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An Ayurveda Prospective on Diagnosis and Management of Penile Disorders: A Comprehensive Review

Chouhan Poona Nath^{1*}, Patel Harshal²

¹ Consultant, Department of Shalya Tantra, Nootan Ayurvedic College and Research Centre, Sankalchand Patel University, Visnagar, Gujarat, India

² Consultant, Department of Panchakarma, Nootan Ayurvedic College and Research Centre, Sankalchand Patel University, Visnagar, Gujarat, India

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* **Corresponding author.**

pncouhan.nah@spu.ac.in

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Abstract

*Shooka Dosh*a refers to a group of disorders arising from the misuse of medications intended for penile enlargement. These disorders are associated with the use of sexual stimulants or penis enlargement products that contain toxic or harmful substances, leading to pathological conditions collectively referred to as *Shooka Dosh*a. *Acharya Sushruta* identified 18 such diseases, categorizing 14 as *Sadhya* (curable) and the remaining 4 as *Asadhya* (incurable). This review examines *Shooka Dosh*a through the lens of modern medicine, correlating its conditions with the treatments available in Ayurveda, on the basis of classical texts. Currently, no clinical trials have been conducted on *Shooka Dosh*a. This study aims to initiate exploration into this largely overlooked aspect of male reproductive health, as preserved in the traditional knowledge of Ayurveda.

Keywords: Ayurveda treatment; Penis length enhancer; *Shooka*; *Shooka Dosh*a; *Sushruta*

1 Introduction

From rise of human beings there is always a concern regarding the length and strength of the penis. In a study it was concluded that in today's era *Hindu* civilization it is said to be inappropriate to talk about intercourse whereas in ancient times¹, *Hindu* mythology has gifted a complete *Grantha* on reproductive care and health "*Vatsayana Samhita*"². It describes the development of education and awareness regarding sex in ancient

times³. Ayurveda is rich in medical and life living heritage where a major place is assigned to *Brahamcharya* (rules for sexual activity) and *Vajikarna* (sexual power enhancement)⁴. In westernized world it is taken a wrong aspect regarding necessity of enlarged penile length⁵, earlier also males with the larger genital organs were regarded in superior strata than rest⁶.

*Shooka Dosh*a is term given to cluster of disorders arising from the improper use of medications intended for penile enlargement. The term *Shooka* refers to

sexual stimulants or penis-enhancing substances containing toxic or harmful compounds, which result in pathological conditions which may occur as an individual disorder or multiple at a time, identified as *Shooka Dosh*^{7,8}. In *Madhava Nidana* commentary *Madhukosha*, *Shooka* is referred to a poisonous insect that is produced from extract or waste products in water. Drugs made from these insects are also referred as *Shooka* which are applied to increase the length of the penis⁹ *Acharya Sushruta*¹⁰, *Acharya Yogratanakar*¹¹, *Bhaisajya Ratnavali*¹², *Madhavkar and Bhavaprakasha*¹³ had described the 18 diseases with their *Lakshana*, *Sadhyata-Asadhyata* and *Chikitsa*. Among these 18, *Acharya Sushruta* considered 14 as *Sadhya* (curable) and rest 4 as *Asadhya* (incurable).

1.1 Aim and Objective

To study the concept of *Shooka Dosh* described in Ayurveda texts and its relevance in the modern era.

2 Material and Methodology

Collection of the data was done using the original text, online resource including journals of Pub Med, Web of Science, and Ayush Research Portal were searched with term “*Shooka Dosh*”. The gathered literature was subsequently reviewed and thoroughly analysed to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the *Shooka Dosh*.

3 Discussion

The use of *Shooka* (remedies prepared with poisonous drugs for local application, with intention to increase the size or length of the penis) leads to *Shookajnya Roga* mentioned in Ayurveda text. *Acharya Sushruta* mentioned 18 *Shooka Roga*. Symptoms are described individually as indicated in Table 1.

Sadhyata- Asadhyata of Shooka Dosh

Acharya Sushruta had mentioned 18 types of *Shooka Dosh* out of which 14 are *Sadhya* (curable) and 4 are considered as *Ashadya Shooka Dosh* (incurable) [Table 2].

Treatment Measure

An identified curable *Shooka* has a detailed line of treatment mentioned in Ayurveda. Both the generalized and specialized measures are indicated in text. Generalized concepts are applicable to all entities while specialized are for an individual entity.

General measures

- *Acharya Sushruta*, *Vagbhatta*, *Yogratanakara*, *Bhaisajya Ratnavali* and *Bhavaprakasha*, adapted similar principles to manage *Shooka Dosh*. Appropriate use of *Kashaya* (decoction), *Kalka* (paste), *Churan* (powder), *Taila*

(oil), *Ghrita* (clarified butter), *Rasakriya* (linctuses), and *Shodhana-Ropana* (cleansing and healing). Apart from this intake of *Ghrita* followed by *Virechana* (purgation), *Raktamokshana* (bloodletting), and other treatments measures are similarly adapted for wound management and *Visha Chikitsa* (treatment measures that are taken for poisonous conditions). *Bhav Prakash*¹⁴ indicated application of *Triphala Kwath* (decoction of *Amalaki - Emblica officinalis*, *Vibhitaka - Terminalia bellerica* and *Haritaki - Terminalia chebula*) treated with *Gugglu* (*Commiphora wightii*), Irrigation with cold milk. The use of specific oil and paste like *Darvi Taila* and *Medhra Roga Nivaryet Rasanjana Lepa* (*Sarva Anagrog*) indicated by *Yogratanakara*¹⁵. Intake of *Ghee* along with *Pitta* suppressing drugs, diet and procedures like *Virechana*, bloodletting¹⁶, application of paste, *Rasa Aushadh* (herbo- mineral drugs) and measures adapted for wound management like *Shodhana*, *Ropana*, *Patana* (Incision of lesion).

Specialized Treatment Protocols of Sadhya Shooka Dosh

- *Sarshapi* – Use of *Kashaya Dravya* (astringent drug or substance) powder on wounds after scrapping the lesion and for wound healing use of *Kashaya Dravya* paste cooked in oil.¹⁷ *Yogratanakara* mentioned scrapping with *Talpatra* (*Cinnamomum tamala*) and application of paste of *Trikatu* (*Shunti - Zingiber officinale*, *Pippali - Piper longum* and *Maricha - Piper nigrum*), *Triphala* (*Amalaki - Emblica officinalis*, *Vibhitaka - Terminalia bellerica* and *Haritaki - Terminalia chebula*) and *Gomutra* (cow urine)¹⁸.
- *Ashtihila* – Repeated use of *Jalauka* (Medicinal leech) for bloodletting, if not relief is observed, excision is done by sharp instrument¹⁹. Similar line of treatment mentioned by *Rasakamdhenu*²⁰. *Vangasena*²¹, *Yogratanakara*, *Bhaisajyaratnavali* mentioned the line of treatment like *Vagbhatta*. *Vasavraj*²² *Vagbhatta* indicated bloodletting, Treatment similar to *Kaphaja Granthi* (swelling occurred due to predominance of *Kapha Dosh*) along with irrigation by *Tinduk* (*Diospyros tomentosa Roxb.*), *Triphala* and *Lodhra* (*Symplocos racemosa Roxb.*) in the treatment of *Ashtihila*.
- *Grathitha*- Regular *Swedana* (Sudation therapy) with use of *Snigdha* (slimy or unctuous) and *Koshana* (lukewarm) poultice²³. Similar line of treatment adapted by *Vangasena*, *Rasakamdhenu* and *Bhaisajyaratnavali*. *Yogratanakara* also mentioned similar to *Shushruta*, additionally indicated application of poultice mentioned in *Vrana Chikitsa* (management of wound)²⁴. *Vasavraj* indicated the same, repeated use of sudation and application of poultice treated with lukewarm oil.

- *Kumbhika* – Suppurated *Kumbhika* is excised with instrument and after cleaning wound, healing is promoted by *Triphala*, *Lodhra*, *Tinduka*, and *Amra* (*Mangifera indica*)²⁵. Similar concept adapted by *Rasakamdhenu* while *Vangasena*, *Vasavrajyama*, *Yogratnakara*, *Bhaisajyaratnavali* follow the *Vagbhatta*.
- *Alaji* – Bloodletting by Leech therapy followed by irrigation by decoction of astringent drugs, for wound healing use of same drugs decoction and paste cooked oil²⁶. Similar concept adapted by *Rasakamdhenu* while *Vangashena*, *Vasavraj*, *Yogratnakara* and *Vaghabhat* also follow the same line of treatment.
- *Mriditta* – Irrigation with lukewarm *Bala Taila*, (Oil of *Sida cordifolia*), poultice of *Ghritha* (clarified butter) mixed with *Madhura Dravya* (sweet tasting drugs)²⁷. Similar Procedure adapted by *Bhaisajya Ratnavali*. *Vangashena*, *Yogratnakara*, *Vasavraj* mentioned the same treatment for *Twakapaka*, and *Sparshhani Shooka Dosh*.
- *Sammuddha* – Rapid bloodletting by leech, suppurated boil is incised and treated with honey and ghee²⁸. Similar concept adapted by *Rasakamdhenu* while *Bhaisajyaratnavali*, *Vangashena*, *Vasavraj* indicated similar management to *Pittaja Visarpa* (Erysipelas caused by predominance of *Pitta Dosh*).
- *Avamantha* – On bursting of suppurated lesion, treated with oil cooked with decoction of *Dhava* (*Anogeissus pendula*), *Ashvakarna* (*Dipterocarpus turbinatus*), *Patanga* (*Caesalpinia sappan* Linn.), *Shallaki* (*Boswellia serrata*) and *Tendu* (*Diospyros melanoxylon* Roxb)²⁹. *Rasakamdhenu* describes the same, *Vasavraj*, *Yogratnakara*, and *Vangashena* and, *Bhaisajyaratnavali* indicated similar to have the same line of treatment like *Vagbhatta*.
- *Puskarika* – Use of cold therapies/measures, bloodletting by leech, *Parisheka* (sudation by streaming of pre-warmed liquid) with *Ghritha*³⁰. *Rasakamdhenu* follows the similar concept. *Vangashena*, *Bhaisajya Ratnavali*, *Vasavraj*, *Yogratnakara* and *Vagbhatta* indicated the management therapies similar to *Pittaja Visarpa*.
- *Sparshhani* – Bloodletting, paste application of *Madhura Dravya*, *Parisheka* with cold milk, *Ikshurasa* (sugarcane juice) and *Ghritha*³¹. *Rasakamdhenu* adapted the same while *Vangashena*, *Yogratnakara*, *Bhaisajyaratnavali* *Vasavraj* mentioned use of *Bala Taila*.
- *Uttama*- Excision with *Badish Shastra* (type of hook used for retraction), dusting of *Kashaya Dravya* along with honey³². *Vasavraj*, *Vangashena*, *Yogratnakara*, *Bhaisajyaratnavali* and *Vagbhatta* while *Rasakamdhenu* had not described *Uttama Shooka Dosh*.
- *Shatponaka* – Scrapping of the lesion, followed by *Rasakriya* (linctuses/concentrated thick liquid), then use of oil cooked with *Prishnaparani Gana* (Group of drugs including *Urariapicta*)³³. Similar line of treatment adapted by *Vangasena*, *Yogratnakara*, *Vasavrajyama* and *Rasakamdhenu*.
- *Twakapaka* – Treated like *Visarpa* (Erysipelas / cellulites)³⁴. Similar concept adapted by *Rasakamdhenu* and *Ratnavali*.
- *Rakta Arbuda* – Treated like *Rakta Vidhradhi* (abscess caused by *Pitta Dosh*)³⁵. Appropriate use of decoction, paste, powder, oils, *Rasakriya*, *Sodhana* (procedures or drug application which clears wound), *Roapankarma* (procedures which promote healing). Use of *Ghee*, *Virechana* (purgation therapy), *Raktamokshana*, *Laghubhojna* (Light diet) also beneficial. Similar concept adapted by *Vangashena*, *Rasakamdhenu* and *Yogratnakara*.

4 Conclusion

Shooka Dosh is an important concept but yet no conceptual or clinical work carried out. More research work is needed to understand its importance. Sincere efforts were done by authors to compile the data and made available related to *Shooka Dosh* from Ayurveda literature. The traced facts were collected systematically and then analyzed. In the first observation, these diseases are mostly seen in society and can be easily correlated with modern existing penile disorders. The searched aetiology, clinical features, and their treatment modalities can be utilized. Clinical trials can be run at the post-graduation dissertation and doctorate work to make it more validate. It is also suggested to make evidence-based clinical correlations of the *Shooka Dosh* of Ayurveda with modern science. The research-based data publications are also solicited to put the subjects on scientific platform. The evaluation of efficacy of mentioned drugs in *Shooka Dosh* for the antibacterial and wound healing properties needs to explore regarding the treatment of genital disorders.

The exploration of *Shooka Dosh* through classical Ayurvedic texts reveals a nuanced understanding of disorders associated with inappropriate use of penile enlargement medications. Through a detailed examination of classical Ayurvedic literature, particularly the work of *Acharya Sushruta*, the research correlates these ancient conditions with analogous symptoms recognized in modern medicine. By categorizing the 18 distinct disorders into curable and incurable forms, as outlined by *Sushruta*, the study highlights both the pathological consequences of toxic substances used in penile enlargement and the extensive treatment protocols in Ayurveda for each condition. These conditions, as elaborated by *Acharya Sushruta*, present a unique framework that could complement modern approaches in understanding and addressing penile health disorders.

Table 1. *Lakshana (Signs and Symptoms) of Shooka Dosh*³⁶

S.N.	Shooka Dosh	Dosha	Lakshana
1.	Sarshapika ³⁷	Kapha-Rakta	White mustard like boils in regional part, a similar entity is known in Modern science Hirsuties coronae glandis, or pearly penile papules which are benign and consider as outcome of anatomical variation. Doesn't need treatment, treated only for cosmetical concern. ³⁸
2.	Ashthila ³⁹	Vata	With misuse of poisonous medication causing hard and irregular edged boil. It may be correlated with a harden or fibrosis structure due to plaque deposition making a stone or rough feeling (Peyronie's Disease). ⁴⁰
3.	Granithita ⁴¹	Kapha	Feeling as fully filled with Shooka. It may be similar to an unfamiliar consist with feeling of collected multiple hyper densities making the penis similar to a bullet shape. ⁴²
4.	Kumbhika ⁴³	Rakta-pitta	Boil's color appears like seed of <i>Jamuna</i> (Black plum), dark purple in color. Somehow similar to larger angiokeratomas of penis which are usually uncommon vascular tumors, round to oval in shape with a colour variation of red to black. ⁴⁴
5.	Alaji ⁴⁵	Tridosha	Similar to <i>Prametha Pidika</i> mentioned in <i>Sushruta Samhita</i> . It is a swelling red and snowy in appearance surrounded with blisters, it is mostly due to bacterial infection especially in the patients which are having diabetic prevalence. It damages the skin and other structure and mostly spreading rapidly. ⁴⁶
6.	Mridita ⁴⁷	Vata	Due to application of medication, initially causing stiffness leading to intention of rubbing the part with hands etc. It may be correlated with stuttering Priapism which leads to unwanted or prolonged irregular erection. ⁴⁸
7.	Sammudhapidika ⁴⁹	Vata	Happens due over rubbing and pressing the medication applied part. Penile Mondors's lump is a similar condition first reported in 1938 characterized by a lump or observable phlebitis. ⁵⁰
8.	Avamantha ⁵¹	Kapha and Rakta	Multiple big boils with burst middle area along with horripiation. Similar condition is reported in herpes of genital regions in which multiple blisters are formed with discharge on bursting. ⁵²
9.	Pushkarika ⁵³	Pitta and Rakta	A Lotus calamus shaped blister surrounded by multiple small boils. May be co-related to <i>Condyloma acuminatum</i> caused by <i>Human Papilloma Virus</i> giving typical structures similar to lotus or cauliflower. ⁵⁴
10.	Sparshahani ⁵⁵	Rakta	Loss of sensation. It a condition may develop due to injury to nerve supply causing numbness in penis. Neurolysis occur mainly due to dorsal branch of Pudendal nerve supplying penis. ⁵⁶
11.	Uttama ⁵⁷	Rakta and Pitta	Due to repeated use of medication and indigestion. <i>Mungga</i> (green grams - <i>Vigna radiata</i>) and <i>Masha</i> (black gram - <i>Vigna mungo</i>) in size and shaped, appear like red colored boil. Similarly, <i>Molluscum contagiosum</i> of penis also develops similar papules which spread by sexual, non-sexual or autoinoculation mode. Mostly in adults this appears in immunocompromised or sexually active individuals. ⁵⁸
12.	Shatapona ⁵⁹	Vata	Multiple minute opening surrounding genital parts. Condition similar to fistula of urethra with multiple opening, it may arise due to infection to an extreme level in which tract me open into nearby organs like bladder or rectum. ⁶⁰
13.	Tvakpaak ⁶¹	Pitta and Rakta	Suppuration, inflammatory signs with fever and burning. Suppuration in a penis is a very rare condition which may arise due to use of injectable, trauma or any other infective conditions giving above symptoms. Staphylococcus aureus is known to most common causative organism. ⁶²
14.	Shonitarbuda ⁶³	Rakta	Penis covered with red and black blisters, pain in genital region. It may be correlated to tumors arising in surrounding. Benign conditions like cavernous hemangiomas and malignant conditions including SCC, papillary carcinoma, condylomatous tumors and basaloid tumors may fall in this category. ⁶⁴
15.	Mansaarbuda ⁶⁵	Mansha	Arise due to <i>Mansha dhatu Dushti</i> (abnormality of muscular tissues). Leiomyosarcoma is a such type of penile sarcoma which arise from either superficial smooth muscle layer or deep smooth muscles of corpus cavernosum. ⁶⁶
16.	Mansapaaka ⁶⁷	Tridosha	Muscular tissues got supported and started to fall off and person experiencing all type of pain. It may be correlated with the pathological condition in which severe suppuration of muscular layer of penis occurs.
17.	Vidradhi ⁶⁸	Tridosha	Various types of pain and discharge. This a very urological conditions which may arise due to trauma, injections or any undefined infections creating Penile abscesses. ⁶⁹
18.	Tilakalaka ⁷⁰	Tridosha	Use of black or mottled Shooka as causative factors creating muscle of penis fragile, putrefied and resulting in blackish discoloration, may extend up to necrosis. It may be considered similar to infective moles or eruptive blue nevi on penis which suppurates later on if not treated. ⁷¹

Table 2. *Sadhya- Asadyata of Shooka Dosha*⁷²

<i>Sadhya Shooka Dosha</i>	<i>Asadhya Shooka Dosha</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sarshapika ● Ashthila ● Granthita ● Kumbhika ● Alaji ● Mridita ● Sammudhapidika ● Avamantha ● Pushkarika ● Sparshahani ● Uttama ● Shataponak ● Tvakpaak ● Shonitarbuda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mansaarbuda ● Mansapaaka ● Vidradhi ● Tilakalaka

Through comprehensive literature review and correlation with modern medical conditions, this study highlights the potential of Ayurveda in offering both preventive and therapeutic insights into *Shooka Dosha*. The principles and treatments suggested, including bloodletting, use of herbal formulations, and detoxification techniques, offer a holistic alternative for curable cases and a respectful approach for incurable cases. This research intends to lay the groundwork for further clinical studies to substantiate Ayurveda's efficacy in treating these disorders, thereby bridging ancient wisdom with contemporary health challenges.

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