

Ayurvedic perspective of cervical erosion: A review

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Abstract

Cervical erosion is a condition where the squamous epithelium of the ectocervix is replaced by the columnar epithelium of endocervix. In classics *Yoni* is used to denote vagina, cervix, uterus, female genital tract, hence the disease affecting female reproductive organs are covered under the heading of *Yonivyapad*. Ayurvedic correlation of *Garbhashaya mukhagata vrana* in gynecological perspective may be done mainly with *Karnini Yonivyapad*. But the symptoms of *Garbhashaya mukhagata vrana* are also present in few other *Yonivyapad*. Direct reference regarding cervical erosion is not available in Ayurvedic classics. Hence an attempt is made to correlate cervical erosion with few *Yonivyapad* keeping in mind the pathology and symptoms of cervical erosion. *Karnini* & some other *Yonivyapad* like *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja*, *Lohitkshara*, *Pittaja*, *kaphaja Vrana* can be directly correlated with cervical erosion on the basis of sign & symptoms.

Keywords: cervical erosion, *garbharhaya mukhgata vrana*, *karnini yonivyapad*, squamous epithelium, columnar epithelium

Introduction

Cervical erosion is a benign lesion & one among the causative factors of vaginal discharge. It causes great discomfort to the woman due to troublesome discharge and recurrence^[1]. Most common causes of vaginal discharge are cervicitis, vaginitis, cervical erosion etc. Physiological vaginal discharge may be clear, cloudy white and without any distorted smell. Deviation in this normal discharge can be due to menstrual cycle, pregnant status, stress, sexual arousal, nutritional status, consumption of any medications like birth control pills. The diseases of cervix are important factors for vaginal discharges and cervical erosion is one of them^[2]. In classical texts, all gynecological disorders included under the concept of *Yonivyapad*. Most of the writers of ayurvedic gynecological books correlated cervical erosion with *Karnini Yonivyapad*. *Karnini yonivyapad* is caused mainly due dominance of *Kapha* or *Vatakapha dosha*^[3].

After seeing the features of Cervical erosion, it is also has resemblance with *Vrana* specially *rs*, *Kaphaja Vrana*. Due to its resemblance with *Vrana* & its place of occurrence at *Garbhashaya mukha*, it is called as *Garbhashaya mukhagata vrana* though this term is not mentioned anywhere in the classics. It involves *Twak* & *Mamsa dhatu* of *Garbhashaya mukha* (cervix). As cervical erosion causes great discomfort to the woman due to troublesome discharge & due to some other symptoms like contact bleeding, backache, intermenstrual spotting or bleeding so it's very important to pay attention towards this disease. As this disease have certain features of *Vrana*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja*, *Karnini* & *Lohitkshara yonivyapad*. So a pin point link can't be made with one condition only.

Here an attempt is made to correlate the present disease with all the possible similar conditions having the features of cervical erosion.

Aims and objectives

To explore the ayurvedic perspective of cervical erosion.

Materials and Method

Classical literature, published papers & other online sources regarding this subject were studied & the information collected is incorporated here.

Consideration of cervical erosion as *Yonivyapad*

The symptoms as found in cervical erosion can also be compared with some of *Yonivyapad* like

Pittaja Yonivyapad: *Srava Atisrava* (excessive), *Varna-Nila*, *Pita*, *Asita* (blue, yellow, black), *Gandha- Putigandha*, *Kunapgandhi* (smell like a dead body), *Yonikandu* (itching) - No, *Vedana*- No, *Yonidaha*- Present.

Kaphaja Yonivyapad: *Srava* – *Pichchhila* (unctuous), *Varna- Pandu* (yellowish), *Gandha- no*, *Yonikandu-yes*, *Vedana- Alpa Ruja or Avedana*, *Yonidaha*- No. The symptoms of *Garbhashaya mukhgata vrana* are somewhat similar to *Pittaja* & *Kaphaja Yonivyapad*.

Lohitkshra Yonivyapad

Acharya Sushruta says that in this disease there is trickling or oozing of blood from a lesion with burning sensation^[4]. *Dalhana* explains that it is a *Paitika roga* hence all the *Pittaja lakshana* like *Paka*, *Jwara*, hot flushes, burning sensation etc are present. He further quotes others opinion that there is decrease or loss of blood along with burning sensation, hence termed as *Lohitkshra*^[5]. *Lohitkshara* appears to be more similar with cervical erosion as in erosion intermenstrual bleeding or blood stained discharge may be present. Due to association of chronic inflammation with erosion, burning sensation, *Jwara* etc features may be present. As there is also oozing of blood from eroded area in cervical erosion so *Lohitkshra yonivyapad* can also be compared with cervical erosion on the basis of this symptom.

Karnini Yonivyapad

The derivation of word *Karnini* is from *Karnin* which means 'having ears', related to ears, with knots etc. In this

Yonivyapad the presence of *Karnika* is the only characteristic feature, which means round protuberance, pericarp of lotus, small brush or tip of an elephant trunk. On the cervix there may be small red projection resembling sprouts as explained by *Indu*. This is mostly associated with pea sized smooth nodular structure called as nabothian cyst. So the cervix looks like a barbed wire due to presence of small sprouts & small brush. Cervix looks like pericarp of lotus when associated with nabothian cysts [6]. *Charaka* mentioned that due to straining without labour pain/ uterine contraction the *Vayu* gets obstructed by foetus withhold *Kapha*, *Rakta* & causes *Karnika* in *Yoni* which in turn obstruct the passage of *Raja* [7]. *Madhukosha* mentioned that it is a *Manskanda* shaped *Granthi* [8]. *Bhavamishra* says that it is a *Manskarnika* shaped *Granthi* [9].

Nidanas (etiological factors) of cervical erosion as per ayurveda

As the reproductive organs lies in the *Apana Sthana* (*Kshetra*), hence *Dushti* of *Apana vayu* causes disorders of reproductive system [10]. The causes of *Garbhashaya Mukhagata Vrana* can't be consider under one entity but specific *Nidanas* of some *Yonivyapad* like *Karnini*, *Acharana*, *Lohitkshara*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja*, *Sannipatiki* can be included under *Vishishta Nidana* of *Garbhashaya Mukhagata Vrana*. Abnormal *Vihara* is the main causative factor like *Brusha maithuna sevana* (excessive coitus), coitus by a man bearing big sized penis, coitus with a young girl whose reproductive organs are not fully developed yet, use of IUCD, repeated vaginal deliveries, injuries by vacuum, forceps done during delivery, entry of foreign material in the *Yoni*, *Hetu* of *Karnini Yonivyapad* i.e. "Akale *Vahamanayaa*", procedures like D&C, Hysteroscopy, Hysterosalpingography (HSG) etc. All these factors leads to infection & injury to the reproductive organs specially cervix & hence cause cervical erosion.

Samprapti (Pathogenesis) of cervical erosion as per ayurveda

The pathogenesis of every disease starts with *Nidana Sevana* & *Dosha prakopa*. In *Garbhashaya mukhagata Vrana*, *Agantuja Nidana*, *Nidana Sevana* of *Yonivyapad* & *Vrana* causes *Triodosha pakopa* mainly *Pitta* & *Kapha*. These *Prakupita doshas* resides in the *Pakwashaya*. *Nidana sevana* causes *Agnimandhya* which leads to *Dhatwagni mandya* & hence *Dhatu dushti*. Primarily *Rasa dushti* occurs & then *Utrottra dhatu dushti* takes place like *Rakta* & *Mamsa*. All the reproductive organs (*Shroni* region) lies in the *Apana Kshetra*. So *Apana vata dushti* causes the disease of reproductive system. All these vitiated *Dosha*, *Dhatu* & *Apana vata* takes their place in *Garbhashaya mukha* & the symptoms, signs are produced there. Due to *Rakta*, *Kapha* & *Mamsa dushti*, tiny sprouts occurs on the cervix. Due to *Drava guna* of *Pitta* & *Picchila guna* of *Kapha Yonisrava* takes place. Hence *Nija* (internal) & *Agantuja* (external) factors are involved in the pathogenesis of cervical erosion.

Chikitsa (Treatment)

In Ayurvedic texts *Shodhana* (Purifying), *Ropana* (Healing) and *Kaphanashaka chikitsa* is mentioned which cures the disease by breaking of pathogenesis [11]. *Charaka* explains that in *Karnini*, *Acharna*, *Shuska*, *prakhrana* & in involvement of *Kapha vata dosha*, *Uttarbasti* with *Taila* processed with *Jivaniya gana dravyas* should be done [12].

Varti (pessary) made of *Kustha*, *Pippali*, *Ark* (tender leaves/tip of twigs), *Saindhava*, pestle with goat's urine is applied locally. All the *Kapha* treatment should be done [13]. *Acharya Sushruta* also quoted that *Varti* (pessary) made up of *Shodhana Dravyas* (Purifying drugs) should be given [14]. The various other treatment modalities like *Yoni Pichu*, *Ksharkarma*, *Agnikarma*, *Kalka Dharana*, *Yonidhavana*, *varti dharana* are being done in treating cervical erosion since long time. *Udumbara taila*, *Kampillaka taila*, *Kampillaka Ghrita*, *Palasha Ghrita*, *Dhatakyadi taila*, *Panchvalakla Ghrita*, *Jatyadi Taila*, *Murchita tila taila*, *Kasisadi taila* are being used for *Yonipichu*. *Agnikarma* by *Swarna Shalaka*, *Karanjadi shalaka*, *Shalaka* made with various *Shodhana* (Purifying), *Ropana* (Healing) like *Haridra*, *Nimba*, *Amalki*, *dhataki* are being used. Various *Ksharas* like *Snuhi*, *Apamarga*, *palasha Kshara* etc are being used. All these treatment modalities destructs the columnar epithelium and promotes the stratified squamous epithelium growth & heals cervical erosion.

Discussion

Women health plays very important role for the wellbeing of the family, society & contributes to economic growth also. Proper awareness, timely approach to the health centres & management of diagnosed disease, maintenance of proper reproductive health is very important to overcome various diseases. The common complaint of most of the women is abnormal vaginal discharge & cervical erosion is the most common cause. Various treatment modalities like electrocautery, cryosurgery are available which causes various complications like profuse discharge, haemorrhage etc. [15]. So it's very important to find out alternative measures to cure this disease. Understanding of cervical erosion in Ayurvedic perspective & its ayurvedic management is accomplished here. In *Ayurvedic* classics, all the gynaecological disorders are included under the concept of *yonivyapad*. The sign & symptoms of cervical erosion can be contemplated as *Karnini*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja*, *Lohitkshara Yonivyapad* & *Pittaja*, *kaphaja Vrana*.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that direct reference of *Garbhashya Mukhagata Vrana* in Ayurvedic classics is not available. *Garbhashaya Mukhagata Vrana* can be considered as *Nija/Agantuja* & *Twak-Mamsaja* type of *Vrana*. So on the basis of sign & symptoms it can be contemplated as *Karnini*, *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja*, *Lohitkshara Yonivyapad* & *Pittaja*, *Kaphaja Vrana* as a pin point link can't be made with one condition only. The various treatment modalities like *Ksharkarma*, *Agnikarma*, *Yoni Pichu*, *Kalka Dharana*, *Yonidhavana*, *varti dharana* helps in healing of cervical erosion.

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