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### Understanding female infertility in the modern world: Homoeopathy as healing path

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#### Abstract

Infertility is a global issue that affects couples during their reproductive years, leading to significant social, emotional, and psychological distress for both the partners and their families. Female infertility has emerged as a significant health concern in the modern world, influenced by lifestyle changes like stress, environmental toxins, delayed childbearing and habits like smoking and alcohol. Homoeopathy aims to balance hormonal irregularities, regulate menstrual cycles, improve ovarian function and enhance overall vitality and also addresses the psychosomatic dimensions of infertility by alleviating stress, anxiety, and emotional trauma, thereby improving the chances of conception.

Keywords: Female infertility, modern day living, homoeopathy

#### Introduction

Infertility refers to the inability of a couple to achieve conception after one or more years of regular, unprotected sexual intercourse. It is categorized into two types: primary infertility, when conception has never occurred, and secondary infertility, when there has been at least one previous conception but the couple is unable to conceive again. Approximately 80% of couples are able to conceive within the first year of regular intercourse (about 4-5 times per week), while an additional 10% achieve pregnancy during the second year. Despite this, nearly 10% of couples continue to experience infertility even after two years of consistent efforts [6].

#### **Epidemiology**

Estimated Global lifetime prevalence of infertility is 17.5% (17.8% in high income and 16.5% in low- and middle-income countries) Out of 60-80 million couples suffering from infertility globally,15-20 million (25%) are in India. Prevalence of infertility in India varies between 3.9 and 16.8%. It is as low as 3.7% in Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Maharashtra, to 5% in Andhra Pradesh and very high 15% in Kashmir [4].

#### Risk factors [1]

- Age: Generally, fertility begins to decline in 30's
- Obesity
- Abnormal menstrual cycle
- Structural problems in fallopian tubes, uterus or ovaries and endometrium.
- Tumors: Uterine fibroids, Ovarian cysts.
- Autoimmune disorders
- Hormonal disturbance: PCOS, POI
- Habits: smoking and alcohol

#### Etiology [7]

- 1. Painful intercourse and vaginal problems
- 2. Birth defects in the reproductive tract
- 3. Infections in the genital tract
- 4. Cervical problems
- 5. Uterine causes blocked or damaged fallopian Tubes
- 6. Ovulation problems
- 7. Pelvic conditions like adhesions or endometriosis
- 3. Chronic health issues (e.g., Thyroid disorders)

9. Hormonal Imbalances (Pituitary or Hypothalamic Problems).

#### Modern life style effect on infertility

- Late motherhood: Many couples decide to give importance to professional or personal goals more than starting a family. As women age, their fertility gradually declines, especially after the age of 35. This decrease is mainly due to a reduction in both the number and quality of eggs [2].
- Lethargic lifestyle: Prolonged sitting, lack of physical activity and minimal engagement in exercise contribute to weight gain and obesity which are strongly associated with reduced fertility. In women, obesity can impair ovulation and disrupt hormonal balance [2].
- Sleep pattern: Sleep plays an important role in maintaining hormonal balance and proper metabolic function, both of which are essential for reproductive health. Lack of sufficient sleep in women can disturb ovulation, cause irregular menstrual cycles, and increase the risk of developing conditions like PCOS and infertility [5].
- Stress and anxiety: In women, stress can interfere with the menstrual cycle by disturbing the hormonal balance needed for normal ovulation and implantation. Anxiety triggers the release of certain stress hormones, such as corticotrophin-releasing hormone, which suppresses the hypothalamic release of gonadotrophin-releasing hormone. In addition, glucocorticoids reduce the secretion of pituitary luteinizing hormone and ovarian estrogen and progesterone. These changes can lead to hypothalamic amenorrhea, ultimately contributing to infertility [3].
- Habits: Social habits involving alcohol consumption, smoking have adversely effect on reproductive health. In women, these substances can compromise egg quality, disrupt hormonal regulation and increase risk of miscarriage. In women, smoking can cause the zona pellucida (the outer layer of the egg) to become thicker, making it harder for sperm to penetrate. Chemicals found in cigarettes, such as cotinine and cadmium, can accumulate in the follicular fluid, disturbing the hormonal balance during the luteal phase and negatively affecting the growth and development of the follicle [3].
- **Poor dietary habits:** Foods which include processed, saturated fats and refined sugars, such unbalanced diet can lead to hormonal imbalance, insulin resistance and ovulatory dysfunction thereby increasing the risk of PCOS and infertility [2].
- Clothing choices: Although clothing does not directly cause infertility, it can have an indirect impact. Wearing tight clothes, especially around the genital area, increases heat and moisture, creating a suitable environment for infections such as yeast infection or bacterial vaginosis. If these infections recur or are left untreated, they can cause inflammation and may damage reproductive organs like the fallopian tubes, leading to complications and possible infertility [5].

#### Homoeopathic approach

The homeopathic approach to female infertility caused by modern lifestyle focuses on treating the woman as a whole rather than just the reproductive system. Stress, poor diet, and irregular habits disturb natural balance, leading to hormonal and menstrual irregularities. Homeopathy works by restoring this balance through individualized remedies chosen according to physical, emotional, and constitutional symptoms. By regulating cycles, improving vitality, and addressing stress, homeopathy offers a gentle, natural, and holistic path to enhance fertility.

#### Common remedies [8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 1] Sepia

Indicated when mental symptoms such as indifference toward loved ones and aversion to sexual intercourse are present. The woman may acknowledge affection logically but feels emotionally detached. Stress and frequent sexual activity aggravate the condition, leading to hormonal imbalance and infertility. There is a bearing-down sensation as if everything would escape through the vulva, compelling her to cross her limbs to prevent protrusion. Menses are often late and scanty or sometimes early and profuse, with sharp clutching pains. Violent stitching pains may extend upward from the vagina to the uterus and umbilicus.

#### Pulsatilla

Suited for cases of amenorrhea, especially during puberty. The patient is tearful, gentle, and yielding, with a desire for sympathy. She weeps easily, dislikes consolation, and has a morbid fear of the opposite sex. Menses are suppressed, appear late, and are scanty, thick, dark, and changeable. Complaints often arise after getting wet or from exposure to cold feet.

#### Natrum muriaticum

Represents individuals who are introverted, reserved, and emotionally suppressed due to modern lifestyle and upbringing. They avoid company, dislike sympathy, and cannot express affection. Indicated in infertility from grief or emotional suppression. Menses are irregular, scanty, and accompanied by vaginal dryness, bearing-down pain, and a hot sensation during menstruation.

#### Lycopodium

Indicated for emotionally sensitive yet anxious women who enjoy companionship but lack self-confidence. Suited in cases of female sterility, delayed or profuse menses, and right-sided ovarian pain. Menses are too late, last too long, or are too profuse. There may be dryness of the vagina, painful intercourse, and digestive troubles due to farinaceous or fermented foods.

#### Nux vomica

Best suited for women engaged in mental overwork or sedentary occupations who suffer from stress and irritability. Complaints may result from stimulants such as coffee, tobacco, alcohol, or highly seasoned food. Menses occur too early, are profuse, and last too long, or may be irregular, stopping and starting again. Symptoms are worse during and after menstruation, often bringing back old complaints

#### Rare remedies [8]

 Lappa arctium (Burdock): Indicated in uterine displacement with an intense sore and bruised sensation in the uterus. There is marked relaxation of vaginal tissues and a complete loss of pelvic tone.

- Damiana (Turnera): Beneficial in sexual weakness and nervous exhaustion. It helps in cases of impotence, sexual debility due to nervous prostration, and lack of sexual desire in females.
- *Helonias dioica* (*Chamaelirium*): Backache after miscarriage. Weight and soreness in womb. Conscious of the womb. Dragging pain in the sacral region, with prolapse, especially after a miscarriage.
- Gossyipim herbaceum (Cotton plant): Intermittent pain in ovaries. Retained placenta. Morning sickness with a sensitive uterine region. Backache, weight and dragging pain in pelvis. Uterine subinvolution and fibroids.
- Aletris farinosa (Stargrass): The uterus feels heavy, with prolapse and pain in the right inguinal region. It is suited to cases with habitual tendency to abortion and muscular pain during pregnancy

#### Conclusion

Homeopathy, with its holistic and individualized approach, offers a gentle yet effective healing path. By addressing the root causes-whether they lie in menstrual irregularities, hormonal disturbances, emotional trauma, or constitutional weaknesses-homeopathy aims to restore balance to the vital force. In doing so, it improves reproductive health, regulates cycles, enhances vitality, and nurtures emotional well-being, thereby increasing the chances of conception naturally. Thus, homeopathy stands as a safe, non-invasive, and comprehensive system of healing, offering hope and restoring harmony for women struggling with infertility in today's changing world.

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