

A REVIEW STUDY OF *RAJASWALA PARICHARYA* CORRELATING WITH MENSTRUATION, IN PRESENT ERA**Vd. Minal D. Bhusewar^{1*} and Dr. Madhuri A. Pachghare²**

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ABSTRACT

Now-a-days, it is seen that the prevalence of Gynaecological disorders is increasing day by day. Modern lifestyle such as fast food, irregular timings of meal and sleep etc are one of the cause for this. In ancient science, the Codes and Conducts have been mentioned for the each and every life event. While in the Modern Science, no any specific Codes and Conducts are advised. Out of all life events, the most precious and most sensitive life event is the menstruation phase of a female. The quality of the menstruation reflects the reproductive health of a female. Hence, it is necessary to maintain the quality of the menstruation by following some Do's and Don'ts. These Do's and Don'ts are precisely mentioned in the Ayurveda Classics and it is known as *Rajaswala*

Paricharya. Also the correlation between the Modern physiology of Menstruating phase and *Rajaswala Paricharya* will suggest to follow the *Rajaswala Paricharya*. As it is impossible to follow the *Rajaswala Paricharya* as mentioned in the Classics. But it is possible to follow it with some modifications. By following the *Rajaswala Paricharya*, many complications related with menstruation and infertility can be avoided, as prevention is better than cure. Though at present era it is somewhat ignored, but it has still importance in the menstruating female. So, *Rajaswala Paricharya* can be used as preventive major against the complications related to menstruation.

KEYWORDS: *Rajaswala Paricharya*, Modern physiology of menstruation, *Rajaswala Paricharya* as preventive major.

INTRODUCTION

A female is called as *Rajaswala*, during the menstruation period. It is the divine gift given to the females in the form of boon that they can give birth to children.

In women, the Raja (menstrual blood) which is the product of Rasa, flows out of the body for 3 days, every month, after the age of 12 years and undergoes diminution by the age of 50 yrs. In Ayurveda, the Codes and Conducts are mentioned for the *Rajaswala Stree* called as *Rajaswala Paricharya*. Acharya has mentioned to follow this *Rajaswala Paricharya* from the moment of appearance of Menstrual flow, for a period of three days.^[1]

Rajaswala Paricharya

In Ayurvedic Classics, Acharya has mentioned the *Rajaswala Paricharya* as follows

- 1.The woman should harbour only good thoughts
- 2.Avoid bath
- 3.Avoid decoration or avoid to wear the jewelleryes
- 4.Should sleep on mattress of *Darbha* Grass
- 5.Should eat little quantity of food prepared from *yava* and Milk, holding it either in a leaf, earthen plate or the hands.
- 6.Should observe celibacy.^[2]

According to Ayurveda *Rajaswala stree* can be included essentially under the three categories given below –^[3]

a. A person who has undergone *Shodhana* procedure as menstruation is the one of the natural *Shodhana* procedure.

- According to Ayurveda, as menstruation is the naturally occurring *Shodhana* so, menstruating woman is considered as *Shodhita* i.e. a person who has undergone *Shodhana* procedure. In Classics, there are *Ashtau- Mahadoshakara Bhavas* i.e. The Bhavas which should be avoided by *Shodhita Vyakti* are mentioned.

Among these *Ashtau – mahadoshakara* Bhavas, *Maithuna*, *Ajirna Bhojana* and *Ahita Bhojana* are those Bhavas which are also mentioned into *Rajaswala Paricharya*.^[4]

b. A person having decreased digestive capacity –*Agnimandya*

- As menstruation is the natural *Shodhana*, it will decrease the appetite. In Classics, it is mentioned that the Agni of an individual gets reduced during or after any of the *Shodhana Prakriya*.

According to this, *Havishyanna*^[5] i.e. the food offering in the holy fire is advised for the *Rajaswala Stree*. The food offered in the holy fire slowly and steadily flare up the fire. The *Jatharagni* present in the body can be corresponded to the holy fire.

After the *Shodhana*, the *Samsarjana Karma* is advised so that, the *Jatharagni* increases slowly and steadily up to the level, where it can digest any type of food stuffs.^[6] In *Rajaswala*, the *Havishyanna* plays the similar to increase the *Agni*.

As *Yava* and Milk (*Godugdha*) are easy to digest, so suggested for the *Rajaswala Stree*.

c. A person having a wound i.e. *Vranita Vyakti*.

- Similarly, the shedding uterus can be considered as an active wound in the body having indication of menstrual blood. The *Pathya- Apathya* prescribed for the *Vranita Vyakti* are almost similar to the *Pathya- Apathya* prescribed for the *Rajaswala Stree*. These are such as to eat *Yava*, *Laghu- Aahara*, in less quantity which is easily digestible. One should avoid *Maithuna Karma*.^[7]

The *Pathya- Apathya* are mentioned for the person having wound i.e. *Vranita* to help the healing of wound without any complications. Similarly, this is applied to the *Rajaswala stree* (menstruating woman), so that the further complications such as *Yonivyapad* or *Rajodushti* viz. *Pooya Raja* or *Kunapa Raja* or *Granthiraja* which are suggestive of necrosis or pyogenesis could be avoided. If the *Rajaswala Paricharya* is not followed, it may be the causative factor of the major problems such as PCOS or infertility.^[3]

So, the menstruating woman should follow the *Rajaswala Paricharya*.

Modern physiology of Menstruation and *Rajaswala Paricharya*

1. The woman should harbour only good thoughts

The levels of oestrogen, progesterone and testosterone are the three major hormones that control the menstrual cycle. But the level of these hormones is relatively low during the first day of menstruation. The effects of female hormones are so patent when it comes to brain health. Oestrogen levels are closely linked with women's emotional well-being as oestrogen

affects the part of the brain that control emotions. The rise in oestrogen levels helps to suppress the stress hormone adrenaline and cortisol. The rise in oestrogen levels during the menstrual cycle deters the woman from impulsive decision making.^[8]

The higher oestrogen levels, the less impulsive a woman likely to be. During the menstruation the level of oestrogen is low which may lead to impulsive decision making. Hence, if woman harbour the good thoughts, it will help to overcome the instability of emotions.

2. The woman should avoid bath

According to modern physiology, it is observed that there is fluctuation and high temperature during menstrual cycle which is of course not unusual. This fluctuation is due to hormones. Oestrogen cools the body temperature before ovulation. Progesterone warms the body temperature after the ovulation and until the menstruation. During pregnancy body will be warmer until the birth. If pregnancy does not take place, then the progesterone –emitting follicles die after 12-16 days and the hormone level will fall along with body temperature causing the body to shed the uterine lining during menstruation.

During the phase of menstruation, if head bath is taken it will hamper the homeostasis maintained by the hypothalamus. If bath is taken with hot water, it will increase the menstrual bleeding and if taken with cold water, it will stop the menstrual bleeding leading to many uterine disorders.

During menstruation, it is best to limit water treatments such as bath. Since vagina at this time the most vulnerable and open. During this phase, leaves the mucous plug from the cervix due to increase of the channel that promotes the penetration into uterus of various infection and diseases which may lead to menstrual disorder and various problems associated with menstruation and conception, as well as endometritis.^[9]

So, woman should avoid bath especially head bath during the menstruation.

3. Woman should sleep on the mattress of *Darbha* grass.

Darbha is a holy grass having botanical name *Eragrotis cynosuroides*. The experiments with this grass have revealed that this grass can absorb heavy radiations. Also according to Research article “Investigations of Antimicrobial activity and chemical constituents of *Eragrotis cynosuroides* by CS-MS, it is concluded that it has antimicrobial properties.

Darbha is used to treat menorrhagia in folk medicine.^[10]

So, menstruating woman should sleep on the mattress of *Darbha* grass.

4. Woman should eat little quantity of food prepared from milk and *Yava* holding either in leaf, earthen plate or the hands, in order to purify the alimentary tract

Progesterone hormone increases immediately after ovulation and decreases slowly until its level drop enough to trigger menstruation. The main symptoms that progesterone produced are bloating, gas and constipation. This is secondary to the slowing or quieting effect on contractibility of smooth muscles of the digestive system that progesterone causes.

Once menstruation is triggered, prostaglandins are released. Prostaglandins are important in that they cause the uterus to contract to slough off the uterine lining during menstruation. Prostaglandins especially if present in excess can lead to uterine cramping and discomfort.

Also it is possible that higher or excess levels of prostaglandins could be the cause of the diarrhoea and gurgle noises, as it causes increased contractions and motility of smooth muscle of the digestive tract.^[11]

As mentioned in Classics, *Yava* is not heavy to digest producing abundance of faeces and promotes stability. So it is useful to eat *Yava* during menstruation.^[12] Similarly, Milk is sweet, unctuous, refreshing, body-promoting, intellect-promoting, strength-promoting, mind-promoting, vitalises, fatigue-alleviating, destroyer of internal haemorrhage, union-promoting in injuries, whole-some for all living beings. This is the most useful in *Kshat*.^[13]

In this way *Yava* and Milk(*Godugdha*) are easily digested.

So, one should eat in little amount that is holding in hands or leaf or earthen plates which help to purify alimentary tract.

5. Woman should avoid the sexual activity

According to the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (ACOG), the pH level of vagina is 3.8-4.5 throughout the month, but during the menstruation, the rise because of the higher pH level of blood. Therefore, Yeast is able to grow more rapidly. Sexual activities during menstruation may transmit STI like HIV, as the virus may present in the menstrual flow.^[14]

As there is chance of transmission of infection due to sexual activities during menstruation, woman should avoid it and should maintain celibacy.

6. Woman should avoid decoration or to wear the jewelleryes

During the menstruation, there is the lowest progesterone while testosterone production increases a woman's sex drive. Also pelvic congestion, or the heaviness felt during menstruation can trigger or translate to arousal.^[14]

As if a woman has used to decorate herself by wearing jewelleryes etc, this will also arouse the sex drive. As mentioned above, it is observed that sexual activities during menstruation leads to many infective disorders.

So, the woman should avoid the decoration and sexual activities also during menstruation.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

✓ From the above correlation, it can be concluded that in Modern Science there is no any specific Codes or Conducts mentioned for the menstruating woman. While in *Ayurvedic* classics, there are specific codes and Conducts mentioned which is called as *Rajaswala Paricharya*.

✓ As per Modern Science, Menstruation all depends on the hormonal levels of oestrogen, progesterone and testosterone.

✓ These hormones have specific control over the emotions of a female, over the temperature of the body, over the physiology of digestion and also over the sexual act of a female. Though this changes are not unusual but hampers the equilibrium of the health. During these phase, if the factors which aggravate the changes are consumed by a female, it will result into many complications related to the menstruation such as PCOS, infertility, uterine fibroid etc.

✓ Similarly, it can also transfer the infections such as UTI, STI and even HIV.

✓ During the phase of menstruations, the female's mind is so vulnerable, that she becomes impulsive. This may lead to many psychotic problems. Hence, it is always better to avoid the factors which triggered the complication during the menstruation.

But, now- a-days, at the era of globalization it is quit impossible to follow the *Rajaswala Paricharya* as it is mentioned in the Classics. But, it can be followed at some extent such as

- The menstruating woman should harbour good thoughts with the help of reading books which are inspirable.
- She should avoid head bath and also bath with too hot or cold water, but personal hygiene should be maintained.
- She should eat in less quantity and at the proper time when hunger is felt. The fast food, spicy food should be prohibited. Instead she should take milk, fruits, wheat, barley(*Yava*), high fibre diet etc.

In this way, these modifications in the *Rajaswala Paricharya* will help to maintain her equilibrium of health during the most sensitive period of menstruation. This *Rajaswala Paricharya* acts as a preventive major for the complications related to the menstruation and infertility.

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