

Ayurvedic Concept of Semen

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Abstract

The fetus (garbha) is the product of nutrient fraction of sukra or semen (sperm). The quantity of retas (semen) is one prasuta (96 ml approximately). Sukra (semen), which is white in color, heavy, unctuous, sweet, thick, more in quantity, resembling either ghee, honey or oil of sesame is suitable for producing the embryo. The function of sukra dhatu is garbhotpadana (getting pregnancy). A male child will be produced, when sukra (semen) is more. It is responsible for strength and steadiness in our body. Hasta maithuna (masturbation) and nocturnal emission, like all natural urges, should not be suppressed, according to Ayurveda. Mithyayoga (wrong utilization) and atiyoga (excessive utilization) of semen can precipitate loss of libido. Food prepared with ghee, milk, meat and soup are very useful for the treatment of vitiated sukra dhatu. The vitiated sukra dhatu is corrected by oleation therapy (snehana), sudation therapy (svedana) and medicated enema (vasti). Treatment of the vitiated semen is done by jivaniya-ghrta (ghee prepared by cooking with drugs belonging to jivaniya group of herbs. Treatment of the vitiated semen is also done by rasayana, valya and vajikara herbs, drugs used for yoni-vyapat (gynecology disorders), cyavanaprasa and silajatu etc.

Introduction

In Ayurveda, semen is described as sukra dhatu out of the seven dhatus (tissue elements of the body). The essence of majja (bone marrow) gives rise to sukra (semen). Porosity of bones is caused by vayu, akasa, etc., and through these porous holes, exudation of sukra takes place. This happens on the analogy of exudation of water through the porous walls of a new earthen pot. The entire body is pervaded by fine channels carrying semen. When a person gets excited of the sexual urge, determination and amorous mental attitude, then semen comes out from the entire body through pores to the testicle. The ejaculation of semen takes place because of the heat that is produced during the physical exercise involved at the time of sexual intercourse. This happens on the analogy of the melting of ghee by the application of physical heat. From the testicles, semen gets ejaculated as water flows from a higher altitude to a place of lower altitude [1, 2, 3].

Characteristics of semen

The transformation of dhatu (from rasa to sukra) is effected in 6 days and nights. This process of transformation of the tissue elements requiring nourishment is a continuous one, like a moving wheel [1, 2, 3]. The quantity of retas (semen) in a young adult is one prasuta or ardha anjali (96 ml approximately) [4, 5].

Tissue metabolism (Dhatu parinama)

The food taken is digested by pachakagni (digestive fire) and is converted to annarasa (the digested food). The annarasa is converted to rasa dhatu (plasma). From rasa, rakta dhatu (blood) is produced by rasadhatvagni. From rakta, mamsa dhatu (muscle tissue) is produced by raktadhatvagni. From mamsa, meda dhatu (fat) is produced by mamsadhatvagni. From meda, asthi dhatu (bone), is produced by medadhatvagni. From asthi, majjadhatu (bone-marrow) is produced by asthidhatvagni. From majja, sukra dhatu (semen) is produced by majjadhatvagni [1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8].

Availability of semen in the body

Juice is spread throughout the sugarcane plant, ghee is present in the curd and oil is present in all parts of the sesame seed. Similarly semen is present in the whole body. As water comes out of a wet cloth when squeezed, similarly, the semen trickles out from its site during copulation between man and the woman, because of sexual acts (chesta) and because of passionate attachment (sankalpa) and physical pressure (pidana). [1, 2, 3]. The foetus (garbha) is produced by sukra dhatu or semen (sperm) [1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8].

Characteristics of pure semen (sudha sukra laksana)

Pure semen is thick, sweet, unctuous, sweet smell, heavy, slimy, white, dense, slimy, in large quantity and helps in reproduction [1, 2, 3, 4, 5].

The sukra dhatu has soma guna, predominant with jala mahabhuta (water element) [6, 7, 8]. The semen increases physical and mental strength [6, 7, 8]. The main function of sukra dhatu is garbhotpadana (getting pregnancy) [4, 5, 9, 10, 11].

Characteristic of individuals having the excellence of semen (sukrasara purusa)

A sukrasara purusa (man with sufficient amount of sukra) has well developed bones, teeth and nails. He is blessed with children. He is strong, stout, gentle, handsome, having fair complexion and sweet voice, masculine body. He is always loved and attracted by females [1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8].

Formation of the embryo (garbhotpatti)

Satva (atma or soul) impelled by afflictions of his own past actions, entering into the union of pure (unvitiated by the dosas) sukra (semen-the male seed) and artava (menstrual blood- the female seed) gives rise to the formation of the embryo; in an orderly (predetermined) manner, just like the fire from two pieces of wood (rubbing together) [4, 5].

Role of semen in determining sex

A male child will be produced when sukra (semen) is more, a female child will be produced when rakta (menstrual blood) is more and a eunuch when both are equal [4, 5].

Cause of vitiation of sukra dhatu

More sexual indulgence, more physical exercise, eating wrong food, sexual intercourse during day time and during menstrual cycle, sexual intercourse through tracks other than the female introitus such as anus, mouth etc., abstinence from sexual activities during night and spring season, sexual intercourse with women who have no interest in sex, old age, worry, grief and lack of confidence in the sexual partner, body emaciation by diseases, suppression of the manifested natural urges like urination, defecation etc., injury of dhatu and vitiation of dhatu are the main causes of vitiation of sukra dhatu [1, 2, 3, 12].

Clinical manifestations of abnormalities of semen (sukra)

Signs and symptoms of excess sukra

Sukrasmaris (gravels made by semen) are seen in the bladder if there is excess amount of sukra is present in the body [6, 7, 8].

Signs and symptoms of loss of sukra

Late ejaculation of semen, ejaculation mixed with blood, pain and burning sensation in penis [4, 5].

Sukradhara kala

Out of the seven kalas present inside the human body, the seventh kala is called Sukradhara (sukra-bearing layer), which extends throughout the entire body of all living creatures. Kalas are the outermost layer of dhatu [6, 7, 8].

Signs & symptoms of vitiation of sukra dhatu

If sukra (semen) diminishes, the patient suffers from weakness, dryness of mouth, pallor, lassitude, exertion, impotency and non-ejaculation of semen [1, 2, 3, 12].

Abnormalities of sukra (vikruta sukra)

Retas (semen) that vitiated by vata, pitta and kapha, that having the smell of a dead body, that formed into balls (masses, pellets), that resembling pus, that decreased in quantity, that resembling the wastes – mutra (urine) and purisa (faeces) are incapable of producing the embryo [4, 5].

Seminal morbidities caused by vata, pitta and kapha

Vayu vitiated sukra dhatu is frothy, thin, unctuous, reddish-black color, ejaculated in small amount and with pain and does not help in reproduction [1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 12].

Pitta vitiated sukra smells putrid, blue or yellow colored, hot, ejaculated with pain and burning sensation [1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 12].

Kapha vitiated sukra dhatu is slimy, white in color and produces the pain (itching sensation etc.) [1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 12].

Seminal morbidities caused by vata and kapha

Sukra dhatu vitiated by vayu and kapha is clotted (granthila) [6, 7, 8].

Seminal morbidities caused by pitta and kapha

Sukra dhatu vitiated by pitta and kapha looks like putrid pus (putipuya) [6, 7, 8].

Seminal morbidities caused by tridosa

Sukra dhatu vitiated by vayu, pitta and kapha smells like urine or fecal matter [6, 7, 8].

Semen associated with blood

Cause of rakta vitiated sukra dhatu is more sexual intercourse and injury. Blood mixed semen is ejaculated [1, 2, 3, 12]. Rakta vitiated sukra dhatu smells like a putrid corpse and is emitted in large quantities and produces pain [6, 7, 8].

Infertility of polluted semen

When impaired by unseasonal implantation and when affected by microbes, insects and fire, a seed does not grow. Similarly the vitiated sukra dhatu does not help in reproduction [1, 2, 3, 12].

Treatment of seminal morbidities in general

Food prepared with ghee, milk, meat and soup are very useful for the treatment of vitiated sukra dhatu [1, 2, 3, 12].

The vitiated sukra dhatu is corrected by oleation therapy (snehana), sudation therapy (svedana) and medicated enema (vasti) [6, 7, 8].

Treatment of the vitiated semen is done by jivaniya-ghrta (ghee prepared by cooking with drugs belonging to jivaniya group of herbs. Jivaniya herbs like Jivanti (*Ledtenia reticulata*), Mudgaparni (*Phaseolus trilobus*) and Masaparni (*Teramnus labialis*).

Treatment of the vitiated semen is also done by rasayana, valya and vajikara herbs, drugs used for yoni-vyapat (gynaecology disorders), cyavanaprasa and silajatu etc. [1, 2, 3, 12, 13].

Valya herbs are Bala (*Sida cordifolia*), Atibala (*Abutilon indicum*), Mahabala (*Sida rhombifolia*), Bidari (*Puraria tuberosa*), Barahi (*Dioscorea bulbifera*) and Tabakshira (*Curcuma angustifolia*) [13].

Rasayana herbs are Haritaki (*Terminalia chebula*), Amalaki (*Embilica officinalis*), Guduchi (*Tinospora cordifolia*),

Asvagandha (Withania somnifera), Brudhadaruka (Argyrea speciosa), Nagabala (Grewia hirsuta) and Nagadamana (Sans evieria) [13]

Treatment of seminal morbidities caused by tridosha

Sukra dhatu if vitiated by vata, pitta and kapha should be treated with appropriate drugs and administration of purificatory therapies [4, 5].

Treatment of seminal morbidities caused by vata

Niruha vasti (medicated enema therapy with decoction etc.) and anuvasana vasti (medicated enema therapy with oil etc.) is given to the patient.

Treatment of seminal morbidities caused by kapha

The patient is treated with medicines like Abhayamalakiya-rasayana, Pippali rasayana, Amalaki rasayana, Loha rasayana and Bhallataka rasayana [1, 2, 3, 12].

Herbs used for sukra sodhana (for semen purification) are Kustha (Saussurea lappa), Katphala (Myrica sculenta). Herb used for sukra stambhana (not to allow

semen ejaculation for longer duration) is Akarakarabha (Anacyclus pyrethrum).

Treatment of vitiated sukra by other dhatus

Sukra dhatu if vitiated by other dhatus, the patient should be treated with appropriate samana therapies (palliative treatment) and sodhana therapies (purificatory methods like panchakarma) for the correction of the concerned dosas and dhatus [1, 2, 3, 12].

Sukra Dhatu Kshaya (Loss of Semen)

Hasta maithuna (masturbation) and nocturnal emission, like all natural urges, should not be suppressed, according to Ayurveda. Mithayayoga (wrong utilization) and atiyoga (excessive utilization) of semen can precipitate loss of libido [1, 2, 3].

Conclusion

Sukra or Retas (Semen) is the seventh dhatu of human body. It is responsible for strength and steadiness our body. The conservation of semen is the best possible way to remain healthy physically, mentally, socially and spiritually. Hence yogis conserve semen and enjoy healthy prolong life.

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