



Cervical Ectropion: Ayurvedic Review

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ABSTRACT:

In today's fast-paced and competitive world, the health of women has become increasingly important for the overall well-being of society. However, modern lifestyles often lead to physical and mental stress, which in turn make women more susceptible to gynecological issues. Common symptoms such as white discharge, foul-smelling discharge, itching in the vulvar region, and burning during urination are prevalent. One such condition is cervical Ectropion, the incidence is between 50-85% in females of child bearing age, with a predominant *Kapha dosha* imbalance. Cervical Ectropion is characterized by a red, circular, granular surface around the cervical OS, often accompanied by discharge. The condition is associated with the vitiation of doshas, which affect the *Yoni* and *Garbhasayakamukha*, leading to the development of cervical Ectropion.

Cervical Ectropion can be compared to *Karnini Yonivyapad* and *Garbhashay Griva Mukh Gat Vran*, a condition involving ulcerative lesions in the cervix, which also manifests with abnormal discharges and symptoms indicative of *Kapha-Pitta* imbalance can be related with *vran* explained in ayurvedic texts. Furthermore, it shares similarities with *Karnini Yonivyapad*, the term "*Karnika*" can be compared to the Ectropion found on the cervix, typically slightly raised above the squamous epithelium of the vaginal portion. The management of cervical Ectropion involves a comprehensive approach, including *shaman aushadi chikista* and *sthanik chikista* like *Yoni Prakshalana*, *Yoni Pichu*, *Yoni Varti*, *Agni Karma*, and *Kshara Karma*, focusing on the reduction of *vikrut Dosha*. Additionally, dietary modifications based on *Pathya* and *Apatya* principles play a significant role in- the treatment of Cervical Ectropion.

Key Words: Cervical Ectropion, *Chikista*, *Dosha*, *Karnini*, *Garbhashay griva mukh gat vran*, *Pathya*.

Introduction:

Cervical Ectropion is a common gynecological issue encountered in clinical practice, commonly known as Cervical Erosion- characterized by the replacement of the natural squamous epithelium on the ectocervix with columnar epithelium. This alteration often presents as a condition resembling a *Karnikara granthi* or *Vrana*, depending on the chronicity.¹ While there is no direct counterpart for cervical Ectropion in Ayurveda, the disease *Karnini* is considered in Ayurveda as one of the *Yonivyapad* and is caused by vitiation of *Vata*, *Kapha* and *Rakta* and is related to disease of reproductive tract. Further it is explained as a *Mamsakandi* or *Mamsankura granthi*. i.e. a muscular tuberos projection or a bulbous structure resembles like knot in shape, origin from the cervical orifice as it has been named cervical Ectropion in the modern medicine. *Karnini Yonivyapad* when left untreated it leads to the formation of deep seated *vrana* (ulceration) in the *garbhashayamukha* and presents with more bright red, deep seated ulceration over the cervix called as

Garbhashaya mukhagata vrana. This can be considered as chronic stage of cervical Ectropion. A condition in which the *Twak* (skin) and *Mamsa* (muscle) *Dhatu* of the *Garbhasaya Grivamukha* (cervix) are affected. In Ayurveda, *Vrana* refers to the destruction of tissue, which also aligns with the concept of Ectropion. It is believed that an imbalance in *Ahara* and *Vihar* can lead to infections and injuries in the reproductive organs, particularly the cervix, resulting in conditions such as cervical Ectropion. Thus, cervical Ectropion can be understood through the lens of Ayurvedic concepts, specifically as *Karnini* and *Garbhasaya Greevagata Vrana*, highlighting the interplay between environmental factors and tissue damage in the cervix.

Diagnostic Codes :

ICD-10 code: N86 Erosion and ectropion of cervix uteri.

Aims:

To Explore the Concept of Cervical Ectropion in Ayurved.

Objective:

Examine the Ayurvedic Diagnosis of Cervical Ectropion.

Evaluate the role of Doshas in Cervical Ectropion.

Material & method:

This study was conducted as a review and analysis of cervical ectropion in the context of Ayurveda, based on data collected from various source, including published articles, books, and OPD case records.

Incidence:

Cervical ectropion is one of the most commonly found gynecological conditions. The prevalence of cervical ectropion ranges between 17 percent and 50 percent. The prevalence increases with parity but decreases with age 35 and above. Cervical ectropion can be found in up to 80% of sexually active adolescents. The prevalence also depends on the type of contraception used. It is seen more commonly in women taking oral contraceptive pills and less so in women using barrier methods of contraception.^{2,3}

Etiology: ⁴

The occurrence of Cervical Ectropion is related to increased estrogen levels. The cervix is highly responsive to estrogen, causing the proliferation and differentiation of the cervical epithelium. Therefore, cervical ectropion is usually found in the conditions of high estrogen exposure, which are as follows:

1. Adolescents
2. Pregnancy
3. Women on hormonal contraception
4. During the years of menstruation, most commonly seen in the ovulatory phase
5. Congenital condition due to the persistence of the squamocolumnar junction at its original neonatal location. During late fetal development and the first month of life, maternal hormone exposure stimulates hyperactivity of endocervical columnar epithelium and produce cervical ectropion.
6. It is uncommon in postmenopausal women. In the postmenopausal phase, the estrogen levels are declining, causing the cervix to shrink and invert, thus drawing the squamous cell epithelium of the ectocervix into the endocervical canal.

Samanya Hetu:

Yonivyapada can be taken into consideration for the Hetu.

According to *Charaka Chi.* 30/5⁵

- *Mithyachara (Ahara, Vihara, Achara)*
- *Pradushta Artava*
- *Beeja Dosha*
- *Daiva*

According to *Astanga Hridaya (A. H. Su.* 33/28)⁶

- *Dushta Bhojana*
- *Visama – Sthana(Coitus in abnormal postures)*
- *Dusht Artava*
- *Apadravya Prayoga*

Types:

Congenital

Acquired

Symptoms:

p/v discharge (watery or curdy; clear or whitish or yellowish; foul smelling)

Abnormal vaginal bleeding (intermenstrual bleeding/ after intercourse)

Symptoms according to *dosha* :

The disease arises from the localized vitiation of *Vata*, *Kapha* and *pitta* in the *Yoni* region. As a result, the symptoms associated with the imbalance of these *Doshas* are typically observed in this condition.

1. Symptoms due to Vitiated *Kapha*

- a) *Pandu Varna*- Pallor in Vaginal canal
- b) *Pichhila Yoni* means excessive mucoid discharge per vagina
- c) *Kandu Yukta* i.e. Pruritis Vulvae
- d) *Sheetala Yoni* means wetness and numbness of vagina

2. Symptoms due to Vitiation of *Vata*

- a) Backache
- b) Pain in lower abdomen
- c) *Aayasa* i.e. sickness feeling

3. Symptoms due to Vitiation of *pitta*

- a) Burning micturition
- b) Excessive watery discharge per vagina
- c) *Yoni dah*

Sign: During pelvic examination an area on the cervix appears raw red and inflamed.

DIAGNOSIS:⁷*Trividha Pariksha (Darshana, Sparshana and Prashana)*1. *Darshana*

Diagnostic criteria of Cervical Ectropion on the basis of *Darshana Pariksha* (inspection) are done by per speculum examination.

1. *Srava of Garbhasaya grivamukhgata vrana*
2. *Rupa of Garbhasaya grivamukhgata vrana*
3. *Gandha of Garbhasaya grivamukhgata vrana*
4. *Ashraya of Garbhasaya grivamukhgata vrana*
5. Area covered by *Garbhasaya grivamukhgata vrana*

2. *Sparshana*

It is examination by Sparsha (touch). P/V examination is done, to assess the condition, consistency of cervix and tenderness in fornix.

1. Condition of cervix
2. Consistency of cervix
3. Tenderness in fornix

3. *Prashana*

Prashna pariksha comes under subjective parameter. Can be done in following format.

1. Amount of *Garbhasyagrivamukhgata vrana srava*
2. Lower backache
3. Dyspareunia
4. Pruritis vulvae
5. Postcoital bleeding
6. Infertility
7. Intermenstrual bleeding
8. Burning micturition

Cervical erosion is often detected through regular pelvic examinations and Pap smear tests, which are part of routine gynaecological screenings. This allows for timely identification and monitoring of the condition.⁸

Complication:

1. Vaginal bleeding : *Vran at Garbhashay griva mukh* may cause intermenstrual bleeding
2. Infertility⁽⁹⁾: The presence of *Karnini Yonivyapad* can hinder the expulsion of menstrual blood. This condition is characterized by excessive mucus secretion, which can obstruct the cervical canal (*rajomarga*) with a thick mucus plug. Additionally, it may alter the pH balance of the vagina and cervix. Under these abnormal conditions, sperm may be unable to reach or penetrate the uterus, potentially leading to infertility.

Ayurvedic co relation:

Derivation of *Yoni*

▪According to *Vagbhata* in *A.S.Uttara*. 38/51 *Indu-*

The word *Yoni* refers to *Garbhashaya Dwar-Mukha*.¹⁰

▪According to *Sushruta* in *Su.S.Shareera*. 5/55:

Yoni resembles the hollow of conch shell and possesses three whorls.¹¹

Karnini :

अकाले वाहमानाया गर्भेण पिहितोऽनिलः। कर्णिकां जनयेद्द्योनौ श्लेष्मरक्तेन मूर्च्छितः ॥२७॥ रक्तमार्गावरोधिन्या सा तया कर्णिनी मता ॥२८॥ (*Ca.Chi*. 30)

Acārya Caraka mentions that when a woman strains in the absence of labour pain/ uterine contractions the *vayu* obstructed by foetus withholds *kapha* and *rakta* causing *karnika* in *yonī* which in turn obstructs the passage of termed as *karnini*.¹²

Acharya Suśruta mentions that the vitiated *kapha* dosa along with *rakta* produces *karnikā* (muscular sprout) in *yonī* and other *kaphaja* features like unctuousness, itching etc.¹³ *Sushruta* is of the opinion that sleeping in the day time, sedentary habits, salty, sour and cold things, excessive use of liquids, beverages and the foodstuff producing *abhishyandi* effects are factors responsible for vitiating *kapha*.

According to *Acharya Vagbhata*, sweetish food stuff, cold environment, *madhura*, *amla*, *lavana rasa* containing diets also plays an important role in the vitiation of *kapha dosha*. However, if other predisposing factors of *Dosha-dushya samurchana* at genital organ i.e. excessive coitus, coitus during menstruation, multi parity etc. is present, the disease of the genital organ may occur.¹⁴

Vran :

There is no direct reference of *Garbhashaya Grivagata Vrana* in Ayurvedic classics, there is much similarity between *vrana* and *Garbhasaya Grivagata vrana* as –

‘व्रण’ गात्रविचूर्णने, व्रणयतीति व्रणः । सु.चि.१/६

The condition in which injury, discoloration or change in texture occurs in any part of body called as ‘*Vrana*’.

- Cause of *Vrana*—*Agantuja* and *Nija*
- *Srava*, *Vrana* and associated symptoms

The symptomatology of the cervical Ectropion resembles with the *Kapha-Pitta Vrana*. Hence, in this study the cervical Ectropion is considered as *Kapha Pitta Vrana* situated in the *yonī*.

Ashtanga Sangraha has described it in reference of *Yoni Vranekshana Yantra*¹⁵

Acharya Sushruta has devoted a special chapter for management of *Vrana* in which he has explained the management of *Doshaja Vrana* from the initial stage of *Vrana Shotha* ¹⁶

Samprapti Ghataka:

Dosha - Vata (Apana), Kapha, pitta

Vran – dusht vran

Dushya – Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa Dhatu

Adhithana - Garbhashaya Mukha (CervixUteri)

Srotas - Artavavaha Srotas.

Srotodushti - Sanga

Vyadhi swabhava - Chirakari

Sadhyaasadyata – Krichasadya Management

Treatment:

Therefore, the treatment should centre on a diet, way of living, and medications that pacify the *doshas* as well as *shothhara*, *raktashodhak*, *vranashodhak*, *vranaropak* properties. Therefore, the drugs having properties of using, *tikshna*, *ruksha*, *snigdha*, and *shodhana* can help in removing or clearing out the *karnika* and healing wound according to chronicity. In our Ayurvedic classics, the following treatments are mentioned in different texts.

Shaman (Internal Medicine)

1. *Churna*

Pushyanug churna⁽¹⁷⁾, *Pippalyadi churna*

2. *Ghrita*

Panchvalkal Grita⁽¹⁸⁾

3. *Kwath*

Panchavalkal kwath⁽¹⁹⁾, *Maharasnadi kwath*

4. *Asava*

Patrangasava, *Lodhrasava*

Shodhan/ Sathink Chikista (External Medicine)

1. *Prakshalan*: With *Kariradi kwath*, *Triphala Kwath*^{20,17}, *Panchvalkaladi kwath*

2. *Picchu*: With *Udumbaradi taila*²¹, *Dhatakyadi taila*, *Jatyadi taila*¹⁷, *Yastimadhu taila*²², *Sallakyadi Taila*¹⁸

3. *Varti*: *Darvyadi Varti*²³, *Kusthadi Varti*, *Nimbapatradi varti*²⁴

4. *Dhoopan*: *Guggulu*, *Dhatra Patra*, *Kushta*, *Agaru*, *Haridra*, *Shatapushpa*

5. *Purana*: *Oil*, *Churna (powder)*, *Kalka (paste)*²⁵, *Veshvara*, *Udumbar-Sara*²⁶

6. *Ksharakarma*: *Yav Kshar*²⁷, *Apamarg Kshar*²⁸, *Tankan*, *Snuhi kshar*²⁹

7. *Agnikarma*^{30,31}

8. *Basti*: *Palash Niruha Basti*, *Satavaryadi Anuvasana Basti*, *Dhatakyadi Anuvasana Basti*, *Jivaniya Dravya sadhita*

9. *Uttara Basti*: *Phal grita*³²

Pathya Apathya:³³

Pathya :

Use of *taila*, *sidhu*, *yavanna*, *pathyarista* (*abhayarista*) are congenial. Use of *asava*, *arista*, *lasuna* and diet having abundance of milk and *mamsa rasa*. For woman, *lasuna* acts like nectar.

Apathya :

Manda is contraindicated in case of *yoni rogas*.

Result:

There is no direct description of CERVICAL ECTROPION in Ayurvedic classics. The acute stage of Cervical Ectropion compared with *Karnini Yonivyapad*, treated through *Kaph-Vata-Rakta Shaman* to balance doshas. In the chronic stage, it is compared with *Garbhashay Griva Mukh Gat Vran*, referring to persistent ulcers in the cervix. Treatment focuses on *Vran Shodhak* and *Vran Ropan*, aimed at cleansing the wound and promoting healing.

Discussion :

Presently available modern medication of Cervical Ectropion is causing many side-effects and toxic effect and requires long term medication. Most commonly used treatment according to modern science is cauterization and cryosurgery which have their own side effects like secondary infertility, bleeding per vagina, infection, which may also destroy the healthy tissue. But if left untreated leads to associated infections including HPV and may results in cervical intraepithelial neoplasia. Ayurvedic treatments are showing wonderful result, commonly used are *Prakshalan* , *Pichu*, *Ksharkarm*, *Agnikarma* etc can replace the convential treatment like cauterization, cryosurgery and is more economical, with less complication and without any adverse reaction. More research needs to be carried out with reference to its chronicity. Self-administered vaginal (local) ointment, capsules can be made with ayurvedic drugs, So that hospital stay can be reduced.

Conclusion:

विकारनामाकुशलो न जिह्नीयात् कदाचन । नहि सर्वविकाराणां नामतोऽस्ति ध्रुवा स्थितिः ॥ ६४॥

It is not always mandatory to refer to each clinical condition by its specific name for treatment.³⁴ It is a *Vikrut dosha* situated on *Griva* of *Garbhashaya* leading to symptoms, Treatment mainly based on Ayurvedic principles considering *Dosha Dushya Dushti* along with treatment of *Vrana* and *yonivyapad* with special attention towards its location i.e. *Garbhashaya Grivamukhagata*.

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