

Modern Life Style (Mithyachaara) Effect On Female Reproductive Health: An Ayurvedic Perspective

***Vd. Sudarshan S. Kale**

Assi. Professor, Department of swasthavritta,
SGMS Ayurved College, Pusad

Abstract

Change is the basic characteristic of evolution. Changes became adaptation & tools for survival. However when these changes occur too fast as desired by evolutionary requirement, these assets may become liabilities. Not only have the occupation, activity, dietary habits changed, but time has also influenced priorities, mortalities & society as a whole. Change in lifestyle which was requirement of time has touched all dimension of human health and specially woman's health. These factors are independent & influence each other in multiple ways.

Today, women have more responsibility; they manage careers with their household responsibilities. Due to this physical & mental stress, they neglect their own health. Changes in dietary habits & reduced activity are the main factors for obesity and PCOS. Obesity further leads to infertility, hirsutism and worsening body shape, hence get stressed follow unhealthy dietary habits, difficult excessive schedule & unnecessary cosmetics procedure.

In Ayurveda different types of yonivyapada are described and mentioned. The main cause of yonivyapada is mithyaahar-vihara and which is similar to today's modern lifestyle. That's why the study was done to review the literature about life style changes & its effect on reproductive health.

Keywords – Yonivyapada, mithyaahara-vihara. Female reproductive health, ayurveda and female health

Introduction –

In today's modern era, lifestyle of women is changed due to modernization. Due to changed lifestyle, responsibilities of woman are also changed. They manage household and carrier responsibilities. That's why their physical activities and mental stress is also increased. Due to changed lifestyle, daily routine of women is also disturbed. Women are working hand in hand with the men of the society. They know their health problems but they have no time to take care of them. Hence they neglect their own health. Changed dietary habits, reduced activity (lack of exercise) and over physical activity are the main factors which are responsible for producing female reproductive and lifestyle disorders.

Aims And Objectives-

- To study the effect of modern life style on female reproductive health with consideration to mithyachaara.

Material And Methods –

Three major classics Charaka samhita, shushruta samhita and astanga hrudaya of vagbhata has been searched for mithyachaara and female reproductive health and correlated with the modern changed lifestyle.

In Ayurveda, there is a brief description about Yonivyapada i.e. gynecological/reproductive disorders and majority of yonivyapadas are occurs mainly due to vitiated vata dosha. Acharya Charaka said that Mithyachara is one of the most important causative factors for yonivyapada. Mithyachara means Mithyahaara (improper diet) and Mithyavihara (improper life style) [1]. There are various female reproductive health disorders which are caused due to consumption of improper diet & improper lifestyle.

Mithyavihara can be defined as the improper actions related to body, speech and mind [2]. Disease, excessive walking, excessive sexual indulgence, excessive intake of alcohol, not following rutucharya properly, improper panchakarma therapy, travelling on bike, jumping and fasting can be included under Mithyavihar related to body. They vitiate vata and produce different kind of diseases. Wrong utilization of mana's include action like not following codes of conducts mentioned in sadvritta, insulting elders, teachers, jealousy, anger, hatred etc which have an impact on mind [2].

Abusing others, speaking in harsh ways, speaking lies, back biting, always blaming others, quarrelling without obvious reasons etc come under improper action regarding speech. This again indirectly has an impact on mind, which in turn affects the body and may lead to disease [3].

Factors which are responsible for reproductive disorders-

Mithyahaar	Mithyavihar	Other
Viruddhaahar(wrong Combination)	Over physical activity	Psychological stress
Abnormal dietary habits	Physical inactivity	Carrier expectations
Processed food	Mental stress	Competition
Under nutrition	Improper sleep	Bad use of social media like internet, TV.
Over nutrition	Mithya rajaswala paricharya (Improper menstrual regimen)	Overuse of oral contraceptive pills
Anashana (fasting)	Suppression of natural urges	Use of fertilizers and pesticides in farming
	Non suppression of suppressible urges	Pollution
		Overuse of oral contraceptive pills
		Late marriage, early marriage

1. Aaharcharya (dietary habits)

There are different types of meal such as *Samashana*, *Vishmashana*, *Adhyashana*. When wholesome and unwholesome ingredients of food are taken together, then it is called as *samashana*. *Vishmashana* (irregular food) means if the food is too much or too little in quantity and if it is taken too early or too late. *Adhyashana* (overeating) means if the food is taken again, even before the previous meal is digested. All the above mentioned three types of meal cause death or give rise to serious diseases [4].

Now a day's most of the urban women are working outside the home, hence generally they take their food outside and it's not possible to carry their meal every day. It's not possible for them to prepare their meal everyday and as their male counterpart generally hesitant to prepare meal or is busy. They have to depend on the restaurant food, junk food or stale food.

Overeating or eating heavy food, oily food, non fresh food (packed food), eating wrong combination of food (*viruddhahara*), excessive eating of sweet, salty, fermented food, stress, anxiety, worries are the causes which are responsible for *Rasavaha strotas dushti* [5]. Due to *Rasa dhatu dushti* later *dhatu* and *upadhatu* are not properly nourished. *Raja (artava)* which is *upadhatu* of *Rasa dhatu* also gets improperly nourished which further leads to reproductive disorders.

1. Mithya rajaswala paricharya (Improper Menstrual regimen)

Ayurveda classics have given some rules about diet and lifestyle during menstruation cycle, which is called as *Rajaswala paricharya*. These rules are mainly focused on female hygiene and proper rest during menses which are utmost important. If these are not followed during menses, then it can cause menstrual abnormalities and female reproductive disorders. In recent era, women are engaged in restless working professions, so taking rest is compromised issue during menstruation[6], which is responsible for *vata* vitiation.

2. Adharaniya vega na dharana (Non-suppression of suppressible urges)

The wise person should suppress or control the urges of the *manah* / mind are *Lobha*(greed), *Bhaya* (fear), *Shok* (grief), *Krodha* (anger), *Mana* (feeling high himself and his qualities), *Nairlajja* (shamelessness), *Irsha* (jealousy), *Atirag* (craving). *Charaka* said that, if you are desirous of good health then one should control suppressible urges [7]. If fails to suppress these urges, will remain unhappy and will be diseased. But many times it is beyond our control to hold these urges. The excessiveness in these mental urges create the stress(*manah kshobha*) which vitiate the *vata dosha* and further it can lead to menstrual abnormalities.

3. Dharana of adharaniya vega(Suppression of natural urges)

"Roga sarve api jaayante vegodeerandharne A. H. Su. 4/22"

The diseases are produced due to the forceful creation and suppression of natural urges [8]. Many a times due to being busy, lack of lavatory facilities and shyness the natural urges of defecation and urination are suppressed by women. Frequently suppressing the natural urges, can lead to vitiation of *vata* and different types of diseases which are categorized under *udavarta* according to *Sushruta*[9]. This *udavarta* directly and indirectly creates the menstrual abnormalities.

4. *Mithya Nidra* (Improper sleep)

Human's sleep when the mind is exhausted and when sense organ retracts from their objects. Sleep is caused by *Kapha* and *Tama dosha*. Increased *Vata* and *Pitta* can cause lack of sleep. *Vata* produces confusion in mind and *pitta* produces alertness or excessive energy in the mind which decreases the sleep. Now a day's many people's are busy in watching TV, surfing internet and using mobile phones at late night, that's why they sleep at late night [10]. Shift duties, late night sleeping habits, use of mobile and watching television while sleeping vitiate the *vata* and *pitta dosha* which in turn reduces the sleep quality. Improper sleep can lead to hormonal imbalance and lead to menstrual abnormalities.

Charaka says that *Sukha* (happiness) & *Dukha* (misery), *Pushti* (corpulence) & *Karshya* (leanness), *Bala* (strength) & *Abala* (weakness), *vrushta* (potency) and *kleebata* (impotency), *Jyana* (intellect) & *Ajyana* (dullness), *Jivana* (life) & *Mrityu* (death), everything is dependent on wholesome or unwholesome sleep [11].

5. *Avyayama* (Lack of Exercise)

With the improved standard of living; most of the households have maids, machines which reduced the exertion of women, lifestyle became sedentary in nature. which is leading cause of *Medoroga* (obesity) in women on one hand And on the other there are many urban and rural families which are in rampant poverty with no access to water and other daily needs, fetching water from long distance and over working to feed the family needs leading to over excretion of poor women. This is causing *dhatukshaya* (exhaustion and imbalanced nutrition). *Medoroga* and *dhatukshaya* both are responsible for *vata* vitiation affecting the reproductive health.

Moderate exercise and physical activity in women have positive effect on fertility. Higher physical activity is also associated with voluntary childlessness [12]. Other *mithyaachaara* which are responsible and are due to modernization are as follows.

6. Air pollution

Change in lifestyle brought the change in transportation and industrialization which are creating air pollution. Gases such as sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrate dioxide, particles and ozone are released into atmosphere from the exhaust of motor vehicles and from industrial burning of coal and wood or from other processes. It has adverse effect on female fertility, and it was also reported that it lead to preterm birth, miscarriages, spontaneous pregnancy loss or fetal demise [13].

7. Late marriage

Age of women directly relate to fertility. Fertility peaks at puberty and declines over time in both men and women. Higher education and aspiration for independence leading to delay in marriage. Lately married couples are having issues related to conception. Chances of conception below the age of 30 years is 71%, it falls down to 41% above the age of 36 years [14].

8. Pesticides

Change in agricultural habits brought the new threat of pesticides. Pesticides are the substances which are used to kill the insects on crops, so as to increase a productivity of crops. These substances are having ill effect on human health. It may cause reproductive toxicity through several different mechanisms: direct damage to the structure of cells, interferences with biochemical process necessary for normal cell function and biotransformation resulting in toxic metabolites. Its exposure causes decreased fertility, spontaneous abortion, ovarian disorders and hormonal imbalance [15].

9. Non-breastfeeding

Now a days, majority of women are working outside; hence the breastfeeding the child is major issue. Lack of breastfeeding have bad implications on mother [16] as well as child health, on the other hand stressful working atmosphere *stanyakshaya* (scanty or no milk formation). *Stanyakshaya* leads to no breastfeeding. Few women avoid breastfeeding for cosmetic reasons. Therefore percentage of breast cancer is on hike.

SOME COMMON FEMALE REPRODUCTIVE DISORDERS

PCOD – The principle signs and symptoms of PCOS are related to menstrual abnormalities, obesity, acne and increased levels of male hormone (androgen). It causes infertility due to improper ovulation.

In Ayurveda, menstrual abnormalities are correlated with *aartavdosha*, anovulation correlates with *Vandhya*.

Amenorrhea (Anartava) - It is one of the menstrual disorders characterized by delayed, scanty menstrual flow associated with pain in vagina and it is due to vitiation of *vata* and *kapha*. *Artava* (*raja*) is an *upadhatu* of *Ras dhatu* and it is formed from *Ras dhatu* within a month after proper metabolism of *rakta dhatu* by *rakta dhatwagni* and *bhutagni*. Hence the decrease or *kshaya* of *Rakta dhatu* causes *Artav kshaya* and *Rakta kshaya*.

Dysmenorrhea (Kashtartava) - Scanty menstruation associated with pain is called as dysmenorrhea. This can be correlated with *artavakshaya*.

Metrorrhagia (Raktapradara) - It is a disease in which per vaginum excessive, prolonged bleeding. Charak describes it after description of *Yonivyapada*. He also counted it as *upadrava* of *Yonivyapada* and is of four types. *Acharya Charaka* gives various causes *Raktapradara*. It is caused due to over consumption of *lavana* (salty), *amla* (sour), *guru* (heavy) food, non vegetarian diet, *dahi* (curd). Today, due to changed dietary habits are changed. Use of junk food, too salty food (package food), use of preservatives like vinegar (*amla*), cold drinks and oily food is increased, which indirectly causes *Raktapradara* [17].

Infertility(vandhata) - 7.4 millions women or 11.9% women have ever received any infertility service in their life time. Approximately one third of infertility is attributed to the female partner; one third male partner and one third combination of both problems in both partner or are unexplained [18]. infertility is explained under *yonivyapada*.

Cancer - It is one of the leading causes of mortality and morbidity. Unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, tobacco and alcohol use are the major risk factor of all types of cancer. In female lack of breastfeeding is risk factor for developing breast cancer. Breastfeeding and parity increases the duration in ovulation time and reduces risk of breast cancer[16].

Discussion –

Indian food culture is much diversified; it is adapted to the regional and geographic variation. Now a day's food habits are changing, there is more monotony in the food. Seasonal variation in food habits which were recommended by *ayurveda* are forgotten. World is heading towards Packed food and junk food culture, which are rich in calories but imbalanced in nature. This type of monotony though is covering / engulfing the whole India is more common among rural and urban middle and high class.

Acharya Charaka said that sterility, obesity, anemia etc are the diseases which are produced by *santarpana* (over nourishment) [19]. Over nourishment of particular *dhatu* is achieved by monotonous and junky diet.

Emaciation (*kshaya*) of the body, reduction in power of digestion(*agni*), strength(*bala*), complexion(*varna*), vitality and immunity (*oja*), semen(*shukra*) or female hormones and menstrual bleeding (*artava*) in female is due to *apatarpana* (nutritional deficiency) [20]. Nutritional deficiency takes place due to monotonous and imbalanced food. Now a days women's are figure conscious for that they follow strict dieting. This is also leading to nutritional deficiency and which in turn leading to further reproductive problems.

In recent era, The new cooking trends are coming to make food look good and taste better, to achieve this the irrational combinations of food articles are being made. *Acharya Charaka* have already stated that, Irrational combinations of food (*viruddhaharaa*) can lead to impotency (*shandhya*), Aneamia (*pandu*), hyperacidity (*Amlapitta*), foetal abnormalities (*santandosh*), and even death may happen [21]. *Acharya Vagbhata* said that *viruddhaahara* act as acute poison and chronic poison, producing instantaneous and delayed effects [22]. It is clear that the health of sperm and ovum depends on diet and lifestyle of person.

Chintyanam-atichintanat (mental stress) is one of the causative factors of *Rasavaha Strotas Dushti* which in turn is the reason of sterility [23]. Above described all type of *mithyaahara* is also responsible for *rasavaha strotas dushti*. Imbalanced and faulty food produces the unhealthy first *dhatu* i.e. *rasa* which further leads to formation of all unhealthy *dhathus* and *upadhatu*s.

Total fertility rate has declined from 3.6 in 1991 to 2.9 in 2008. The total fertility rate (TFR) in rural areas has declined from 5.4 in 1971 to 2.9 in 2008, whereas the corresponding decline in

urban areas has been from 4.1 to 2.0 during the same period. And TFR in 2015 is 2 [24]. Which clearly shows the effect of changed lifestyle on fertility.

Conclusion –

Female health is utmost important for propagation and existence of humans. Diet and lifestyle are responsible for health and illness. Diet and lifestyle are changing with the modernization. Unhealthy diet and changed fast pace lifestyle have adversely affecting the female health and is responsible for generating female reproductive disorders.

References

1. Charak, Charak Samhita of Agnivesh, edited by Shri Satya Narayan Shastri, Yonivyapad Chikitsa Adhyaya, Ch. Chi. 30/8, 2004, p. 841
2. Dr.Mangalagauri V. Rao, A textbook of Swasthvrutta, Chaukhamba Orientalia Varanasi, 1st edition, 2014, p. 76
3. Dr.Mangalagauri V. Rao, A textbook of Swasthvrutta, Chaukhamba Orientalia Varanasi, 1st edition, 2014, p. 76
4. Charak, Charak Samhita of Agnivesh, edited by Shri Satya Narayan Shastri, Grahanidosh chikitsa adhyaya, Ch. Chi. 15/235-236, 2004, p.484
5. Charak, Charak Samhita, edited by Harishchandra Sinha Kushavaha, Strotas viman Adhyaya, Ch. Vi. 5/13, Chaukhamba orientalia, Varanasi, 2016, p. 633
6. Sushruta, Sushruta Samhita of Maharshi Sushruta, edited by Anantram Sharma, Shukrashonitshuddhi Adhyaya, Su. Sha. 2/25, Chaukhamba surbharati prakashan, Varanasi, p.18
7. Charak, Charak Samhita, edited by Harishchandra Sinha Kushavaha, Na vegadharaniya Adhyaya, Ch. Su. 7/109, Chaukhamba orientalia, Varanasi, 2016, p. 109
8. Vagbhata, Ashtang Hridaya of Vagbhata, edited by Kaviraj Atridev Gupta, Roganutpadaneeya Adhyaya, A. H. Su. 4/22, Chaukhamba prakashan, Varanasi, 2007, p.37
9. Charak, Charak Samhita, edited by Harishchandra Sinha Kushavaha, Na vegadharaniya Adhyaya, Ch. Su. 7/109, Chaukhamba orientalia, Varanasi, 2016, p. 106
10. Vd. H.S. Kasture, Concept of Ayurveda for perfect health and longevity; Nidra and Swapna published by : Shree Baidyanath Ayurveda Bhavan private Ltd, Nagpur, 1st edition 1991, p.126
11. Charak, Charak Samhita, edited by Harishchandra Sinha Kushavaha, Ashtaunindit Adhyaya, Ch. Su. 21/36, Chaukhamba orientalia, Varanasi, 2016, p. 314
12. Turupa Aydin, Mert Ali Karadag (2014), Effect of modification of lifestyle on reproductive potential: Exercise, Journal of medical sciences, 4(1):27-35; p.28
13. Turupa Aydin, Mert Ali Karadag (2014), Effect of modification of lifestyle on reproductive potential: Air pollution, Journal of medical sciences, 4(1):27-35; p.33
14. Turupa Aydin, Mert Ali Karadag (2014), Effect of modification of lifestyle on reproductive potential: Reproductive age, Journal of medical sciences, 4(1):27-35; p.31
15. Pesticide exposure, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
16. Huo D, Adebamowo CA, Ogundiran TO, Akang EE, Campbell O, Adenipekun A, et al. Parity and breastfeeding are protective against breast cancer in Nigerian women. Br J Cancer. 2008;96:992–6.
17. Charak, Charak Samhita of Agnivesh, edited by Shri Satya Narayan Shastri, Yonivyapad Chikitsa Adhyaya, Ch. Chi. 30/204-206, 2004, p. 868
18. Turupa Aydin, Mert Ali Karadag (2014), Effect of modification of lifestyle on reproductive potential: Reproductive age, Journal of medical sciences, 4(1):27-35; p.31
19. Charak, Charak Samhita, edited by Harishchandra Sinha Kushavaha, Santarpaniya Adhyaya, Ch. Su. 23/5-6, Chaukhamba orientalia, Varanasi, 2016, p. 327
20. Charak, Charak Samhita, edited by Harishchandra Sinha Kushavaha, Santarpaniya Adhyaya, Ch. Su. 23/27-28, Chaukhamba orientalia, Varanasi, 2016, p. 329
21. Charak, Charak Samhita, edited by Harishchandra Sinha Kushavaha, Aatreyabhadrakapyeeya Adhyaya, Ch. Su. 26/102-103, Chaukhamba orientalia, Varanasi, 2016, p. 403
22. Vagbhata, Ashtang Hridaya of Vagbhata, edited by Kaviraj Atridev Gupta, annaraksha Adhyaya, A. H. Su. 7/29, Chaukhamba prakashan, Varanasi, 2007, p. 69
23. Charak, Charak Samhita, edited by Harishchandra Sinha Kushavaha, Strotas viman Adhyaya, Ch. Vi. 5/13, Chaukhamba orientalia, Varanasi, 2016, p. 633
24. India- Infertility rate / statistics : www.statista.com