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Review Article

AYURVEDIC VIEW ON INFERTILITY AND ITS MANAGEMENT W.S.R. TO ROLE OF UTTAR BASTI

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ABSTRACT

Infertility is a disease of female reproductive system which impairs the capacity of reproduction. Although the prevalence of infertility is believed to have remained relatively stable during past 40 years, there is no doubt that the demand of infertility evaluation and treatment has increased considerably. The factors such as lifestyle, stress, excessive usage of contraceptives, genetic problems, smoking & drinking habits increases such cases day by day. Ayurvedic classics describe both mental and body purification along with lifestyle management for treating infertility. *Panchkarma* provides best efficacy because it helps in balancing *Doshas* and *Dushyas*. *Uttarbasti* is one such type of therapy being indicated for infertility. It helps in detoxification of reproductive tract like uterus & fallopian tube. *Uttarbasti* helps in balancing *Vata Dosha* and thus helps in retaining *Garbha*. According to Acharya Charaka, due to normalization of *Vata* caused by Uttar Basti, the yoni retains the *Garbha* quickly. Present review is an effort to understand the efficacy of *Uttarbasti* in female infertility. Considering the effects of *Uttarbasti* it was proved as a better palliative treatment to many female disorders helps to revitalize the hormonal system and giving fruitful result.

KEYWORDS: *Uttar Basti, Garbha, Yoni, Vata, Infertility.*

INTRODUCTION

Infertility is generally defined as one year of unprotected intercourse without conception. Sub fertility to describe women or couples who are not sterile but exhibit decreased reproductive efficiencyⁱ.

According to the WHO report about 2-10% of couples worldwide are unable to conceive primarily and about 60-80% couples in the world are infertile. It is estimated that 10% of normally fertile couples fail to conceive within their first year of attempt. Further 10-25% couples experience secondary infertilityⁱⁱ. Among these couples, causative factors are found about 30-40% in females and 10- 30% in males. Genetic factors, changed lifestyle, increased stress and environmental pollution are identified as factors contributing to the rise of infertility. It is a social stigma where the female partner is blamed leading to marital disharmonyⁱⁱⁱ. Charaka and Vagbhata have mentioned *Vandhya* under the description of *Beejamsa Dushti*^{iv}. According to Charaka abnormality of any one out of *Shadbhavas* (*Matraj, Pitraj, Atma, Satwa, Satmya, and Rasa*) will cause the failure to conceive. Sushruta has mentioned *Vandhya* in *Vataja Yoniroga*.

In Kashyap Samhita *Vandhyattva* is mentioned in eighty *Rogas* of *Vata*. Bhela says that due to abnormalities of *Bija* of mother and father, nonconsumption of congenial rasas (malnutrition leading to improper formation of rasa dhatu and its *Updhatu Artava*), and disorders of yoni, the women become infertile. Bhavprakash has mentioned *Vandhya* in *Yonirogadhikar* and mentioned *Artavanasha* as one among the 80 *Vatananatmaja Vikara*^v. Harita is the first who classified *Vandhyatva* in detail. Harita has included childhood, *Garbhkoshbhanga*, loss of dhatus and constriction of uterus and vulva due to coitus having been done with the girl before her menarche also in the causes of infertility. Harita Samhita mentions six types of *Vandhya* like *Kakavandhya* (secondary infertility), *Anapathya* (primary infertility), *Garbhasrahvi* (repeated abortions), *Mrtavatsa* (repeated still births), *Balakshaya* (Nutritional) and *Vandhyatva* due to injury to *Garbhashaya* or *Bhaga*. According to Ayurveda, important factors for conception are *Rutu* (fertile period), *Kshetra* (uterus & reproductive organs), *Ambu* (proper nutrient fluid), *Bija* (*Shukra-Shonita*) & normalcy of *Hridya* (psychology). Abnormality of properly functioning *Vayu* and *Shadbhavas* can cause infertility. *Yoni Pradosha* refers to abnormalities of vagina, cervix, uterus, fallopian tubes which hinders fertilization. Management includes *Daivavyapashraya* and *Satwavajaya Chikitsa* which act through Psychic component. *Yuktivyapashraya* involves *Antah* and *Bahi Parimarjana* (detoxification) and *Shamana* (palliative treatment). Depending upon the vitiation of the dosha and condition of the diseases, internal cleansing with internal oleation or intake of unctuous substances, vaginal application of pastes & *Uttar Basti* are administered^{vi}. *Uttar Basti* is a type of *Basti Upakrama*, a mode of administration of drug. *Uttar Basti* has been well highlighted in the classics for the management of most of the gynaecological disorders. Charaka recommends the use of *Basti* for repeated still births.

DEFINITION: *Uttar Basti* may be defined as a route of administration of drugs through vesicular/urethral or genital route in females.

INDICATIONS: *Uttar Basti* is indicated in the following conditions:

1. *Yoni Vyapath* 2. *Pushpanasha* 3. *Garbhashaya Vikaras*^{vii}



QUANTITY & FREQUENCY: *Uttar Basti* can be administered three times a day on 3 consecutive days. The quantity mentioned is $\frac{1}{2}$ Pala (20g). *Uttar Basti* is advised to be given during the *Ritukala* (period of ovulation) when *yoni Mukha* is open.

PROCEDURE: The physician should administer it to the women lying in supine position with knee flexed. Then introduce the nozzle into the vagina by pressing and squeezing the pouch. The process is repeated for 3–4 times after the previous *Dravya* come out^{viii}.

TREATMENT

Dietary management Diet plays a crucial and vital role in the prevention and cure of diseases and in maintenance of good health. As per Ayurveda, food affects the mind also by causing either an increase or decrease in the three qualities of mind, i.e., *Rajo Guna*, *Satva Guna*, and *Tamo Guna*. It was believed in the ancient Indian literature that if dietetics is properly followed, medicine is not required but if dietetics is not observed, even medicines are not useful. Dietary management involves strict compliance and adherence to *Ojas* building foods and to avoid the substances which diminish the *Ojas*. This is important to regulate ovulation and enhances fertilization. Eating whole foods provides all nutrients for the health of the body in addition to fibre that influences hormonal levels provides.

Ayurvedic treatment for infertility:

1. ***Ashwagandha Churna and Kapikacchu:*** Both these medicines are known to increase sperm count and also improve its quality.

2. ***Phala Gritam:*** This is an Ayurvedic medicine to treat female infertility. Consumed in the form of liquefied butter mixed with milk, this medicine is touted to treat functional problems but does not treat structural deficiencies.

3. ***Guduchi, Gokshura, and And Triphala Churna:*** These medicines are used to clear the blockages in the body, which prevents the production of the *shukra dhatu*.

4. ***Shatavari:*** This is only woman medicine, used female infertility treatment in Ayurveda.

Yoga for Female Infertility:

1. Bee Breath (*Bhramari Pranayama*)
2. Seated Forward Fold (*Paschimottanasana*)
3. Reclining Bound Angle (*Supta Baddha Konasana*)
4. Shoulder Stand (*Sarvangasana*)



DISCUSSION

Management of infertility involves specific identifiable cause and its correction along with counselling to both the partners. There are many factors responsible for female infertility like anovulatory factor, tubal factor and cervical factor. Ovulation disorder is the most common female infertility factor. Another commonest cause of infertility is Salpingitis, where the lumen of the tube becomes adherent and the passage between the uterus and abdominal cavity is blocked. The cervical factors (altered pH of cervix) are responsible for 5% cases of infertility. Endometriosis and chronic ill health are the other causes of infertility. In condition of anovulation, Uttar Basti removes the *Srotosangha* and corrects the *Artavagni* which regulates the menstrual cycle, thus resulting in ovulation. Ovaries contain receptors which receive hormones secreted by hypothalamus and pituitary gland. The drug stimulates these receptors, so that proper ovulation occurs in each cycle^{ix}. Uttar Basti is an ideal local treatment in tubal block and can be adopted for all sorts of problems of infertility as well as reproductive tract disorder. In tubal blockage the drug is reaching in bulk to the site of pathology. Hence Uttar Basti relieves tubal block by lysis of adhesions and relieves obstruction^x. In cervical factor, drug administered locally in the cervix and absorbed by cervical epithelium due to *Sukshma* property of drug. The lipid soluble drug is passively diffused across the membrane in the direction of its concentration gradient. The rate of transport is proportional to lipid: water partition coefficient of the drug. The more lipid soluble, higher is the concentration and quicker diffusion. In this way altered cervical pH can be corrected by Uttar Basti. Uttar Basti helps in endometrial conditions by improving thickness of endometrium, improves the quality of endometrium, helps in curing endometriosis, absorption is very fast gives quicker result. The above-mentioned drugs could be regulating the Gonadotropin Releasing Hormone to induce ovulation and improving uterus blood flow, menstrual changes of endometrium. They are useful in infertility resulting from anovulation, cervical factors, tubal factors and immunological disorders. Strict aseptic measures should be adopted to avoid complications.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda prescribed a wide range of treatment methods to cure ailments caused for infertility, but it is not a science which describes single medicine for single disease. The medicines used and treatment method adopted

for couples may vary on individuals as it depends on the *Tridosas* and external factors for the body. The above said medicines are for different condition with different stages of *Dosas*.

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