

Review Article

Shweta Pradara - A Localised Symptom of the Female Reproductive System or a Systemic Disease? - A Review

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A B S T R A C T

Shweta pradara is a pathological condition that is characterised by a localised symptom that is whitish discharge from the vaginal canal. The following are three criteria of leucorrhoea. 1) Excess secretion is evident from persistent vulvar moistness or staining of the undergarments or need to wear a vulvar pad, 2) It is non-purulent and non-offensive, 3) It is non-irritant and never causes pruritis, treatment of which includes to improve the general health condition along with other specific management. *Shweta pradara* closely resembles leucorrhoea but does not completely fulfil the criteria. It has been explained mainly as a symptom in many diseases related to *stree roga* as well as *prasuti tantra*. Treatment options involve oral medications along with other lines of treatment like *basti*, *lepa*, *varti*, *prakshalana* and *pichu*. This indicates that the condition is more than just local. Very less has been explored about the systemic involvement in *Shweta pradara* which can be attempted to be established as the systemic disease as the *acharyas* have mentioned a separate classical treatment in order to combat the ailment, else can be understood as an important symptom of an underlying cause so as to attain symptomatic relief. Interpretation of *Shweta pradara* as a disease has been dealt in the article.

Keywords: Leucorrhoea, Localised Symptom, Systemic Disease, Moniliasis, Anaemia, Diabetes, Hyperglycemia, *Shweta pradara*, *Stree Roga*, *Prasuti Tantra*, *Yoni Vyapat*, *Prameha*, *Panduroga*

Introduction

Shwetapradara is one of the common complaints for which women seek help from gynaecologists. It not only occurs by the dysfunction of the reproductive system but also due to certain abnormality in general health in certain cases.³ Out of 10 women in the OPD of Sri Sri Ayurveda Hospital, Bangalore, come with the complaint of white discharge per vagina. Among these, 2 are known to have an underlying

systemic disease. The recurrence rate is often present in these cases, if only managed locally.

Leucorrhoea is physiological in a healthy female during her puberty, menstrual cycle, pregnancy and during sexual excitement. Pathologically, there can be cervical or vaginal involvement.¹ Here the matter of concern is when the patient's day to day activity is hampered due to the discharge. It is characterized by white discharge per vagina

with or without foul smell, itching and pruritus, associated with problems like low back pain, lower abdomen pain, mental stress, sexual anxiety and local discomfort.

Shwetapradara has been mentioned in the classics as a symptom of the *streerogas* that occur due to vitiation of *kapha* and *vata-kapha*.² Medicines prescribed by the

various *acharyas* are *Kashaya rasa yukta*, which possess *sthambhana* action.³

References of *Shweta Pradara* in the Ayurveda Classics

The table 1, below is a compilation of the references for *Shweta pradara* and *vyadhis* related to it.

Table 1. References

Charaka samhita 4 : Chikitsa sthana 30 th chapter, Yonivyapat chikitsa adhyaya			
Condition	Nidana	Symptoms	Treatment
<i>Kaphaja yoni vyapat</i>	<i>Kapha vardhaka aahara vihara</i>	<i>Panduta</i> of the <i>Artava</i>	<p><i>Ruksha</i> and <i>Ushna</i> line of treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Basti</i> with <i>katu pradhana dravya</i> mixed in <i>gomutra</i> <i>Kalka dharana</i> of <i>Shyama (trivrt)</i> <i>Varti</i> of (i) a piece of cloth soaked in <i>varaha pitta</i> (ii) <i>churna</i> of <i>yava</i> and <i>masha</i> with <i>saindhava</i> dipped in latex of <i>arka</i> – <i>varti dharana</i> for <i>kshana matra</i> and then <i>prakshalana</i> with <i>sukhoshna</i> (iii) <i>pippali, maricha, masha, shatahva, kushta, saidhava</i>
<i>Sannipataja yoni vyapat</i>	<i>Samashana of shad rasa</i>	<i>Shweta pichila vahini</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Chikitsa</i> told in <i>vataja, pittaja, kaphaja, evam dwandwaja yoni vyapat</i>. <i>Chikitsa</i> given should be <i>sadharana</i> type
<i>Upapluta yoni vyapat</i>	<i>Kapha vardhaka aahara vihara by garbhini, chardi and shwasa vega dharana</i>	<i>Pandu sravan</i> along with <i>toda</i> and <i>Shweta srava</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Dhatakyadi taila</i> - for <i>pichu, abhyanga</i> over <i>kati, prushtha</i> and <i>trika pradesha</i>, and <i>anuvāsana basti</i> <i>Snehana</i> - <i>swedana</i> to be done, followed by <i>santarpana</i> with <i>sneha pichu</i>
<i>Kaphaja pradara</i>	<i>Gurvadi ahara</i>	Include <i>pichila</i> and <i>pandu varna yukta srava</i> which is described in detail to be <i>guru, pichila, ghana srava</i> . It causes <i>manda peeda, chardi, arochana, hrillasa, shwasa</i> and <i>kasa</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Pana</i> - <i>nimba</i> and <i>guduchi churna</i> with <i>madya</i>
<i>Shweta pradara</i>	<i>Kapha vardhaka aahara vihara</i>	<i>Shweta pradara</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Rohitaka moola twak kalka</i> along with <i>jala</i> for oral intake <i>Amalaki beeja kalka</i> with <i>madhu, mishri</i> and <i>jala</i> for oral intake <i>Amalaka churna/ swarasa</i> with <i>madhu</i> for oral intake <i>Nyagrodha (vata) twak kwatha</i> with <i>lodhra</i> for oral intake <i>Vata twak kwatha</i> for <i>yoni pichu</i> <i>Plaksha twak churna</i> with <i>madhu</i> made into <i>pinda</i> form then into <i>varti</i> for <i>yoni dharana</i> or <i>pottali</i> of <i>churna</i> <i>Churna</i> of <i>lodhra, priyangu</i> and <i>yashtimadhu</i> (1 part each) with <i>madhu</i> is made into <i>varti</i> for <i>yoni dharana</i>, after

			<p>yonī abhyāṅga</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kashaya rasa pradhana dravya churna</i> with <i>madhu</i> for <i>yonī dharana</i>, after <i>snehana</i> of <i>yonī</i> • <i>Abhyāṅga</i> with <i>vata nashaka taila</i>, followed by <i>yonī dhupana</i> with <i>Sarala, guggulu, yava, ghrita</i>. • For complete cure of <i>pandura asrgdara</i> - <i>dhupana</i> with <i>sidhari matsyaka/katu matsyaka</i> (<i>Chakrapani</i> - <i>shushka matsyaka</i>)
Sushruta Samhita⁵: Uttara tantra 38th chapter, Yonivyapat pratishedha			
<i>Kaphaja yonī vyapat</i>	<i>Kapha vardhaka aahara vihara</i>	<i>Pichila yonī, kandu yukta, ati sheetala</i>	
<i>Karnini yonī vyapat</i>	Vitiated <i>kapha</i> along with <i>rakta</i> forms <i>mamsa kandi</i>	<i>shleshma linga</i> (<i>shvaitata, paichilyata, kandu</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Varti</i> - <i>shodhana dravya</i>
<i>Acharana yonī vyapat</i>	<i>Maithuna purva purushat atirichyate</i>	<i>Kapha vriddhi lakshanas</i> like <i>shvaitata, paichilyata, kandu</i>	
<i>Atichrana yonī vyapat</i>	Excessive indulgence in the coital act	<i>shleshma linga</i> (<i>shvaitata, paichilyata, kandu</i>)	
<i>Atyananda yonī vyapat</i>	<i>kapha vardhaka aahara vihara</i>	<i>shleshma linga</i> (<i>shvaitata</i>)	
Ashtanga sangraha⁶: Indu teeka, Uttara tantra 39th chapter - Guhyarogapratishedha			
<i>Kaphaja yonī vyapat</i>	<i>Abhishyandi aadi ahara sevana</i>	<i>panduta</i> of <i>yonī</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Basti</i> with <i>katu pradhana dravya</i> mixed in <i>gomutra</i> • <i>Kalka dharana</i> of <i>shyama</i> (<i>trivrt</i>) • <i>Varti</i> of (i) a piece of cloth soaked in <i>varaha pitta</i> (ii) <i>churna</i> of <i>yava</i> and <i>masha</i> with <i>saindhava</i> dipped in latex of <i>arka</i> - <i>varti dharana</i> for <i>kshana matra</i> and then <i>prakshalana</i> with <i>sukhoshna</i>. (iii) <i>pippali, maricha, masha, shatahva, kushta, saidhava</i>
<i>Upapluta yonī vyapat</i>	<i>kapha vardhaka aahara vihara by garbhini</i>	<i>Shweta pichchila vahini</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Vatanashaka ahara prayoga</i> • <i>Pichu</i> - <i>Sallaki, jingini, jambu, dhava</i> and <i>panchavalkala Kashaya sadhita Sneha</i>
<i>Acharana</i>	<i>Maithuna purva purushat atirichyate</i>	<i>Kapha vriddhi lakshanas</i> like <i>shvaitata, paichilyata, kandu</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Uttara basti</i> - with <i>taila</i> • <i>Pichu</i> - cloth dipped in <i>Go pitta</i> or <i>matsya pitta</i> or <i>madhu mishrita kinva</i> for 21 times • <i>Pichu</i> - <i>Sallaki, jingini, jambu, dhava</i> and <i>panchavalkala Kashaya sadhita Sneha</i>
Kashyapa Samhita⁷: Kalpa sthana, chapter-Revatikalpadhyaya			
<i>Jataharini</i>	Infliction by <i>jataharini</i>	<i>srava</i> that has been mentioned refers to <i>Shweta pradara</i>	Same as that of <i>shweta pradara</i>
Yogaratanakara⁸: chapter- Streerogadhikara			

<i>Kaphaja yoni vyapat</i>	<i>kapha vardhaka aahara vihara</i>	<i>sa pandure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Varti - pippali, maricha, masha, shatahva, kushta, saidhava</i> • <i>Pathya - taila, seedhu, yavanna and abhayarishta</i>
Chakrapani dutta⁹:			
<i>Shweta pradara</i>	Excessive coitus, abortions, improper hygiene, improper diet during bleeding phase	<i>pandure pradare iti Shweta pradara</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment told by <i>Charaka</i> with respect to <i>shweta pradara</i>

Discussion

Table 1, compiles the references that we find in the classics in relation to *Shweta pradara*, which mostly depict it as a symptom to various gynaecological disorders. Understanding *Shweta pradara* as a symptom to another systemic disease or a systemic disease itself is going to provide the practitioners a broader perspective of treatment. Below mentioned are a few examples for the above mentioned outlook.

1. *Shweta pradara* as a symptom of an underlying systemic disease

Shweta pradara can be analysed to be a localised symptom of a systemic disease. Here, the importance to know about it, lies in the mode of management. In such conditions, if only locally treated yields an unsatisfying and incomplete result, hence leading to an increased incidence of recurrence and further deterioration in general health condition. Here are a few examples of systemic health conditions where in *Shweta pradara* can be noticed as a symptom.

Prameha

Prameha and *Shweta pradara* both are the diseases resulting from *dushana* of *kapha dosha*,¹⁰ the *nidana* in both the diseases is *kaphavardhaka ahara-vihara*. The *sthanasamshraya* of both diseases are very closely associated anatomically which is *basti* in *prameha* and *yoni* in *Shweta pradara*.

Charaka while explaining *kaphaja prameha* talks about the *ghanata* and *shuklata* of the *mutra*,¹¹ here this *ghanata* and *shuklata* of the *mutra* can also be considered as *Shweta pradara*.

Yogaratanakara has also given the treatment of *Shweta pradara* under the chapter named *Somaroga chikitsa*.

With special reference to Diabetes and Leucorrhoea:

- Diabetes is considered as hyperglycemic state.
- While explaining leucorrhoea it is mentioned that the white discharge may be associated with pruritus in

patients with history of diabetes and is diagnosed as moniliasis.¹²

- Moniliasis is caused by fungus monilia, now commonly known as candida albicans.
- High levels of sugar in blood and urine are directly proportional to the growth of the above mentioned fungus which is leading to localised symptoms.¹³

In the above condition the localised treatment might give relief for a very short duration of time as the underlying cause, which is, hyperglycemia has to be controlled primarily, which inturn will relieve the vaginal irritation.

Panduroga

Panduroga is explained by the *dushana* of *rasa dhatu* resulting in *kshaya* of *uttarotara dhatus* and *upadhatu*. The *alpata* of *rakta dhatu* mainly resulting in *panduroga*. *Artava* being an *upadhatu* of *rasa dhatu* is seen to have depleted as well. This depletion of *artava* can be considered as the depletion of the *kshudha artava lakshanas*. The disease *pandu* may also result in the *panduta* of the *artava* as explained above. The considerate treatment of *pandu* results in *vridhhi* of the depleted *dhatus* and *upadhatus* thereby relieving the *shwetata* or *panduta* of the *artava*.

With special reference to Anaemia and Leucorrhoea:

- Anaemia is the condition wherein the Haemoglobin levels are found to be at the lower end.
- In explanation of leucorrhoea, ill health and poor nutrition has been mentioned to be causing vaginal discharge.¹⁴
- Anaemia is directly associated to cause ill health and is due to poor nutrition.
- It causes exfoliation of the superficial cells leading to discharge from vaginal canal.¹⁵

2. *Shweta pradara* - a systemic disease:

To substantiate *Shweta pradara* as a systemic disease in itself, the following *nidana panchaka* has been interpreted. The diagnosis through investigations is mainly through an

elimination method, wherein the tests are negative for underlying causes lead to the diagnosis of *Shweta pradara* as a systemic disease.

Nidana: *kaphaja ahara vihara evam vataja ahara vihara* like *asatmya ahara, atyashana, vishamashana, alpashana, dushtabhojana*, excessive coitus, abortion, improper mode of life and dietetics during the *rajasrava kala*, unhygiene.

*Purvaroop*a: generalised weakness.

Roopa: discharge per vagina (white, yellowish white), weakness, may or may not have pruritus.

Samprapti: The above mentioned *nidana* leads to the vitiation of *vata* and *kapha dosha, rasa dhatu*. Figure 1 describes the same.

Chikitsa: mentioned earlier according to various *acharyas*.

The systemic diseases like *prameha, pandu* in general can also be evaluated wherein the *Shweta pradara* can be one of the features. The systemic disease when only symptomatically treated has more chances of relapse.

Shweta pradara itself can be considered a systemic disease as interpreted in the *samprapti* above. It is important to know the disease for its systemic or local involvement for its treatment protocol. The necessity is strengthened by the presence of the management of *Shweta pradara* separately in the classics.

Shweta pradara if only a symptom, then the presence of separate treatment in the classics can signify its severity.

Acharyas have given various oral medications which also act systematically in curing the disease which is causing the *Shweta pradara*.

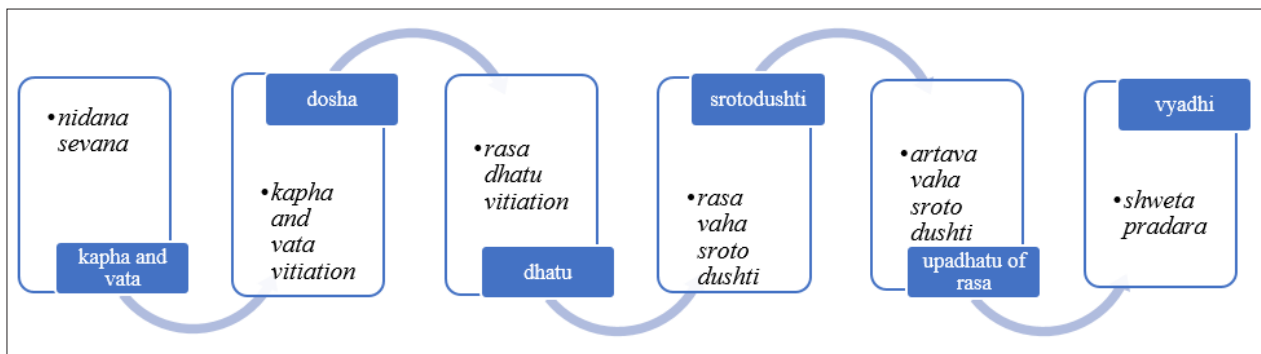


Figure 1. Samprapti

Conclusion

Leucorrhoea is closely related to *Shweta pradara*. *Shweta pradara* can be widely understood wherein leucorrhoea has restricted criteria. The pathology of leucorrhoea involves vaginal and cervical causes which has to be specifically examined and treated.

The mode of action of the oral medication is not restricted to reach to relieve the *kha vaigunya* in localised organ, but the *kha vaigunya* in the entire system.

Shweta pradara has been repeatedly found as a symptom in various diseases. Some patients come with complaint of severe white discharge overshadowing the underlying disease. Hence, careful history taking and examination will help in securing correct diagnosis. Also, in contrast, it is not always necessary for the underlying disease to be present. In these cases it can be a localised pathology, wherein the local treatments relieve the discomfort.

Pandu varna has been told by *acharyas* along with qualities of *yoni vyapat* which state *pandu, pichila, kandu grasta* etc. Here the *panduta* of the *artava* might be the white coloured mucus along with *artava* that is expelled or the *artava* itself is *pandu* in colour which means lesser red or pinkish in colour.

Keeping this in mind we also need to consider that not all *pradara* of *shweta varna* can be considered to be associated with systemic disease. Careful history taking, lab investigations will give a clear picture.

Evaluation of *Shweta pradara* as a systemic disease is important for attaining the health of the patient, the disease if locally treated without evaluating the systemic cause there are major chances of relapse and failure in the treatment.

Conflict of Interest: None

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