



## AYURVEDA OVERVIEW OF FEMALE INFERTILITY

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## ABSTRACT

Infertility is a major issue now a days due to changes in lifestyle and, unhealthy diet, anxiety, hormonal imbalance, ovulation failure, failure of implantation, and embryonic growth. Infertility/ childlessness cause great personal suffering & distress. According to *Ayurveda Bandhyatva* (infertility) primarily refers to the biological inability of a woman of who contribute to conception and also the state of a woman who is unable to carry pregnancy to full term. *Ayurveda* has its own way to handle any health issue, it focus on the treatment of infertility holistically with an aim of improving the overall health and quality of life of the individual.

**KEYWORDS :** Ayurveda, Bandhyatva, Infertility, Hormonal imbalance, Lifestyle.

## INTRODUCTION-

Infertility is defined as a failure to conceive within one or more years of regular unprotected coitus. Female infertility is the major disorder which has altered the mankind foe lack of conception and reproducibility. Stressful world, excess radiation, lack of biological food, genetically disorder, changed life style, increased electronic discharge have resulted the female infertility. *Ayurveda*, science of life has a different aspect of *Bandhyatv* (infertility). According to *Acharya Haarit* failure to achieve a child rather than pregnancy as *garbha strava* (repeated abortions) & *mrutvatsa* (having repeated still ) is also included in types of infertility.

Among the important factors or constituents of *Garbha* (zygote/embryo/fetus), *Acharyas* have included –

1. *Rtu* (season/fertile period),
2. *Kshetra* (uterus and passage),
3. *Bija* (sperms and ovums),
4. *Ambu* (nutrient fluid),
5. **Clarity or normalacy of hydra or psychology, properly functioning Vayu** (normal function of nervous system)
6. *Shadbhawas* (six factors)- mother, father, Atma, Satwa, Satmya, and Rasa.

Abnormality of anyone out of these will cause the failure to get pregnancy.

## Etiological Factors of bandhyatva mentioned in Ayurveda Classics-

- According to *Acharya Charaka*, Coitus with a women who is very young, old, chronically ill, hungary, sorrow-stricken and afflicted with other physiological abnormalities are responsible for infertility .
- Abnormalities of *yon*, psychology, *sukra*, *asrik*, diet and mode of life, coitus at improper time and loss of *bala* (body strength) have been included in the cause of delay in achieving conception by an otherwise fertile or *sapraja* women.
- As per *Acharya Vagbhatta*, hump-back or lateral posture of female is futile While coitus.
- *Acharya Bhel* says, Semen falling over *samirana nadi* (outer part of vagina) also fails to impregnate the women.
- Further he says that Due to coldness of *ashaya* (uterus) and dryness of *Indriya* (penis) infertility occurs.
- Infertility has been included in the clinical features of injury to *artavavahasrotas* by *Acharya Sushruta*.
- According to *Acarya Haarit*, childhood *Garbhakoshbhanga* (injury to uterus or uterus prolapsed), loss of *dhatu* and constriction of uterus and vulva due to coitus have been

done with the girl before her menarche also in the cause of infertility.

Overall it can be said that, Due to non acceptance of *Bija* (sperms) or *Garbha* (zygote/embryo) by vitiated vagina in various *yonivyapad* (gynecological disorders) and destruction of *bija* in *artvadustis* (menstrual disorders) the conception does not take place. In other words *yonivyapad*, *artavdosha*, and *yonyarsha* (vaginal polyp/genital warts) can be included in the etiology of infertility.

## Pathophysiology of bandhyatva-

*Acharya bhel* has mentioned about the pathophysiology of *bandhyatava*. It can be understand in two manners.

1. Abnormalities of *bija* (sperm & ovum) of mother and father  
+ non consumption of congenial *rasas*  
+ suppression of natural urges

The woman either delievers abnormal child or becomes infertile.



2. Aggravation of *vayu* due to *nidan sewan*



*vayu* expels the *sukra* (sperm) from the uterus, destroys the *raja* (ovum), thus the women becomes infertile.

## Classification &amp; Clinical features-

Classification of *bandhyatva* has not been given in any classics except *Haarita Samhita* & *Charak Samhita*.

According to *Acharya Charak* Infertility can be classified into three types-

1. **Bandhya or absolute sterility**- its due to congenital absence of uterus and/or *Aartva*. It refers to incurable congenital or acquired abnormalities resulting into absolute sterility.
2. **Apraja**- Infertility in which woman conceives after treatment. It can be said as primary infertility according to modern science.
3. **Sapraja**- it is a condition in which a woman in her active reproductive age does not conceive, after giving birth to one or more children. It refers to secondary infertility.

*Acharya Haarita* has described classification and etiology together. During childhood or in case of *garbhakoshabhanga* (injury to the uterus or its prolapse) and loss of *dhatu*, a woman never conceives.

According to him *Bandhya* is of six types-

1. *Kakabandhya* (one child sterility/ delivers one child only)
2. *Anapatya* (no child or primary infertility)
3. *Garbhasravi* (repeated abortions)
4. *Mrutvatsa* (repeated still births)
5. Due to *balakshaya* (loss of strength)
6. Due to coitus with *Ajatrasa stri* (coitus done with a girl before menarche, results as constriction of uterus and perineum & vaginal canal)

#### Treatment-

##### 1. General principles of treatment-

- Treatment of specific causes responsible for infertility such as – *yonivyapad*, *artavdosha*, *garbhkoshabhang*, *yonyarsha*, etc. should be done.
- Forsaking etiological factors such as abnormal diet, mode of life, coitus before or after *rtukala*, psychological trouble etc.
- Use of *balavirdhak* (strength producing) and *brmhana dravya*s to compensate loss of *bala* & *dhatu*s.
- After using *Snehan* (oleation), *Swedan* (sudation), *Vaman* (emesis), *Virechan* (purgation), *Asthapana* (cleansing) and *Anuvasan* (nutritive) *Basti* ( medicated enema) in consecutive order, the woman should be given congenital diet.

##### 2. Drugs for external use as *Nasya* (nasal instillation), *Abhyanga* (massage), and *Basti* (enema)-

- *narayana taila*- it can be used as *nasya* (nasal pouring), *abhyanga*, *pana*, and *basti*. (sh.)
- *Shatpuspa taila*- use of this oil in the form of nasal pouring, massage and enema is beneficial. (kashyap)
- *Lashun taila*- *basti* with this oil is highly useful in infertility as well aged persons to get *virya* (semen) and progeny. (kashyap)
- *Shatpaktaila* – *basti* with this oil is mentioned in infertility. (su.chi4/29)
- *Traivrita sneha*- *basti* (su.chi.)
- *Bala taila* – *basti* (su. Chi)
- *Shatavaryadi anuvasan* – (ch.si 12/18)
- *Guduchyadi rasayan basti*-(bhel.si.8/39)
- *Sahacharadi yapana basti*- (as.kalpasthan)
- *Mustadi yapana basti*- (As. Kalpstan)
- *Jeevantayadi anuvasan*-(ch.si)

##### 3. Drugs for Oral use-

###### *Taila*-

- *Narayana taila*
- *Shatawari taila*
- *Bala taila*
- *Shatpuspha taila*

###### *Ghrita*-

- *Laghuphlaghrita* (*shadhangdhar mandhyam khanda*)
- *Phlaghrita* (*shadhangdhar mandhyam khanda*)
- *Kamdev ghrita* (*shadhangdhar mandhyam khanda*)
- *Paniyakalyanaka ghrita* (*shadhangdhar mandhyam khanda*)
- *Sheetkalyanaka ghrita* (*yogratnakar*)
- *Shatawaryadi* or *brhatshatawaryadi ghrita* (ch. Chi.)
- *Kashmaryadi ghrita* (as. Sa.)
- *Jeevaniyagana sadhit ghrita* (ch. chi.)
- *Lashun Ghrita* (*kashyap kalpasthan*)

###### *Aristas*-

- *Dashmoolarista* (*shadhangdhar mandhyam khanda*)

###### *Rasoshadhi*-

- *Khandakadya lauha* (*bhavprakash*)

###### *Paka/avleha*-

- *Pugapaka* (*yogaratnakar*)

#### 4. *Pathya-Apathya*-

##### *Pathya* (congenial)

- *Lashuna* is said to be highly beneficial in infertility.
- Milk helps in achievement of pregnancy.
- Meat gives nourishment & help in getting pregnancy.
- Root of *bandhyakarkati*, *langali*, *katutumbi*, *devdali*, both *brahatis*, *suryaballi*, and *bhiruka* are congenial.
- Wearing off clothes and garland left over by the woman having son, bath with the water left over or flowing during bath being taken by the woman having son and coitus during *rtukala* are beneficial.

##### *Apathya* (non congenial)

- *Kaccara*, *surana*, *amla rasa*, *kanji*, articles producing burning sensation (*vidahi*) and *tikshana* (pungent or sharp acting) *dravya* are contraindicated.

#### Yoga For Female Infertility:

**1. Bee Breath (*Bhramari Pranayama*):** The *Bhramari Pranayama*, or Bee Breath, is a great asana for stress relief. A study by Fertility and Sterility reports that psychological stress is a significant factor that results in infertility. This *Pranayama* calms the body and relieves it of stress, anxiety, and worry. With a calm state of mind and body, you can increase your chances of conception to a remarkable extent.

**Directions:** Sit straight with your eyes closed and place your index fingers on the cartilage of your ears. Inhale deeply and gently press the cartilage when you exhale. Keep pressing the cartilage in and out as you inhale and exhale while making a humming sound. Do 6-7 reps of this breathing pattern.

##### 2. Seated Forward Fold (*Paschimottanasana*) –

*Paschimottanasana*, commonly known as Seated Forward Bend, helps exercise the hamstrings, lower back, and hips. This asana even helps vitalize the ovaries and uterus, the key organs responsible for conception. This asana can also improve your psychological state.

###### Directions :

Sit straight with your legs stretched out and your toes flexed towards you. Inhale and stretch both your arms above your head. Exhale and bend forward at the hip, touching the sides of your feet with your arms, while keeping your spine erect. Breathe steadily and bend further towards your legs each time you exhale. Stay in this position for one to two minutes and then inhale deeply and come back to the sitting position with your arms stretched out. Exhale and lower your arms.

##### 3. Reclining Bound Angle (*Supta Baddha Konasana*) –

This asana exercises your inner thigh and groin muscles. It also helps relieve stress, along with the discomfort of symptoms associated with IVF, menstrual cramps (bloating), and a medicated fertility cycle.

###### Directions:

Exhale and lower your back towards the floor, with the support of your hands. Lie on your back, and rest your neck on a pillow if needed. Bend your knees, and place the soles of your feet on the ground. Slowly, let your knees drop open to the sides, such that your soles touch each other. Place your hands beside you, with your palms facing up. Stay in the pose for up to 10 minutes and continue to inhale and exhale. Press your thighs together with the help of your hands. Turn onto one side and gently rise from the position.

##### 4. Shoulder Stand (*Sarvangasana*)-

Here's an *asana* that helps stimulate the thyroid gland, the dysfunction of which can lead to infertility. It also helps calm your mind and relieve stress.

**Directions:** Lie with your back on the ground, your legs

stretched out, and your arms on the sides of your body with your palms facing up. Now, raise your legs up ssto form a 90-degree angle. Press your palms into the floor and lift your waist up, bringing your legs forward, keeping them vertical to the ground. With the support of your palms hold your waist and raise your legs to form a 90-degree angle to the floor. Hold that position for one and a half minutes. Gradually lower your legs and back and place your hands on the ground, as your entire body rests parallel to the floor.

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