

Review Article

Panchavalkal kwath yonidhavan in Shweta-pradar - A review study

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ABSTRACT:

Shwetapradar is “shweta = white and pradar = discharge. It can be correlated with Leucorrhoea i.e. Leucos= white + rrhoea= discharge in modern science. It is a common symptom in women, particularly in the reproductive age group. In earlier days it was ignored as a general symptom of weakness, however with changing lifestyles and advances in diagnostic microbiology and advent of screening for cervical cancer by Papanicolaou smears it soon became apparent that leucorrhoea could be a forerunner of Reproductive Tract Infections (RTIs) including Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), and Cervical Cancer. Panchavalkal is one of the commonest therapies for shwerapradar and cervical erosions and is used extensively in current gynecological practice and also has been documented in recent times by researchers of biological sciences to have remarkable antibacterial and antifungal and anti-inflammatory activity hence a conceptual type of study of panchavalkal kwath yonidhavan in shweta pradar was conducted.

KEY WORDS: Shwetapradar, panchavalkal, yonidhavan

INTRODUCTION:

Panchavalkal [PVK] literally means “5 barks”, i.e. pancha = 5, and valkal = barks, in Sanskrit, and in several regional languages. PVK is prepared from the barks of 5 specified medicinal plants from the ficus family and is extensively used for the treatment of women's diseases, specially leucorrhoea, uterine diseases and cervical erosions, and also for wounds and ulcers in other parts of the body.

क्षीरीवृक्षाः हिमा वर्ण्या योनिरोग व्रणापहाः।

The combination of the barks of 5 medicinal plant, namely

न्यग्रोधोदुंबराश्वत्थपारीषत्पलक्षपादपाः।

पञ्चवेते क्षीरिणो वृक्षास्तेषां त्वक् पंचवल्कलम्॥ भा. नि.

in equal proportions are known as the Classical Panchavalkal. Its use is described in Ayurvedic texts Charak, Sharangdhar; Kashyap Samhita; Bharat Bhashajya Ratnakar; Bhava – Prakash and in books on traditional practices in recent times by famous Vaidyas as it is used extensively by traditional practitioners in general practice as well as in Ayurvedic Medical Hospitals all over the country. It is important that the disease is understood before the treatment can be defined hence a brief description of shwetapradar i.e. leucorrhoea is given below.

Leucorrhoea literally means white discharge (leucos = white, orrhoea= discharge), usually implied from the vagina in females. In Sanskrit it is called as Shwetapradar (etymology: Shweta= white + pradar= vaginal discharge in women). The earliest Ayurvedic scripts ie the Atharvaveda or Brihat-trayi as they are known to be described by the ancient rishis, Charak, Sushrut and Vag-Bhatt, have not used the word Shwetapradar but have used the word pradar or yonisrava for vaginal discharge and raktapradar or asrugdar for blood stained discharge or irregular bleeding. The meaning of the word Shwetapradar is “shweta = white and pradar = discharge. Comment (teeka) by Chakrapani and books like Sharangadhara samhita, Bhavaprakash and Yogratanakara have used the word shwetapradara for white vaginal discharges.

Need of study:

The allopathic treatment of leucorrhoea depends on the symptoms, signs and causative organisms. Resistance to antibiotics is well known phenomenon and may occur in 5 to 15 % of cases. In view of the cost, side effects and possible drug resistance with antimicrobials, a scientific evaluation of Ayurvedic therapies assumes prime importance. Incompletely treated, chronic infections can lead to a number of complications in women, men, and in the newborn also if a woman happens to conceive with an infected

cervico-vaginal tract. Major consequences of incomplete treatment,

1. Drug resistance
2. Chronic PID
3. Life threatening conditions- ectopic gestation, septicaemia
4. Horizontal transmissions & vertical transmissions

Hence it is necessary to evaluate complementary therapies for the management of RTIs/STIs with objective criteria. In comparison to other therapeutic procedures of different systems of medicine, Ayurveda has a potent approach towards the treatment of *yonigata shwetastrava* by both internal and external. Therefore, taking into account the complications, the condition has to be actively treated to restore the quality of life.

AIM & OBJECTIVES:

1. To assess the effect of *panchavalkal kwath yonidhavan* in shweta pradar.
2. To study the review of literature through *Ayurvedic* text.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The current study is based on ancient *Ayurvedic samhita grantha*, research journals and various websites.

Causes of Leucorrhoea / Shweta-Pradar:

Leucorrhoea or white discharge is the symptom caused by cervicitis or vaginitis and often both are co-existent. Multiple causes are also common. It is important to recognize the common physiological and pathological causes of leucorrhoea.

Table No. 1: Causes of Leucorrhoea and its usual therapy

Cause	Examples	Usual therapy
Physiological	Physiological midcycle mucorrhoea, pregnancy, sexual stimulation, Intrauterine device Sterile	No treatment required Counseling
Systemic Nongenital Causes	Anemia, Protein deficiency, Congestive Cardiac Failure, Uncontrolled Hypertension	Treatment of the Cause
Non-infectious genital diseases	Prolapse, Fibroids, Ovarian tumours	Gynecological Surgery
Non Sexually Transmitted Infectious	Bacterial vaginitis, Pseudomonas infection, Mycoplasma genitalis (STD also), Staphylococcal infections, Streptococcal infections due to poor hygiene or iatrogenic	Specific antibacterial therapy: Local/ and/or Systemic, Plant extracts
Sexually Transmitted Infections	Gonorrhoea, Syphilis, Chlamydia, Trichomonas vaginitis, Herpes Simplex Viral infection etc	Specific antibiotics, Plant extracts; partner treatment essential

Hetu- pathogenesis- samprapti- Shwetapradar, or white discharge is described as pradar or soma roga in various texts. The shat-kriya-kaal for this symptom as such is not described but it is recognized that there are 20 types of women's diseases and that these arise from 4 basic causes,

1. Defective behavior or lifestyle,
2. Affections of the artava (menses and discharges),
3. Genetic causes
4. Unknown causes like fate, wrath of the Gods are the causes of genital diseases in women as per Charak Samhita.

In Ashtang Hridaya later Vagbhatt specified additionally abnormal diet, having coitus in abnormal postures, excessive coitus (sexual promiscuity) and use of toxic substances etc. for sexual pleasure as causes of female genital disease (yoni vyapad or yoni-roga).

Symptoms:

The primary symptom or Leucorrhoea or shweta-pradara is described as a vaginal discharge

and hence the type of discharge can offer a clue to the Ayurvedic etiology:

- Pittaja Shwetasrava is dominated by pittadushti when there is burning, yellowish discharge.
- Kaphaja shwetasrava is said to occur when there is bad smell, itching (kandu) and thick mucoid discharge.
- Vataja shwetasrava occurs when there is yellow mucopurulent or bubbly (budbuda) discharge and pain (ruja).
- Sannipatik shwetapradara occurs due to vitiation of all 3 doshas. This may cause all symptoms like burning, itching, pain, swelling (shopha, shotha), and may indicate multiple causes.

In severe cases it may be associated with fever (jwara), dyspareunia (maithuna-asahanta) etc corresponding clinically to Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID). Infections including worm infestations may be indicated by jantu.

Sannipatik Yonivyapad can also indicate cancer or arbuda. In recent times it is known from the virological and bacteriological studies as well as long

Pathogenesis:

The main vitiated dosha is kapha in majority of cases and on the basis of clinical features leucorrhoea appears to be disease of vitiation of kapha.

Kapha aggravated due to its own vitiating factor, influences or vitiates rasadhatu of reproductive system, which already influenced by excessive coitus, miscarriage, improper mode of life & dietetics during menstruation & rutu kala along with poor hygiene produces white and painless vaginal discharges. However according to Charaka all gynecological diseases have vitiated Vata (Vata prakopa) as a causative factor

Shweta-pradara or white discharge is a symptom of all gynecological disorders arising due to vitiation of kapha and vata – kapha (atyananda, karnini, acharana, aticharana, sheshmala, upapluta, and prasarvini). Kapha vitiated due to excessive use of abhisyandi substances (food or substances which block the srotas or passages) reaches reproductive system and causes unctuousness, coldness, itching, and dull pain in vagina. This may result from swelling and obstruction to the normal flow of blood and lymph. The woman looks anemic and discharges yellowish coloured unctuous menstrual blood. This is the opinion of Charaka. Chakrapani has equated this with kaphaja asrugdara on the basis that yellowish discharges per vaginum are present during intermenstrual period also.

Investigations:

The following investigations should be done to confirm the diagnosis and for proper treatment to cure the disease.

1. Cytological examination (Pap smear)
2. Cervical Punch Biopsy
3. Cervical culture
4. Haematological investigation: Hb%, TLC, DLC, ESR etc.
5. Serological investigations: VDRL, HIV
6. Urine examination: Routine & microscopic
7. Colposcopy

Treatment:

As Kapha is main causative factor for vaginal discharge. Restoration of Agni in order to cleanse the accumulated toxins and bring kapha dosha back towards equilibrium and tone up the muscles of reproductive organs with the help of rejuvenating herbs are considered main principle of treatment through Ayurveda.

Panchavalkal is one of the commonest therapies for leucorrhoea and cervical erosions and is used extensively in current gynecological practice and also has been documented in recent times by researchers of biological sciences to have remarkable antibacterial, antifungal and anti-inflammatory activity hence a conceptual type of study of panchavalkal kwath yonidhavan in shweta-pradar was conducted. Patients with Sannipatik shweta-pradara were not included in this study.

Table No. 1: List of Ingredients of Panchavalkal kwath

Drug	Latin name	Rasa	Vipak	Virya	Guna	Karma
Vata	<i>Ficus bengalensis</i>	Kashaya	Katu	sheeta	Guru, ruksha	Kaphaghna and Pittaghna
Udumbara	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	Kashaya	Katu	sheeta	Guru, ruksha	Kaphaghna and Pittaghna
Ashwattha/Peepal	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	Kashaya, Madhur	Katu	sheeta	Guru, ruksha	Kaphaghna and Pittaghna
Plaksha	<i>Ficus infectoria</i>	Kashaya	Katu	sheeta	Guru, ruksha	Kaphaghna and Pittaghna
Parisha	<i>Thespiea populnea</i>	Kashaya, Madhura, Tikta	katu	Slightly ushna	Laghu	Tridoshaghna

Triphala Kwath (Decocction of Triphala) and Triphala siddha ghrut (ghrit made up of Triphala) were prepared by ancient method described by Sharangdhar in Madhyam Khand under guidance of Rasashastra – Bhaishajya Department,

Panchavalkal kwath is prepared by ancient method described by sharangdhar in madhyam khand under guidance of rasashastra bhaishajya department.

Yonidhavan:

Yonidhavan Dhavan karma of yoni is term as Yonidhavan (Cleaning of Yoni). It is a procedure in which vaginal canal, vagina, cervical lip are washed with medicated kwath. Dravya used for the dhavana does their work through rasa virya vipaka guna and reduces sthandushti by dosh prakopa. Sushruta and Vagbhata consider Dhawan as Yoni Prakshalan.

Procedure:

1. Proper aseptic precaution should be taken before starting the procedure.
2. Patient is given lithotomy position.
3. The rubber mackintosh is placed underneath patient's waist, one end of which lies in the bucket.
4. Sterile rubber catheter is inserted into vagina.
5. Enema pot filled with luke warm Panchavalkal decoction is kept at 5 feet distance, prathamavarta (Vagina) is washed out.
6. After the procedure the vulva is dried with cotton.
7. Then procedure is repeated on the daily for 7 days.

Mode of action:

The panchavalkal kwath used for Yonidhawana has antiseptic, bactericidal as well as pain relieving action. It prevents the growth of bacterial organism and helps in restoring pH of vagina. Drugs used for Yonidhavan absorb through mucosa and blood circulation. And have beneficial effect on uterus. All the *dravyas* in *kwath* are *kashaya rasatmak*. So it helps to bring vitiated *kapha dosha* to its normalcy. *Kashaya rasatmak dravya* having property of *stambhan, grahi, guna* helps in reducing vaginal discharge. It also contains *kandughan* and *krimighan action*.

CONCLUSION:

- Shweta- Pradar is commonest problem in women in reproductive age.
- Better management of Shweta- Pradar is kaphaghan chikitsa using dravya of opposite guna of kapha dosha.
- Sathanik chikitsa like yonidhavan is a boon in such condition like Shweta-Pradar, helps in maintaining healthy localised environment and preventing growth of bacterial infection.
- The above study shows that *Panchavalkal kwath* is found very useful in treatment of *leucorrhoea*. After using *panchavalkal kwath yonidhavan* symptoms like itching, white discharge reduced significantly.

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