



# Management of Menstrual Disorders through Ayurveda: A Clinical Review

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## Abstract

Menstrual disorders, including dysmenorrhea, menorrhagia, amenorrhea, and irregular cycles, are common gynecological concerns that significantly impact women's physical and emotional well-being. Ayurveda, the traditional system of medicine in India, offers a holistic framework for understanding and managing these conditions through the balance of *doshas*, regulation of *Agni* (digestive fire), and maintenance of *Artava* (menstrual health). This clinical review explores Ayurvedic principles related to menstrual physiology and pathology, along with commonly prescribed therapies such as *Panchakarma*, *Rajaswala Charya*, and herbal formulations like Ashokarishta, Lodhrasava, and Shatavari-based preparations. Emphasis is placed on the role of *Apana Vayu* and uterine detoxification in restoring normal cyclic function. Drawing on classical texts and contemporary clinical studies, the review highlights the efficacy, safety, and integrative potential of Ayurvedic interventions. The findings suggest that individualized Ayurvedic management can offer a sustainable and side-effect-free alternative for the treatment of menstrual disorders.

**Key Words:** Yonivyapad, Ayurveda, clinical view.

## INTRODUCTION

Menstruation is a vital and integral component of a woman's reproductive cycle. Irregularities and painful periods are among the most common gynecological issues, significantly impacting women's quality of life. While conventional medications may provide symptomatic relief, they are often associated with adverse effects such as acne, deepened voice, alopecia, and hepatic complications. As a result, many women are turning to alternative therapies, including herbal medicine and Ayurveda. The Ayurvedic approach not only emphasizes effective treatment but also focuses on early detection and the correction of underlying imbalances specific to each individual. This review is based on that foundational principle, offering a critical analysis of the therapeutic roles and mechanisms of herbal remedies such as *Ashoka*, *Dashamoola*, *Guggulu*, *Haridra* (Turmeric),

*Nagarmotha, Aloe vera, Triphala, and Vidanga* in the management of menstrual disorders including menorrhagia, metrorrhagia, and oligomenorrhea..<sup>[1]</sup>

Ayurveda, the ancient science of life, offers a holistic approach to both the preservation of health and the treatment of diseases. Menstruation is a natural physiological process experienced by women during their reproductive years. However, menstrual disorders are among the most common gynecological complaints for which women seek medical care. Ayurveda provides detailed descriptions of the normal menstrual process as well as various therapeutic interventions for managing associated disorders. Herbal remedies, as part of Ayurvedic medicine, offer an effective alternative with minimal or no long-term side effects. The integration of traditional herbs in the management of menstrual irregularities reflects Ayurveda's comprehensive and individualized approach to treatment. This study incorporates several classical herbs to explore their role in addressing menstrual disorders as part of an integrative therapeutic model..<sup>[2]</sup>

### **Ayurveda and Menstrual Disorders**

This section highlights the relationship between Ayurvedic medicine and women's health, with a specific focus on menstrual disorders. Ayurveda—translated as "the science of life" or "a complete way of living"—offers a holistic perspective on the various stages of a woman's life, including menstruation, pregnancy, menopause, and aging. It provides comprehensive strategies for managing the physiological and psychological changes associated with these phases. In Ayurveda, a woman's health is closely linked to her metabolic energy, reproductive function, and hormonal equilibrium, which are regulated by the three fundamental doshas: *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*. Menstruation is considered a natural and essential physiological event that must occur at the appropriate time and in a balanced manner. When the doshas become aggravated—often due to stress or emotional disturbances—menstrual irregularities can occur, manifesting as early, delayed, or painful periods. Ayurveda emphasizes restoring doshic balance as a primary means of addressing such disruptions..<sup>[3]</sup>

### **The clinical appearance of menstrual disorders**

Ayurvedic perspectives on menstrual health differ considerably from those of Western medicine. In Ayurveda, menstrual disorders are broadly categorized into four types: excessive uterine bleeding (*Asrigdara*), retrograde menstrual flow, downward displacement of blood, and diminished menstrual flow (*Artava Kshaya*). The Ayurvedic framework attributes disease to three primary causes: misuse of the intellect (*Prajnaparadha*), misuse of the senses (*Asatmendriyarthasamyoga*), and failure to adapt to changing environments (*Parinama*). Imbalances among the three doshas—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—are believed to underlie the pathological changes in the menstrual cycle. Ayurvedic healing principles emphasize restoring internal doshic balance and eliminating the root cause of the disorder. This is achieved through the administration of specific herbal formulations and individualized therapeutic interventions. Once the natural harmony of the doshas is re-established, the normal physiological functions are restored, leading to the relief of symptoms and long-term well-being..<sup>[4]</sup>

## Concepts and Principles of Ayurveda

In Ayurvedic medicine, health is viewed not merely as the absence of disease, but as a dynamic state of balance among the mind, body, and spirit in harmony with nature. Illness is considered the result of disruption in this balance. Central to Ayurvedic philosophy is the concept of *Prakriti*—an individual's unique constitution—defined by the specific combination of the three doshas: *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*. This constitution is established at the time of conception and remains unchanged throughout one's life. The predominance or imbalance of a particular dosha can predispose an individual to certain diseases. Menstrual cycles and their associated disorders are interpreted within this framework, as disturbances in doshic balance manifest differently depending on a woman's *Prakriti*. Understanding the menstrual health of an individual through the lens of her constitutional type allows for personalized and holistic therapeutic approaches in Ayurveda.<sup>[5]</sup>

A thorough understanding of both the normal and abnormal features of the menstrual cycle is essential for the effective treatment of menstrual disorders. In Ayurveda, recognizing an individual's *Prakriti* (constitutional type) facilitates accurate diagnosis and the selection of appropriate therapies tailored to each woman's unique physiological makeup. The principles of health maintenance in Ayurveda emphasize the importance of *Ahara* (diet), *Vihara* (lifestyle), and *Aushadha* (medicines) for disease prevention and overall well-being. Classical Ayurvedic texts describe various herbs that are considered safe and effective for the management of menstrual disorders. Since overall health significantly influences menstrual function, maintaining systemic balance is key. Findings from the present review indicate that Ayurvedic herbs can play a crucial role in managing conditions such as *Artavakshaya* (scanty menstruation), *Kshina Shukra* (decreased reproductive strength), and *Rasa Kshaya* (deficiency of bodily fluids), offering a holistic approach to women's reproductive health.<sup>[6]</sup>

## Common Menstrual Disorders in Ayurveda

Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, acknowledges a range of physiological imbalances that can arise in women throughout different life stages—from menarche to menopause. Menstrual disorders are classified as either acute or chronic. Acute conditions may involve fluctuations in libido, pain, or irregular bleeding, while chronic issues include delayed menstruation, lochial retention, fibroids, and ovarian cysts—often arising from mixed disorders of the uterine muscles and ovaries. The causative factors of these disorders, as outlined in Ayurvedic texts, include excessive intake of sour, salty, astringent, and cold foods, prolonged fasting, intense physical exertion, and unhealthy lifestyle practices. Additional etiological factors include sexual activity during night, rainy seasons, or other unfavorable times. Commonly cited menstrual disorders include dysmenorrhea, menorrhagia, oligomenorrhea, and amenorrhea. Dysmenorrhea is categorized into uterine and pelvic types, often linked to aggravated *Vata* and *Pitta* doshas. Ayurvedic treatment focuses on identifying and correcting doshic imbalances, supported by appropriate herbal therapies, dietary modifications, and lifestyle adjustments.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Treatment

Since ancient times, various herbs and their formulations have been documented for managing menstrual disorders by addressing their symptoms, underlying causes, and doshic imbalances. Ayurvedic texts detail numerous medicinal plants—such as Ashoka, Shatavari, Hingvastak, Amla, Ahiphen, garlic, Trikatu, Nagkesar, Chitrak, and Satavari—that are employed to alleviate symptoms associated with different menstrual irregularities. Understanding the properties, effects, and indications of these herbs, as described in classical Ayurvedic literature, facilitates their application, making them accessible even to those without formal training in Ayurveda.. [8]

Ayurvedic literature emphasizes the importance of understanding individual symptoms to effectively utilize herbs in managing menstrual disorders. Certain herbs, due to their inherent properties and effects, not only alleviate specific symptoms but also address the underlying disease conditions directly. This symptom-focused approach enhances the therapeutic efficacy of herbal treatments.

Classical Ayurvedic texts, such as *Sharangadhara Samhita* and *Bhavaprakasha Nighantu*, provide detailed insights into the properties, effects, and indications of various herbs used in the treatment of gynecological disorders, collectively referred to as *Yonivyapad*. These texts serve as valuable resources for understanding the application of herbs like Ashoka (*Saraca asoca*), Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*), and Lodhra (*Symplocos racemosa*), among others, in managing conditions such as menorrhagia, dysmenorrhea, and amenorrhea .

To validate and comprehend the efficacy of these herbs in treating menstrual disorders, extensive research and clinical trials are essential. Such studies can bridge traditional knowledge with contemporary scientific understanding, ensuring safe and effective integration into modern healthcare practices.

For those interested in delving deeper, Ayurvedic compendiums like *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita* offer comprehensive descriptions, including specific *shlokas* and formulations, detailing the use of these herbs in various *Yonivyapad* conditions. These texts are accessible to both practitioners and enthusiasts seeking to explore the intricacies of Ayurvedic gynecology.[8]

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