



Review Article

www.ijrap.net

(ISSN Online:2229-3566, ISSN Print:2277-4343)



INEVITABILITY OF VAJIKARANA IN WOMEN: A REVIEW

Swati S. Mohite¹, Mayuri H. Bhoskar^{2*}

¹ Professor and HOD, Prasuti tantra Evam Streeroga Department, Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University),
College of Ayurveda, Pune, Maharashtra, India

² PG Scholar, Prasuti tantra Evam Streeroga Department, Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University),
College of Ayurveda, Pune, Maharashtra, India

Received on: 11/11/21 Accepted on: 13/01/22

*Corresponding author

E-mail: drmayuribhoskar07@gmail.com

DOI: 10.7897/2277-4343.130116

ABSTRACT

Vajikarana is one of the eight specialities of Ashtang Ayurveda. The word Vajikarana is made up of two words, Vaji and Karana. Vaji means horse, and Karana implies power. This branch of Ayurveda deals with maintaining health and treating the disease. As per classical texts of Ayurveda, Vajikarana is advised to males. The preservation of health and disease-free life is equally essential in males and female to keep herself healthy and free from illness.

Keywords: Vajikarana, middle-aged women, Dehabalakarakara, Climacteric, Shukra

INTRODUCTION

A classical Ayurvedic text was written 5000 years back, called the Vedic period. During the Vedic period, the women were primarily engaged in household work and taking care of family. So, she was not facing the physical and emotional stress present during the postmodern era. But after the Vedic period, the life of women started deteriorating. Child marriage, gender inequality, female feticide, sati pratha changed the situation of women drastically. Females were utterly reliant on male members of their families¹.

In the post-independence phase of India, Constitution allotted equal rights to both males and females. Many laws have been developed to protect women from gender inequality, sexual harassment, dowry deaths, and rape cases. Still, there is a lack of acceptance for women from male-dominated societies. But now, in the postmodern era, in developed and developing countries, her role has been changed drastically. Women are doing their household work along with the official position. Thus, it is inevitable to reproach her health uniquely.

Adhirudha avastha, mentioned in Ayurveda, a Middle age also known as Climacteric, i.e., after forty years, is predominantly governed by Vata dosha where pitta dosha is in chaya avastha & Kapha dosha is in kshaya avastha. So, there are many physical and psychological changes occurring in the body of women. There is a need to achieve the equilibrium of tridosha through lifestyle modification and herbal supplements. Vajikarana dravyas can be arranged for this purpose because the Vajikarana deals with maintaining health through the balance of tridosha and taking care of the disease. Vajikarana dravya provides strength power like a horse to the body. So, they will help women to cope with these changes occurring in middle age.

The detailed study of Vajikarana chikitsa is done from Charaka Samhita Chikitsa Sthana Vajikarana Adhyaya, Sushrut Samhita Chikitsa Sthana Kshinabaliyavajikarana Chikitsa Adhyaya and Ashtanga Hridaya Chikitsa Sthana Vajikaranavidhi Adhyaya. Research papers published in different authentic journals up till now are studied.

This study will develop a concept and need of vajikarana chikita in females.

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda has been divided into eight branches called Ashtanga Ayurveda². These eight branches are Kaya, i.e., Internal medicine, Bala, i.e., Pediatrics, Graha, i.e., Bhoot vidya or Psychiatry, Urdhvanga means eyes, ears, nose, throat and head diseases and their treatment, Shalya indicates Surgery, Danshtra, i.e., Agad tantra or Toxicology, Jara includes Rasayana chikitsa and Vrishya includes Aphrodisiacs.

Kaya defines sharir, i.e., body. In Kayachikitsa, Nidan Panchak, i.e., Nidan means diagnosis, purvaroop indicates symptoms, roop shows signs, upashaya means relieving and aggravating factors. Samprapti tells the pathogenesis of all diseases mentioned along with hetu means causative factors, and chikitsa includes primary treatment. It also involves panchakarmas, i.e., five types of body purification. These are Vamana, i.e., emesis; Virechana means purgation; Basti, i.e., enema, Nasya, which means medication through nasal way; and Raktamokshana, bloodletting therapy by different methods.

Bala or kaumarbhritya is the branch that deals with taking care of the fetus from pregnancy till adolescence. They have mentioned different diseases and treatment modalities with drug dosage according to age. Streerog & Prasuti tantra are also described in kaumarbhritya. It focuses on healthy upbringing of newborns and nursing till adolescence.

Graha or bhoot vidya deals with spirituality and agantuja vyadhis, i.e., idiopathic disorders. They have described different diseases of children mental conditions. They have treated these diseases as mantras, i.e., chanting, poojas, i.e., prayers etc. Urdhvanga involves diseases of Karna (ear), Nasa (nose), Gala (throat), Netra (eyes), Danta (teeth) and Shir (head). It is also called Shalakyana tantra. They have mentioned their medical, surgical, and preventive measures. The fifth branch is Shalya tantra. It involves various types of surgical procedures. They also described Ksharakarma and Agnikarma and multiple types of instruments medicinal preparations used in Shalya tantra. Damshttra involves all types of poisons. These are maybe animal bites or food poisoning etc., so that's the way it is also called Agadtantra. It also contains medical jurisprudence.

Rasayana (rejuvenation treatment) is given to prevent disease and helps to achieve longevity with healthy and disease-free life. The word Rasayana is made up of two words Rasa and Ayana. Word Rasa represents rasadi all sapta dhatus. While the word Ayana means Vardhana (to increase). So, the treatment which helps to increase sapta dhatus and prevents the ageing process is called Rasayana chikitsa. It helps to keep good harmony of body, mind and soul. Ayurveda demonstrates healthy life rather than just curing disease conditions. Rasayana chikitsa helps to achieve this. It delays the process of ageing. It encourages the Oja dhatu (vital force of life) and immunity of the body. Most of the rasayana dravyas are dietary and can be readily available. So, it can be given alone or with medicine as supplementary.

Advantages of Rasayana Chikitsa are it enhances Oja dhatu (vital force of body), It helps to maintain dirgha ayu (longevity of life). Rasayana dravyas increase (reception and memory retention power). It holds uttam arogya (health). It also helps sustain Vayasthapana (decreasing or slowing the ageing process). It maintains and enhances Prabha, Varma, Kanti (lustre of skin). It helps in building the body and increases Deha bala (stamina). It improves the metabolism of the body. It also prevents degenerating changes like osteoporosis, hair greying, etc.³

Interpreted with modern science, the mode of action of Rasayana dravyas are Immunomodulatory effect, antioxidant effect, anti-ageing effect, nourishing and neuroprotective activity. Vajikarana is one of the most popular therapies used to solve sexual activities in males. It is well established that females also face libido during middle age due to the natural decline of hormones. This issue could be solved through Vajikarana chikitsa⁴.

Dravyas (herbs) having following characters are Vrishya, Madhura (sweet) Rasa and Vipaka, Sheeta Veerya, Snigdha (glossy), Guru (heavy) gunas (properties), Jivana (promoter of life, restorative), Brimhana (nourishing), Harshana (which causes joy), Balavardhana (promoting strength), karmas (actions) They act as Shukrala, Dehabalakaraka and Vayasthapaka.

The word 'stree' is used for a woman in Ayurveda. The word stree (female) is derived from the word 'stru'. It means to hold. That denotes stree is one whose body is specially designed to maintain the fetus.

Different acharyas have mentioned the classification of women's lives in different ways.

Acharya Charaka divided age into three categories- balya avastha (from birth to thirty years of age), madhyam avastha (from thirty years to sixty years) and vriddha avastha (above sixty years of age). Balya avastha is further classified into Aparipakva dhatu (from birth up till sixteen years) and Vivardhamana dhatu (sixteen years of age up to thirty years)⁵.

The classification of age by Acharya Sushruta is Balya, Madhyam and Vriddhavastha⁶. Balyavastha is subdivided into Kshirapavastha (from birth up to one year), Kshirannada (from one year to two years of age), and Annada (from two years till sixteen years). Madhyamavastha is further subdivided into Vriddhi (sixteen years to twenty years), Yauvana (twenty years to thirty years), Sampurnata (from thirty years to forty years) and Hani (forty years till seventy years). Vriddha avastha, i.e., Jara above seventy years. Vagbhata acharya also described Balya, Madhya and Vriddha avastha. Balya avastha is subdivided into Kshira, Anna and Kshirannada avastha. But they did not mention the specific age limit of each age group⁷. In Khilasthana, Kashyap described age as Garbha, bala and Kumara. Garbhavastha is from Fertilization till birth. Balyavastha is from birth up to one year, and Kaumaravastha starts from one year to sixteen years. They again mentioned yauvana, madhyam and Vriddhavastha. Yauvanavastha means from sixteen years to thirty-four years. Madhyamavastha belongs to thirty-four to seventy years and vriddhavastha after seventy years⁸. Yoga Ratnakara also described age classification⁹. They said Balya avastha (childhood) female is up to sixteen years. While Rajaswala is from sixteen years to fifty years, which is again subdivided into Taruni avastha (young age) from sixteen years to thirty-two years and Adhirudha avastha (climacteric) from thirty-two years to fifty years of age. After fifty years, it's Vriddha avastha (old age).

Thus, it could be concluded that life stages are changing continuously for performing different functions. The changes demand a particular need for change in lifestyle and some herbal support to maintain her health.

In Ayurveda, two types of chikitsa are mentioned, i.e., Svasthasya urjaskara (to Prevent disease and maintain good health) and secondly Rogahara (to treat the disease condition)¹⁰. An Acharya Charaka quote that Rasayana chikitsa is essential for both sexes, but Vajikarana is advised only for males. Acharya Charaka has stated that stree (female) itself is the best Vajikarana. Acharya Charaka has further divided svasthasya urjaskara chikitsa into Vrishya and Rasayana. Rasayana chikitsa is useful when the disease manifests from rasa dhatu. The eighth one is Vrishya. Vrishya is nothing but vajikarana chikitsa (aphrodisiacs)¹¹. Vajikarana chikitsa is helpful in diseases manifest from shukradhatu. The dravyas and karmas prescribed for vajikarana are svasthahita dravyas and svasthaurjaskara chikitsa, respectively. Dravyas (herbs) which has Madhura (sweet) Rasa and Vipaka, Sheeta Veerya along with guna (properties) such as Snigdha (glossy), Guru (heavy), and karmas (actions) such as Jivana (promoter of life, vital), Brimhana (nourishing), Harshana (which causes joy), Balavardhana (promoting strength) are called as Vrishya. All vrishya dravyas can be used as vajikara, but all vajikara dravyas does not possess vrishya properties¹².

Vajikarana herbs are of three types, Shukrajanaka (helps in spermatogenesis), Shukrapravartaka (helps in ejaculation of sperms), and Dehabalakaraka (recitals the body strength). They contain properties like Shukrala, Jeevaniya, Brimhana and Balavardhana. The functions of shukradhatu are sarvadehika (systemic process), maithunagata (related to sexual activity), rupa dravyagata (related seminal fluid or hormones). Stree shukra and shukra dhatu both are different. In males' words, Shukra refers to sperms, while in females, it means ovum. Shukra dhatu is responsible for fertilization, but stree shukra has no role in fertilization¹³. In females, shukra is secreted at the time of coitus. According to modern science, Shukra can be correlated with Bartholin gland secretions in females. According to Sushruta, the appearance of axillary and pubic hairs and breast changes in females is due to Shukra¹⁴. As said by acharyas, shukra dhatu is present in the whole body just like how ghee is present in milk or

jaggery is present in sugarcane juice. This shukra dhatu gives deha bala, including deha upachaya (physical health) and utsaha (enthusiasm), oja poshaka (shukra dhatu nourishes oja).

Vajikarana dravyas acts by the effect of Prabhava (indefinable power). According to Acharya Charaka, vajikarana dravyas modulate the neurological- endocrine- immune system. Their action is on the higher centre of the brain, i.e., on the hypothalamus and limbic system. They have an antioxidant, antiageing, immunomodulatory effect on the body. States of doshas change by age, day, night, and digestion¹⁵. Adhirudha avastha (Middle age), i.e., after thirty-five years, is predominantly governed by Vata dosha, where pitta dosha is in chaya avastha & Kapha dosha is in kshaya avastha. Thus, she needs to maintain tridosha, as the attribute of Vata dosha may vitiate them easily. There is a requirement of balancing strength, potency, and complexion at this age. So, women need Vajikarana chikitsa during this age also. As Samhita has mentioned, vajikarana chikitsa is given in males for virility; in the same way, we can also use these dravyas to lose libido in females.

According to recent advanced science, ovarian function gets reduced after thirty-five years. Many times, there are anovulatory cycles. That means ovarian function declines in the climacteric phase. Middle age, i.e., above thirty-five years, is a transitional period of women's life. Many physical and psychological changes occur in that period. These changes affect women's day-to-day life. So during this phase, many women complaints about hot flushes, vaginal dryness, irritability, mood swings, anxiety, atherosclerotic changes, osteoporosis etc. During middle age, i.e., after thirty-five, many women complain about reduced sexual desire, i.e., libido. All these symptoms can be compared with symptoms of Ojakshaya¹⁶ such as Bibhitata (anxiety), Durmana (depressed mood), Rukshata (dryness of skin and vagina) and symptoms like Vatavruddhi like hot flushes, Karshnya (discolouration of the skin), dryness of skin and vagina, anxiety, Nidranasha (Insomnia), Pralapa (Irritability), depressed mood etc.

We cannot improve ovarian reserve but giving proper herbal medicines and dietary supplements can reduce Ojakshaya and Vatavruddhi. So, women can get rid of these physical and psychological problems. Women also need Vajikarana during their productive life for good progeny and in non-productive life, i.e., after forty years for Bala and Pushti, i.e., for physical and mental health, because this age is significantly governed by Vata where pitta and Kapha are in kshaya avastha so to maintain an equilibrium of all three doshas we must give herbal as well dietary components. So, there is a need to strengthen the body and mind to cope with these changes.

CONCLUSION

In the post-modern era, by observing and studying women's health, it could be concluded that middle-aged women need vajikarana chikitsa to maintain physical and psychological health.

The women are an essential part of her family and nation's progress by giving birth to the next generation. Every woman's life is equally critical to her development and the country's improvement.

REFERENCES

1. Govind Kumar Saxena & Major Gen. Praveen Kumar Sharma (Retd.), Editor. International Journal of Legal Developments and Allied Issues. Vol.4, Issue 4, July 2018.
2. Sharma A, editor. Sushruta Samhita, Vedotpati Adhyaya, Shloka No. 7-14, Varanasi: Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashana; 2017. P 4-7.
3. Joshi YG. Chikitsa Sthana, Abhaya Amalakiya Rasayana. In: Charaka Samhita. 4th ed. Vaidyamitra Prakashana, Shloka No. 7
4. Vajikarana for Infertility and Virility, Livayur.Com
5. Charaka Samhita, Y.G. Joshi, Vaidyamitra Prakashana, 4th Edition, Vimana Sthana, 8th Adhyaya, Shloka No 22.
6. Sushruta Samhita, Anantram Sharma, Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, 2017 Edition, Sutra sthana, Adhyaya 35th, Shloka No 34-36.
7. Bramhanand Tripathi, Ashtanga Hridaya, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Prakashana, Delhi, Uttar tantra, Adhyaya 2, Shloka 1
8. Kashyap Samhita, Khilashtanaa, Adhyaya 3, Shloka 72-75
9. Yoga Ratnakara, Indradev Tripathi, Chaukhamba Prakashana, 1st Edition, 1998, Ratrichaya Adhyaya, Shloka No 9-10.
10. Charaka Samhita, Y.G. Joshi, Vaidyamitra Prakashana, 4th Edition, Chikitsa Sthana, 1st Adhyaya, Abhaya Amalakiya Rasayana, Shloka No 4.
11. Charaka Samhita, Y.G. Joshi, Vaidyamitra Prakashana, 4th Edition, Chikitsa Sthana, 1st Adhyaya, Abhaya Amalakiya Rasayana, Shloka No 5-6
12. Piyush Chaudhary, Neha Lamba, Bl. Mehra, J. Vrishya and Vajikarana- Exploring Ancient Science Of Aphrodisiacs. Educ Indian Med. 2017; 1-2:43-54.
13. Ashtanga Samgraha, Sutra Sthana, Hemadri Commentary, 1/17, P 12
14. Shahu SK. Anatomical Consideration of Shukra Dhatu: A Review. IAMJ. 2017 May
15. Ashtanga Hridaya, Arundatta and Hemadri Tika, Collated By Late Dr Anna Kunte, Sixth Edition, Pandurang Jawaji Publication, Sutra sthana, Adhyaya 1, P 7
16. Ashtanga Hridaya, Dr Bramhanand Tripathi, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Prakashana, Reprinted Edition 2017, Sutrasthana, 11 Adhyaya, Shloka No 6.

Cite this article as:

Swati S. Mohite and Mayuri H. Bhoskar. Inevitability of vajikarana in women: A review. Int. J. Res. Ayurveda Pharm. 2022;13(1):71-73 <http://dx.doi.org/10.7897/2277-4343.130116>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

Disclaimer: IJRAP is solely owned by Moksha Publishing House - A non-profit publishing house, dedicated to publishing quality research, while every effort has been taken to verify the accuracy of the content published in our Journal. IJRAP cannot accept any responsibility or liability for the site content and articles published. The views expressed in articles by our contributing authors are not necessarily those of IJRAP editor or editorial board members.