yogi, is depicted as *Ardha Narishwar*, symbolizing unity of masculine and feminine energies. Shakti, the embodiment of feminine power, completes *Shiva*, highlighting their inseparable bond. This connection signifies purity and auspiciousness. The significance of a woman's health stretches beyond individual boundaries, resonating as a pivotal indicator of societal equilibrium. Since time immemorial, Ayurveda is an ancient holistic science that has emerged as a cornerstone in nurturing individual and societal well-being. Ayurveda has a comprehensive approach to health, harmonising the mind, body, and spirit.

In the present era many changes have been observed. Due to extensive globalisation, Social fabric has changed and joint families have disintegrated to nuclear families and the scenario has changed a lot. Workforce participation of women has increased a lot as female are

achieving financial independence, but the task of home making is the most cherished task for women; this has created an extra burden on female and it is taking a very heavy toll on their physical and mental health due to this increased role women has become more prone to diseases.

There are many challenges and negative impacts on women's health that have been observed due to increased workforce participation. These impacts can vary based on individual circumstances, cultural contexts, and support systems available.

Women often face a complex web of challenges that can negatively impact their overall well-being. Balancing work responsibilities with household and caregiving duties can lead to chronic stress and burnout, particularly due to the double burden of paid work and unpaid domestic work. The struggle to maintain work-life balance can result in inadequate self-care time, exercise, and relaxation. Additionally, demanding careers may lead to delayed family planning, affecting reproductive

health. Sleep deprivation, physical health issues from hazardous jobs, and lack of access to healthcare further compound the problem. Gender pay gaps contribute to financial stress, impacting healthcare access. Workplace discrimination and inadequate maternity leave and childcare support add mental stress. Addressing these issues requires societal changes including flexible work arrangements, equal pay, and comprehensive healthcare access, as well as individual efforts for self-care and advocating for support. Promoting women's well-being benefits not only the individuals but also creates healthier and more equitable societies.

Only a healthy female can bear a healthy child if the vessel is not pure or full of toxins. Whatever we try to keep in it will be toxified. Anatomical, physiological and psychological build up of a child depends on her /his parents and more on the mother as she is the child bearer. Rising number of non communicable diseases and genetic diseases is evidence lifestyle changes and over burdening has affected overall health of a female especially reproductive health of a female. Ayurveda plays an important role in every epoch of women health. Ayurvedic guidelines of *dinacharya*, *Ritu Charya*, *Ashta Aahar Vidhi Visheshayatan* plays a great role in human health and also of female.

## OBJECTIVES

### Role of *Dinacharya* in female health

We can prevent diseases and may remain stress free by following Ayurvedic guidelines like waking up in *Brahma muhurta* after that there is a sequence of events that need to be followed and also their significance is mentioned in ayurvedic text *Aachman*, *Dantdhavan* is mentioned for oral hygiene and other hygiene body hygiene is very important to keep a person healthy and say after *Dant Dhavan*, *Jivha Nirlekhan* is mentioned with specific metals every metal has its own unique property and it gives different benefits *Guntur* and *Kawal* are mentioned for oral hygiene and besides that it has numerous health benefits and is also prescribed in various disease condition *Anjana* which is prescribed here is different then applying *Kajal* for cosmetic purpose it is done for cleansing Eyes *Dhumapan* mentioned in ayurvedic text is different than *dhumrapan* which is prevailing in society *Dhoompan* is done by medicated powder and different *dravya* exhibit different benefits besides that it is also mentioned to perform this differently in different *dosh pradhanya*. Head is considered as *uttamang Nasya* therapy has multiple benefits on health of both male and female. Stress and anxiety which are one of the main causes of many physical and physiological elements after the *Nasya* Ayurvedic text has given guidelines for *vyayam* it should be done judiciously. It is extremely important to follow those guidelines as nowadays many sudden deaths are witnessed while doing heavy exercises. Exercise (*vyayam*) should be done to remove toxins out of our body but in the manner in which it is described in ayurvedic text. *Abhayang* and *Samvahan* Considered as massage in modern terminology which is

mentioned in ayurvedic text is very useful for providing strength to body sense organs and softness of the skin.

*Udvardana* dilated blood vessels and improved them provide lightness and after *Udvardana* is prescribed in *dinacharya* in ayurvedic text. These are followed it gives immense benefits and access preventive medicine

### Role of *Ashta Aahar Vidhi visheshyatan*

After *Dinacharya*, *Aahar* plays an important role in women health it is observed that women if working as a homemaker prefers eating after everyone has eaten and most of the times consume scale food to avoid wastage of food if females are working in any sector they are bearing dual responsibility of home making and earning and they also don't focus on eating or avoid themselves and keep their family as a priority besides that in almost all house and family health even more important.

Dietetic counseling of female is even more important as it will impact the health of family and have more benefits. *Aahar* in Ayurveda is not considered as mainly the food what is considered as "*Ahar param Aushadham*". Thus culinary science is very important in Arabic text it is mentioned as *Ashta Aahar Vidhi visheshyatan* which is *Prakriti* (nature of substance), it improves the knowledge about what is being eaten. it is extremely important to know the food for example in pulses, *Mudga* considered as *Laghu*. While *Masha* is considered *Guru*,

**Karan-** It is considered as the processing of the substances which results in transformation of the inherent attributes for example milk is transformed to curd.

**Sanyog-** It is a combination of two or more substances, for example milk and fish eaten together causes skin diseases.

**Rashi-** Is the quantity of food taken it is of two types *sarvagraha* and *parigraha*.

**Desh-** It is about habitat. It is of three types *Jangal*, *Anup* & *Sadharan*. *Pattha* and *apathya* is decided on its basis.

**Kala-** It is considered as life as a whole starting from intrauterine period till death the entire time is dynamic. *Kala* stands for both the time inform of day and night or seasons, also status of individual according to disease and age. *Kala* is also considered acute and chronic stages of diseases.

**Upyog Sanstha -** It is about dietetic rules like *matravat* consumption not consuming *virya viruddh* taken without talking or laughing.

**Upyokta-** It is an individual who is consuming food. *Oak Satmya* should not be consumed.

In a world captivated by rapid medical advancements, Ayurveda's age-old wisdom assumes a renewed

relevance. It champions the respect for natural processes, advocating for a harmonious coexistence between human existence and the environment. Through Ayurvedic practices, the mind-body complex is nurtured, allowing for the cultivation of emotional and mental equilibrium alongside physical health.

In the pursuit of ensuring the continuity of life, the desire to conceive healthy and virtuous progeny (Roopvan Satvavan) remains paramount. However, this noble aspiration faces the challenge of non-communicable diseases being inadvertently passed from parents to offspring. This cycle underscores the need for a comprehensive approach.

Women are considered very important as they have the ability to procreate. Acharya Sushruta mentions Garbha Sambhav samagri as an essential requirement for a healthy progeny, i.e. Ritu, Kshetra, Ambu & beej. The female plays a more important role in procreating a healthy progeny than the male counterpart.

Ayurveda not only defines all epochs of women's life like Bala Kumari, rajaswala, Ritu Mati, garbhini, prasavini, Sutika etc., but also the health status of the female in regard to dosha and dhatu variation and preventive steps in the form of diet and lifestyle modification to achieve health during all these epochs, where drastic changes occur, which makes her susceptible to major illness. These diet and lifestyle modifications are known as specially during her period. Rajaswala paricharya is defined.

The practices and beliefs surrounding women's health during menstruation, as described in the concept of Rajaswala paricharya, have garnered attention due to their potential impact on reproductive and overall health. These practices are deeply rooted in traditional and cultural contexts, often guided by ancient wisdom. While not widely adopted in contemporary society, there are attempts to understand the scientific validation and implications of such practices.

The practices advocated in Rajaswala paricharya could be interpreted as early biomedical interventions to enhance the chances of conceiving a healthy offspring. They emphasize the importance of a healthy maternal state before conception, aligning with modern concepts of preconception care.

#### **Avoid Sexual Activity**

During menstruation, pH is increased, which can provide a favorable environment for the growth of yeast infections. The shedding of endometrium also leaves a raw area in the uterus. These factors can cause rapid growth of any fungal or bacterial infections. Sexual activities during this period may transmit STIs, which can reach up to the peritoneal cavity via the uterus and fallopian tube. So, women should maintain abstinence during this period. Coitus during menstruation, as per the teachings of Rajaswala paricharya, is discouraged due to

its potential effects on both the husband and the mother. While these beliefs may not align with contemporary scientific understanding, they highlight the historical emphasis on maintaining certain practices during menstruation. The suggested period of Bramhacharya (abstinence) following menstruation is seen as a way to ensure optimal conditions for both conception and the overall well-being of the mother and potential foetus.

#### **Eat Havishya (rice, ghee, and buttermilk) and Yawaka (barley and milk) with terracotta spoons or leaves –**

Prostaglandins cause the uterus to contract to slough off the uterine lining during menstruation. If prostaglandins are present in excess, they can lead to uterine cramps and discomfort. Barley's soluble fiber promotes the growth of beneficial gut bacteria that create short-chain fatty acids, which helps to decrease gut inflammation. The majority of the fiber in malt is immiscible with water, meaning it does not absorb water as oatmeal does. Instead, it bulks up your stool and speeds up your digestive rotation, lowering your chances of digestive disorders.

Clay has alkaline properties, so utensils made of clay neutralize the pH balance of the food by interacting with acids in food, thus enhancing digestion. Clay contains more than 16 natural minerals which are beneficial for health. These include calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, iron, copper, and manganese, presented in right quantities.

#### **Avoid Day Sleeping and Over Exertion**

Adjustments in the episode secretion pattern of LH, as seen in lethargic women with prefrontal amenorrhea and runners with intense exercise, are most likely responsible for menstrual cycle disruption. The increasing corticotrophin-releasing hormone (CRH) production, which suppresses the release of gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH), might be the reason for the altered LH secretion. Relatively high CRH levels also cause a rise in release candidate levels, which inhibits the GnRH signaller. Finally, continual adrenal activity leads to increased catecholamine synthesis that might be translated to catechol estrogens.

GnRH discharge is believed to be inhibited by these substances.

#### **Harbour good thoughts**

Estrogen & progesterone are the main hormones in regulating the menstrual cycle. Estrogen affects the part of the brain that controls emotions, so this hormone is closely related to women's emotional well-being. The level of these hormones is relatively low during menstruation, which may lead to impulsive decision making. Consciously creating positive thoughts helps in maintaining mental and emotional stability.

#### **Avoid Katu (Spicy) Ras**

Katu Ras is having thrombolytic activity, i.e. ability to break down the blood clot, therefore, aggregation of platelets does not take place and bleeding continues in

the form of Abnormaluterine bleeding.

#### **Avoid Bathing (Head Bath)**

According to modern physiology, it is observed that there is fluctuation and high temperature during the menstrual cycle. This fluctuation is due to hormones. Estrogen causes a fall in the body temperature before ovulation and progesterone rises the temperature after ovulation and until menstruation. During menstruation, if a head bath is taken it will disturb the haemostasis maintained by the hypothalamus. Bathing with hot water enhances peripheral blood circulation. This can reduce the blood flow to the uterus, and the expected purification may be compromised. During menstruation the internal os is open, this can cause ascending infections into the uterine cavity due to altered pH of vagina. So, water treatments should be limited during this period.

#### **Sleep on Darbha mat**

Darbha has antimicrobial, anticancer and antioxidant properties. Some volatile compounds in this plant have antibacterial properties. This facility's hydro alcoholic preparation has been shown to have antioxidant properties. Sleeping on Darbha mat helps to get relief from backache and body ache.

#### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The Charak Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and other classical ayurvedic texts and other relevant literary research.

#### **DISCUSSION /CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the practices outlined in Rajaswala paricharya offer insights into historical perspectives on women's health during menstruation and conception. While some aspects may not align with contemporary scientific understanding, there is an ongoing effort to bridge traditional wisdom with modern healthcare practices. The prevailing stigma around menstruation across cultures underscores the need for education and awareness to dispel myths and empower women to make informed choices about their reproductive and overall health. As societies evolve, a holistic approach that respects both cultural heritage and evidence-based medical knowledge can guide the way toward healthier outcomes for women and their offspring.

The idea that a woman's well-being is inextricably linked to societal progress becomes evident. Health of females serves as a reflection of the society's commitment to equitable development. As the custodian of life's genesis, a woman's physical and emotional health resonates throughout her family and community. The holistic paradigm of Ayurveda extends this connection, recognizing the impact of a woman's vitality on the very fabric of society.

#### **REFERENCES**

1. Charak Samhita, P. Kashinath Shastri and

Gorakhnath Chaturvedi, Chaukhambha Prakashan Sansthan, Sutra Sthan Chapter 5.

2. Charak Samhita, P. Kashinath Shastri and Gorakhnath Chaturvedi, Chaukhambha Prakashan Sansthan, Viman Sthan, Chapter 1

3. Sushruta Samhita, Yadavji trikamji, Sharir Sthan Chapter 2.