

## AN AYURVEDIC REVIEW ON MENOPAUSAL SYNDROME

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Article Received on  
19 April 2024,

Revised on 09 May 2024,  
Accepted on 29 May 2024

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr202411-32058



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**ABSTRACT**

Menopause is defined as the permanent cessation of menstruation at the end of reproductive life resulting from the loss of ovarian follicular activity.

During the period of menopause, the women enter an estrogen deficient phase which leads to various symptoms like hot flash, Urogenital atrophy, osteoporosis and psychological changes as mood disturbance, insomnia, anxiety etc.

**KEYWORDS:** Menopausal Syndrome, HRT.

**INTRODUCTION**

Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) is the only alternative available for menopausal syndrome in modern medicine. It also has a wide range of side effect on females body. In Ayurveda concept of menopause is depicted as jarapakva avastha of body and Rajonivritti. Acharya

sushruta has mentioned a group of naturally occurring disease under the heading of swabha balpravitta include kshuda, pipasa, jara and mrityu. Acharya sushruta during vaya-vibhajan has also mentioned that more than 40 year and upto 70 years of age parihani i.e degenerative phase, Rajonivritti janya lakshan is a group of symptoms is a naturally occurring and degenerative changes in the female body. Menopause is a gradual and natural transition phase. This transition start with pitta- vata transition and later on dominated by vata dosh. In Ayurveda menopausal symptoms are regarded as imbalance of dosha (vata, pitta, kapha) and dhatukshaya which occurs as a natural and gradual consequence of aging. The basic concept of Ayurvedic medicine is “**swasthasya swasthya rakshanam and aaturasya vikar**

**prashmanam cha”** to overcome menopausal symptoms ayurveda has different way like Diet, samsan chikitsa, panchakarma, rasayana, yoga, pranayam etc.

**AIMS:** To explore and understand ayurvedic theories and practices on menopausal symptoms.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The data are collected from the Ayurvedic Samhita's, journals & articles on google & from previous studies.

**KEYWORDS:** Perimenopause, menopause transition, rajonivritti.

## INTRODUCTION

- ❖ Propagation of species is a basic feature of nature. In multiplication of human race “Woman” has a pivotal role to play. A woman's life stages are based on the reproductive cycle, beginning with menstruation (menarche) and ending with menopause.
- ❖ The onset of first menstruation in life is called menarche. It may occur any where between 10 and 16 years, the peak time being 13 years.
- ❖ Menopause is defined as the permanent cessation of menstruation at the end of reproductive life Resulting from the loss of ovarian follicular activity. The age of menopause ranges between (45 to 55 years) average 50 years.
- ❖ The clinical diagnosis is confirmed following stoppage of menstruation (amenorrhea) for twelve consecutive months without any other pathology. So far as the condition of the females is concerned, the phase of “Menarche” and “Menopause” have great importance and influence their physical, psychological, social as well as emotional existence. The menopause is a natural phenomenon and one of the life's milestones.
- ❖ Perimenopause is a period around menopause (45-55yrs) presenting with Vasomotor symptoms such as hot flash, Urogenital atrophy, osteoporosis and fracture, cardiovascular disease, psychological changes as mood disturbance, insomnia, anxiety, memory loss, irritability, dementia and cognitive decline.
- ❖ Few years prior to menopause, along with depletion of the ovarian follicles, the follicles become resistant to pituitary gonadotropins. As a result, effective folliculogenesis impaired with diminished estradiol production. This is a significant fall in the serum level of estradiol from 50- 300 pg/mL before menopause to 10-20 pg /mL after menopause.

- ❖ Menopause is called as RAJONIVRITTI in the Ayurveda, is one of the most significant milestones In a Women's life.

**If youth is the spring season of our life**

**“Then menopause is like autumn”**

The term **RAJONIVRITTI** is made up of two different words viz **RAJAH** and **NIVRITTI**.

**RAJAH**- the rajah is quoted by various name in literature.

- Rajah,
- Artava
- Shonita
- Ashrika
- Pushpa
- Beeja

This can be taken as menstruation in present context. It considered as upadhatu of rasdhatu in Classics.

- रक्तमपि रजसंज्ञं रसादेव प्रसादभागजन्यम् || (चक्र.,च.सं.चि.15/17)
  - रसात् स्तन्यं ततो रक्तम् || (च.सं.चि. 15/17)
  - मासि मासि रजः स्त्रीणां रसजं स्त्रवति त्र्यहम् || ( अ.ह. शा० 1/7)
  - यथा च बालस्य जीर्णस्य वा तरोः पुष्पफलं पुष्पफलस्य वा तद्विधस्य गन्धो नोपलभ्यते तथैव नोनषोडशातीतसप्ततिवर्षस्य पुंसः शुकसेकादयः योषितश्चोदद्वादशातीतपंचाशद्वर्षाया रजस्तन्यादय इति || (अ० सं० शा० 1/21)
- ❖ As in young or aged plants flowers and fruits do not come up and in bud and decaying flower or fruit the fragrance is not explicit, similarly in male, shukra before sixteen and after seventy year of age and in female menstrual (blood) and Stanaya (breast milk) before twelve year and after fifty years of age are not visible.

**NIVRITTI**

- ❖ The word notes NIVRITTI is derived from Sanskrit word Ni and Vritta.
- ❖ Here in the present context the meaning of NIVRITTI is understood as end or ceasing,
- ❖ Thus the whole term rajonivritti means end of aartava pravritti or cessation of menstruation.

**Rajonivritti kal**

- तद्वर्षाद्वादशात् काले वर्तमानमसृक् पुनः ।
- जरापक्वशरीराणां याति पञ्चाशतः क्षयम् ॥ सु शा 3/11 ॥
- तद् वर्षाद् द्वादशादूर्ध्व यातिपञ्चाशतः क्षयम्। (सु०सं०सू० 14/6)
- वत्सराद् द्वादशादूर्ध्व यातिपञ्चाशतः क्षयम् । (अ० ह० शा० 1/7)
- ❖ Rajonivritti kal is mentioned by almost all Acharya's without any controversy. According to the Acharya sushrut 50 yrs is mentioned as the age of rajonivritti when the body is fully in grip of senility. Acharya vagbhatta evam Bhavamishra also mentioned the same age of rajodarshan and Rajonivritti.

➤ **Acc to kashyapa**

अर्वागपि यदाहार विशेषादारोग्याच्च पूर्ण भवत इति परिषत् ॥ (का० सं० जाति० 4/70) Kashyapa mentioned that age of menarche or menopause depends on nutrition & the health status of an individual.

➤ **Acc to yogratnakara**

वृद्धा तत्परतो जेया सुरतोत्सववर्जिता ॥ (यो० २० स्त्रीरोग ची० 10/20) Yogratnakara mentioned that women at age of 32-50 years is k/a Adhirudha & after 50 years, she is termed as Vriddha & at this age, coitus is contraindicated.

**Perimenopausal transition-** The years prior to menopause (range from 4-8 yrs) that encompass the change from normal ovulatory cycles to cessation of menses are known as the perimenopausal transition.

**Menopause-** The age of menopause range between 45 to 55 yrs average being 50 yrs Varying from 47 to 51 yrs.

**Premenopause-** Perimenopause is often used ambiguously refer to the one or two years immediately before the menopause.

**Postmenopause-** Is the phase of life that comes after the menopause, when a woman hasn't experienced a menses for over a year.

### Types of rajonivritti

1. Kalaja 2. Akalaja

**1. Kalaja-** If Rajonivritti Occurs at its probable age (ie. around 50 years of age.)

**2. Akalaja-** If rajonivritti occurs before or after its probable age (ie around 50 years) it is termed as Akalaja rajonivritti.

### Probable samprapti of rajonivritti

Vata dosha will have effect all over the female body including all anatomical as well as physiological factors by its characters, ie. “**laghutva**” and “**rukshatva**”.

#### 1. Kalaja samprapti

- ❖ It is for naturally occurring rajonivritti like jaravastha & can be constructed on the basis of swabhavika vyadhi.
- ❖ Kala, vata, swabhava, & Jaravastha as biological stimulants which are common for both jara & rajonivritti
- ❖ These factor lead to - Dhatukshaya: Vata vridhhi Kapha kshaya
- ❖ Both these condition together cause rakta dhatukshaya and this causes updhātu artavakshaya.
- ❖ Due to this factor along with generalized vata vridhi and kapha kshaya. Rukshatva and shosha of artavah srotas takes place. All these things leads to artava nasha and finally Rajonivritti

#### 2. Akalaja samprapti

- ❖ Two etiological factors are responsible i.e. karma or environment and abhigata
- ❖ Under this samprapti etiological factors like Karma or environment will lead to dhatukshaya avastha and again the same samprapti follows, which has already been described in kalaja samprapti and ultimately lead to artavanasha and rajonivritti occur.
- ❖ And another etiological factor i.e. Abhigata will directly leads to vighata of artava vaha srotas and finally Rajonivritti.

Pathogenesis behind various mansik lakshanas of rajonivritti



Jarapakvavastha



Dominance of vata dosha with specific guna of laghu and ruksha



Decreased dravatava of ras dhatu



Leads to uttarotara dhatukshaya and kshaya of updhatu



Artava kshaya



Vitiation of vata dosha, leads to vitiation of manas dosha as well



Vitiation of rajas and tamas dosha



Manovaha srotasang

(Phychological disturbance due to menopause)

Pathogenesis behind various dhatukshyatmaka lakshanas of Rajonivritti

Generalised dhatukshaya



Affects metabolism of dhatu



Generalised vaat vridhhi



Updhatu artava kshaya



Lakshanas of rajonivritti

• Doshaja lakshanas

Vataja lakshanas	Pittaj lakshanas	Kaphaj lakshanas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shirah Shula</li> <li>Hrid Spandanadhikya</li> <li>Hasta-Pada Supti</li> <li>Shabda Asahisnuta</li> <li>Bala Kshaya</li> <li>Adhmana</li> <li>Atopa</li> <li>Vibandha</li> <li>Anidra/AlpanidraBhrama.</li> <li>Katishula</li> <li>Sandhi Vedana.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ushnanubhuti</li> <li>Daha</li> <li>Swedadhikyata</li> <li>Ratrisweda</li> <li>Trisha</li> <li>Mutradaha</li> <li>Glani</li> <li>Yonidaha</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hrid dravatva</li> <li>Bhrama</li> <li>Raukshaya</li> <li>ngamarda</li> </ul>

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To understand the concept of menopause According to the Ayurveda.
- To understand the role of tridosha in menopausal symptoms
- To understand the etiologi & pathogenesis of menopause as per Ayurveda theories,

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

- All references are collected from Ayurvedic classics, commentaries and Modem Literature.

## MANAGEMENT

Ayurveda has excellent solution for a safe and happy transition into menopause. Ayurvedic Treatment for Menopausal Symptoms involves correcting Dosha imbalance with appropriate diet.

- Samshamana therapy,
- Internal detoxification (Panchakarma therapy/Samshodhan therapy),
- Satvavajaya Chikitsa,
- Yoga therapy,
- Rasayan Therapy,

Ayurveda is a great treasure of precious concept like rasayana which can be very well utilised to combat with this burning issue.

- दीर्घमायुः स्मृतिं मेधामारोग्यं तरुणं वयः । प्रभावर्णस्वरौदार्यं देहेन्द्रियबलं परम् ॥७॥
- वाक्सिद्धिं प्रणतिं कान्तिं लभते ना रसायनात् । लाभोपायो हि शस्तानां रसादीनां रसायनम् ॥८॥

(Ch. Chi.1/1/8)

Further Acharya charak has specifically mentioned that use of rasayana delays senescence or old age.

### **Food to help menopause symptoms**

- Plant based foods that have isoflavones (plant estrogen) work in the body like weak form of estrogen.
- Isoflavones can be found in foods such as tofu and soya milk.
- They may be phytoestrogens, flavonoids, antioxidants, Anti-cholesterol agent anti-cancer substances, vitamins, minerals etc.

### **Commonly used food having phytoestrogens**

1. Whole grain -rye/oat/barley/millet/wheat/corn
2. Edible seeds -Buck wheat /sesame/sunflower/pumpkin
3. Beans- red kidney bean/red lentil /soy
4. Leafy greens -parsley /Cabbage) broccoli
5. Fruits- cherries /grapes/apple/pears/strawberry/raspberry/blackberry

### **DISCUSSION**

- Life span of every individual is divided into three stages as Bala, Madhya and Vriddha in our classics. For women, Acharya Bhavamishra and Acharya Harita have again sub classified the life span since child hood till old age. These sub divisions indicate the puberty, beginning and end of reproductive period. Also, during lifetime, all the physiological and psychological changes are attributed doshas in the body. To status of dhatu and doshas in the body.
- Kapha, Pitta and Vata dosha dominate Bala, Madhya and Vriddhawastha re- spectively. Ojas, Bala, Veerya, Indriyas, and Dhatu paripurnata are important factors for sustaining vitality. Acharya Sushruta mentions that these factors attain Sampurnata till 40 years of age and after that till 70 years of life span of a person, there is quality As mentioned earlier the symptoms of Rajonivritti arise mainly due to jarawastha. hence it is evident that Rajonivritti should be dealt on the line of jarachikitsa and the first line of treatment of jara is rasayan chikitsa.



## CONCLUSION

- Dominant doshas of particular stage of life governs all the functions of body; also these dominating doshas are responsible for maximum number of diseases occurring in Bala, Madhyam and Vriddhawastha. For e.g. In Balyavastha, Kaphaja Vyadhi, in Madhyamawastha – Pittaj vikara and in Jarawastha – Vata vyadhi will be prevailing in majority.
- Any change involving the reproductive function in a woman will seriously affect her physical and mental well being. A woman starts her youth from menarche and it eventually ceases with the menopausal stage. Therefore with the ending of her youth she feels that her importance in the family and society has been finished, resulting in mental weakness like anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, fatigue etc, moreover she loses her body strength unable to perform her day to day activities.
- From the above theory we can conclude that various Ayurvedic drugs having properties of Rasayana, Vata Shaman and Kapha Vardhan along with Panchakarma, Sadvrutaa, balanced diet, Yoga, meditation can be helpful for the Management of menopausal syndrome.

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