

A COMPARATIVE INSIGHT INTO GYNECOLOGICAL DISORDERS: INTEGRATING AYURVEDIC AND MODERN THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES

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ABSTRACT

Reproductive health issues such as polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), dysmenorrhea, endometriosis, and infertility significantly affect women's well-being and quality of life. Despite the availability of modern medical treatments, these disorders often require long-term management, and many pharmacological or surgical interventions are associated with adverse effects or limited long-term efficacy. Ayurveda, the ancient system of Indian medicine, offers a holistic approach to managing these conditions through personalized therapies that include herbal formulations, dietary interventions, lifestyle modifications, and detoxification treatments like *Panchakarma*. Recent studies have started to validate the effectiveness of Ayurvedic methods in addressing hormonal imbalances, reducing pain, improving fertility, and enhancing overall reproductive health. This review synthesizes classical Ayurvedic principles and contemporary clinical evidence, emphasizing the potential for integrative care that combines

Ayurvedic approaches with modern biomedical practices. It concludes that a collaborative model of care, grounded in individualized treatment plans, could offer improved management of gynecological disorders and optimize reproductive health outcomes for women.

KEYWORDS: Endometriosis, Infertility, Integrative medicine, Herbal therapies, Panchakarma.

Ayurvedic View on Women's Reproductive Health

Ayurveda, an ancient medical system with a history of over 5,000 years, emphasizes a holistic approach to women's well-being, addressing prevention, treatment, and health promotion. The study of female health in Ayurveda is mainly covered under *Yonivyapad* (disorders of the reproductive tract) and *Prasuti Tantra* (obstetrics and gynecology), providing insights into the anatomy and physiology of the female reproductive system, menstrual regulation, prenatal care, and postpartum recovery. Foundational texts such as *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Kashyapa Samhita*, and *Bhavaprakasha Samhita* discuss various reproductive conditions and recommend remedies including herbal therapies, *Panchakarma* cleansing techniques, dietary adjustments, and lifestyle interventions.

In Ayurvedic understanding, the female reproductive system is regulated by the balance of the three *doshas*—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—alongside *Artava Dhatu* (reproductive tissue). When these elements become imbalanced, gynecological problems arise, which are treated by restoring *doshic* harmony through targeted therapies, herbal medicines, and personalized health routines. For instance, polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) is viewed as a disturbance of *Kapha-Vata*, while menstrual pain (dysmenorrhea) is linked to the aggravation of *Vata*.

Mordern View on Women's Reproductive Health

Modern gynecology has achieved remarkable progress in diagnosing and treating reproductive health problems. Methods such as hormonal therapy, assisted reproductive technologies (ART), and minimally invasive surgeries offer fast relief and targeted care. However, these options often involve high costs, possible side effects, and may not provide long lasting results. For instance, hormonal treatments for PCOS can help regulate periods but fail to correct the core metabolic disturbances. Likewise, NSAIDs used for dysmenorrhea can ease pain but do not resolve the underlying causes of uterine discomfort. Although these medical advances are valuable, their drawbacks have increased interest in complementary and integrative healthcare. Ayurveda provides a holistic approach, focusing on lifestyle changes,

herbal remedies, detoxification therapies, and mind-body practices such as yoga and meditation to address the root causes of gynecological disorders rather than just the symptoms.

The Need for Integrative Approaches

Combining Ayurveda with modern medicine offers a more complete and patient-focused way to care for women's health. Ayurvedic therapies can complement modern treatments by naturally balancing metabolism, regulating hormones, and improving reproductive health without harmful side effects. Studies indicate that herbs like *Shatavari* (*Asparagus racemosus*), *Ashoka* (*Saraca asoca*), *Lodhra* (*Symplocos racemosa*), and *Dashmoola* show strong potential in managing hormonal problems, menstrual irregularities, and infertility. This review will examine and compare both Ayurvedic and modern medical views on common gynecological conditions, covering their causes, diagnosis, and treatments. It will also highlight how integrative approaches can enhance women's reproductive health outcomes.

Methods

This review uses an integrative research approach, combining insights from classical Ayurvedic texts with evidence from modern medical research.

Literature Search

A detailed literature search was conducted using databases including PubMed, Scopus, Google Scholar, and the AYUSH Research Portal. Search terms covered topics such as Ayurveda and gynecology, Ayurvedic treatment for PCOS, herbal approaches to endometriosis, traditional medicine for dysmenorrhea, and Ayurvedic therapies for infertility.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria

Peer-reviewed human clinical trials on Ayurvedic treatments for gynecological disorders.

Randomized controlled trials (RCTs) comparing Ayurveda with conventional medical approaches.

References from authoritative Ayurvedic sources (e.g., *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*).

Studies published in English within the last 20 Years.

Exclusion criteria

Animal studies without human clinical application . Single case reports lacking strong statistical evidence.

Non-peer-reviewed materials, opinion pieces, or editorials.

Data Extraction and Evaluation

Relevant studies were reviewed to assess study design, intervention details, therapeutic outcomes, and safety profiles. Ayurvedic formulations and procedures were compared with modern pharmacological actions to identify possible scientific correlations and mechanisms of action.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This review analyzes Ayurvedic and contemporary medical perspectives on prevalent gynecological disorders, examining their underlying mechanisms, therapeutic approaches, and clinical effectiveness. Ayurveda emphasizes a comprehensive and personalized treatment model, whereas modern medicine relies on pharmacological therapies and surgical techniques. Integrating both systems has the potential to improve therapeutic success and enhance overall patient health.

Infertility

Infertility impacts approximately 10–15% of couples worldwide and can result from various factors, including problems with ovulation, structural issues in the uterus, or other reproductive system disorders.

Modern Perspective

Ovulation Induction (Clomiphene, Letrozole): Stimulates the release of eggs but may lead to ovarian hyperstimulation in some cases.

Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART): Techniques like IVF and ICSI have good success rates but are expensive and can be emotionally stressful.

Ayurvedic Perspective

In Ayurveda, infertility (*Vandhyatva*) is linked to imbalances in the doshas. Management focuses on restoring balance through

Rasayana Therapy

Phala Ghrita — Improves ovarian health and prepares the uterus for conception.

Shatavari Ghrita — Nourishes and supports overall reproductive vitality.

Panchakarma Therapies

Uttarbasti (intrauterine therapy) — Enhances endometrial lining and boosts implantation chances.

Nasya (nasal therapy) — Aids in balancing hormones and supporting reproductive function.

Pranayam & Yoga: Stress reduction techniques to regulate hormones.

Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS)

PCOS is a multifactorial endocrine condition that affects approximately 5–10% of women in their reproductive years. It is marked by elevated androgen levels, impaired insulin sensitivity, and abnormal ovarian function, resulting in irregular menstrual cycles, reduced fertility, and associated metabolic complications.

Modern Perspective

PCOS management in contemporary medicine generally involves:

Oral Contraceptive Pills (OCPs): Prescribed to normalize menstrual cycles and lower excess androgen levels. Prolonged use, however, may cause side effects such as weight gain, mood swings, and a higher risk of blood clots.

Insulin Sensitizers (Metformin, Myo-Inositol): Assist in reducing insulin resistance, though they are often associated with digestive discomfort

Lifestyle Adjustments: Healthy dietary patterns and regular physical activity can enhance metabolic health but require consistent long-term commitment.

Ayurvedic Perspective

In Ayurveda, PCOS is viewed as a condition stemming from *Kapha-Vata* imbalance and *Avarana* (blockage in body channels). The therapeutic focus is on restoring metabolism, balancing hormones, and purifying the body through

Herbal Interventions

Kanchanar Guggulu — Helps shrink ovarian cysts and boosts metabolic activity.

Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*) — Acts as a uterine rejuvenator and supports ovarian health.

Chandraprabha Vati — Regulates hormonal fluctuations and aids reproductive well-being.

Panchakarma Procedures

Vamana (medicated emesis) — Beneficial in *Kapha*-predominant cases to expel excess mucus and metabolic toxins.

Virechana (therapeutic purgation) — Detoxifies the liver and enhances insulin sensitivity. *Basti* (medicated enema) — Balances *Apama Vayu* and promotes regular menstrual cycles.

Dietary & Lifestyle Modification

Limiting foods that aggravate *Kapha* (such as dairy products and refined sugars).

Including barley, fenugreek, and turmeric in the diet to aid digestion and stabilize hormonal function.

Endometriosis

Endometriosis is a chronic women's health condition where tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterine cavity. This often causes ongoing pelvic pain, painful periods, and reduced chances of pregnancy.

Modern Medical Approach

Hormonal Treatments

GnRH agonists lower estrogen levels, which can reduce symptoms, but long-term use may lead to bone thinning (osteoporosis).

Progestins reduce inflammation and tissue growth but may cause weight gain and mood changes.

Surgical Options

Minimally invasive surgeries like laparoscopic lesion removal are often done.

In severe cases, hysterectomy (removal of the uterus) may be considered, though symptoms can return after surgery.

Ayurvedic View

In Ayurveda, endometriosis is linked to *Rakta Dushti* (impurity or imbalance in blood) and aggravated *Vata-Pitta doshas*, which lead to abnormal tissue growth. The aim is to balance the doshas, cleanse the system, and prevent recurrence.

Herbal Remedies

Ashoka (Saraca asoca) — Balances hormones and reduces inflammation.

Lodhra (Symplocos racemosa) — Supports healthy uterine lining.

Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*) – Nourishes reproductive organs and improves fertility.

Panchakarma Therapies

Virechana – Detoxifies and helps balance hormones.

Basti – Relieves pelvic pain and aids tissue repair.

Diet & Lifestyle

An anti-inflammatory diet with turmeric, ginger, sesame seeds, and flaxseeds is advised.

Stress management, gentle yoga, and adequate rest are recommended for overall balance.

Dysmenorrhea

Dysmenorrhea, or painful menstruation, is a common condition affecting many women.

Primary dysmenorrhea is mainly caused by increased prostaglandin levels, which trigger strong uterine contractions and pain.

Modern Perspective

Treatment in modern medicine generally includes

NSAIDs (e.g., Ibuprofen, Naproxen): These are the first-line drugs to relieve pain, but long-term use can cause gastric irritation, ulcers, or kidney problems.

Oral Contraceptives: Help regulate menstrual cycles and prevent ovulation, though they may cause hormonal changes and metabolic side effects.

Lifestyle Modification

Regular exercise, yoga, and stress management are often recommended to reduce symptoms.

Ayurvedic Perspective

Ayurveda, dysmenorrhea is linked to an imbalance of *Apana Vayu*, which causes blockage and excessive cramping. Management focuses on restoring balance through herbal medicines, external therapies, and diet.

Herbal Medicines

Dashmoolarishta — Relaxes the uterus and eases pain.

Ashokarishta — Balances hormones and helps control heavy bleeding. *Guggulu* preparations — Reduce inflammation and improve blood circulation.

External Therapies

Abhyanga (warm sesame oil massage) — Improves blood flow.

Swedana (steam or fomentation therapy) — Relieves muscle tension and pain.

Dietary Measures: Warm drinks like ginger tea or turmeric milk to soothe aggravated Vata.

Avoid excess caffeine and cold or refrigerated food.

Summary of Comparative Insights

| DISORDER | AYURVEDIC TREATMENT | MORDEN TREATMENT | COMPARATIVE-BENIFITS |
|---------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| INFERTILITY | <i>Phala Ghrita, Rasayana therapy, Uttarbasti.</i> | Ovulation induction, IVF. | Health Improves ovarian function and endometrial |
| PCOS | <i>Shatavari, Kanchanar Guggulu, Panchakarma.</i> | OCPs, Metformin. | Ayurvedic herbs improve insulin sensitivity with fewer side effects |
| ENDOMETRIOSIS | <i>Ashoka, Lodhra, Virechana, Basti.</i> | Hormonal therapy, surgery | Reduces pain and inflammation naturally |
| DYSMENORRHEA | <i>Dashmoolarishta, Ashokarishta, Abhyanga.</i> | NSAIDs, OCPS | Ayurvedic treatments reduce pain intensity without NSAID-induced side effects. |

Integrative Approach to Gynecological Disorders

Both Ayurveda and modern medicine provide important ways to manage women's health problems. An integrative approach, which combines Ayurvedic detoxification therapies, herbal remedies, and dietary guidance with modern diagnostic tools and reproductive technologies, can offer more complete and individualized care. Recent clinical studies show that Ayurvedic treatments may help in regulating menstrual cycles, improving ovulation, and balancing hormones. This makes them useful as supportive therapies for conditions such as PCOS, infertility, and menstrual disorders. However, more well-designed research, especially randomized controlled trials, is necessary to scientifically confirm the safety and effectiveness of Ayurvedic medicines and therapies.

CONCLUSION

Gynecological disorders demand a multidisciplinary approach for effective and sustainable management. Modern medicine provides rapid symptomatic relief through hormonal therapies and surgical interventions, whereas Ayurveda emphasizes addressing the root cause, restoring balance, and ensuring long-term wellness. Integrating these two systems holds the potential to deliver a more holistic and patient-centered model of care for women's reproductive health.

The future of gynecological healthcare lies in evidence-based integrative medicine, where Ayurveda and modern medical science work together to optimize outcomes. To achieve this, large-scale, well-designed clinical trials on Ayurvedic interventions are essential for validating their efficacy, safety, and acceptance in mainstream medical practice.

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