

## UTERINE FIBROID IN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE AND ITS MANAGEMENT

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### ABSTRACT

In present era, women are getting more beauty conscious rather than being health conscious. Therefore changing lifestyle and dietary pattern has become a major cause of increased incidence of gynecological disorders in women. Uterine fibroid is one of them, which is the commonly being faced by gynecologist in day to day practice. It hampers the quality of life of a female causing physical and mental grief which has a great impact on the wellness of her family. In ancient era the cases of *Garbhasayath Arbuda* were rarely found because of the lesser incidence of the risk factor of this disease like late marriages, postponement of pregnancy, nulliparity, sedentary lifestyle, improper food habits, chemical and adulterated food and polluted environment. Specific reference of *Arbuda* of female reproductive

system is not available in any *Ayurvedic* classical book. On the basis of its origin from *Garbhashaya* and its surrounding structure it can be called as *Garbhashaya Arbuda* and can be correlated with uterine fibroid. Now- a- days the prevalence of uterine fibroid among women is between 30-50% due to inappropriate changes in lifestyle. If we look towards modern medicinal system for treatment of fibroid, we could hardly find hormonal therapy or surgical interventions as a solution. Hormonal therapy causes many side effects and unwanted complication like weight gain, depression, abnormal uterine bleeding and surgical therapy especially hysterectomy does not allow to preserve her fertility. This study is aimed to justify pathophysiology of uterine fibroid in *Ayurvedic* perspective with an intention to raise awareness and to encourage implementation of *Ayurvedic* therapies in such type of disorders. On the basis of pathogenesis, signs and symptoms of uterine fibroid, we can correlate it with *Mansaja Arbuda* mentioned in *Susrutha Samhita*. The treatment approach is

directed towards reducing size of fibroids and symptoms uses *Shodhana, Shaman* and *Shalyaja Chikista* which are mentioned as a line of treatment in *Arbuda Chikista* contexts.

**KEYWORDS:** *Garbhasayadushtivikara, Yonirogvikara, Mamsa Vridhi*, Uterine fibroid.

## INTRODUCTION

Uterine fibroid is the commonest benign outgrowth of the uterus. In spite of being non-cancerous in nature, it may severely affect the general health and quality of life of women. It is the most common hormone dependent benign tumor that is usually found among reproductive aged women.<sup>[1]</sup> It is also known as fibroma or leiomyoma. It is derived from smooth muscle cell either from vessel wall or uterine muscle. They are rarely developed before puberty and after menopause. Uterine fibroids are known to increase in size during pregnancy and with oral contraceptives pills user.<sup>[2]</sup> Prevalence of this disease is 20 - 40% among women over the age of 35 years.<sup>[3]</sup> The risk factors for fibroids are nulliparity, an early menarche, obesity, family history of fibroids hyper-estrogenic state, high fat diet.<sup>[4]</sup> Majority of the time, it remains asymptomatic and is diagnosed accidentally but some time it induces symptoms like heavy p/v bleeding, intermenstrual bleeding, pain during menses, pain and heaviness in lower abdomen, lower backache, pressure symptom, reproductive problems such as infertility and repeated abortion.<sup>[4]</sup> On the basis of origin it is classified as intramural, submucous and subserous.<sup>[5]</sup> About 75% of fibroid are intramural in nature. According to site and size of fibroids the intensity of symptoms varies. Big sized fibroids distort the shape of uterine cavity and may affect the uterine contraction. It is ranked as a major reason for approximately one third of all hysterectomies per year<sup>[6]</sup> and hysterectomy does not allow women to preserve their fertility so women prefer conservative treatment.

## AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE ON FIBROID

In *Ayurvedic* literature specific illustration of *Arbuda* of female reproductive system is not mentioned. According to principle of *Ayurveda*, there is no disease without the vitiation of *Doshas*. *Acharya Charak* and *Acharya Vagbhat* has considered *Arbuda* as *Mamsapradoshajavyadhi*.<sup>[7,8]</sup> Thus uterine fibroid can be considered as a *Mansaja* type of *Garbhashayagatha Arbuda*. *Acharya Vagbhat* also told *Arbuda* to be bigger than the *Granthi*.<sup>[9]</sup> According to *Yogratnaka*, *Granthi* and *Arbuda* are same because of similarity in their *Dosha, Dushya, Sthan, Hetu* and *Aakruti*.<sup>[10]</sup> According to *BhavPrakash*, *Arbuda* is produced by *Vata, Pitta, Kapha, Dosha Rakta, Mamsa, Meda Dushya* and its symptoms are similar to those of respective *Granthi*.<sup>[11]</sup>

As per *Ayurvedic* perspective, *Arbuda* is *Vata-Kaphaj* in origin. *Vata Dosha* is responsible for the faulty division of cells and *Kapha Dosha* for their growth or proliferation. Thus vitiated *Vata Dosha* along with *Kapha Dosha* (*Dosha Vaishamyawastha*) results in tumor formation (benign tumors). Muscular tissue is the most common *Dhatu* affected by tumor. Benign tumors of muscular origin are slow growing tumors which are mostly caused by *Kapha Dosha* entering into *Mamsa Vaha Srotas* and thus vitiating *Mansa dhatu*.

### TYPES OF ARBUDA

Based upon the dominance of *Doshic* factor and *Dhatu* (tissues) involved, they are classified as<sup>[12]</sup> -

- *Vataja Arbuda*
- *Pittaja Arbuda*
- *Kaphaja Arbuda*
- *Raktaj Arbuda*
- *Mamsa Arbuda*
- *Medaj Arbuda*

All of the above *Arbuda*, *Mamsaja Arbuda* can be considered as uterine fibroid (tumors found in smooth muscle cells of the myometrium).

### CLINICAL FEATURE

In *Susruta Samhita* the clinical feature of *Mamsaja Arbuda* is *Avedana*, *Snigdha*, *Ananyavarna*, *Apakam*, *Ashmopamam*, and *Aprachalyam*.<sup>[13]</sup> These features are similar with fibroids in the following manner

- *Avedna* - Generally it is painless tumor, but sometime pain occurs due to its big size (caused irritation in neighboring nerve or pressure symptoms)
- *Snigdha*- Outer appearance is glossy
- *Ananyavarna* - Color of tumor is same of the tissue that it grows
- *Apakam* - Non-suppurating
- *Ashmopamam* – Consistency of tumor is hard
- *Aprachalyam*- Immovable

### ETIOPATHOGENESIS OF ARBUDA

*Arbuda Vyadhi* is first described by *Acharya Sushruta* with its etiopathogenesis in *Sushruta*

*Samhita*. According to *Acharya Sushruta*, the aggravated *Doshas* along with vitiated *Mamsa dhatu*, get localized in any part of body, producing a local swelling specially in deeper muscle which is round, fixed, big, mild pain and non-suppurative. It is deep rooted and show a gradual increase in size. Such abnormal prominent growth (*Upachay*) in *Mamsa Dhatu* is termed as *Arbuda*.<sup>[14]</sup> The causative factors for formation of *Arbuda* are *Mithya Aahar* (*Gramya Mamsa, Ajeerna Aahara, Dusta Bhojana, Abhishyandhi Bhojana*), *Mithya Viharas* (*Divaswapna, Avyayama*) etc. which lead to *Agni Vaishamya* and vitiated *Kapha - Vata Dosh*. *Agni Vaishamya* causes *Pitta Dosh* vitiation and produce *Ama*. This *Ama* (Toxins) accelerates the *Kapha Dosh* vitiation and transferred to *Garbhashaya* (uterus) by *Apana Vata Dosh*. Formation of *Ama* and accumulation of vitiated *Kapha Dosh* block the movement of *Apana Vata* in susceptible individuals when *Kha-Vaigunya* occurs (in *Garbhasaya*). It leads to vitiation of *Mamsa Dhatu* leading to *Arbuda* formation in *Garbhasaya*. In chronic conditions there is involvement of *Rasa, Raktha, Medo* and *Arthavaha Srotas* too that leads to manifestation of *Garbhasaya Vikrithi*.

## DISEASE PROGNOSIS

*Acharya Charaka* has described two types of *Asadya vyadhi*, named as *Yapya* and *Anupapakrama Vyadhi*.<sup>[15]</sup> According to *Acharya Charak*, *Mansaj Arbuda* (uterine fibroid) can be considered under *Yapya Vyadhi* because of the *Lakshanas* of *Yapya Vyadhi*<sup>[16]</sup> is-

- *Gambheeram* - Disease afflicting deep seated body tissues
- *Bahu Dhatustham* - Disease involves many body tissues
- *Alpena Hetuna Ashu Pravartakam* - Disease gets quickly exacerbated with mild causative factors
- *Deerghakaalam* - Chronic disease

Therefore, it (uterine fibroid) is more supportable to be considered as *Yapya Vyadhi* whereas *Acharya Sushruta* has depicted *Mansaja Arbuda* to be *Asadya Vyadhi*.

Modern science also find recurrence of uterine fibroid even after surgical treatment (*Myomectomy*). Its recurrence rates after *myomectomy* is 20 to 40 %.<sup>[17]</sup>

## MANAGEMENT

In Ayurvedic classical texts, description and treatment of *Arbuda* is barely mentioned because of the lesser incidence. Most of the diseases in present time are due to consumption of *Mithya Aahar* and *Vihara* so *Nidan Parivarjan*<sup>[18]</sup> is considered as first line treatment for

all the diseases. This concept can be used as a treatment, prevention and thus stopping the recurrence of the disease. *Acharya Charak* has provided effective management for *Arbuda* as- *Shaman Chikitsa*, *Sodhana Chikitsa*, *Rasayana Chikitsa*, *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* (counseling) *Yoga* and *Pranayama*.<sup>[19]</sup>

- *Vata-Kaph-har Dravya* should be given.
- *Sthoulya Chikitsa*<sup>[20]</sup> can be administered.
- *Vrana Chikitsa*<sup>[21]</sup> should be used.
- *Granthi Chikitsa*<sup>[23]</sup> should be used.
- *Lepana* and *Sthanik Chikitsa* should be used.
- *Shastra karma*, *Kshara karma*, *Agni karma*.<sup>[24]</sup>
- *Uttar Basti* with *Vata-Kaph-Nashak Dravya siddha taila*.

*Arbuda Vyadhi* can be managed according to the principal of *Samprapti Vighatana* (To break the pathogenesis). *Vata-Kapha* dominating *Tridosha* are involved in the pathogenesis of *Arbuda* hence *Vata- Kaph-har chikitsa* may be administered. *Tikshna Ushna*, *Lekhan*, *Chedana*, *Shrotoshodhan Dravya* can be used to reduce the symptoms and size of uterine fibroid. When *Garbhasaya Arbuda* presents with *Lakshana* of heavy prolonged bleeding or intermenstrual bleeding *Rakta Stambhana*, *Rakta Prasadana* and *Asrigdar Chikitsa* should also be done.

#### **AUSHADI**

- *Kanchanara Gugglu*
- *Shigru Gugglu*
- *Triphaadi Gugglu*
- *Palasa twak kshara*,
- *Kalyanka kshara*,
- *Varundi kashayam*
- *Chitraka Granthikadi kashayam*
- *Gomutra therapy*,
- *Rasyan therapy*.
- *Arbuahara Rasa*
- *Roudra Rasa*

**Lepana and Sthanik Chikitsa**

- Swedan with *Snuhi, Gandiraka, Lavana, and Seesaka* should be done followed by equal part of *Gandhaka, Shila, Sunthi, Vidanga, Nagabhasm lepa* mixed with blood of chameleon.<sup>[25]</sup>
- Application of *Aragwadha, Gojihwa, Trivrit*<sup>[26]</sup> etc *lepa*.
- Application of *Langali, karavira*<sup>[27]</sup> etc *lepa*.

**PATHYA**

- Consuming proper food like *puraan Ghrita, Rakta Shali rice, Yava, Mudge, Patola, Rakta Shigru, Ruksha, Katu, and Deepana dravyas, Guggulu, and Shilajatu*.<sup>[28]</sup>
- *Pathya* mentioned in *Yoni Rog* like *Yava-annam, Abhayarishtam, Pippali, Lasun, Amalaki*.<sup>[29]</sup>
- Light exercise like jogging, yoga etc.
- Sleeping at right time.
- Do meditation.

**APATHYA**

- Use of milk with lahsun.
- *Kapha Medo Vardhak Aahara* like *Mamsa Bhojana*, junk food.
- *Srotoavarodh Aahar* like *Abhishyandhi Bhojana, Guru Bhojan*.
- Meat of aquatic animals.
- Dough of grounded wet pulses.
- Excess use of white sugar, white salt, white hydrogenated oil.
- Sweet, sour, heavy and moisture producing substance.
- Processed foods like cheese, frozen pizza, microwaveable dinners.
- Foods with ingredients added for flavor and texture like sweeteners, spices,
- Colors and preservatives like sauce, jam, yogurt, juice etc.
- *Virudh ahaar*.

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