



MENOPAUSE A SHORT REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Menopause , *rajonivurti*, climacteric is the phase of aging process from the reproductive stage. most often after age of 45 menopause happens due to less production of estrogen & progesterone . complete one year absence of period is noted as menopause. ayurveda text says that *rajonivurti* is due to *dhatukshya*. All *dhatu*s becomes *ksheen* at the age of about 45 -50 ,also *ojakshya* is observed. Earlier *rajonivurti* includes symptoms like *medvridhi* , *sandhishool* ,*astishool* ,etc. Other symptoms may be as hot flashes , absence of period, vaginal dryness . Due to increase life expectancy specially in affluent society about one third of life span will be spent under estrogen deprivation stage with long term symptomatic & metabolic complications. Women suffer from various psychological & anatomical changes ,in this review a little contribution is made by throwing light on menopause.

Keywords –menopause ,climacteric ,*rajonivurti*,*v riddha*

AIM - Aim of study is to throw light on menopause, symptoms, life style changes, diet plan symptomatic treatment stated in various ayurvedic classics & modern text

books. Though it is a normal stage in women's life but she suffer from various problems in this stage so the review may help for society.

INTRODUCTION-

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Raja is *updhātu* of *rasa dhātu*, in *rajonivurti* there is a *dhatukshya*, all *dhatu*s become *ksheen* (1) or *rajonivurti* is due to *dhatukshya* (2). *Dhatu*s are constitutional part of our body, *dehadharan* karma is done by *dhatu*s.

Reproductive life of women starts at the age of 12 (menarche- *rajpravurti*), *rajodarshan* & stops at the age of average about 45 to 50 (3). *Raja* is having 4 *anjali praman* (Ayurveda measuring system) (4). After every 28 days menses occurs in a woman, *rajstrav kal* (menstrual bleeding) varies in every woman averagely its 3-5 days.

Rajonivurti is a *vata* dosha *ulban avastha*. (6)

Menopause means 'end of monthly cycle', it gives signal of end of women's reproductive life (5). Menopause is unavoidable change that every woman will experience as she reaches in middle age & beyond. Menopause is officially declared when there has been amenorrhea for one complete year. The age of menopause is not related to age of menarche, number of pregnancy, lactation, race, height, weight. Thinner women have early menopause however cigarette smoking & severe malnutrition may cause early menopause.

<i>Ayu</i>	Age	Body changes	<i>Dosha predominance</i>
<i>Balya</i>	Upto 16 years	<i>Sarvagīn vīkaś avastha</i> (general growth occurs)	<i>Kapha ulban+++ ,vata+ ,pitta+</i>
<i>Madhyam –yuvati, taruni, Praudhāvastha, adhirudha</i>	16 to 40 40 to 50	<i>Prajanan +++</i> , (fertility rate+++), <i>sarvagīn vridhī</i> (overall growth of body)	<i>Pitta+++ ,kapha+++ ,vata+</i>
<i>Vrddha-</i>	50 to 55	<i>Prajanan śakti kshya</i> (fertility less) premenstrual symptoms) <i>Rajonivurti</i> (menopause)	<i>Pitta+++ ,vata+ ,kapha+</i> <i>Vata+++ ,pitta+ ,kapha+</i>
<i>Vriddhāvastha</i>	After 55 years	<i>Sarva dhātu kshya</i>	<i>Vayu +++ , pitta+ , kapha+</i>

PHYSIOLOGY OF MENOPAUSE

AYURVED- in Ayurvedic literature menopause is noted as *rajonivurti* which occurs at the age of 45-50 due *rajakshya* which is a natural process in women's life as age goes on (7). According Ayurveda menopause is not a disease it is a transitional imbalance where transition takes place in women's life. This transition takes place during the end of pitta stage & beginning of vata stage of women's life. so women experience both vata & pitta related imbalances, symptoms.

MODERN MEDICINE- menopause is a period in old age when reproductive system undergoes changes due to decreased secretion of sex hormones estrogen & progesterone. As age advances atrophy of ovaries occurs it leads to cessation of menstrual cycle causing menopause. Throughout women's sexual life about 450 of primordial follicles grow into graffian follicles & ovulate while many of degenerate .(8)

At the age of 45-50 only few primordial follicles remain in the ovary to be stimulated by FSH & LH

this affects the secretion of estrogen & when estrogen secretion is zero FSH & LH are continuously secreted. When all primordial follicles are atrophied estrogen secretion stops completely. Absence of progesterone cause menopause, there is a fall in levels of prolactin & inhibin. Ultimately due to physiologic aging GnRH & both FSH & LH decline of estrogens.

DIAGNOSIS –

- 1) cessation of menstruation for continuous 12 months.
- 2) Appearance of menopausal symptoms like hot flashes, night sweats.
- 3) Vaginal cytology –shows maturation index of at least 10/85/5
- 4) Serum estradiol -20 pg. /ml (9)

ORGAN CHANGES – ovaries becomes wrinkled, shrink, thinning of medullary components.

- Fallopian tube undergo atrophy, muscle coat becomes thin ,cilia disappear.
- Uterus- becomes small endometrium may be proliferative or hyperplastic.
- Vagina- narrower, loss of elasticity, ph becomes alkaline.

- Vulva- atrophic labia becomes flattened, pubic hair becomes scantier.
- Breast- nipple decrease in size breasts becomes flat & pendulous.
- Bladder & urethra – epithelium becomes thin & more prone to damage & infection .dysuria frequency, urge, stress incontinence.
- Muscle-tone loss, pelvic relaxation, vaginal uterus muscle loses tone.
- Skin & hair –thinning, loss of elasticity, wrinkling of skin. After menopause some loss of pubic & axillary hair ,balding(10)

SYMPTOMS-

- As its vataulban & pitta** diminishing stage both symptoms are found in women. For instance menopausal complaints like vaginal dryness, skin wrinkles, and mental confusion are due to vata predominance, hot flashes, urinary tract infection, irritability are related to pitta. Every women is having variation in these symptoms (11)
- Vascular- hot flashes, night sweats, skin wrinkles, hair on face, subcutaneous fat deposition on hips & thighs.
 - Urinary system- urgency in urination ,urinary incontinency,
 - Skeletal –back pain, osteoporosis, joint pain, atherosclerosis .
 - Soft tissue – breast atrophy, breast tenderness.
 - Psychological- depression , anxiety, irritability, memory problems, insomnia, palpitation, mood changes, vaginal dryness.
 - Sexual –dyspareunia,
 - Cardiovascular – vascular endothelial injury, vasoconstriction, thrombus

SYMPTOMATIC TREATMENT / LIFE STYLE CHANGES

AYURVED VIEW –

Rajonivurti is a *vata dosha* predominance period so to reduce *vata doshaadhikya* symptoms women's may use *snehan, abhayanga, katibasti* for *asthishool & vata* related symptoms (12).

- *Yogasana*, walking pranayam will keep the body tone good & mind stable.
- For psychosis & *avasad* (depression) drugs like *vacha, ashwandgha churna ,shankhpushpi* are effective(13).
- To increase *asthi dhatu bal* (bone health) *praval, dashmularishta*,is effective (14).
- *Rasayan* (geriatric)is effective to increase *dhatu bal* (15)

- To avoid *vata* symptoms *madhur* , *amla* ,*lavan rasas* are useful. For *pitta dosha* symptoms *madhur ras dravya*, diet should be followed (16).

- *Gokrusadi gugglu*, *punarnava guggle* are useful in urinary tract infections (17).

- soya milk has a natural estrogen ,also a rich content of protein so can used frequently.

- *singdh dravya abhygang* (oil massage) is useful for external application(18)

MODERN VIEW-

Most of women's have no problem with this condition or symptoms but about 15% of women need treatment (19)

1) Counseling-every women must be aware , know about menopausal age, symptoms so she can happily accept the changes. This can be done by arranging free seminars for women's, pamphlets, health checkup camps, using social media.

2) Psychotherapy – as women's feel nervousness, emotional disturbances family members, partner, and friends must give moral support. Love, affection works very well .(20)

3) HRT- hormone replacement therapy –daily administration of

estrogen in small quantities is useful, also a combination of estrogen & progesterone is more effective because it prevents estrogen induced cancer & hyperplasia of myometrium. Dose must be gradually decreased to avoid complications (21)

4) No hormonal treatment –a) nutritious diet – diet full of calcium & proteins are useful, daily 1-1.5 gm .calcium reduce osteoporosis & fracture .b) vit.D, D3 400-800 IU/day also effective .c) cessation of smoking & alcohol) some commonly used drugs are fluoride, calcitonin, clonidine ,thiaeids , paroxetine , soya protein(22)

5) Life style changes according to symptoms are preferable.

6) Cessation of smoking & alcohol (23).

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION-

Menopause is normal stage in women's life but it may be stressful in 15% of them. So by making social awareness, literacy about the symptoms, mental support by family & society it can be faced happily .As *Ayurveda* is a life science it has a great contribution in this stage .it contributes by giving

amazing *ayurvedic* remedies symptomatic medicines, *rasayana*, life style changes, dietary changes .*yoga* , *pranayama* have a great effect in *vatadoshaulban* stage. *Ayurveda* can definitely bring a revolutionary change in modern discipline of medical science

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