



Review Article

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AN OVERVIEW OF NUTRACEUTICALS AND MANAGEMENT OF MENOPAUSE THROUGH THE SIDDHA SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

Siddha medicine is an ancient traditional system from South India that offers a holistic approach to health and well-being. The transition of menopause is considered a significant phase in a woman's life state, defined by permanent cessation of menstruation resulting in the loss of ovarian follicle development. Nutrition and Siddha management address the challenges of menopause by incorporating phyto estrogen, calcium and omega-3 fatty acids, which alleviate the symptoms, promote hormonal and tri-humour balance. The present study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of nutraceuticals, Siddha regimen and Ashtanga yogam for menopause. To synthesize the results of published studies from electronic databases such as PubMed, Medline and the grey literatures available in the online repository of The Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University and literature evidence regarding the management of menopause through the Siddha system. In the Siddha system, medicines, nutraceuticals and Ashtanga Yogam during menopause are centred around promoting hormonal balance, managing symptoms and supporting overall well-being. This study may act as a key role support for menopausal women.

Keywords: Siddha medicine, Menopause, Nutraceuticals, Management, Yogam.

INTRODUCTION

Menopause, the permanent cessation of menstruation, is an ill-defined time period that surrounds the final years of a woman's reproductive life. It is caused by oocyte depletion and the loss of gonadal steroids. It is preceded by perimenopause, a transition period characterized by oocyte loss, reduced reactivity to gonadal steroid feedback, broad hormonal variations, and unpredictable menstruation patterns. It begins with the first onset of menstrual irregularity and ends after one year of amenorrhea, thereby defining the final menstrual period (FMP)¹. The level of estrogen is sharply declining during menopause which causes many physical as well as psychological symptoms, including palpitations, headache, irritability, anxiety, lethargy, forgetfulness, loss of libido, dyspareunia, urinary complaints, menstrual irregularities, hot flashes, vaginal dryness and osteoporosis. The onset of menopause begins at around the age of 45 and may last for up to four years. The overall prevalence of menopausal symptoms was reported as 87.7%². In which anxiety physical and mental exhaustion were the most common symptoms.

In the Siddha system, this transitional period can be compared to kadai poovu / poovu mudivu³. Menopausal symptoms are prevalent in India. According to them, they managed menopause mostly on their own by adopting various strategies. Some of them

undergo Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT), but it is not affordable to everyone as they need other alternative therapy. Siddha medicine uses a holistic approach with its unique polyherbal medicine, Ashtanga yogam and nutraceuticals. Scientific research strongly evidences that Siddha polyherbal preparations herbs serve as an innovative platform for managing menopausal symptoms along with Ashtanga yogam.

All the data were synthesized from published studies of electronic databases such as PubMed, Medline and the grey literatures available in the online repository of The Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University and literature evidence regarding nutraceuticals, Ashtanga yogam and management of menopause through Siddha system.

Menopausal Symptoms

- Hot flushes
- Night sweats
- Trouble sleeping /Insomnia
- Joints pain
- Fatigue
- Depression
- Palpitation
- Vaginal dryness
- Mood swing

- Loss of libido
- Impaired memory
- Urinary incontinence
- Reduced Bone Mineral Density

Nutraceuticals

Phytoestrogens are the compounds in plants that appear to act like a mild form of Menopausal Hormone Therapy (MHT). Scientific evidence shows that it can reduce menopausal symptoms. Some of them are listed as follows,

Food Supplement	Common name	Botanical Name	Action	Active Component	Effect on menopause
Sesame balls [Figure 1]	Sesame	<i>Sesamum indicum</i>	Antioxidant, Reduces cholesterol, Lipid regulation ⁴	Sesamol Sesamin Phytosterols Essential amino acids ⁴	Improves Blood lipids Antioxidant status Sex hormone status. ⁵
Raagi koozh, Raagi adai [Figure 2]	Finger millet	<i>Eleusine coracana</i>	Anti-inflammatory Antioxidant ⁶	Thiamin Riboflavin Niacin Tocopherols Calcium Potassium ⁶	Improves Calcium level & BMD. ⁷
Roasted flaxseed Ladoo Porridge Salad [Figure 3]	Flax seed	<i>Linum usitatissimum</i>	Anticancer Antioxidant ⁸	Cyanogenic glycosides Cadmium Trypsin inhibitors Phytic acid ⁸	Reduces Hot flushes Fatigue Anxiety ⁹ .
Fennel seeds decoction/water [Figure 4]	Fennel	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Hepatoprotective Antioxidant ¹⁰	High dietary fiber Calcium Manganese Sodium ¹⁰	Reduces Insomnia Vaginal dryness Hot flashes. ¹¹
Soybean Sprouts Soy milk [Figure 5]	Soybeans	<i>Glycine max.</i>	Antioxidant Antiinflammatory Antimicrobial Anticancer ¹²	Isoflavones Phyto-sterols Lecithins Saponins ¹²	Improves Bone health Cognitive function Memory ¹³

Siddha Management for Menopausal Symptoms

- Pirandai chooranam
- Sakala noi chooranam
- Muthu parpam
- Mega rajanga girutham
- Thetrankottai leghiyam
- Thanneervittan nei

Pirandai Chooranam¹⁴

Ingredients: *Cissus quadrangularis*

Effect on menopause: Improves Bone Mineral Density and prevents osteoporosis¹⁵.

Sakala Noi Chooranam¹⁶

Ingredients

- *Coriandrum sativum*
- *Glycyrrhiza glabra*
- *Nigella sativa*
- *Cuminum cyminum*
- *Cycas circinalis*

Effect on menopause: Relieves hot flush, mood swings, sleep disturbance/insomnia, joint pain¹⁷.

Muthu Parpam¹⁸

Ingredients

- *Pinetada margarittifera*
- *Vitex negundo*
- *Curculigo orchioides*

Effect on menopause: Relieves hot flashes, myalgia, insomnia, palpitation and other cognitive impairment¹⁹.

Mega Rajanga Girutham²⁰

Ingredients

- *Ficus racemosa*
- *Syzygium cumini*

- *Lannea coromandelica*
- *Saccharum officinarum*
- *Emblica officinalis*
- *Citrus aurantium*
- *Abies spectabilis*
- *Elettaria cardamomum*
- *Syzygium aromaticum*
- *Myristica fragrans*
- *Alpinia officinarum*
- *Glycyrrhiza glabra*
- *Curculigo orchioides*
- *Cocos nucifera*
- *Sesamum indicum*
- Cow's ghee

Effect on menopause: Relieves mood swings, fatigue, depression, and urinary incontinence, reduces the loss of bone mineral density, corrects menstrual irregularities, anaemia, menorrhagia, and leucorrhoea during transitional period²¹.

Thetrankottai Leghiyam¹⁸

Ingredients

- *Zingiber officinale*
- *Piper nigrum*
- *Piper longum*
- *Terminalia chebula*
- *Emblica officinalis*
- *Terminalia bellirica*
- *Alpinia galangal*
- *Cuminum cyminum*
- *Strychnos potatorum*
- Sugar
- Honey
- Cow's ghee
- Cow's milk

Effect on menopause: Prevent loss of bone mineral density and osteoporosis²².

Thanneervittan Nei²³

Ingredients

- *Emblica officinalis*
- *Asparagus racemosus*
- *Cucumis sativus*
- *Benincasa hispida*
- *Sacharum officinarum*
- *Zingiber officinale*
- *Piper nigrum*
- *Piper longum*
- *Terminalia chebula*
- *Emblica officinalis*
- *Terminalia bellerica*
- *Coriandrum sativum*
- *Eletaria cardamomum*
- *Syzygium aromaticum*
- *Glycyrrhiza glabra*
- *Saussurea lappa*
- *Cuminum cyminum*
- *Nigella sativa*
- *Nymphaea alba*
- *Vitis vinifera*
- *Aponogeton natans*
- *Phoenix dactylifera*
- *Trachyspermum ammi*
- *Trachyspermum roxburghianum*
- Cow's milk
- Rock candy
- Pink rock salt
- Cow's ghee
- Tender coconut water

Effect on menopause: Regulates hot flashes, mood swings, impaired memory, and vaginal dryness and reduces urinary incontinence²⁴.

Ashtanga Yogam²⁵

IYAMAM- Moral disciplines

The ten iyamas are non-violence, truth, honesty, sexual continence, forbearance, attitude, kindness, straightforwardness, and bodily cleansing. Making a habit of constantly practising iyamam purifies words, thoughts and deeds.

NIYAMAM-Positive observances

The ten niyamas are austerity, contentment, belief in God, charity, worship of God, listening to explanations of doctrines scriptures,

modesty, having a discerning mind, repetition of prayers and sacrifice.

AASANAM-Postures

Jaanusirasanam [Figure 6]

Benefits

- Relieves anxiety, fatigue and headache
- It calms the brain and helps reduce depression
- Improves digestion
- Stretches the spine, shoulders, hamstrings, and groins

Adho Muga Savanasanam [Figure 7]

Benefits

- It calms the brain and helps to relieve stress and depression
- Helps to prevent osteoporosis
- Relieves headache, insomnia, back pain and fatigue
- Improves digestion

Sedhu Bandha Sarvangasanam [Figure 8]

Benefits

- Reduces anxiety, fatigue, backache, headache and insomnia
- Improves digestion
- Reduces for osteoporosis and sinusitis

Bhujangasanam [Figure 9]

Benefits

- Reduces stress and fatigue
- Improves blood circulation
- Strengthens the arms and shoulders
- Stretches muscles in the chest, shoulders, spine and abdominal muscle

Thirikonasanam [Figure 10]

Benefits

- Reduces stress
- Increases stability and flexibility
- Stimulate digestive organs
- Improves metabolism

Pranayamam [Figure 11]

Benefits

- Improves quality of sleep
- Enhances cognitive performance
- Decreases stress
- Improves lung function
- Increases mindfulness



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11

CONCLUSION

Each phase of a woman's life is beautiful and should be considered gracious. Various scientific evidence strongly suggest that the Siddha system promotes a healthy menopausal transition by providing nutrient-rich foods, medicines and yoga procedures to enhance physiological, psychological and overall well-being during the menopausal phase.

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