

A CRITICAL REVIEW STUDY ON *SHUKRA DHATU* W.S.R. TO SEXUAL HEALTH AND FERTILITY

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ABSTRACT

According to *Ayurveda*, *Shukra* is the terminal tissue element of the body. It is considered as the *Sara* of all other *Dhatus*. *Shukra Dhatu* is one of the “*Dasha pranayatanas*”. There are seven *Dhatus* explained in *Samhitas*, those are *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, *Ashthi*, *Majja* and *Shukra* among all *Dhatus*, ***Shukra* is considered as the *sara* of all other *Dhatus***. *Shukra Dhatu* is made from *Majja Dhatu* as its *Sara Bhaga* and it is in *Kapha Pradhana* form. It starts working from the brain and then it is spread all over the body through *Vyana Vayu* from the *hridaya*. After that its effect is seen all over the body. Every *Dhatu* is located in the entire part of the body, ***Saptami shukra dhara naam, ya sarva praninam sarva shariravyapini***(su.su 4/19). *Shukra* is *Saumya* which is derived from *Jala Mahabhuta*. Nearly one month is required for metamorphosis of *Ahara Rasa* into *Shukra Dhatu*. The qualities attributed for good quality *Retas* are *Snigdha*, *Madhura*, *Shweta*, *Bahal*, *Guru*, *Madhur Gandhi*, *Tailabham* etc. According to

Ayurveda Bala, *Varna*, *Upachaya* in both sexes and besides this the most important work of *Shukra Dhatu* is *Garbhotpadana* and Nourishment of *Oja Dhatu* because according to *Sharangdhar Acharya*: *Oja* is the *Upadhatu* of *Shukra Dhatu*. The function of *Shukra Dhatu* mentioned by *Acharya Susruta*; *Dhairya* (courage), *Chayvanam* (ejaculation), *Priti* (affection), *Dehabala* (body strength), *Harsh* (exhilaration), *Bijarth* (procreation). Vitiating

of *Shukradhatu* shows *Shukradhatudusti* (pathology) in the form of *Vridddhi* (hyper state) and *Kshaya* (waning). This vitiation may lead to male infertility. “*Aharasya param dhamam Shukram tadrakshya atmanam.*” In *Ayurveda*, the quality of sperm (*Shukra*) is considered crucial for fertility. Sperm quality encompasses factors such as sperm count, motility (ability to swim), morphology (shape), and vitality. When the quality of sperm is optimal, it enhances the chances of successful conception. *Ayurvedic* texts emphasize the importance of maintaining a balanced and healthy *Shukra dhatu* (reproductive tissue). *Ayurvedic* practices such as proper diet, lifestyle modifications, herbal remedies, and therapeutic treatments aim to balance and nourish *Shukra dhatu* to support overall sexual health and well-being. By addressing imbalances and promoting the health of *Shukra dhatu*, *Ayurveda* seeks to enhance fertility, libido, and overall sexual vitality.

KEYWORDS: *Shukra dhatu, Sara bhaga, Dash pranayatan, Updhatu, Garbhotpadana, Chyavanam.*

INTRODUCTION

The term “*Shukra*” is derived from *Sanskrit*, meaning brightness or clearness, and is often associated with semen or the reproductive essence. In *Ayurvedic* physiology, *Shukra Dhatu* is considered the seventh and final tissue in the body’s tissue hierarchy and is responsible for reproduction. It is said to be formed from the nourishment provided by the preceding tissue, *Majja Dhatu*, which fills the bony cavities. *Shukra Dhatu* is believed to exist in two forms.

The form that is ejaculated during mating, responsible for fertilizing the ovum and thus initiating **Embryogenesis**. In males, this refers to semen and particularly to **sperm**.

The form that circulates throughout the body in both males and females, associated with the hypothalamic-pituitary-gonadal axis of hormones. In females, *Shukra Dhatu* is sometimes compared to the vaginal fluid produced during sexual activity, although it is distinct from the ovum, which is referred to as **Artava Dhatu**.

The quality of *Shukra Dhatu* is considered vital for reproductive health, and its balance is maintained through diet and lifestyle. *Ayurveda* emphasizes the importance of *Shukra Dhatu* not only for fertility but also for overall vitality and strength. *Shukra* is considered the essence of all *dhatu*s (tissues) because it is the end product of *dhatu* formation.

Its presence in reproductive organs enables procreation on a physical level, but it also forms the basis of sexual attraction, beauty, and vitality.

When *Shukra* is depleted, it can affect libido, fertility, and hormonal balance.

Fertility is the capacity to reproduce naturally and conceive offspring. It is quantified demographically by the fertility rate, which represents the average number of children born during an individual's lifetime. The pure form of *Shukra Dhatu* improves fertility and sexual function in men.

When *Shukra* is healthy, it supports male fertility and sexual energy. It represents sexual power, ejaculation, erectile strength, sperm quality, and overall reproductive strength while an imbalance in *Shukra Dhatu* can lead to reduction in quality and quantity. *Shukra Kshaya* (loss of *shukra dhatu*) can lead to symptoms like loss of erection, premature ejaculation, muscle weakness, skin wrinkling, hair whitening, fatigue, and decreased concentration.

Literature Review

The word *Shukra* is derived from *Sucha+Raka+Kram = Shukra*. The derived word *Shukra* is having multiple meanings such as.

Pumstvam / Paurusham: These terms denote masculinity and virility. *Shukra* embodies the vital force associated with male reproductive strength.

Retas: Literally meaning that which flows, it specifically refers to seminal fluid.

Beejam: This term signifies the germ element, origin, source, or cause. It represents the fundamental essence from which life arises.

Veeryam: Referring to potency, valor, and heroism, *veeryam* encompasses the inherent power within reproductive tissues.

Teja: This term conveys the essential nature or essence of tissues. *Shukra* embodies the radiant energy that sustains life.

Indriyam: It signifies bodily virile power or the power of the senses. *Shukra* influences both physical and sensory aspects of reproduction.

Saptadhatunam Charma Dhatu Shukrah**Tejah Retah Beejam Viryam Indriyam Ityete Shukrasya Paryaya. (Amarkosh 6/2/62)**

As per *Acharya Shushruta-Saptami Shukra Dhara Naam Ya Sarva Praninam Sarva Sharira Vyapini. (Su.sha. 4/20)*. It is the seventh *Kala* and is pervaded in the entire body of living beings. *Shukra* pervades all over body in *Shukradhara Kala* in such a way *Ghrta* is present in milk and *Iksu rasa* present in *Iksu*. When sexual relation of any kind between a male and a female take place, the *Shukra* exudes out like mud vessel containing water exudes water. after that its effect is seen all over the body such as *Sarva-daihika Shukra Sara Lakshan* and *Maithungat Lakshan*.

Shukra dhatu is crucial for reproductive health and vitality in both men and women. In men, it is primarily associated with semen, while in women, it corresponds to the ovum. The quality and quantity of *Shukra dhatu* are believed to influence fertility, libido, and overall vitality. Ayurvedic texts emphasize the importance of maintaining the balance of *Shukra dhatu* through proper diet, lifestyle, and specific herbal remedies. Ayurvedic practitioners often prescribe treatments aimed at strengthening and nourishing this tissue for the promotion of optimal reproductive health.

In *Ayurveda*, *Shukra dhatu* (reproductive tissue) is closely linked to fertility and reproductive health. The quality and quantity of *Shukra dhatu* are believed to play a significant role in determining fertility in both men and women.

- 1. Men's Fertility:** In men, *Shukra dhatu* primarily corresponds to semen. According to *Ayurveda*, healthy semen (*Shukra*) is essential for fertility. It not only carries sperm but also contains vital energy (*Ojas*) necessary for conception. When *Shukra dhatu* is balanced and healthy, it supports the proper functioning of reproductive organs, sperm production, and libido, thereby enhancing fertility. Imbalances in *Shukra dhatu*, such as low sperm count, poor sperm motility, or abnormalities in semen quality, may lead to infertility issues.
- 2. Women's Fertility:** In women, *Shukra dhatu* corresponds to the ovum (egg). A balanced and healthy *Shukra dhatu* supports the regular menstrual cycle, ovulation, and the quality of the ovum. When *Shukra dhatu* is nourished and functioning optimally, it enhances the chances of conception and a healthy pregnancy. Imbalances in *Shukra dhatu* in women

may manifest as irregular menstrual cycles, hormonal imbalances, or difficulties in conceiving.

Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of maintaining the balance of *Shukra dhatu* through proper diet, lifestyle, and specific herbal remedies. Practices such as following a nutritious diet, managing stress, getting adequate sleep, and avoiding harmful substances are recommended to support the health of *Shukra dhatu* and enhance fertility. Additionally, *Ayurvedic* treatments and therapies aimed at strengthening reproductive organs and improving overall vitality may be prescribed to address fertility issues caused by imbalances in *Shukra dhatu*.

Sexual health encompasses various aspects of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being related to sexuality. Here are some key components of sexual health.

- 1. Physical Well-being:** This involves understanding and addressing physical aspects of sexual health, such as preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs), accessing reproductive health services, and managing issues like erectile dysfunction or sexual pain disorders.
- 2. Mental and Emotional Well-being:** Mental health plays a significant role in sexual health. It involves having a positive body image, managing stress and anxiety, and addressing psychological issues such as depression or trauma that may impact sexual functioning.
- 3. Healthy Relationships:** Building and maintaining healthy relationships is essential for sexual health. This includes communication skills, mutual respect, trust, and negotiation of sexual boundaries. Addressing issues such as domestic violence or coercion is crucial for ensuring safe and fulfilling sexual experiences.
- 4. Sexual Education and Awareness:** Comprehensive sexual education provides individuals with accurate information about anatomy, contraception, consent, and sexual pleasure. It empowers people to make informed decisions about their sexual health and behaviour.
- 5. Sexual Rights and Equality:** Sexual health is intertwined with human rights, including the right to autonomy, privacy, and non-discrimination. Promoting sexual health involves advocating for the rights of all individuals to have access to healthcare, education, and resources without discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, or other factors.

- 6. Cultural and Societal Factors:** Addressing cultural norms, stigma, and societal attitudes towards sexuality is crucial for promoting sexual health. This includes challenging taboos surrounding sexuality, promoting inclusive policies, and creating supportive environments for diverse sexual identities and orientations.

Overall, sexual health is a holistic concept that recognizes the importance of physical, mental, and social well-being in sexual experiences. It involves empowering individuals to make informed choices, advocating for sexual rights and equality, and creating environments that support healthy sexuality and relationships.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Shuddha Shukra, which refers to the pure form of this tissue, is essential for maintaining healthy reproductive function in men. *Shukra Dhātu* is primarily responsible for the production of sperm and seminal fluid.

The sexual function and fertility of men depend on the quality and quantity of *Shukra Dhātu*. When *Shukra Dhātu* is healthy, it supports bodily functions related to reproduction and vitality. Practicing a healthy sexual life, consuming nourishing foods, and leading a balanced lifestyle help protect and maintain *Shukra Dhātu*.

Majja dhātu (bone marrow) provides core nutrients for *Shukra Dhātu* production.

Both tissues are interconnected, and their health affects overall vitality and reproductive function. In summary, maintaining the purity and balance of *Shukra Dhātu* is essential for optimal sexual health and fertility. *Ayurveda* emphasizes nourishing this tissue through a wholesome lifestyle and proper dietary choices moreover Sexual health and fertility are closely interconnected. Good sexual health is essential for the ability to reproduce, and fertility issues can have a significant impact on sexual health and well-being. It's important to address both sexual health and fertility in a comprehensive manner, as improving one can have positive effects on the other. Counselling for couples dealing with infertility can help manage the emotional and psychological challenges, thereby improving their sexual health.

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