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POLY CYSTIC OVARIAN SYNDROME: A MODERN AND AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

Jugade V¹, Khot L.B.²

1. Professor Dept.of Rachna Sharir, M S Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Gondia, Maharashtra, India.
2. Associate Professor Dept. of Streerog & Prasutitantra, M S Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Gondia, Maharashtra, India.

ABSTRACT:

Poly Cystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) is a complex endocrine and metabolic disorder affecting women of reproductive age, characterized by hyperandrogenism, ovulatory dysfunction, and polycystic ovaries. Modern science attributes PCOS to multifactorial causes, including genetic predisposition, insulin resistance, and lifestyle factors, with diagnostic criteria outlined by the Rotterdam Consensus. Conversely, Ayurveda identifies PCOS as a manifestation of 'Artava Kshaya' or 'Granthi' caused by an imbalance in doshas, particularly Kapha, leading to blockage of the channels (srotas) and improper tissue metabolism (dhatu agni). This article discusses the diagnostic methods, preventive approaches, and management of PCOS through modern and Ayurvedic lenses. Modern diagnostic tools include ultrasound imaging and hormonal profiling, while Ayurvedic diagnosis emphasizes clinical features and pulse diagnosis ('nadi pariksha'). Preventive measures, such as dietary modifications, physical activity, and stress management, are effective in both paradigms. Management in modern medicine includes pharmacological treatments like oral contraceptives and insulin sensitizers, alongside lifestyle interventions. Ayurvedic management incorporates Panchakarma, herbal formulations such as Chandraprabha Vati and Dashamoolarishta, and yoga therapy. This integrative approach highlights the potential of Ayurveda and modern medicine in addressing PCOS comprehensively.

KEYWORDS: Poly Cystic Ovarian Syndrome, PCOS, Hormonal Imbalance, Lifestyle Management

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Dr.Vandana Jugade,

Professor & HOD, Dept. of Rachna Sharir,
M S Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Gondia,
Maharashtra, India.

Email: vandanaaloni@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION:

Poly Cystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) is a prevalent health issue affecting 5-10% of women globally. It is the leading cause of infertility, menstrual irregularities, and metabolic syndromes in women of reproductive age. The syndrome presents a significant public health challenge due to its multifaceted etiology and long-term complications such as Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) and cardiovascular diseases. While modern medicine offers advanced diagnostic tools and therapeutic strategies, Ayurveda provides a holistic approach, emphasizing individualized care and preventive strategies. This article explores PCOS from modern and Ayurvedic perspectives, bridging traditional wisdom with contemporary science. Lifestyle and environmental factors, including urbanization and dietary habits, have contributed to an increasing trend in PCOS diagnosis worldwide.

Prevalence:

The global prevalence of PCOS varies based on diagnostic criteria. Using the Rotterdam criteria, prevalence ranges from 6% to 21%. Among adolescents, rates of 10% to 15% are commonly reported.

Rationale of Study:

The increasing prevalence of PCOS necessitates a multidimensional approach for its effective management. Modern medicine focuses on symptom alleviation and hormonal regulation, while Ayurveda addresses the root causes and underlying imbalances. Understanding both perspectives can pave the way for integrative

treatment strategies, ensuring comprehensive care and improved patient outcomes.

Modern Science Perspective:

Etiology and Pathophysiology
PCOS is attributed to a combination of genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors. Key contributors include:

- **Insulin Resistance:** Hyperinsulinemia stimulates androgen production, disrupting follicular development.
- **Hyperandrogenism:** Elevated androgens cause hirsutism, acne, and anovulation.
- **Inflammation:** Chronic low-grade inflammation exacerbates insulin resistance and hormonal imbalances.

Diagnostic Criteria:

The Rotterdam Criteria (2003) require two of the following for diagnosis:

1. Oligo-anovulation
2. Hyperandrogenism (clinical or biochemical)
3. Polycystic ovaries on ultrasound (presence of ≥ 12 follicles or ovarian volume > 10 mL)

Preventive and Management Strategies:

1. **Lifestyle Modifications:**
 - **Diet:** Low glycemic index diets reduce insulin resistance.
 - **Exercise:** Regular physical activity improves metabolic parameters.
2. **Pharmacological Interventions:**
 - Oral contraceptives to regulate menstrual cycles.
 - Metformin to address insulin resistance.
3. **Surgical Options:**
 - Ovarian drilling for refractory cases.

Ayurvedic Perspective

Conceptual Understanding Ayurveda correlates PCOS with 'Artava Kshaya' (deficiency or dysfunction of menstrual flow) or 'Yonivyapad' (gynecological disorders). Kapha's dominance, along with Vata and Pitta imbalances, disrupts 'Artava Dhatu' (reproductive tissue) and 'Agni' (digestive/metabolic fire), leading to improper tissue formation and cystic growths.

Diagnostic Approach

- Clinical Signs: Irregular menstruation, hirsutism, obesity, and acne.
- Nadi Pariksha: Identifying doshic imbalances.
- Ashtavidha Pariksha: Comprehensive assessment of body systems.

Preventive and Therapeutic Strategies

1. Panchakarma Therapies:
 - Vamana (therapeutic emesis) to balance Kapha.
 - Virechana (therapeutic purgation) to detoxify Pitta and reduce inflammation.
2. Herbal Formulations:
 - Chandraprabha Vati for hormonal regulation.
 - Dashamoolarishta for reproductive health.
 - Sharpunkha Ghna Vati
3. Lifestyle and Diet:
 - Pathya-apathya (dietary regimen) to pacify Kapha.
 - Yoga and meditation for stress management.

DISCUSSION:

Modern medicine has advanced significantly, offering precise diagnostic tools and targeted therapies that can address

specific symptoms and conditions effectively. However, it often falls short in addressing the root causes of diseases or providing preventive care that nurtures overall well-being. This gap is where Ayurveda, with its holistic approach emphasizing detoxification, rejuvenation, and lifestyle modifications, can play a pivotal role. For instance, modern drugs like Metformin effectively target insulin resistance in conditions like PCOS, but they may come with side effects or fail to address systemic imbalances. On the other hand, Ayurvedic herbs such as Shatavari and Ashwagandha not only support hormonal balance but also promote mental and physical resilience. The integration of these two approaches can provide a more comprehensive treatment plan, enhancing patient outcomes while potentially minimizing side effects. Such integrative strategies recognize the strengths of both systems, aiming for a synergy that benefits patients beyond the limitations of a single modality. PCOS, with its multifaceted etiology and manifestations, underscores the need for this integrative approach. Its management requires addressing not just the symptoms but also the underlying metabolic, hormonal, and psychological imbalances. Modern diagnostic tools can help accurately identify these imbalances, while Ayurvedic principles of balancing doshas, promoting systemic health, and supporting natural processes can complement conventional treatments. By combining these approaches, healthcare practitioners can offer more personalized and effective management strategies.

CONCLUSION:

The integration of modern medicine and Ayurveda offers a promising pathway for managing complex conditions like PCOS. While modern science provides the tools for precise diagnosis and targeted interventions, Ayurveda contributes its rich tradition of holistic healing and preventive care. Together, these systems can address both immediate symptoms and the root causes of diseases, providing a more balanced and comprehensive treatment approach. Future research is essential to validate Ayurvedic treatments using evidence-based methodologies, ensuring their safety and efficacy. Establishing standardized protocols for integrating Ayurvedic therapies with modern medical practices can further enhance their combined impact. This collaborative approach holds the potential to revolutionize healthcare, making it more effective, inclusive, and patient-centered.

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