

# Understanding PCOS through Ayurveda and its Different Treatment Modalities

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## ABSTRACT

Women are known to be the symbol of spirituality, strength, love, sacrifice, and courage. The role of women in today's world is changing significantly. The way we act, think and do our day-to-day activities can have significant effect on hormones. Hormonal imbalance causing PCOS in present era is a burning issue for health of women life in terms of Obesity, Infertility causing emotionally weak in the society and mental stress of not getting regular menstrual cycle. In ayurveda we get few references in Kashyapa Samhita, Sushruta Samhita where we can correlate the lakshanas to different conditions of PCOS. Acharya Charaka has said that few diseases condition which are not named or mentioned can be treated based on dosha and dushya involved. So based on concept dosha dushya involved in PCOS understanding of artava kshaya, anartava, nashtartava, vandhyatwa and pushpagni jataharini and treating it through ayurveda is necessary in present era. Treatment for any disease as such explained is Nidana parivarjana Shodhana Shamana Eka mulika prayoga, Abhoutika chikitsa and Rasayana. So, exploring the treatment modalities for PCOS through ayurveda and analysis it for different conditions of PCOS.

**KEYWORDS:** PCOS, hormonal imbalance, infertility, Anartava, Artava kshaya

## INTRODUCTION

Polycystic Ovarian syndrome (PCOS) is rather a mysterious endocrine abnormality. It affects female reproductive performance as well as it has effects on female health. The endocrine and metabolic abnormality associated with PCOS lead to infertility as well as long term health hazards like Type 2 diabetes, adverse lipid profile coronary heart disease hypertension and obesity.<sup>1</sup>

Incidence: Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is one of the most common endocrinological disorders in women of Reproductive age, affecting 5% to 10% of these women. Anovulatory infertility is common consequence of PCOS, and the incidence of PCOS in women with anovulatory infertility is higher at 70 % to 80%. PCOS is associated with a variety of long-term health problems that affect physical and

emotional wellbeing.<sup>1</sup> in 6 globally affected by infertility published by WHO.<sup>2</sup>

In Ayurveda understanding of artava according to Charak acharya (Ch.chi 15/17), Sushruth acharya (Su.su 14/5) and other acharyas. Utpatti of artava occurs from rasa dhatu in the female body. Rasa dhatwagni acts upon the poshaka rasa dhatu and give rise to Stanya and Artava as Upadhatu. (Ch.chi 15/17). Artava is agneya. Garbhoptatti is the Samanya karma of Prakrut artava (Su.su 15/5).<sup>3</sup>

Quantitative kshaya of Artava causes irregularities in menstrual cycle (anarthava), oligomenorrhea (alpa artava). (Su.su 15/12). Artavavaha Srotas viddha lakshanas like vandhyatwa, Mithun asahishnuta and artavanasha.<sup>4</sup>

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Bhavaprakasha has mentioned that in arthava kashya the women have a desire for katu, amla, lavana, ushna, vidahi guru annapana and phalasaka.<sup>5</sup>

Nashtartava is a condition which is described by Acharya Sushruta. according to Dalhana commentary, either Kapha or vata alone or kapha vata together may cause Avarana (obstruction) to artava srotas leading to nashtarhava.<sup>4</sup>

Bhavaprakasha included rajonasha among the Nanatmaja vyadhis of vata. (Bhav. Chi 24:15-16). Anartava as a complication of medo-vridhhi (C Su 21:4)

Insulin resistance and compensatory hyper Insulinemia is one of the major pathophysiological factors in PCOS. Hyperandrogenism and other associated symptoms in PCOS develop due to insulin resistance. It can be considered as a prediabetic stage. Prameha poorvarupa like Anganam shithilam (flabbiness of body), Ghanangata (obesity), Keshavridhhi (hirsutism), Asye madhuryam (sweet taste in mouth) are seen among PCOS patients. This insulin resistance on long term leads to type 2 diabetes, dyslipidaemia, cardiovascular disease etc

Clinical symptoms of PCOS shows similarity with Pushpagni Jataharini described by Kashyapa Samhita Revathi kalpa adhya. Pushpagni, Revati, although have regular cycles it is fruitless. She has cheeks with excessive hair growth. This may be considered as the clinical manifestation of hyperandrogenism and anovulation.<sup>6</sup>

### NECESSITY FOR UNDERSTANDING IT THROUGH AYURVEDA AND GIVING TREATMENT BASED ON THAT UNDERSTANDING

Despite the magnitude of the issue, solutions for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of infertility – including assisted reproductive technology such as in vitro fertilization (IVF) – remain underfunded and inaccessible to many due to high costs, social stigma and limited availability.

Millions of people face catastrophic healthcare costs after seeking treatment for infertility, making this a major equity issue and all too often, a medical poverty trap for those affected,” said Dr Pascale Allotey, Director of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research at WHO, including the United Nations’ Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP). “Better policies and public financing can significantly improve access to treatment and protect poorer households from falling into poverty as a result.”<sup>2</sup>

In modern the medicine fails to combat PCOS and still a research topic. In Modern the medicines usually

prescribed are oral contraceptive pills from 2<sup>nd</sup> day of menses till next cycle and continued for PCOS which usually the patients fails to start the pill from 2<sup>nd</sup> day or forget to take it on timely and gets bored of continues taking the 21 pills and antidiabetic drug like metformin for insulin resistance .In this only the symptomatically treatment will be given but the root cause and factors causing the PCOS are not tackled Charaka acharya has told to treat the disease based on dosha dushya involved in it so based on this understanding the doshas involved in PCOS condition and Nidana parivarjana as a first line of treatment plays a important role in treating it .

Apart from this infertility cases due to PCOS are difficult to conceive through modern medication. Ovulation induction, follicular studies and IUI, in some cases ovum retrieval and IVF which are expensive which all people cannot afford it, but is ayurveda special drugs are mentioned for deha shodhana like panchakarmas garbhashaya shodhana, beeja and beeja granti shodhana by Uttara basti and artava janana drugs and few rasayanas are also mentioned which will be cost effective and simple procedures through this PCOS can be managed and infertility can be treated.

So, the understanding of PCOS based on ayurvedic concept and treating it becomes the necessity in present era.

### NIDANA OF PCOS

#### Ahara

Intake of excess *Abhishyandi Ahara* leading to *Kapha Medo Dushti* and *Srotorodha*. Here the movement of *Vata* especially *Apana vata* got obstructed by the increased *Kapha* which in turn obstructed the natural functioning of *Artava* also.

Quality - currently the food is chemically processed which gives less nutrients to the body, junk foods like pizza, panipuri, Chinese foods and processed food items like bread biscuits and instant packed foods. Leading cause for *rasa dushti*. Having tea after breakfast and meals causes decrease in digestion. *Abhishandya ahara* like curd pickle alcohol smoking.

Quantity and Time- currently the food intake time is not according to biological clock, usually it is said that our digestion i.e. *Agni* is compared to sun as the sun rising *agni* increases and decreases as sun sets. but today’s generation due to work patterns having heavy food during night time is in practice very *agni* is not capable to digest it and junk foods in the evening. Early morning where *agni* is good having tea or beverages at that time cause decrease in appetite and having tea or beverages after breakfast and meals also decreases the digestion process.

### *Sarveroga mandagni api*

Body metabolism has also important role in ovulation. disturbance in it causes anovulation.

Thyroid hormone has an important role in the metabolism of the body as well as sex hormone balance Hyper and Hypothyroidism both are responsible for anovulation.

### **Vihara**

No physical exercise cause kapha vrddhi which is nidana for prameha too and causes medho vriddhi. Excessive physical exercises like gym causes vata vriddhi. Diva Swapna causes kapha vriddhi and Ratri jagarana causes vata vriddhi both dosha vriddhi is seen in PCOS

Pulsatile release of GnRH hormone during night sleep. Obesity is *associated with an increased risk of developing insulin*

### **Manasika**

Earlier lifestyle of women was stress free compared to today's women Stress of duty and the responsibilities of housewife gives here stress and strain. Decrease in GnRH pulse due to stress and strain but in PCOS there is increase in GnRH pulse that is selective abnormal increase in LH and FSH

But in ayurveda PCOS is not directly mentioned as it's due to present day life style which has an impact on irregular menstrual cycles in women compared to previous life style. Where dinacharya, rutucharya and aharavishesha ayatana has been well followed than currently, where awaking is late which causes kapha vriddha and intake of food which is spicy, junk foods and viruddha aharas in hurry, which gets improperly digested causing ama. Mentally stressful work which has an impact on mind, night awaking and day sleeping which causes vata kshaya and kapha vriddhi which is totally opposite to biological clock the hormones are sensitive and pulsatile in nature gets varied.

### **SAMPRAPTI OF PCOS**

The blood organized for whole month by the dhamanis (uterine vessels and their tributaries) will be expelled by the action of vata. We can consider *Kapha and Vata as Dosha, Rasa,*

*Rakta, Mamsa, Medas as Dushya.*

1. Updhatu of rasa are artava and stanya. Mala of rasa dhatu is kapha which is completely diff from that of prakruta kapha dosha kapha vriddi – leading to medo vriddi prameha and artava kshaya – PCOS
2. For flow of menstrual blood vata anulomana gati is important Avarna of vata causing nashtartava

(amenorrhoea) Usually, patient complaints of even constipation if there is vata vitiation.

nidana – vata vitiated – vata Anuloma gati is hampered (amenorrhoea)

Nidana – mandagni – improper metabolism of sara dhatu – leading to decreased or less formation of sara bhaga i.e. artava scanty bleeding. rasa – Rakta endometrium is not properly formed less bleeding. Hormones are affected anovulation) – kapha and vata dushti –

Anarthava – PCOS.

Ayurveda perspective of follicle development and ovulation.<sup>8</sup>

The process of development and enlargement follicles is said to be due to Kapha, as one of the functions of Kapha is upachaya which means development. Differentiation or separation and then expulsion are the functions of Vata. So, here Vata is responsible for the rupture of follicle and proper outcome of menstrual cycle and ovulation. These are the normal functioning of Doshas.

In PCOS due to vitiation of Kapha, there is no proper development of follicles and due to vitiated Vata premature luteinisation of follicles occurs and thus causes anovulation. Here, the function of Pitta is somewhat suppressed by Vata and Kapha, so there is reduced rate of aromatization (Pitta being not enough to convert increased androgens into oestrogens causing androgen excess) and no maturation of follicles occurs. Hormonal imbalance first disturbs ovarian cycle which later on reflects by irregular menstrual cycle.

### **LAKSHANA**

Lakshana of dosha Dushti

Vata – anartava, vibandha(constipation), udavartini yonivyapt, artava kshaya

Kapha – prameha, granti, sthoulya

Lakshan of Dushya Dushti –

Rasa - Aruchi, Gouravam, Tandraagninasa, Angamarda, Srotorodha, Klaibya;

Rakta - Kushta, Pidaka, Asrigdar

Mamsa - Granthi

Meda - Prameha Poorvarooopa

Asthi - Keshaloma

Majja - Gaurava

Shukra - Klaibya, Garbhasrava.



## TREATMENT MODALITIES

### 1. NIDANA PARIVARJANA FOR PCOS IN CURRENT ERA

Nidana parivarjana is utmost important than the treatment aspect Su.su 1<sup>st</sup> chapter. If nidana is not stopped giving treatment goes waste. In present era patients are ready taking the treatment but when come to changing of their lifestyle pattern it is hard to do so it is a paramount to change their sedentary life style it may be slow or it may take long time but we must have to change their life style. eg - gradual change in their weight is half treatment done, avoiding sleep during day time and having health food.

### 2. SAMPRAPTI VIGHATANA CHIKITSA

Vata- vata anulomana drugs like haritaki churna, triphala churna

Kapha- amalaki churna, trikatu churna

Vata kaphahara – varunadi kashya, regular exercise and proper healthy diet

Mandagni – agni Deepana – agnitundi vati, chitrakadi vati

Rasa dhatu dushti – Vamana Basti

Raktha or pitta dushti (acne) rakta shodaka Kashaya, pitta vardaka drugs like tila, Rajapravartini vati

Medo dushti – Sthoulya hara chikitsa like udvartana, Varunadi Kashaya, Chandraprabha vati

Beeja dushti – arthava janana drugs and shodhaka drugs, Pushapadhanva rasa, Nashtapushpantaka rasa, chaturbeeja churna, Rajapravartini vati.

Garbhashya shodana – Uttara basti with lashuna taila, phala ghruta

### 3. SHODHANA THERAPIES

**Probable mode of action of Panchkarma in PCOS<sup>9</sup>**  
Basti improves quality of Artava by regulating Apan Vayu thus regulate menses, prevent dysmenorrhea, clears Artava Vaha Srotas and reduces symptomatic manifestation related to the PCOS. Basti removes obstructions in the path of Vata dosha therefore reduce pathological severity of female genital disorders.

Virechana eliminates toxins and control vitiation of Pitta and maintain functioning of hormonal system therefore helps to manage diseases originated from hormonal imbalances.

Vaman is very effective to removes vitiated Kapha. It is well evident that aggravation of Kapha can leads obesity which further trigger pathogenesis of PCOS therefore pacification of Kapha through Vaman help to limit progression of PCOS. Moreover, Vaman acts on Thyroid and stimulates Pancreas therefore

maintain normal level of hormones and decreases chances of PCOS

Nasya - It stimulate olfactory nerves and limbic system, hypothalamus, GnRh neurons, regularizing GnRh pulsatile secretion and regularize normal menstrual cycle. For Nasya Narayana Taila, Shatapushpa taila, Shatavari ghruta can be used.

Pratimarsha nasya can also be performed.

Uttar-Basti - it Purify and clears the Artava Vaha Srotas, pacifies vitiated Apana Vayu and Improve follicular maturity. For Uttar Basti Dhanvantara Taila, Bala Taila, Phala Ghrita can be used

### 4. SHAMANA OUSHADIS

To induce menses – Rajapravartini vati, Tila guda kashaya

For scanty bleeding- lashuna vati, trikatu churna

To regularise the periods - CP vati, kumaryasava, Ashoka arishta ashwagandha choorna, shatavari pratimarsha nasya, Dashamoola arishta.

For infertility – shatavari ghrutapana, phala ghrita, Swarnaksheeri swarasa

For obesity – triphala guggulu, amalaki churna, shilajatvadi vati, chandraprabhavati, varunadi kashaya, navaka guggulu.

For insulin sensitivity – Nishamalaki churna, shilajatvadi vati, chandraprabha vati.

For thyroid – Kanchanara guggulu, Chitrakadi vati, Kaishora guggulu.

For androgen excess – Guduchi, swarnaksheeri leaf extract

### 5. EKA MULIKA PRAYOGAS

Lashuna, shatavari, shatapusha, swarnaksheeri, Tila kanchanara, haritaki, lodra, Ashoka, avartaki, methika, patola.

### 6. YOGA AND MEDITATION

Setu bandhasana, Bhujangasana, Dhaurasana, Janu siraasana, Surya namaskara, Shalabhasana, baddhakonasana( butterfly exercise)

Pranavam [OM] is having the the combinations of Aa, Uu and Ma. The Pranavam is entirely submerged in these 3 letters Pranava sadhana in which the omkara chanting is done which has effect on the thyroid and CNS system which regularise the hormones and gives zeal to work and reduces stress.<sup>10</sup>

### 7. RASAYANA

Phala ghrita, kalyanaka ghrita, amalaka rasayana, dhataki avalehya, shatavari guda, jeeraka rasayana, soubhagya shunti paka.

## 8. PATHYA AND APATHYA

In Vitiated Artava, Pathya Ahara is Anna, Rakta Shali, Yava, Madya, Mamsa and Pitta vardhak ahara.

In Nashta artava /Anartava, Pathya Ahara is Matyasya, Kulatha, Amla, Tila, Masha, Sura, Gomutra, Utkshipta, Dahi, Shukta. In Pradar / Artava Vridhi, Pathya Aahara is according to Raktapitta like Vasa.

APATHYA- masha, navanna, dadhi, guda, and gudavaikruta.

## CONCLUSION

PCOS is lifestyle disorder which is mainly due to hormonal imbalance. Further complications of PCOS leading to infertility, Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis. So, the treatment modalities of PCOS through modern is OC pill and metformin. Through Ayurvedic the treatment is from the root cause that is Deha shodana, Beeja Shodana by different Panchakarma procedure, shamana aushadas for irregularising the periods and managing the conditions of PCOS, Yoga and meditation for maintaining the life stress rasayana for rejuvenation of the total health.so thus concluding PCOS ayurvedic understanding and its different treatment modalities.

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