UTERINE FIBROIDS IN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Aim: To make an equivalent correlation of Uterine fibroid with gynecological disorders from an ayurvedic perspective. Objective: Uterine fibroids or Leiomyomas are benign tumors of uterus. The exact cause of uterine fibroid is unknown but Genetic abnormalities, alteration in growth factor (proteins formed in the body that direct the rate and extent of cell proliferation) expression, abnormalities in the vascular (blood vessel) system, and tissue response to injury have all been suggested to play a role in the development of uterine fibroids. Many times uterine fibroid are accidently diagnosed otherwise the clinical features are pelvic pain, menorrhagia, dysmenorrhea. Though the uterine fibroid mentioned in modern science is not directly available in Ayurveda texts; however Ayurveda has its own principles of classifying and diagnosing diseases. In Charak Sutrasthan 18/44 it is said that even if a physician is unable to name a particular disease, a full knowledge of therapeutic properties of doshas, site of its manifestation, etiological factors, and due regard given to scriptural instructions would never fail his attempt to cure a disease. The gynecological disease in ayurveda is explained under a board term yonivyapat, it can be understood as the functional and structural abnormalities of female reproductive organs. Yet there are other disease need to be understand, For this purpose, diseases having comparable features with uterine fibroid in accordace with Ayurveda will be discussed.

Keywords: Endometriosis; Menorrhagia; Gynecological disorders; Menstruation; Dysmenorrhea.

INTRODUCTION

Uterine fibroid also referred to as uterine leiomyomata uterine leiomyomas or uterine myomas are benign growth of womb (uterine) muscle, they are composed of smooth muscle layer accompanying connective tissues of the uterus¹. Most leiomyomas occur in the fundus and body of the uterus; only 3% occur in the cervix. They are most common towards the end of the reproductive years they exist sometimes singly but most often are multiple or diffuse and if the uterus contains too many leiomyomatas to count, it is referred to as uterine leiomyomatosis². They are more common in obese women and probably some genetic determinant and they are less common in smokers. Majority of fibroids grow as a women gets older, and tend to shrink after menopause³.
Leiomyomas are benign smooth muscle neoplasms that typically originate from the myometrium, due to fibrous consistency and are also called as fibroid. In ayurvedic classics the explanation of granti shows similarity, like gratanath Granti, Localized nodular swelling/growth has been referred under the name of Granthi that develops due to localization of morbid body humors in body tissue. It protrudes like joint of bamboo/joint between two parts of a plant or kernel of the fruit of Amalaki (Emblica officinalis Gaertn.) and is relatively hard and tough, glandular or nodular swelling; knotty, hard and rough appearance.

**PATHOLOGY**

Leiomyomas arise from the overgrowth of smooth muscle and connective tissue in the uterus. Histologically, a monoclonal proliferation of smooth muscle cells occurs. Estrogen and Progestin receptors are present on fibroids. Elevated estrogen levels may cause fibroid enlargement. Overall, estrogen, progestrone, and growth factors likely promote tumor growth, but only after the initiation of tumor formation. This initiating event remains unknown, although recent evidence suggests there is a strong inherited component to fibroid development.

Pathogenesis of Granthi is propounded as when morbid Tridoshas, vitiate Rakta (blood), Mamsa (fleshy/muscles), and Meda (fat/adipose tissue) that are admixed with Kapha produce rounded protuberant, knotty or glandular and hard swelling called Granthi. Though there is vitiation of rakta, Mamsa, Meda but the initiating event remains vata. And also been supported by the natural site of its location (basti pradesha) in the body.

Etiopathogenesis, clinical features and treatment of Granthis, are identical to the Granthis of any other body part, however few clinical features present due to a specific location of the disease as a result of anatomical and physiological disturbance. Granthi when present in yoni (female reproductive system)/Garbhashaya (uterus) will lead to disturbed menstrual cycle-menorrhagia, metrorrhagia, dysmenorrhea, etc., along with infertility

**TYPES OF UTERINE FIBROIDS**

Growth and location are the main factors that determine if a fibroid leads to symptoms and problems.

- Intramural fibroids are located within the wall of the uterus and are the most common type; unless they may be asymptomatic.
- Subserosal fibroids are located underneath the mucosal (peritoneal) surface of the uterus and can become very large. They can also grow out in papillary manner to become pedunculated fibroids. These pedunculated growths can actually detach from the uterus to become a parasitic leiomyoma.
- Submucosal fibroids are located in the muscle beneath the endometrium of the uterus and distort the uterine cavity; even small lesion in this location may lead to bleeding and infertility. A pedunculated lesion within the cavity is termed as intracavitary fibroid and can be passed through the cervix.
- Cervical fibroids are located in the wall of the cervix (neck of the uterus). Rarely fibroids are found in the supporting structures (round, ligament, broad ligament, or uterosacral ligament) of the uterus that also contain smooth muscle tissue

*Ayurveda acharys* are also explains different types of granthi as follows:

- *Vataja granthi* which are elongated and usually painfull- Subserous fibroid can become very large and even wondering hence this can understand.
- *Pittja granthi* are more prone for suppuration and inflammation-as this distort the uterine cavity it can be consider as submucosal fibroid.
- *Kaphaja granthi* are with mild pain, localized mass.-cervical and Intramural fibroids can be understood.
- *Medo granthi* are usually board, mild pain
- *Sira granthi* is quick in onset and with multiple symptoms and complication -when it comes to
understanding medoja and siroja granti the degenerative changes of fibroid can be well established.

SYMPTOMS OF UTERINE FIBROIDS
The most common symptoms of women with fibroids are pressure symptoms and heavy periods. An enlarged womb will place pressure on the bladder giving increased symptoms. Generally, symptoms include abnormal bleeding, heavy or painful periods, abdominal discomfort or bloating, painful defecation back ache, urinary frequency or retention and in some cases, infertility.

In same way any Granthi when present in yoni (female reproductive system)/Garbhashaya (uterus) will lead to disturbed menstrual cycle-menorrhagia, metrorrhagia, dysmenorrhea, etc., along with infertility.

FIBROID TREATMENT OPTIONS
Treatment should be individualized, but some factors can help with the decision:
- Asymptomatic fibroids: No treatment
- Postmenopausal women: Trial of expectant management
- Surgically accessible symptomatic fibroids,
- Non-surgical techniques

In ayurveda treatment principle for granti are described as
- Managed according to the principle of Samprapti Vighatana (to break the pathogenesis).
- Choice of Kapha vatahara drugs
- Vataamulomana
- Lekhana and Rakthaprasadana
- Chedana and visravana

Same principles can also be used in treating Garbhasaya granti.

CONCLUSION
The uterine fibroids in Ayurvedic perspective can be clearly understood as Garbhasaya gata Granti due to vitiation of vata and kapha along with mamsa and raktha. On treatment approach it may Oushada sadya or Shastra sadya according to clinical symptoms and extension of granti.

REFERENCES

Source of Support: Nil
Conflict Of Interest: None Declared