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## A BRIEF REVIEW OVER AYURVEDIC TREATMENT OF INFERTILITY

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**Abstract:** It includes definition and types of infertility, causes: according to Ayurveda diet is also one of the most important cause other cause includes genetic defect, Ayurvedic view about infertility, diet and drugs that can prevent infertility acc. to Ayurveda, preventive measures of infertility, also includes Ayurveda suggestions on intercourse to get good progeny.

**Keywords:** Ayurveda, Infertility, Treatment.

**Introduction:** Infertility primarily refers to the biological inability of a person to contribute to conception. In women, it may also refer to the state when she is not able to carry a pregnancy to its full term<sup>[1]</sup>. There is no unanimous definition of female infertility, because, the definition depends on social and physical characteristics which may vary by culture and situation. NICE guidelines state that: "A woman of reproductive age who has not conceived after 1 year of unprotected vaginal sexual intercourse, in the absence of any known cause of infertility, should be offered further clinical assessment and investigation along with her partner." It is recommended that a consultation with a fertility specialist should be made earlier if the woman is aged 36 years or over or there is a known clinical cause of infertility or a history of predisposing factors for infertility. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), infertility can be described as the inability to become pregnant, maintain a pregnancy, or carry a pregnancy to live birth. A clinical definition of infertility by the WHO and ICMART is "a disease of the reproductive system defined by the failure to achieve a clinical pregnancy after 12 months or more of regular unprotected sexual intercourse."<sup>[2]</sup>

### Types of Infertility

**Primary Infertility:** Couples who have never been able to conceive. This group excludes women who have conceived but not carried the pregnancy full term.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Secondary Infertility:** Related to couples who have difficulty in conceiving after already have conceived once [this includes full term pregnancy and also miscarriages, abortions etc.]<sup>[3]</sup>

**Unexplained Infertility:** Couples who have no physiological anomalies and are pathologically healthy yet do not conceive.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Subfertility:** Couples who have unsuccessfully tried conception for a year or more. Subfertile means less fertile than a typical couple with fecundability [reproductive] rate of 3-5%.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Causes:** Female infertility is caused due to structural problems like blocked fallopian tubes, defect in cervical canal, uterine fibroids or polyps. Hormonal imbalance leading to ovulation problems too can cause infertility. In males infertility may have anatomical, psychological, hormonal or lifestyle related causes. From Ayurvedic perspectives, shukra dhatu can get affected by various physical, mental causes and even by serious diseases. Poor quality shukra dhatu can cause infertility in males & females.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Symptoms:** Failure to reproduce

### Ayurvedic View

• According to Ayurveda, preparing for conception can be easily compared to the process of farming. Just like the health of a crop depends on the quality of soil, seed, timing of sowing, and amount of watering it gets, the health of a baby depends on the health of its parents. For a pregnancy to be healthy and successful, a couple needs to take care of the following four essential factors:<sup>[1]</sup>

- Sperm/Ovum (Seeds)
- Uterus (Soil)
- Nourishment (Water)
- Time for Conception (Timing of Sowing)

Reproductive health, in both men and women, depends on the health of the reproductive tissue or shukra dhatu. In women, shukra creates the ovum as part of the monthly cycle, and in men the semen is formed due to sexual stimulation. The shukra is created as part of a long chain of metabolic transformations. It starts with the digestion of food, then goes on to transformation of food to nutrient fluid, blood, muscle, fat, bone, bone marrow, and finally, to shukra tissue. Healthy shukra tissue, then, according to Ayurveda, depends on the health of all the other tissues in the body.<sup>[1]</sup>

**Diet that Prevent Infertility:** Consume more of dairy proteins, including milk, lassi (buttermilk), and panir (fresh cheese made of milk. Eat soaked almonds or soaked walnuts (you can grind them and add them to your vegetables). Sweet, juicy fruits such as mangoes, peaches, plums, and pears are recommended. Spices such as ajwain (bishops weed) powder, cumin (which purifies the uterus in women and the genitourinary tract in men) turmeric (to improve the interaction between hormones and targeted tissues), and black cumin are also good for enhancing fertility. If your digestion is strong, eat urad daal (Split Black Gram) cooked with equal parts of turmeric, cumin, coriander, and fennel. A banana cooked in ghee, cinnamon, and cardamom is a tasty and wholesome dessert for people with strong digestion.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Foods that Cause Infertility:** Avoid high-fat foods and foods containing preservatives. Caffeine should also be limited, especially if you're having trouble conceiving. Refined carbs, such as white bread, pasta and rice, should be limited. Smoking, eating a lot of meat, or drinking alcohol is not recommended. Stress can have a major impact on women's fertility. The importance of a positive attitude is essential when trying to get pregnant. Being both overweight and underweight can impair a woman's odds of getting pregnant. If you are underweight, your reproductive system will shut down because of the body's inability to maintain a pregnancy. On the other hand, being overweight or obese reduces a woman's chance to get pregnant.<sup>[3]</sup>

**What Ayurveda Medicines are Used:** Medicines are selected on the basis of

imbalances. They can be classified as QUALITY-QUANTITY PROMOTING ["vrushya" ] [eggs and sperms]. These medicines mostly belong to the Vajikarana stream of Ayurveda which specializes in reproductive and sexual health. The drugs may range from

**Herbs:** Ashwagandha [Withania somnifera], Shatavari [Asparagus racemosus], Safed Musali [Asparagus adscendens/ Chlorophytum sp.]

**Metals:** Vang [tin], Suvarna [gold], Parad [Mercury], Yashad [Zinc]

**Minerals:** Shilajit, Suranjan.

**Gems:** Emerald, Sapphire.

**Formulations:** Pushyanuga churna, Vrushya vati, Makardhwaja, Suvarnamalini Vasant.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Fertility Influencing Drugs:** ["vayasthapan, raktashodhan, jeevaniya, garbhashthapan"]. These medicines help bring about congenial environment for fertilization. The medicines also influence or promote fertilization by their usage during the time of intercourse. These drugs are also used as a part of GARBHADHAN SANSKARA

**Herbs:** Nagkesara [Mesua ferra], Kesar [Crocus sativus], Palas [Butea monosperma], Vad [Ficus benghalensis], Laxmana [Solanum sp.], Rudravanti [Cressa cretica], Kavachbeej [Mucuna pruriens], Agaru [Aquillaria sp.]

**Metals:** Raupya [Silver], Vajra [Diamond], Suvarna [Gold].

**Minerals:** Kanta Loha [Lodestone], Shilajit.

**Formulations:** Phalaghrita, Rasasindoor.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Does Vedic Astrology Help:** Many references to infertility have been found in Vedic astrology. Vedic astrology states that couple with same Nadi [Nadi is segregated into Aadhya, Madhyam and Antya for each individual as per his natal chart] most prominently do not conceive. If they do conceive the child is born of low immunity. The influence of Saturn in Nakshatras [stellar] corresponding to Leo [Simha] & 12th house also influence fertility. However these are general rules and must be evaluated properly by an Ayurveda physician. The effects are countered by intake of medicines mostly made of gems. Nilam [Blue sapphire], Praval [coral], Mauktik [pearl], Padmaraga [Emerald] are effectively used in terms of internal medicine [Bhasma, Pishti] or externally.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Ayurveda Suggestions on the Intercourse:** Ayurveda advises the missionary position [women lying on back] as the best for conceptions. However the positions differ as per constitution and physical make up. An Ayurveda

expert is the best one to advise a position for each couple. There are certain points Ayurveda advises before and after intercourse<sup>[3]</sup>.

**Before:** The couple must have not had physical strenuous activity. The couple must not be hungry, thirsty. The couple like wise must not have over eaten. The couple must have consumed light and replenishing food made from milk, ghee which promotes the release of vital fluids. The couple must be in a happy mood. The couple must be longing for each other first on physical attributes and not just mate for conception. This is an important point because Ayurveda says that shukradhara kala, one that holds the prime refined fluids of creations are located in each cell. Superficial sex only releases them from the reproductive organs but bonding with passion helps release them from the entire body and accumulate in the reproductive organs which promote fertility.<sup>[3]</sup>

**After:** Couple is advised to take a cool bath or shower. Consume warm milk with saffron.

**Conclusion:** As infertility becomes one of the most common disorders in today's time and this is just because of unhealthy life style that includes unhealthy diet, stress, overwork etc. By doing some modification in our daily food habits and by keeping positive attitude we can prevent infertility in early ages caused by unhealthy lifestyle.

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