



CONCEPTUAL LITERARY REVIEW ON *RUTUCHAKRA*

BHARATHI K. S.^{1*} NIYAZAHMED KANAVI²

^{1*}Assistant professor, Department of *Prasuti Tantra and Streeroga*, Rajiv Gandhi Education Society's Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital Ron, Karnataka, India.

²Assistant professor, Department of *Rachana Shareera*, Rajiv Gandhi Education Society's Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital Ron, Karnataka, India.

Corresponding Author Email: drbharathiks12@gmail.com Access this article online: www.jahm.co.in

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ABSTRACT:

In *Ayurveda* importance is given to the *Swastha* [health] concept. In this woman health is also play important role because health of family, community inturn a healthy nation depends on the health of its woman. *Artava* [menstrual blood/ovum] is the *Upadhatu* [sub-tissue] of *Rasa* [lymph]*Dhatu*[tissue] responsible for conception, which act as major importance in fertility rate of the country. The menstrual cycle in *Ayurveda* is called *Rutuchakra*[menstrual cycle]. The duration of Menstrual cycle is one Month[*Chandramasa*-28days] divided into 3 phases- *Rajahsravakaala*[menstruation], *Rutukaala*[proliferative phase including ovulation] and *Rutuvyatitkaala*[secretory phase]. This article highlights the summary on the concept of *Rutuchakra*[menstrual cycle].

Keywords: *Artava*, *Rutuchakra*, Menstruation, *Rajahsravakaala*, *Rajaswalacharya*, *Rutukaala*, *Rutumatcharya*, *Rutuvyatitakaala*.

INTRODUCTION

According to *Ayurveda*, normal Menstruation is the indicator of healthy status of normal reproductive organs in women. Menstruation is the visible manifestation of cyclic physiologic uterine bleeding due to shedding of endometrium following invisible interplay of hormones mainly through hypothalamo- pituitary- ovarian axis ^[1]. It occurs every month from puberty to menopause. *Artava* is the *Upadhatu* of *Rasa dhatu* responsible for conception. The menstrual cycle in *Ayurveda* is called *Rutuchakra*. The duration of Menstrual cycle is One Month [*Chandramasa*-28days] divided into 3 phases- *Rajahsravakaala* [Menstrual phase], *Rutukaala* [Proliferative phase including ovulation] and *Rutuvyatitkaala* [Secretary phase]. The synonyms of *Artava* are - *Shonita*, *Raja*, *Rakta*, *Lohita*, *Asruk*, *Rudhira*, *Pushpa* these words are used to indicate menstrual blood, as well as ovum even ovarian hormones.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To review *Artava* and *Rutuchakra* in detail.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The materials are collected from classical *Ayurvedic* books like *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Astanga Sangraha*, *Astanga Hridaya*, *Sharangdhara Samhita*, *Kashyapa*

Samhita etc and commentaries and contemporary science books were reviewed.

METHODOLOGY

As per *Ayurveda* for better understanding of the *Rutuchakra*, following points are elaborated i.e. *Artava Paribhasha* [Definition], *Utpatti* [formation] of *Raja*, *Swarupa* [nature], *Rutuchakra* [menstrual cycle], *Rajasrava Kala* [menstruation], *Shudda Artava Lakshana* [characteristics of normal menstrual blood], *Rajaswala Paricharya* [mode of life during menstruation], *Rutukala* [proliferative phase including ovulation], *Rutumati Stri Lakshana* [woman during ovulatory period], *Rutumati Charya* [mode of life during ovulation] and *Rutuvyatita Kaala* [secretory phase].

***Artava Paribhasha* [Definition]**– The blood which is expelled from *Yoni* [vagina/female genital organ] every month is termed as *Rajas*^[2]. *Rajas* is the periodical discharge occurring in women for 3 days^[3].

***Utpatti of Raja* [Formation of Menstrual blood]**^[4,5]– According to *Charaka*, *Sushruta*, *Vagbhata*, *Dalhana*, *Chakrapani*- *Rajas* is formed from *Rasa dhatu*, *Arunadatta* says *Rajas* is formed from *Ahara rasa* [essence of food]. *Sharangadhara*^[6] and *Bhavamishra*^[7] opines *Rajas* as *Upadhatu* of *Rakta* [blood].

Prathama Rajo Darshana[age of Menarche] is 12years and **Rajonivrutti**[age of Menopause] is 50years^[8].

Swarupa [Nature]- *Artava* is *Agneya*[fire] in *Guna*[attribute] due to dominance of *Tejo* [fire]*Mahabhuta*[primary element], has the qualities of *Rakta*[blood] and responsible for the formation of *Garbha*[embryo]^[9].

Rutuchakra^[10]- The duration of Menstrual cycle is One Month, divided into 3 phases-

1)*Rajahsrava Kala*[Menstruation] – 3 to 5 days- *Vata*

2)*Rutukala*[Proliferative phase including ovulation] - 12 or 16 days- *Pitta*

3)*Rutuvyatitakala*[Post Ovulatory phase or Secretary phase] - 9 or 13days- *Kapha*

Rajasrava Kala[Menstruation]- The periodic expulsion of *Rajas*[menstrual blood] from *Yoni*[vagina or entire female genitalia] termed as menstrual phase inter-menstrual period is 1 month. Different opinions are given by different *Acharyas* for *Rajasravakaala* [duration of menstruation].

Table no. 1: Rajahsravakaala according to different Acharyas.

Acharya	Rajasrava Kala	Reference
<i>Charaka</i>	5days	<i>Cha.chi.30/225</i>
<i>A.H &A.S</i>	3days	<i>A.S. Sha 1/10,A.H Sha 1/7</i>
<i>Bhavamishra</i>	3 to 5 days	<i>B.P.P.3/1</i>

<i>Harita</i>	7days	<i>Ha.sa.shashta.1/8</i>
<i>Bhela</i>	7days	<i>Bhela.sha.5/6</i>

Shudda Artava Lakshana [Characteristics of normal menstrual blood]^[11,12]- Has inter-menstrual period of 1 month, duration of blood loss as 5 days and is not associated with pain or burning sensation. Color Resembles like- *Gunjaphala*[fruit of jequirity], *Padma*[red lotus flower], insect *Indragopa*, *Shashaasruk*[rabbits blood], *Laksharasa*[red juice of lac]. Not unctuous, not very scanty or excessive in amount and does not stain the clothes.

Rajaswala Paricharya [Mode of living during menstruation] ^[13,14,15]

Pathya[wholesome diet and regimen]- Follow *Bramhacharya*[celibacy], should eat in hand or unbroken utensils made up of clay and leaves, should sleep over bed made of *darbha*[grass mat] spread over the ground, eat meals made up of *ghrita*[ghee], *shali*[rice], milk and barley, always concentrate on thinking good and auspicious thoughts.

Apathya[unwholesome diet and regimen]- – Should not take bath, sleeping during day time, application of collyrium, crying, anointment, massaging, cutting nails, running, over talking, over hearing, combing, fast winds, excessive exercise, *Nasya*[nasal administration], *Swedana*[sudation],

Vamana[emetics], indulging in sexual activities, intake of pungent, irritants and salty foods and she should not adorn herself with ornaments.

Rutukala[Proliferative phase including ovulation] - This *Kaala*[period] is considered apt time/period for Conception^[16]. *Beeja*[sperm] deposited during *Rutukala*[ovulation] is sure to bear fruit. *Rutu* can be taken as Ovulation period.

Table no.2: Rutukala according to different Acharyas.

<i>Acharya</i>	<i>Rutukala</i>	Reference
<i>Sushruta</i>	12days	<i>Su.S.Sha.3/6</i>
<i>Vagbhata I</i>	12 or 16days or entire month	<i>A.S SHA1/40</i>
<i>Vagbhata II</i>	12nights	<i>A.S.Sha1/27</i>

Table no.3:Rutukala on the basis of Varna [caste]of woman^[17,18]

<i>Varna</i>	<i>Kashyapa</i>	<i>Bhavamishra</i>
<i>Bramhana</i>	12days	12days
<i>Kshatriya</i>	11days	10days
<i>Vaishya</i>	10days	08days
<i>Shudra</i>	09days	06days

Interpretation regarding caste wise is very difficult it might be the effect of their life style or work.

Rutukala is ideal time to get a healthy progeny, as lotus flower closes after sun-set, similarly after *Rutukaala* the *Yoni*[cervical opening] of women gets constricted and does not accept *Shukra* [sperm]or permits the entry of *Bija*[sperm] into its inner components i.e. uterus.

Rtumati Stri Lakshana^[19]-After the expulsion of *Purana*[old] *Rajas* [menstruation] and formation of new *Rajas* with commencement of new menstrual cycle , the women after bath possessing healthy *Yoni*[vagina], *Garbhashaya*[uterus], *Shonita*[ovum] termed as *Rutumati*. The female looks bright and healthy, her mouth and teeth are moist, she is anxious to hear love stories and have sexual relations, her flanks, eyes, hairs are lax, she has twitching over the arms, breasts, pelvis, umbilicus, thighs and hips, she is passionate, happy and excited.

Rutumati Charya^[20,21]-On the 4th day,she should take head bath after *Abhyanga* [massage] and wear white garments, ornaments, flowers, worship god and should see her husband first and in pleasant state of mind indulge in cohabitation.

Rtumati Stri Varjya^[22,23]- *Kshara*[alkali] and *Nasya*[nasal administration].

Rutuvyatita Kaala[Secretary phase]- Time period of *Rutuvyatitakaala* is from *Rutukala* to next *Rajasrava kaala*, except constriction of

Yoni[closure of cervical OS] any physical or psychological changes are not described^[24]. After *Rutukala* due to influence of Progesterone the thick cervical mucus forms plug causing closure of cervical os-which is hostile to sperm entry^[25]. This stage coming after *Rtukaala* is secretary phase.

DISCUSSION

Important physiological manifestation in woman is *Rutuchakra*, i.e. menstrual cycle, which gives her identity of motherhood *Rajahsrava kala* - The periodic expulsion of *Rajas* from *Yoni* termed as menstrual phase inter-menstrual period is 1 month, it is governed by *Vata dosha-Rajapravrutti* is main function of *Apanavata*.Our *Acharyas* have mentioned awareness regarding life style

during the different phases of *Rutuchakra*.As in *Rajasravakala* they given *Rasaswala Paricharya*.By following *Apathya* during *Rajasravakaala* it has adverse effect over the baby^[26].

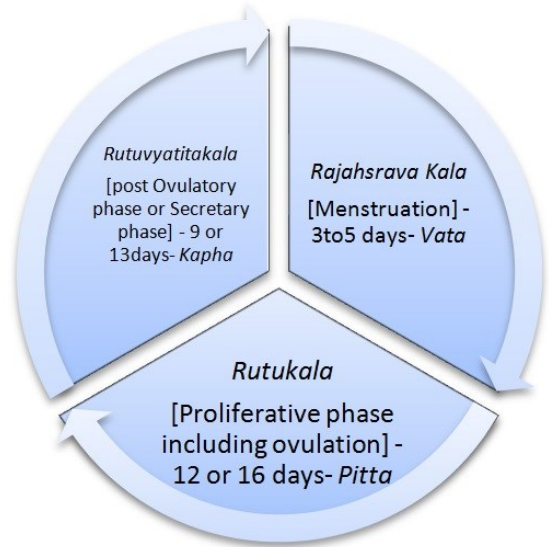


Fig 1: *Rutuchakra* based on phases of menstrual cycle with its duration.

Table no.4: Consequences of *Apathya* during *Rajasravakaala*.

<i>Rajaswalastri varjya</i> [restricted acts in a woman]	<i>Garbha vikruti</i>[abnormalities in child]
<i>Anjana</i> [collyrium]	<i>Andhatwa</i> [blindness]
<i>Divaswapna</i> [daysleeping]	<i>Swapnasheela</i> [over sleepy]
<i>Ashrupaata</i> [crying]	<i>Vikrutadristi</i> [abnormality of vision]
<i>Snana</i> [bath] and <i>Anulepa</i> [anointment]	<i>Dukhasheelata</i> [depression]
<i>Abhyanga</i> [massage]	<i>Kushti</i> [leprosy,skin disorders]
<i>Nakha Chedana</i> [cutting nails]	<i>Kunaki</i> [deformity of nails]
<i>Pradhavana</i> [running]	<i>Chanchala</i> [fickle minded]
<i>Hasana</i> [laughing]	Black color of teeth, lips and tongue
<i>Kathana</i> [excessive talking]	<i>Pralapi</i> [over talkativeness]
<i>Atishabda shravana</i> [excessive hearing]	<i>Bhadhira</i> [deafness]

<i>Avalekhana</i> [combing]	<i>Khalita</i> [baldness]
Exposure to wind	<i>Unmada</i> [insane]
Scraping or digging of earth	<i>Skhalana</i> [Falls during walking]
Use of <i>Nasya</i> [nasal administration]	Menstrual abnormalities.

If the women does not avoid above contra-indicated things due to ignorance, neglect, greed or fortune vitiated *doshas* reaching the foetus produces above mentioned abnormalities.

Rutukala- This *Kaala* is considered apt time/period for Conception. *Beeja* deposited during *Rutukala* is sure to bear fruit. *Rutu* can be taken as Ovulation period. Effect on child conceived after *Rtukaala*^[27]-Life span of child declines gradually in case of impregnation after *Rutukala*, as the paddy sown after its appropriate season posses less properties, is weak, unstable, unsteady, thin and fragile, similarly is the case with the child. It is governed by *Kapha dosha* – this phase starts with establishment of *Naveena Raja* it can be considered as proliferation of endometrium followed by ovulation, *Pruthvi*[earth] and *Jala*[water] *Mahabhuta* required for re-geneeration, *Boutika*[physical] component of *Kapha* are *Pruthvi* and *Jala*[water]. Application of *Kshara* is conta-indicated. *Nasya* also contra indicated as it causes *Yoni Shosha* [dryness of vagina].

Rutuvyatitakala- Any physical or psychological changes are not described except Constriction of *Yoni*. It is influenced by *Pitta Dosh* -after ovulation or *Rutukala*, *Artava* becomes *Agneya* and increases the basal body temperature 0.5 - 1^oF, increased temperature is thermogenic effect of progesterone hormone in secretory phase.

For proper regulation of *Rutuchakra* there should be normalcy of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Agni*[digestive fire], *Srotas*[channels]. *Agni* - As *Artava* is a *Updhatu* of *Rasa Dhatu*, *Mandagni*[slow digestive fire] with vitiated *Dosha* hamper the formation of *Ahara Rasa* by producing *Ama*[undigested metabolic waste].So utapati of *Rasa Dhatu* is affected as it is formed from *Ahara Rasa*.*Srotas*-there are two *Artava Vaha Srotas* having *Moola*[root] in *Garbhashaya*[uterus] & *Artavavahi Dhamanis*[uterine and ovarian arteries] - injury to these causes infertility, dyspareunia and amenorrhea^[28].

CONCLUSION

The physiology of menstruation is explained in detail in *Ayurveda* under the heading of *Rutuchakra*. The age of onset, age

of cessation of menstruation, duration of menstruation, ovulation with their clinical importance are explained. *Rajahsravakaala*, *Rutukaala* and *Rutuvyatitkaala* can be correlated to Menstrual phase, Proliferative phase and Secretory phase respectively. The *Rutuchakra* is regulated by *Doshas*. Whenever there is imbalance in *Tridosha*, *Agni*, *Srotas* the formation of *Artava* gets impaired and causes disorders of *Artava* i.e. *Artavavyapad*[disorders of menstruation] and some of *Yonivyapads*[disorder of female genital organs]. This gives the awareness regarding the do's and don'ts to be followed during *Rajahsravakaala* and *Rutukaala*.

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