

## AYURVEDIC OVERVIEW OF PCOS; THE LEADING LIFESTYLE DISORDER

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Stein and Leventhal were the first to describe polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) more comprehensively in 1935,<sup>[1]</sup> With varied clinical manifestations, unknown etiology, complex pathophysiology, and poor diagnosis. The diagnosis of PCOS remains a controversy in clinical endocrinology. In order to create an extensive and descriptive definition for the diagnosis of PCOS, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) criteria came into existence in 1990.<sup>[2]</sup> Then, in 2003, a workshop in Rotterdam formulated a new diagnostic criterion named Rotterdam criteria.<sup>[3]</sup> This criterion requires the presence of two conditions out of the three: (1) oligomenorrhea/anovulation, (2) clinical/biochemical hyperandrogenism, and (3) polycystic ovaries

( $\geq 12$  follicles in each ovary measuring 2–9 mm). In 2006, the Androgen Excess Society (AES) revised the diagnostic criteria. The AES requires the specific presence of clinical/biochemical hyperandrogenism in combination with either oligomenorrhea, anovulation or polycystic ovaries.

The syndrome has gained much attention as a result of its high prevalence and possible metabolic, reproductive and cardiovascular disturbances. There are few studies conducted in India. Studies done in south India and Maharashtra, prevalence of PCOS (by Rotterdam's criteria) were reported as 9.13% and 22.5% (10.7% by Androgen Excess Society criteria) respectively.<sup>[4]</sup>

In the past era, polycystic ovary has been looked at primarily as an endocrine disorder but now research shows that this syndrome spans the lives of women affecting them from in-

utero life until death, leading to several health risks that can impair quality of life. But several aspects of PCOS remain unclear, in deficit of solid evidence, the underlying pathogenic mechanism is not understood fully, the clinical manifestations may be diverse among the patients or evolve over time and the long-term consequences are not clarified conclusively. It is the best known and most extensively studied cause of anovulatory infertility in reproductive-aged women.

In the present scenario of westernization, the sedentary lifestyle and westernized food habits adopted have contributed to the progression of disease.

Modern medical intervention of PCOS mainly includes hormonal, anti-diabetic all having adverse side effects. Surgical drilling has temporary effect. Hence there is need of efficient and easily assessable drug which will be free from adverse effects and drug interactions seen in above mentioned drugs and will treat the cause of PCOS.

*Ayurveda*, the ancient system of Indian medicine mainly aims at “*Swasthasya swasthya rakshanam aturasya vikaara prashmanam*” which means the treatment of the diseases as well as maintenance of the health. PCOS is an emerging health problem during adolescence which needs to be understood as per *Ayurveda*. It has to evolve as a mainstream of medicine in dealing such emerging health problems like PCOS without any adverse effects.

The condition PCOS, it cannot be correlate as a single disease, but the symptoms resemble to the features which are mentioned in various contexts in *Ayurvedic* classics under various headings as *Anartava*, *Nashtartava*, *Artava Kshaya*, *Vandhya Yonivyapat*, *Pushpaghni Jataharini*, *Granthibhootha artavadushti*, *Srotodushti* and *Santarpanottha Nidana* can be to some extent compared with the symptoms of Polycystic ovarian syndrome which needs to be analysed as per *Ayurvedic* parlance.

### ***Artava Nirukti***

अमरकोश :- Three names given for *Streeraja*, :-स्याद्रजः पुष्पमार्तवं<sup>[5]</sup>

1. रजः- रज्यतेऽनेन 'भूरज्जिभ्यां कित' इत्यसुन । रजः क्लीबं गुणान्तरे ।

Here, *raja* means which stains anything.

2. आर्तवः- आर्तवे च परागे च रेणुमात्रे च दृश्यते ।

Here *Artava* means ovum.

3. पुष्प :- पुष्प्यते । पुष्प विकसने ।

*Pushpa* which undergoes in process of folliculogenesis.

4. ऋतुरेव प्रजादयण ।

The secretion which comes out according to *Rutukala*.

**Artava Paribhasha:** The term *artava* can be defined as<sup>[6]</sup>

मासि मासि रजः स्त्रीणां रसजं स्रवतित्र्यहम् । अ. ह. शा. १/७

The substance which is formed from *Rasa* and flows out of the body in each month for 3 days is called as *Rajah*.

*Acharya Sushruta* mentioned that over entire month, *artava* is collected through *dhamanis* in *garbhashaya*, this slight blackish *artava* having specific odour is brought to *yonimukh* by *vayu*.

मासेनोपचितं काले धमनीभ्यां तादार्तवम्

ईषत्कृष्णं विवर्णं च वायुर्योनिमुखं नयेत् ॥<sup>[7]</sup> सु. शा. 3/10

- *Acharya Kashyap* mentioned that *visarjan* of *raja* is done by *rajavaha sira*, it takes the form of *Pushpa* (i.e. becomes *Pushpibhuta*) & its *Pravartana* occurs every month. The process of *pravartana* is under the control of *Apana vayu* as described in the *prakrita karma* of *apana vayu*.

रजोवहा : सिरा यस्मिन् रजः प्रविसृजन्त्यतः ।

पुष्पभूतं हि तदैद्वान्मासि मासि प्रवर्तते ॥ .का. खि.9-17

### **Rajodarshan-kala**

तद्वर्षात् द्वादशादूर्ध्वं याति पञ्चाशतः क्षयम् ॥<sup>[8]</sup> .सु. सू. 14/6

According to *Acharya Sushruta* as well as *Vagbhata*, *Rajodarshan* starts from the age of approximately 12 years and ceases at the age of 50 years.

### **Artava pramana**

According to *charak* and *Vagbhata Samhita*, the quantity of *Artava* is as follows

*Artava*:- 4 anjali

*Antah-fala*- 2 bindu

**Artava Srava Kala<sup>[9]</sup>**

Duration of menstrual bleeding is called *Artava Srava Kala*. It varies with individuals. There is difference of opinion regarding to the duration of menstruation.

The different opinions related to *Artava Srava Kala* are as follows:

<i>Ashtang sangrah, Ashtang hriday, sushrut, dalhan, bhavprakash</i>	3 days
<i>Charak samhita, Madhav nidan</i>	5 days
<i>Harita samhita, Bhel samhita</i>	7 days

According to above references maximum duration of *Artava kala* is 7 days, average being 5 days, and minimum 3 days. If the *Artava Srava Kala* is less than 3 days and more than 7 days it may taken as abnormal.

**Stages Artava Chakra**

The whole *Artava Chakra* of 1 month is divided into three phases;

<i>Avastha</i>	<i>Raja swarup</i>	<i>Kala</i>	<i>Predominant dosha</i>
<i>Rajaswala</i>	<i>Mala-rupa raja</i>	3-5 days	<i>Vata</i>
<i>Rutumati</i>	<i>Prasad-rupa raja</i>	12-16 days	<i>Kapha</i>
<i>Rutuvyatita</i>	<i>Puran raja</i>	Up to the next <i>rajodarshan</i>	<i>Pitta</i>

**Shuddhaartava Lakshana<sup>[10]</sup>**

मासान्निष्टिच्छदाहर्ति पंचरात्रानुबन्धि च ।

नैवातिबहु नात्यल्पमार्तवं शुद्धमादिशेत ॥

गुंजाफल सवर्णम् च पद्मालक्तकसन्निभम् ।

इंद्रगोप संकाशमार्तवं शुद्धमादिशेत ॥ .च.चि. ३०/ २२५-२२६

According to *Acharya Charaka*, the characteristics of the normal menstrual blood is that which possess the colour as that of *Gunjaphala*, *Padma*, *Indragopa* and *Alaktaka*.

**Panchabhautika sanghatana**

According to *Sushruta Samhita*, the *Artava* is *Agneya* i.e., *Agni mahabhuta Pradhan*.

..... आर्तवमाग्नेयम् ॥

**Artavavaha Srotas<sup>[11]</sup>**

आर्तववहे दवे तयोर्मुलं गर्भाशय आर्तववाहिन्यश्च धमन्यः ।

तत्र विद्धायां मैथुनासाहिष्णुत्वम् आर्तवनाशश्च ॥ ..सु.शा. 9/12

The *Artavavaha srotas* are two in number having their *moola-sthan* being *Garbhashay* and *Artavavahi dhamani's*. Any injury to this *artavavaha srotas* produces *Vandhyatva*, *Maithunasahishnutwa* and *Artavanasha*. (Su. Sha. 9/12)

**DISEASE REVIEW****Granthibhoot artav<sup>[12]</sup>**

अत्र दोषाः कफोवायुः वातकफ च । सु.शा. २ / २१

The symptoms of PCOS can be correlated with *granthibhoot artava*, described by *Aacharya Sushrut*.

**Aartavkshaya<sup>[13]</sup>**

आर्तवक्षये यथोचितकालदर्शमल्पता वा योनिवेदना च । सु.सु. १५/१२

A condition in which the menstruation does not appear in its appropriate time or is delayed or intermenstrual period is prolonged as well as the quantity of menstrual flow is reduced or scanty, can be correlated with symptoms of PCOS.

**Charak samhita**

"Central obesity; a symptom of PCOS find its similarity with *sthoulya*, a *santarpanottha vikara* mentioned by *Aacharya Charak* in *ch.su.23/4.*, as the *sthanas* of *medsanchay* are *kati*, *Sakthi* etc.

**Kashyap samhita<sup>[14]</sup>**

वृथा पुष्पं तु या नारी यथाकालं प्रणश्यति ।

स्थूललोमशगण्डा वा पुष्पघ्नी साऽपि रेवती ॥ का.क.६. रेवती

The symptoms of PCOS can be correlated with *pushpaghni jatiharini* mentioned by *kashyap*.

**Bhavprakash<sup>[15]</sup>**

वंध्या निरार्तवा ज्ञेया । भा. प्र.चि. ७०/६, ७

In *vandhya yoni*, the *artava* is destroyed. So it can be correlated with amenorrhoea.

### *Arajaska yonivyapad*<sup>[16]</sup>

अरजस्का इति अनार्तवा | चक्रपाणी

*Aacharya chakrapani* adds *anartava* as symptom. This description seems to be of amenorrhoea because of systemic disorders, where absence of menstruation because of decreased body fat which is necessary for normal menstrual function.

### *Alpartava*

"*Bhel samhita* there is a description about *Alpartava* and *Vikrit artava* in *sharirsthan* 5th chapter, *Sharirvichaya adhyaya*.

## DRUG REVIEW

Contents of *Rajapravartak choorna* mentioned in *Rasatantrasar va Siddhaprayogasangrah pratham khand*, are as follows:<sup>[17]</sup>

*Hingu* :- 3 mashe

*Shunthi, Marich, pippali, Bharangi* :- each 8 mashe

*Anupan* :- *Bramhi* and *krishna tila kwath*.

### *Hingu*<sup>[18]</sup>

हिङ्गुष्णं पाचनं रुच्यं तीक्ष्णं वातबलासहत् ।स्त्रीपुष्पजननं बल्यं मूर्च्छापस्मारहत् परम् ॥

In *haritakyadi varg*, *bhavprakash* mentioned *pachan vatakaphaghna* and *streepushpajanaj* properties of *hingu*.

हिङ्गुनिर्यासछेदनीयदीपनीय अनुलोमिकवातकफप्रशमनानाम्।“

*Aacharya Charak* mentioned the properties of *hingu* as, *deepan Vatakaphashamak*.

### *Shunthi*<sup>[19]</sup>

शुण्ठी रुच्यामवातघ्नी पाचनी कटुका लघुः ।स्निग्धोष्णा मधुरा पाके कफवातविबन्धनुत् ॥

*Bhavprakash* in *haritakyadi varg* mentioned *shunthi*, with *katu ras* and *ushna veerya* it has *pachaniya, vatkaphaghna* properties.

स्निग्धोष्णा कटुका शुण्ठी वृष्या शोफकफारूचीन् ।

*Rajnighantu* explained the *shunthi* as, *vrishya, shothahar, kaphaghna* in *shatapushpadi varg*.

**Maricha<sup>[20]</sup>**

नात्यर्थमुष्णं मरिचमवृष्यं लघु रोचनम् । छेदित्वाच्छोषणत्वाच्च दीपनं कफवातजित् ॥

*Chedaniya, deepaniya, laghu properties of maricha are mentioned in Charak Sutrasthan Also Bhavprakash mentioned the properties of maricha as*

मरिचं कटुकं तीक्ष्णं दीपनं कफवातजित् ।

**Pippali<sup>[21]</sup>**

पिप्पलीमुलं दीपनीय पाचनीय आनाहप्रशमनानाम् ।

*Aacharya Charak mentioned the properties of Pippali as, deepan pachan.*

Also the *Aacharya Sushruta,*

शुष्का कफानिलघ्नी सा वृष्या पित्ताविरोधिनी ।

**Bharangi<sup>[22]</sup>**

रुक्षा कटु - तिक्ता रुच्योष्णा पाचनी लघुः । दीपनी तुवरा गुल्मरक्तजिन्नाशयेत् ध्रुवम् ॥

*According to Bhavprakash, Bharangi with katu tikta rasa has the properties of deepan, pachan and also the kaphavatghna and anulomak.*

**Bramhi<sup>[23]</sup>**

ब्राम्ही तिक्तरसोष्णा च सरा वातामशोफजित् ।

*Raj nighantu mentioned bramhi, tikta rasa and ushna veerya helps in pachan, vatashaman anuloman. Also bramhi included in medhya varg and parjasthapak gan.*

**Krishna tila<sup>[24]</sup>**

कषायानुरसं स्वादु सूक्ष्ममुष्णं व्यवायि च । वातघ्नेषुतमं बल्यं त्वच्यं मेधाग्निवर्धनम् ॥

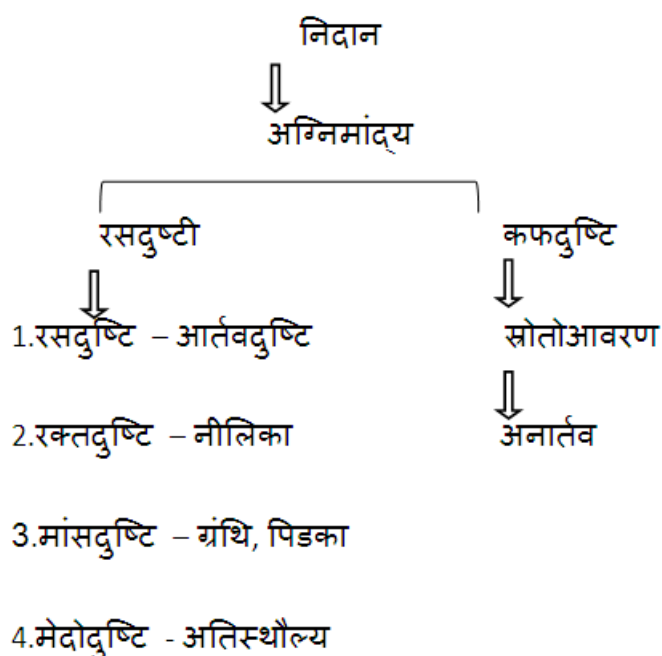
*Aacharya Charak mentioned properties of til as a.ushna, vataghna balya.*

	<b>Hingu</b>	<b>Shunthi</b>	<b>Maricha</b>	<b>Pippali</b>	<b>Bharangi</b>	<b>Bramhi</b>	<b>Krishna tila</b>
<b>Latin name, family</b>	Ferula narthex, Umbelliferae	Zingibar officinale, Zingiberaceae	Piper nigrum, Piperaceae	Piper longum, Piperaceae	Clerodendrum serratum, Verbenaceae	Bacopa monniei, Plantaginaceae	Sesamum indicum, Pedaliaceae
<b>Chemical content</b>	Asaresinotanol, Asafoetidin	Gingerol, Geraniol	Piperene, beta-caryophyllene	Piperene, pipartine	Saponin	Bramhin, herpestin	Sesamine
<b>Prayojyanga</b>	<i>Niryasa</i>	<i>Kanda</i>	<i>Phal</i>	<i>Mool</i>	<i>Mool</i>	<i>Panchang</i>	<i>Beej</i>
<b>Rasa</b>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Tikta, katu</i>	<i>Tikta</i>	<i>Madhur, kashay, tikta</i>
<b>Veerya</b>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Anushna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<b>Vipak</b>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Madhur</i>
<b>Guna</b>	<i>Sara</i>	<i>Laghu, Snigdha</i>	<i>Guru, tikshna, ruksha</i>	<i>Laghu, snigdha</i>	<i>Laghu, ruksha</i>	<i>Laghu</i>	<i>Guru, snigdha</i>
<b>Karma</b>	<i>Vatakaphaghna, vajikarn, aartavajanan, Garbhashayashodhan</i>	<i>Vatakaphaghna, uttejak, Vrishya.</i>	<i>Vatakaphaghna, deepan, pachan, vatanuloman, aartavajanan</i>	<i>Vatakaphashamk, medhya, deepan, vrishya, garbhashaysamkochak</i>	<i>Vatakaphaghna, deepan, pachan, raktashodhak</i>	<i>Medhya, prajasthapan, aartavajanan, anulomak</i>	<i>Vatashamak, yogvahi, medhya, aartavajanan</i>



**Samprapti**

*Santarpanottha nidana sevana* leads to *agnimandya*. Because of which there is improper digestion leading to the *ama annarasa*. This leads to *dhatvagnimandya* which hampers the formation of *dooshita rasa dhatu* which circulates within body. Due to the *madhuratara* and the *ati-snigdha* property of *rasa dhatu*, having close affinity to the *medo dhatu* vitiates it. Thus, there is increase in the *medo dhatu* leading to *ati sthoulya*, and also because of the *avarana* to other *srotas* caused by *kapha dosha* there is no proper formation of other *dhatu*s (Su. Su. 15/37).



Flow chart- Showing *Samprapti* of PCOS based on *Ayurvedic* Parlance.

**Samprapti Ghataka**

*Dosha*: Kapha, Vata

*Dushya*: Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Asthi

*Srotas*: Rasavaha, Raktavaha, Mamsavaha, Medovaha, Asthivaha, Artavavaha

*Rogamarga*: Abhyantara

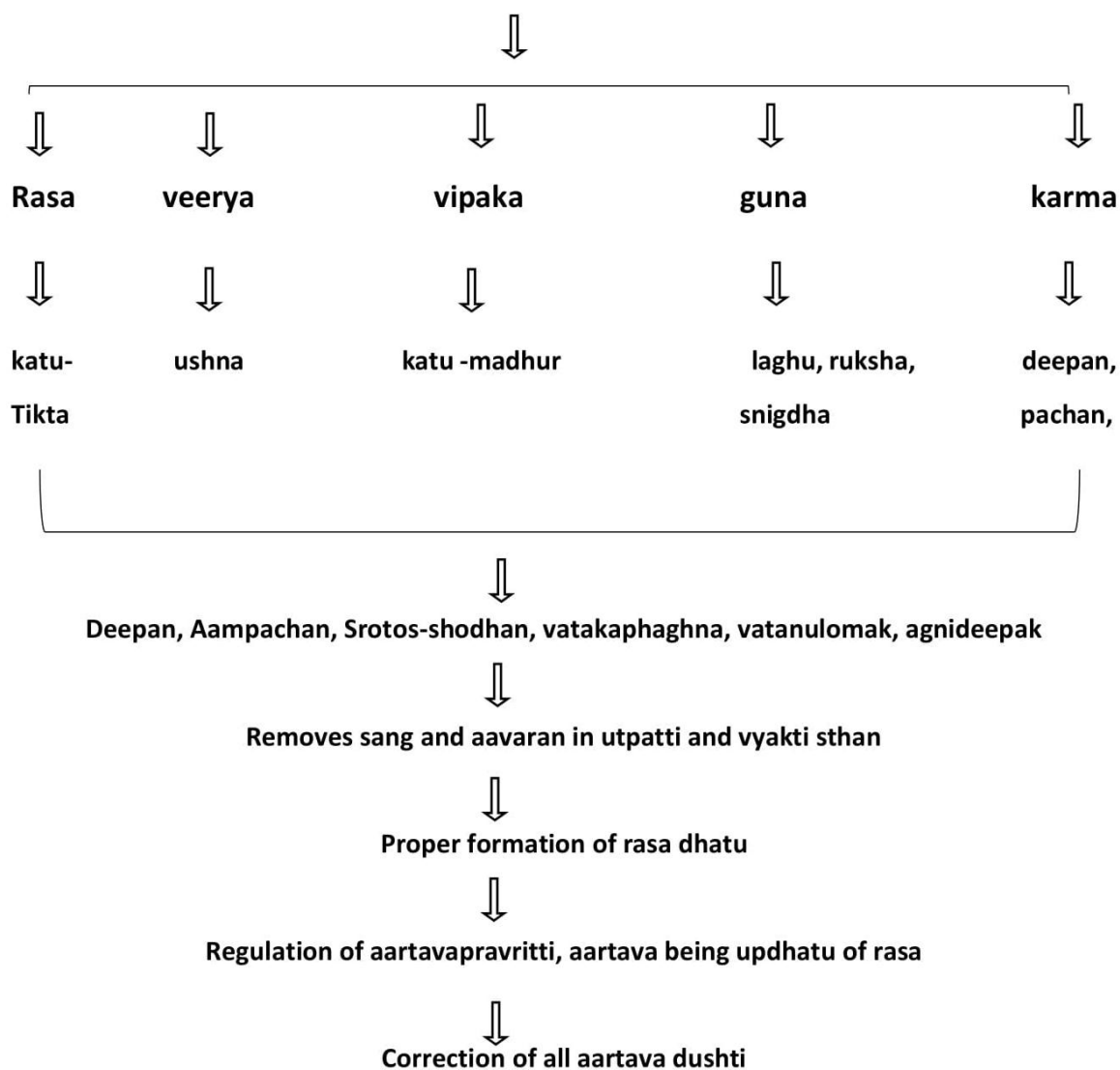
*Adhishtana*: Garbhashaya, Phalakosha

*Vyaktasthana*: Sarvasharira

*Udbhavasthana*: Amapakvashaya

*Dushti prakara*: Sanga, Atipravrutti and Granthi

*Agni*: Jatharagni and Dhatwagni

**Probable action of Rajapravartak choorna:-**

So, as to bring out *samprapti-bhedan*, *Rajapravartak choorna* has all the properties.

**Dose**

2 to 3 gms of *choorna* with *kwath* of *bramhi-krishna tila*.

**Duration**

Before 10 days from expected date of menstruation for 4 to 6 months.

**CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, *samprapti* of PCOS according to *Ayurveda* includes *agnimandya*, *rajodushti*, *ashtartavdushti*, *srotorodh*, *rasadhatudushti*. The *Rajapravartak choorna*, mentioned in *Rasatantrasar* has properties which brings out *samprapti bhedan* such as, *deepan*, *pachan*,

*vatakaphashamak, srotoshodhan, aartavajanan, medhya, vrishya*. These properties will help in relieving the symptoms of PCOS.

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