



AYURVEDIC APPRAISAL OF ENDOMETRIOSIS

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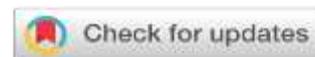
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ABSTRACT

Endometriosis is a female health disorder in which the endometrium (*cells from the lining of the uterus*) start growing outside the uterine cavity. Endometriosis most commonly involves ovaries, fallopian tubes, and the tissue lining pelvis. In rare cases, endometrial tissue may spread beyond pelvic organs. It is a gynaecological condition that affects **1 out of every 10** women of reproductive age. It is seen in **25-35%** of women with infertility. According to Ayurveda, endometriosis is due to disturbed or altered *Vata Dosha*, mainly *Apanavata Vikara*. The most useful herbs are *Shatavari*, *Ashoka*, *Lodhra*, *Aloe Vera* and *Arjuna* are effective in signs and symptoms of endometriosis.

Keywords: Endometriosis, *Apanavata Vikara*, *Garbhasaya*, *Trayavartha Yoni*, *Yonivyapad*, *Vedana*, *Pratyatma Linga*.

INTRODUCTION

Endometriosis is a disorder in which endometrium (cells from the lining of the uterus) start growing outside the uterine cavity. Endometriosis most commonly involves ovaries, fallopian tubes, and the tissue lining pelvis. In rare cases, endometrial tissue

may spread beyond pelvic organs. It is a gynaecological condition that affects **1 out of every 10** women of reproductive age. It is seen in **25-35%** of women with infertility^[1]. Endometriosis is oestrogen dependant and manifests during the reproductive

years. It is associated with pain and infertility, Dysmenorrhoea, deep Dyspareunia, Pelvic pain, and Dysuria are the most commonly reported symptoms. As the disease and pain are chronic conditions there is significant interference in the quality of life of women, in their professional performance, and significant costs to the health services [2]. This disease is not directly explained in *Ayurvedic Samhitas*. Certain guidelines given in *Samhita's* utilised for understanding such diseases. The endometrium is a part of Uterus or *Garbhasaya* which again is considered as a part of *Trayavartha Yoni*. The majority of the diseases related to the female reproductive system are explained under the heading of *Yonivyapad* in *Ayurvedic Samhitas*. On analysing the symptoms, we can interpret endometriosis as a *Yonivyapad* with the involvement of *Vata Dosha* with different types of *Vedana Visheshas* as *Pratyatma Linga* [3]. According to Ayurveda, endometriosis is due to disturbed or altered *Vata dosha*, mainly *Apanavata Vikara*, which is a subtype of *Vata Dosha* which is responsible for the downward elimination of urine, faeces, flatus, and childbirth and menstruation blood. According to Ayurvedic physiology, *Aartva* (the reproductive apparatus along with the menstrual blood and the ovum) is formed from the *Rasa Dhatu*. When the food habits are faulty like an excessive indulgence is heavy, fried, oily, or too dry food, incompatible foods like fruits with milk, excessive junk food, non-vegetarian dominant or dairy dominant food, overeating, etc, the metabolism is hampered leading to inflammation and formation of endotoxins (*Aama*) in the *Rasa Dhatu*, which is passed on to the *Aartva* too [4]. Other contributing factors are a sedentary lifestyle, habitual constipation, suppression of natural urges like urination, defecation, etc, excessive stress, environmental factors, and drug abuse leading to endotoxins or toxic metabolite formation which leads to improper nutrition as well as an altered immune response in the reproductive system overall leading to excessive endometrial growth and weak ovum or egg [5]. The overall sustained toxicity in the tissues over time leads to these endometrial growths to implant in the other

areas outside of the uterine cavity making conception difficult. There is a retrograde menstrual spill (reversed flow of menstrual blood) due to dysfunction in the normal movement of *Vata dosha* [6].

Nidanas can be summarised as follows:

- **Mithyahara** (unhealthy eating habits), particularly the use of *Vata Prakopaka Aharas*.
- **Mithya viharas** (abnormal style of living) - Coitus in unusual positions, coitus with several partners, coitus by a man with a large penis with a frail lady, and the use of foreign bodies for sex. These can cause infections or alter the patient's mentality, resulting in *Yonivyapath*.
- The vitiation of *Apana Vata* is caused by *Vegavarodha* (withholding desires), particularly of *Adhovayu* (Flatus), *Mootra* (Urine), and *Mala* (Feces).
- **Pradushta Aartava** can be ectopic endometrium or aberrant hormone changes with menstrual irregularities as a result.
- Idiopathic factor / Daiva

These can be considered as *Sannikrishta Nidana* for *Yonivyapath*. All these *Nidanas* results in the vitiation of *Vata Dosha*. The vitiated *Vata* vitiates *Aartava* and affects the proper formation of dhatus. The vitiated *Aartava* gets implanted at various anatomical sites by the *Pratiloma Gati* of the vitiated *Vata* (Retrograde menstruation). Immunodeficiency resulting from impaired dhatu formation helps in the survival and growth of ectopic implants. These implants respond to hormonal changes during the menstrual cycle and get enlarged. With subsequent menstrual cycles, the progression of the disease occurs,

Causes

The exact cause of endometriosis is unknown. But some possible cause are explained below:

- Retrograde Menstruation
- Transformation of Peritoneal Cells
- Surgical scar implantation
- Endometrial cells transport
- Immune system disorder

Signs and Symptoms

- The primary symptom is pelvic pain associated with the menstrual period

- Dysmenorrhea
- Dyspareunia
- Dysuria
- Excessive bleeding during periods
- Infertility
- Other symptoms may also include fatigue, diarrhoea, constipation, bloating, or nausea, especially during menstrual periods

Diagnosis

- Pelvic examination
- Ultrasound
- Laparoscopy

Treatment

According to *Ayurveda*, there are various herbs that are able to balance hormones. These herbs do contain different female hormone precursors. For example, the herb *Ashoka* contains analogues and precursors of female hormone estrogens in the form of phytoestrogens. The other plants like *Shatavari* have similar actions. Curcumin is actually a natural pain relieving, inflammation reducing, anti-cancer herb. Medicines include the usage of herbs that help strengthen the immune system which in turn helps the glands function properly and create a hormonal balance. There are good herbal remedies for Endometriosis explained in *Ayurvedic* medicine. The most useful herbs are *Shatavari*, *Ashoka*, *Lodhra*, *Aloe vera*, and *Arjuna*.

1. *Shatavari (Asparagus racemosus)*

Primarily it is known as a reproductive tonic (for both males and females), a demulcent for the digestive system, and a powerful Adaptogen. It is a wonderful *Rasayana (rejuvenator)* that promotes physical and mental health in females. It pacifies vata and pitta doshas in the body. It is used widely in *Ayurveda* for its rejuvenating property. It also contains the antioxidant compound '**Racemofuran**' which has the ability to regularize female hormones and gives strength to the female reproductive system. It is beneficial for all stages of a woman's reproductive cycle, from menarche (*start of menses*), supporting the female system through menses, ovulation and fertility, uterine strength during pregnancy, childbirth, and ample lactation (*flow and quantity of milk*), and hot

flashes, irritability, irregular memory and dryness during menopause. It is useful in the preparation of various ayurvedic preparation like [Female Health Support Capsules](#) and *Shatavari* Capsules.

2. *Ashoka (Saraca indica)*

It is very beneficial to manage menstrual disturbances. It helps to regulate the female menstrual cycle and relieves menstrual pain. It Works very well on the female hormonal system. It is useful in the preparation of Female Health Support Capsules and *Pradrantak Churna*.

3. *Lodhra (Symplocos racemosa)*

This herb is quite effective in cases of excessive menstruation, painful menstruation, and delayed menstruation. According to *Ayurveda*, vitiation of pitta leads to heavy bleeding. Due to its cooling (*sheet*) and light (*laghu*) properties, it pacifies pitta. It is beneficial in all gynae problems. It is useful in the preparation of Female Health Support Capsules and *Pradrantak Churna*.

4. *Shallaki (Boswellia serrata)*

It is a famous herb used for the treatment of various ailments like pain, osteo – arthritis, and muscular pains. It is used as a substitute for modern pain killer medicines. This plant contains anti-inflammatory terpenoids called boswellic acids. It suppresses the growth of inflamed tissues in Endometriosis as well as prevents the breakdown of the surrounding connective tissues. It is found throughout India and used for many herbal preparations like Boswellia Curcumin Capsules.

5. *Haridra (Curcuma longa)*

Curcumin is one of the main constituents of turmeric or curcuma longa. It is one of the most common spices used in the Indian kitchen. It is best known for its properties like anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, antiviral, antifungal, and anticancer properties and is used in various health problems. It is used in various health complications including pains, and wounds. It is a strong antioxidant that removes toxins from the body. It is used in various herbal formulations like Boswellia Curcumin Capsules.

6. PRADRANTAK CHURNA

This formulation is an improvised form of **PUSHYANUG CHURNA** which consists of **Lodhra, Ashok, Arjun, and Udumber**. It is considered to be very helpful in curing female disorders and Vata imbalance is said to be the root cause of all gynaecological disorders this herb calms the vitiated vata. Also, it naturally equalizes female hormones. It improves the inflamed lining of the uterus or the endometrium and treats endometriosis.

Dosage - 5 grams with lukewarm water every day.

Pathyapthaya

- All vegetables- especially bitter vegetables. (Cooked with little oil)
- All pulses, dals, cereals.
- Cooked coconut.
- Black tea, Black coffee, green tea.
- Rice popcorns, plain popcorn
- Root and tubers like carrot, beetroot, and radish, sweet potato to be cooked and consumed.
- Potato cooked but occasionally.
- All types of masalas and spices are used to garnish the food.
- Boiled or medicated water to drink and warm water only during meals.
- Eat freshly prepared, warm food.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda and western medicine can work hand in hand to help women with this debilitating condition western medicine to help manage the symptoms of endometriosis simple **Ayurvedic** dietary, lifestyle, herbal and physical remedies can help prevent any recurrence by addressing the deepest causes of endometriosis. Endometriosis cannot be correlated to any single disease of Ayurveda. It can be considered as a syndrome complex of **Vataja Yonivyapad** based on the clinical presentation. The treatment can be formu-

lated by following the treatment principles of **Yonivyapad, Gulma, Granthi Arthava Dushti, Pradara**, etc. This type of interpretation may help to formulate an effective ayurvedic treatment modality that can efficiently reduce the lesions with limited side effects and no interference with the patient's menstrual physiology and fertility.

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