

Understanding Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome Through Ayurvedic Lens: Bridging Classical Insights with Modern Health Challenges

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Abstract: Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome is a heterogeneous disorder characterized by excessive androgen production by ovaries. It is a multifactorial and polygenic condition. It is also known as Stein Leventhal Syndrome, also called as hyper androgenic anovulation. The incidence of PCOS is increasing alarmingly since last decade. Incidence is high amongst the women of reproductive age group. It is one out of every fifteen females of reproductive age group. It is now increasingly perceived as disorder of changed life style. There is disturbance of metabolic, endocrine and reproductive functions. Hyperinsulinemia appears to play a key pathogenic role in women with PCOS. Going through our classical texts in detail no direct reference involving the clinical spectrum of PCOS was found; instead, the symptoms were explained as a part of various diseased conditions in *yonivyapadas*, *aartavdushti*, *jataharinis*. Therefore, it is necessary to postulate an ayurvedic view for PCOS and also its suitable line of treatment.

Keywords: PCOS, endocrine disturbance, hyperinsulinemia, ayurveda

1. Introduction

Ayurveda has given lot of importance to the *rajapravartana* (menstruation) in women. *Rajapravartana* reflects the metabolic health of a women. *Raja* is the *upadhatu* of *rasa dhatu*. [1] If *preenana* and *poshana* of *rasadhatu* is proper the women menstruates regularly and has a certain amount of menstrual bleeding. To protect the physiology of women she should not be exposed to stress, anxiety etc. But due to today's changed life style, stress, unhealthy food has resulted in disruption of H - P - O axis and this may lead to many condition like Polycystic ovarian syndrome. where we come across a disturbed physiology in her menstruation, like amenorrhea, oligomenorrhoea, anovulation and dysfunctional uterine bleeding. Hyperandrogenism which is clinical and or biochemical i. e. hirsutism, acne, acanthosis nigricans seen in PCOS also polycystic ovaries and obesity [2] Research shows that 40% of PCOS patients develops gestational diabetes also there is greater chances of development of endometrial and breast carcinoma in future. PCOS is such type of disease which resembles with symptoms mentioned in Ayurveda in some *yonivyapadas*, *aartavdushti*, *pushpaghni*, *jataharini* etc. These diseases can correlate with PCOS after going through details of signs and symptoms described in our ancient Ayurvedic classics.

2. Material and Method

In Ayurveda Acharyas mentioned about almost all diseases with there treatment. The equilibrium of *tridosha* is mainly responsible for health and any disturbance will leads to diseases. Charaka mentioned that every disease could not be named. It should be understood by its *dosha*, *dhatu*, *avastha* etc. Hence even if there is no direct reference PCOS in Ayurveda, a detail analysis of *lakshanas* (symptoms), state

of *dosha*, *dhatu*, *agni*, *strotas* will guide us to formulate an Ayurvedic approach for management of disease by understanding its *samprapti* (pathogenesis).

Nidana (causes) of the disease –

Modern medicine has been able to pinpoint a number of important factors indicating the disease determinants, however the exact cause of the disease is unknown. [3] Ayurveda has given number of causes for this kind of diseases under the broad heading of *santarpanotta vyadhi*'s. 80% of PCOS patients will be suffering with obesity, this makes it clear that it is a type of *santarpanotta vyadhi*, caused due to intake of *snigdha*, *madhura*, *guru*, *picchila*, *nava anna*, *nava madhya*, *cheshta dwesha*, *divaswapna*, *asana sukha*, [4] these all *nidana*'s (causes) can be probably compared with sedentary life style, junk food, improper work schedules, stress etc which are consumed by all most all women's in today's era. Also the *rasavahastrotas* and *medovaha strotas dushti hetu* are important in PCOS.

Lakshanas (signs and symptoms) -

Aratavkshaya -

In *aartavkshaya*, *aartava* does not appears in its appropriate time or delayed, it became scanty and it expels with pain in *yoni* or pelvic region. According to Acharya Sushruta and Acharya Ashtang samgrahakara because of abnormal functions of *dosha* the *aartavaha strotas* became obstructed due to *vata* and *kapha dosha* and destruction of *artava* occurs and it is not visualized properly [5] i. e. there are many menstrual abnormalities seen in PCOS like oligomenorrhoea, amenorrhoea

Beejopaghata/ Pushpopghata -

Acharya Sushruta says that in *vandhya yoni* the *aartava* is destroyed and the vitiated *vata dosha* is mainly responsible for this. Here *anartava* is correlated with amenorrhea or anovulation in PCOS.^[6]

Revati -

Excessive body hair especially in female is given as a symptom of *Revati* described by Acharya Kashyapa. In *Revati kalpadhyaya* of kashyapa samhita descriptions of some *rewati*'s are found which are related with amenorrhoea or menstrual irregularities. Out of this the women with *pushpaghni rewati* is having irregular cycle but it is fruitless. Here the female became obese and she is having corpulent and hairy cheeks.^[7] The all symptoms of *ravati* are seen in PCOS patients.

Sthaulya -

It is come under *santarpanjanya vyadhi* in which *vandhyatva* has also be given. *Meda Dhatu* plays a major role in pathogenesis of the disease. Due to *kapahakara ahara vihara* there is *dhatvagni mandya* which leads to formation of *ama* and *medoroga* and ultimately *vandhyatva*. *Sthaulya* causes menstrual irregularities, hirsutism, acanthosis nigrans.^[8] About 80% of women who have PCOS are obese.

Samprapti -**Santarponotha Samprapti -**

The above stated etiological factors gives rise to tridosha prakopa mainly of *kapha* and *vataprakopa* which leads to *jatharagni* and *dhatvagnimandya* along with *amotpatti* resulting in *medoroga*. *Amotpatti* and *agnimandya* causes an improper nourishment of consecutive *dhatu*s and undernourished *aartava*. *kapha* that causes prolongation in *ritukala* and *rutuchakra* (menstrual cycle) and thus resulting in *aartavkshaya*. Thus it can be stated that *kapha* predominance manifests *sthaulya*, growing extra hair, anovulation. *Pitta* predominance manifests as alopecia, acne. Where as irregular menstrual cycles and *kashtartava* are because of *vata* predominance.

Apatarponotha Samprapti -

20% *Krusha* (thin) patients suffers from PCOS. According to Ayurveda the *samprapti* in *Krusha* PCOS patient is different from *sthula* patients. In *krusha vata* and *pitta kshaya* and *kapha avarana* which is responsible for *kshinartava*. There is *dhatukshya* in *krusha* PCOS patients. Thus hampering the physiological production of *artava* leading to *artava kshaya*. In this patients first *deepana*, *pachana* and *anulomana chikitsa* and then *bruhana chikitsa* is done. This *samprapti* is found in *arajaska yonivyapada*.^[9]

Chikitsa (treatment) -

Modern science have explained treatments like Hormone replacement therapy, life style modification, surgery like ovarian drilling etc.^[10] where as hormonal replacement therapy will have its own side effects so there comes the role of Ayurveda. As *rasa* and *medho pradoshaja lakshana*'s are seen in this condition so by *yukti* one can implement the *chikitsa* (treatment) which will be helpful for both *rasa pradosha* and *medho pradosha lakshanas*.

Nidan Parivarjana - *Nidana* is consider as a causative factor for disease. Thus to get free from disease avoidance of *nidana* is necessary.

Samshodhana chikitsa - Before *Samshodhana deepana*, *pachana* and *anulomana chikitsa* is important. *Vamana*, *virechana*, *nasya*, *Ruksha teekshna basti*, *udvartana*, are going to help in large extent. *Vamana* helps in *kapha shodhana* and *agni deepana*. According to acharya Dalhana *virechana* (purgesis) should not be used. Because purgation leads to decrease *pitta* and ultimately *aartava*. But by *yukti pramana* we can use *virechana* in *pitta prakruti* patients also patients having *pitta prakopaka lakshanas*. Chakrapani said *virechana* clears downward channels so it should be used. *Teekshna basti* helps in *vatanulomana*, *strotorodhanashana*, where as *Ruksha udvartana* helps in *kapha medho vilayana*. All these treatment principles act by correcting *agni* and respective *dhatwagni*'s.

Shaman chikitsa - *Agneya dravya*'s like *tila*, *masha*, *sura*, *shukti* are always helpful in this condition.^[11] This *agneya dravas* removes the obstruction of *strotasa* because of their *ushna*, *tikshna*, *ruksha* and *vata kaphaghya* properties, also helps in *pitta vruddhi* and *artava vruddhi*, by this menstrual cycles gets regularized. yoga, meditation, *Pathya* and life style modification plays a very important role in supporting the main line of treatment.

3. Discussion

PCOS is a common endocrinopathy in young women. This is the most challenging disease in present era. Changes in life style, food habits, environmental exposures to toxins along with hereditary predisposition, stress are contributed to the disease. Patient need to be treated for amenorrhoea, hirsutism, obesity, acne and long term effects like Gestational Diabetes Mellitus, Cardiovascular disease, carcinoma. In Ayurveda description of PCOS cant explain in single disease. According to Ayurveda *samprapti ghatak* in PCOS are; *tridosha* with *vata* and *kapha* predominance. *Rasa* and *Rakta* are *dushya*. In *Strotasa Aartavaha Strotas* and *rasavaha* and *medovaha strotasa dushti* occurs. *Agni* is *Mandagni*. In *Strotodushti* there is *strotasang* and *vimargamana* and *Pratyatma Lakshanas* are *Anartava*, *Rajakshinata* and *sthaulya* etc.

4. Conclusion

The symptoms of PCOS found in speckled manner in our classics which should be compiled and involvement of common *samprapti ghataka* and *samprapti* can made out and from that treatment protocol can be made. In treating PCOS, one should aim for *samprapti vighatkara ghatakas* (break down of pathogenesis) as per *dosha dushya samurchhana*.

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