



Review Article

EFFECT OF *STHANIKA CHIKITSA* IN THE MANAGEMENT OF *YONIVYAPAD*

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ABSTRACT

Disorders of the female genital tract or the vaginal disorders are on rise due to the current lifestyle and food habits. It is considered as an important public health problem worldwide particularly in developing countries. World Health Organization (WHO), globally has reported an estimation of 357 million new cases of reproductive tract infection annually. These disorders can be correlated to *Yonivyapads* in Ayurveda and are twenty in number. All the Ayurveda Acharyas have described in depth about these disorders, its *Dindana*, *Samprapti*. *Lakshanas* and *Chikitsa* that includes both the *Sarvadaihika* and *Sthanika chikitsa*. *Sthanika chikitsa* or the local therapeutic procedure encompasses the treatments such as *Yoni lepana*, *Yoni prakshalana*, *Yoni poorana*, *Yoni dhoopana*, *Yoni Abhyanga*, *Yoni Varti*, *Yonidharana* etc. in the management of *Yonivyapads*. Application of these local therapies are said to produce effective results based on the procedure, duration, indications, selection of drugs and the patients. Due to the higher tendency of absorption in the vagina and the female genital tract, these local therapies or the *Sthanika chikitsa* act on the absorption mechanism and hence produces the effect of the medicine on the tissue applied thereby helps in the reduction of the disorders. The present study attempts to evaluate the effect of all the *Sthanika chikitsa* explained in the Ayurvedic medicine.

INTRODUCTION

Most of the women suffer from gynaecological disorders at least once in their life time based on the functioning of reproductive organs and their reproductive health. It can be either a catastrophe in some or insignificant that includes heavy or irregular menstrual bleeding, pelvic pain, uterine tumours, dysmenorrhea, endometriosis and vaginal discharges which can affect their reproductive, sexual and mental health at any stage of life and thus may warrant hysterectomy. They also serve as the leading causes of both the maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity. [1] With a worldwide prevalence of these gynaecological disorders, women are afflicted by an umbrella of diseases including uterine leiomyoma,

endometriosis, and polycystic ovary syndrome etc. These disorders cause significant morbidity affecting their quality of life with heavy menstruation, debilitating pelvic pain, chronic anovulation, hyperandrogenism, infertility, and even death. [2]

In the last 30 years, significant progress has been observed in the global women's health with much of the focus on maternal health and the prevention of cervical cancer. Since 1990, the Global Burden of Disease database has demonstrated a gradual evolution towards the non-communicable diseases in gynecological disorders, such as BGCs, as the major causes of morbidity with their consequences extending beyond the expected symptoms. To enhance and elevate the gynecological conditions as global health priorities, the magnitude of the problem must be understood and highlighted. [3]

In Ayurveda, *Yoni* or the vagina has been explained in depth due to its position and serving as a direct route to *Garbhashaya*. In case of affliction of *Yoni*, it can entirely affect the *Kshetra* required for growing a healthy embryo and its development. So, it becomes very important to maintain the reproductive

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health and preventing the *Yonivyapads*. Ayurveda has described about 20 different disease conditions related to yoni and this is called as *Yonivyapat*. These *Yonivyapats* include most of the abnormal and unhealthy conditions of vagina.^[4] These conditions are treated with various kinds of *Abhyantara* and *Bahya aushadhi's* in Ayurvedic science since ages and the research studies are also available on the same. Present study has made an attempt to evaluate the effect of the *Sthanika chikitsa* named *Yonidharana chikitsa* with *Lepa* in the management of *Yonivyapat*.

Yonivyapat's

Although all the Ayurveda Acharyas have described the twenty *Yonivyapat's* or the gynaecological disorders, however, there persist much differences of opinion regarding causative factors such as *Dosas* and other *Nidanas*. Acharya Charaka has described twenty *Yonivyapats* among which eleven are due to the vitiation of *Vata*, three due to *Pitta*, one *Kaphaja*, one *Sannipataja* and four *Dwandwaja*, due to the vitiation of two *Dosas* together. Whereas Acharya Sushruta has explained five *Yonivyapads* under each *Dosa* and five *Sannipataja*, all together. *Yonivyapadas* has been elucidated as per Acharya Charaka, Sushruta and Vagbhata in detail. Both the Acharyas Sushruta and Charaka have described the similar features with respect to definition and the symptoms with difference of opinion in the causative factors particularly with the *Dosa* involvement. Other *Yonivyapads* such as *Upapluta*, *Antarmukhi*, *Shushka* and *Prakcharana* are not quoted by Sushruta and Acharya Charaka has not mentioned about *Phalini*, *Vandhya* and *Prasransini*. Both the Vagbhata's have explained similar to Charaka regarding the *Dosha* involvement.^[5]

Pancha Nidanas of the Yonivyapads

Regarding the *Nidana* or the causative factors of the *Yonivyapat*, Acharya Charaka elucidates that the *Mithya aahara* and the *Vihara*, *Artava*, *Beeja doshas* and the *Shapa* of God are the causative factors for all kinds of *Yonivyapat*.^[6] Whereas Acharya Chakrapani has given more clarification in detail regarding the *Mithyachara* that includes both the *Mithya aahara* and *Vihara*, *Beeja dosha* implies *Stri beeja dusti* and *Daiva shapa* which are the misdeeds of present and past lives.^[7] Acharya Sushruta authenticating the views of Charaka in addition has quoted that when a woman with *Ruksha* or the body or a weak and very young woman involves in does excessive *Maithuna* with a man having bigger size penis, then *Vayu* in her body gets aggravated. Further, this *Vayu* retaining both the vitiated *Pitta* and *Kapha doshas*, reaches the region of vagina or the yoni and produces various gynaecological disorders or the *Yonivyapads*.^[8] Additionally, both the Vagbhatas' have added the

Nidanas as consumption of improper diet, diet, having maithuna in abnormal postures, excessive maithuna and the application of various objects for sexual pleasure.^[9,10] In *Madhava Nidana* same explanation of Acharya Charaka can be found, whereas, *Madhukosha* has elaborated in detail about the *Pradusta artava* which means *Rajas* or the *Artava* vitiated by *Vatadi doshas*. *Beeja doshas* are said to be due to the abnormalities of both male and female gametes. *Bhava Prakasha* and *Yogaratnakara* further acknowledge the views of Acharya Charaka.

Purvarupa of *Yonivyapat* have not been described by the Acharyas and the *Lakshanas* are based explained based on the involvement of *Doshas* and the type of *Yonivyapat*. *Upadravas* are explained in general such as formation of *Gulma*, *Arsha*, *Vatarogas*, *Pradara* and *Vandhyatva* etc.^[11] Regarding the management of *Yonivyapat*, it depends on the type of *Yonivyapat* and their intensity. Ayurvedic management of *Yonivyapat* includes an umbrella of treatments with *Abhyanthara chikitsa*, *Bahya chikitsa*, *Panchakarma chikitsa* etc. which helps the patients of *Yonivyapat* to overcome the problem. *Sthanika chikitsa* plays a vital role in the management of *Yonivyapat* by acting locally on the disease condition.

Sthanika Chikitsa

Sthanika Chikitsa indicated for the *Yoniyapat* includes *Yoni Pichu*, *Uttar Basti*, *Yoni Dhavana*, *Yoni Dharana*, *Yoni Lepana* and *Yoni Dhoopana* etc.^[12] In this treatment procedure medicines are applied intravaginally in the form of *Lepa*, *Kashaya* or *Varti*. By this procedure, the vaginal wall and their adjacent tissues which are highly vascular facilitates the absorption of drugs effectively. These *Sthanika chikitsa* or the local procedures are described as follows;

Yoni Prakshalana/Yoni Dhavana^[13]

This procedure is also called as vaginal wash or the vaginal douching. It is a cleansing procedure in which the *Kashayas*, medicated liquids, decoctions or water are used as the medium for the wash under aseptic precautions. This is administered under the *Poorva*, *Pradhana* and the *Paschat karmas*. In this procedure, the *Kashayas* are to be filled in the douche pot and with the help of the rubber catheter attached to it vaginal douching is carried out.

Indications

Yoni Srava, *Yoni Kandu*, *Yoni Daurgandhya*

Mode of action

For this procedure, the drugs having the properties of *Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa* with *Laghu Ruksha Guna*. Possess *karmas* such as *Vrana Shodhana*, *Vedanasthapaka*, *Ropana*, *Shothahara*, *Kleda Shoshana*, *Kandughna* and *Krimighna* will be selected. It is also observed that the main action of *Prakshalana dravyas*

should be anti-inflammatory and bactericidal. This local treatment is said to clear the layer of unhealthy tissues and debris and in turn promotes the growth of new tissue. Thereby they help to maintain the normal vaginal flora, vaginal mucosa, normal vaginal pH and also helps to eliminate the growth of harmful bacteria.

Yoni Parisheka ^[14]

In this procedure, *Parisheka* or the pouring of the medicated oil or the *Kashaya* is carried out for 5 to 10 minutes over the external part of vagina.

Indications: *Yoni Shoola*

Yoni Pichu ^[15]

Like *Shiropichu*, *Yonipichu* is a treatment of its unique importance that plays an important role in effectively treating the disorders. In this procedure, tampon is made out of a cotton ball and soaked in any of the *Kashayas* or the medicated oils or *Kashaya* and placed inside the vagina for certain duration. Sometimes *Pichu* is also done by combining 2-3 cotton swabs and wrapping it with the gauze piece. This will be tied to a long thread and immersed in medicated *Tailas*, *Kalkas* or the *Kashayas* for the specified time and then placed in vagina for certain duration.

Indications

Vataja Yoni Vyapad, *Yoni Daaha*, *Yoni Shoola* and *Upapluta Yonivyapad*.

Mode of Action

This procedure mainly depends on the *Dravyas* used for the *Pichu* and most commonly *Tila taila*, because of its antiseptic and antibacterial properties. With its *Yogavahi* and *Sukshma guna*, the *Tila taila* strengthens and nourishes the uterine muscle. It is considered as the best among the *Sthanika chikitsa* as it retains the *Dravya* in vagina for longer duration and thereby it increases the advantages.

Yoni Varti ^[16]

Varti are defined as the wicks that are prepared by the mixture of *Churnas* or the finely powdered *Dravyas* and these are administered in the vaginal disorders to treat the disorder effectively.

Indications

Kaphaja Yoni, *Karnini Yoni*, *Shweta Pradara* and *Yoni Kandu*.

Mode of Action

Since the drugs used for *Yoni Varti* possess *Teekshna*, *Laghu* and *Ruksha guna*, *Katu Rasa*, *Ushna Virya* and *Katu Vipaka*, it acts as *Krimihara*, *Kandughna*, *Vrana Shodhana*, *Ropana* and *Kleda Nashaka*.

Yoni Dhoopana ^[17]

Yoni Dhoopana is a procedure which involves the fumigation of vagina with the *Dhoopana dravyas*.

Indications

Yoni Kandu, *Shweta Pradara*

Mode of Action

The drugs used for the *Yoni Dhoopana* will be endowed with *Tikta* and *Kashaya rasa*, *Laghu*, *Ruksha Guna*, *Vata- Pittanashaka*, *Vrana Shodhana - Ropana*, *Vedna Sthapaka* and *Shothahara Dhoopana* increases the local blood supply by increasing the vaginal temperature and this leads to the soothing effect which results in pain relief. Due to its drying effect and the antimicrobial properties, *Dhoopana* reduces vaginal discharge and helps in prevention of the infection.

Yoni Abhyanga ^[18]

Yoni Abhyanga is the procedure of applying the *Taila* over the *Yoni* and this further increases the perineal muscle strength and the tone.

Indications: Uterine Prolapse

Mode of Action

Yoni Abhyanga is carried out with the *Sneha Dravyas* like *Taila* or the *Ghrta* and it is said to nourish the tissues, stretch and strengthen the muscles of vagina.

Yoni Poorana ^[18]

In this treatment procedure, the cavity of vagina is filled with either *Kalka*, *Ghrta*, *Churna* or *Vasa*. This is known to retain the large quantity of drug for particular action of the drugs.

Indications: *Yoni Kandu*, *Vataj Artava Dushti*, *Pittaj Artava Dushti*, *Kaphaj Artava Dushti*.

Mode of Action

The active principles of the drugs used gets absorbed through the vaginal epithelium and the cervical epithelium thereby providing the necessary benefits.

Yoni Lepana/Yoni Dharana ^[19]

This is one of the procedures in which the *Kalka* is prepared by mixing the finely powdered *Churnas* with water or any medicated liquid and make into a fine paste with uniform consistency and this applied at affected area locally.

Indications: *Vivrata Yoni*, *Yoni Drantva*, *Yoni Shoola & Arsha*

Mode of Action

Most of the drugs used in this procedure possess *Tikta* and *Kashaya*, *Tikta Rasa*. Their action is anti-inflammatory, antiulcer, anti-diabetic, slough of dead cell. Improve blood circulation and promote new growth also provide strengthening.

It helps in relieving pain and burning use with *Sheeta Dravya*. When applied locally it firstly stimulates the nerve of local area then relax it.

DISCUSSION

The present article reviews about the *Sthanika chikitsa* that are administered in the management of *Yonivyapad* or the one affecting the *Stree* also called as *Stree rogas*. *Yonivyapads* are said to be the most commonly affecting disorders observed in all age groups of women. Irrespective of the age, there are many disorders affecting the *Stree* which is described as twenty according to Ayurvedic science. *Sthanika Chikitsa* plays the prime role and has its own advantages in treating the *Yonigata rogas*. *Sthanika chikitsa* is also considered as important as *Sarvdehika Chikitsa*. In the *Sthanika chikitsa* or the local treatment, the medicine administered reaches the place very fast and also acts faster with higher efficacy by targeting the tissue or the organ than that of internal medication.

These procedures have shown significant results in the management of *Yonivyapad* in which *Yoni Prakshalana*, a cleansing treatment procedure, does both the cleansing and healing actions with its bactericidal properties. *Yoni Pichu* strengthens the muscles of vagina, increases the flexibility and nourishes the tissues. In case of *Yoni Purana* is administered in case of diseases affecting the vaginal epithelium in uterine prolapses, where the large amount drug needs to be retained. In case of retention of the medicines for longer duration *Yoni Lepana* will be more effective as it provides more surface area for the absorption of drugs. *Yoni Varti* is showed to cleanse the vagina and the uterus, maintains pH maintain and also helps in normalizing the vaginal flora. As drugs used in *Yoni Dhoopana* have antimicrobial properties, it improves the strengthens the female genital tract and increases its defence mechanism by maintaining the healthy vaginal flora. [20-22]

Basically, the *Sthanika chikitsa* acts very effectively on the disorders of the female genital tract or the *Yonivyapads* because of the absorption property of the vagina. Due to its absorption capacity, vagina helps to retain the medicines administered and importantly the anatomical backward position of vagina helps in the self-retention of drugs used for a longer duration which makes it more effective. In addition, the higher vascularity due to rich blood supply also increases the absorption of the drugs in vagina. Previous studies have noted that the maximum absorption is seen in the rugae of the lower vagina or the lateral recesses. As the lower vaginal epithelium is lipophilic, the molecular weighing *Dravyas* are easily absorbed by the vagina.

CONCLUSION

Administration of the medicine through the vaginal route is the most effective and common in today's generation due to the rise in the disorders of female genital tract. This is called as the *Sthanika chikitsa* in Ayurveda that comes under the *Stree roga* branch of Ayurveda. Ayurveda Acharyas have widely described about the disorders that affect the female reproductive system and their management through various modes of therapies that have been proved authentic as they are being practiced since centuries. *Sthanika chikitsa* has shown its effects such as strengthening, nourishing, cleansing, wound healing, in disinfection and also in regeneration or the growth of the new tissue due to the delivery of the drugs in the comfortable mode and easy absorption. In conventional medicine, the local treatments used such as tampons, vaginal painting, vaginal douching, vaginal suppository and cauterization etc can be taken as the modified form of *Sthanika Chikitsa* that is available in Ayurveda. Though they are very effective and can be easily administered, awareness of these practices is less among the females. The present study has made an attempt to display the importance and the effectiveness of the *Sthanika chikitsa* which is applied with proper precautions provides wonderful results.

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