

## *Leucorrhoea: Addressing a Common but Overlooked Condition through Herbal and Home Remedies*

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### **Abstract**

*Shuwetapradra* or Leucorrhoea, commonly known as white discharge affects significant proportion of women, mainly those who are at puberty or reproductive phase. The condition may arise due to hormonal, lifestyle, anatomical, systemic, or infectious factors. While normal vaginal discharge serves as a physiological role in maintaining vaginal health, but excessive vaginal discharge may reflect underlying gynecological concern. This review integrates traditional ayurvedic preparations used to cure leucorrhoea and provide knowledge regarding various medicinal plants having property to treat leucorrhoea. The article systematically discusses Etiology, pathophysiology, symptoms, diagnosis and ayurvedic oral and local preparations for the management of leucorrhoea. Since it is a prevalent yet often

underdiscussed condition affecting significant numbers of women, its treatment can be challenging. This review mainly focuses on ayurvedic preparations, ethno-medicinal plants and homemade remedies offering effective solution for managing leucorrhoea.

**Keywords:** *Leucorrhoea, Ayurvedic preparations, Ethno-medicinal plants, excessive vaginal discharge*

### **Introduction**

In Sanskrit, the term *shuwetapradra* is derived from two words i.e. *shuweta* meaning “white” and *pradra* meaning “discharge” [1]. Leucorrhoea is defined as an excessive vaginal discharge which is often considered normal. As the symptoms of excessive vaginal discharge is subjective and varies from one person to another, while some women may experience a normal vaginal discharge and non-infective

one, so for the identification we need to conduct clinical and laboratory investigations. Leucorrhoea should be characterized by the following key criteria:

### **Excessive vaginal secretion:**

It leads to excessive vaginal wetness, staining or discoloration of undergarments (the staining appears brownish-yellow upon drying), or there may be need to use the vulval pad due to excess vaginal secretion.

- It is non-offensive and non-purulent.
- It does not cause pruritus and is non-irritant.

Leucorrhoea is a medical condition which is mainly experienced during puberty, where women experience thick and sticky yellowish or whitish colour vaginal discharge. It is a common gynecological complaint among women, contributing to over 25% of patients visits to gynecologist [1,2]. The white discharge from vagina may be of two type i.e. pathological or physiological. It may be also noticed in women under normal condition without any disease as it helps to flush out the dead cells of reproductive organs and other toxic organisms. The properties of vaginal discharge may change according to the age or when they travel too much. Normally, vaginal discharge fluctuates in consistency and amount

throughout the menstrual cycle. Increased discharge than usual amount is considered normal during pregnancy, and reduction in discharge typically seen during lactation and following menopause [1,3]. Leucorrhoea does not lead to mortality or morbidity in affected women. However, it can lead to sexual anxiety, mental stress, and in some cases, infertility and fear of carcinoma. Additionally, it can lead to local inconvenience to the patient impacting daily life and overall well-being. The major cause of vaginal discharge is hormonal imbalance mainly of oestrogen. It is the primary female sex hormone responsible for development and regulation of the secondary sex characteristics and female reproductive system. And other reasons of discharge may be inflammation or infection affecting cervix or vagina [1].

### **Etiology of Leucorrhoea**

It can arise due to various factors that are:

#### **A. Infectious Causes**

- Urinary tract infection
- Bacterial, parasitic or fungal infection
- Sexually transmitted infections: Syphilis, gonorrhoea and trichomoniasis
- Pelvic inflammatory disease

## B. Hormonal and Physiological Factors

- Early/young age pregnancy
- Postpartum changes
- Menstrual hygiene issues
- Depression and mental anxiety

## C. Lifestyle and Environmental Factors

- Allergy or contact dermatitis
- Use of contraceptives by women
- Weak immune system and malnutrition
- Frequent use of dirty public toilet

## D. Systemic Conditions

- Diabetes and anaemia
- Typhoid
- Arthritis

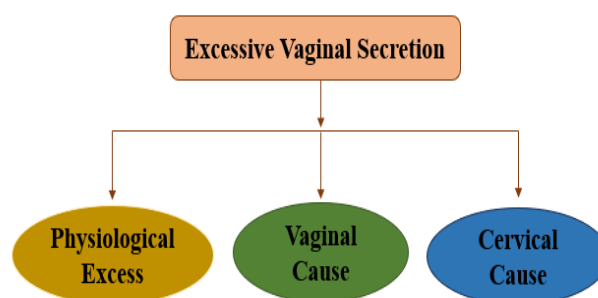
## E. Anatomical Factors

- Uterine displacement
- Cervical or vaginal injuries [1,4]

environment. Generally, a small amount of mucoid secretion is produced from the cervical glands and carbohydrates radical of the glycoprotein mucin broken down and fermented into lactic acid. However, when the mucus is produced in excess amount, it flows outward to the vulva region.

The excessive vaginal secretion is due to:

1. Physiologic excess
2. Vaginal cause (vaginal leucorrhoea)
3. Cervical cause (cervical leucorrhoea)



## Pathophysiology of Leucorrhoea

The basic physiology of normal vaginal secretion is regulated by endogenous oestrogen levels, as oestrogen levels are increased, there is abundant secretory activity of the superficial vaginal epithelium and the endocervical glands. Due to increased oestrogen levels the superficial vaginal epithelium becomes rich in glycogen, resulting in balanced vaginal

## Physiologic Excess

This condition arises when the normal vaginal secretion is increased due to high levels of oestrogen in body. Such conditions are:

- **During puberty**  
Rising levels of endogenous oestrogen leads to significant overgrowth of the endocervical epithelium. This intrudes

onto the ectocervix, leading to congenital ectopy (erosion) which results in increased secretion.

- **During menstrual cycle**

Around ovulation a peak rise in oestrogen levels stimulates heightened secretory activity of the cervical gland, resulting in excessive vaginal discharge. And during premenstrual phase pelvic congestion occurs, resulting in increased mucus secretion from hypertrophied endometrial glands.

- **During pregnancy**

There is excess of oestrogen in body known as hyperestrinism with increased vascularity. This leads to greater vaginal transudate and enhanced cervical gland secretion.

- **During sexual excitement**

The Bartholin's glands located at the vaginal opening become highly active, and results in abundant secretion.

### **Vaginal Cause**

Increased vaginal transduction is often related with increased pelvic congestion, which can result in acquired retroverted uterus, chronic

pelvic inflammation, uterine prolapse, use of contraceptive pills and vaginal adenosis. Poor overall health plays a major in excessive vaginal discharge by producing increased exfoliation of the superficial cells.

### **Cervical Cause**

Non-infective cervical lesions can lead to excessive secretion, which may flow out at the vulva. These conditions include- chronic cervicitis, mucous polyp, ectropion and cervical ectopy [2].

### **Symptoms of Leucorrhoea**

Most common symptoms of leucorrhoea are excessive vaginal discharge, burning micturition, pain in the calf muscles and thighs etc. The vaginal discharge may vary in colour i.e. whitish, reddish, yellowish and blackish. The discharge may be foul-smelling, itchy or accompanied by pain in the infected area. Other related symptoms of the excessive vaginal discharge are: [1,4]

- Pain and heaviness in the lower abdomen
- Anaemia
- Headache and dizziness
- Indigestion
- General weakness

- Local soreness
- Constipation
- Breathlessness
- Pruritus (itching)
- Polyuria (frequent urination)
- Anorexia (loss of appetite)
- Malaise (general discomfort)
- Lumbago (lower back pain)
- Pain during menstruation

### Diagnosis of Leucorrhoea

The diagnosis of patients usually involves evaluation of excessive vaginal discharge alongside other associated symptoms mentioned above. The vaginal discharge may appear white, creamy, blackish, reddish or yellowish in colour, and general weakness may indicate underlying health concerns. The vaginal discharge may be subjected to various examination i.e.

- **Microscopic examination:** To detect the pus cells for the identification of infective or non-infective discharge. If pus cells are absent, it indicates non-infective leucorrhoea and if pus cells are present, then further investigation is conducted to identify the causative organism in vaginal discharge.

- Smears from vagina, cervix and urethra.
- Urine and blood analysis.
- Blood pressure examination
- Biopsy (if evidence of malignancy) [1,4,5].

### Some Classical Preparations for Managing Leucorrhoea

#### Oral Preparations

- *Phyllanthus emblica*- seeds, powder, paste or juice of fruit *Phyllanthus emblica* mixed with honey and sugar.
- *Terminalis chebula* (Haritaki), *Piper longum* (pippali), *Pushyanuga churna*, and *Loha Bhasma* combined with equal quantity of honey.
- *Symplocos racemosa* (Lodhra) paste mixed with decoction of stem bark of (vata) *Ficus bengalensis* L.
- Darvyadi decoction, juice of *Azadirachta indica* (Nimba), *Tinospora cordifolia* (Guduchi), *Ficus hispida* Linn., *Aphanamixis polystachya*, *Achyranthes aspera* roots with honey.

- Powder of bark of *Saraca asoca*, *Symplocos racemos*, and *Berberis*'s **extract** taken with honey and rice water.
- *Ficus racemosa* juice of the fruit with honey followed by diet of milk cooked rice and sugar.
- Root of *Amaranthus tricolor* Linn. and Paste of *Rasanjana* prepared in honey and rice water

### External or Local Preparations

#### 1. Vaginal Douches

Triphalarasa (Swarasa/Kwatha)  
Kariradi Kwatha, with buttermilk or Sukta or cow urine, *Tinospora cordifolia*, Triphala and decoction of *Baliospermum montanum*/*Mucuna pruriens*/ bark of the five milk yielding trees/plants of Rajvrikshadi Gana / purifying plants with urine of cow and salt.

#### 2. Vaginal Suppositories (Varti)

Pipalyadi Varti, Palashadi Varti, Arkadi Varti, varti made up from the powder of *Ficus benghalensis* L. and honey/from fine powder of *Symplocos racemosa*

Roxb., *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, *Callicarpa macrophylla*, and honey/of fine powder any Astringent drugs and honey, Shodhana Dravya Varti, Ajagandhadi Varti, Varti of *Piper nigrum*, *Piper longum* Linn., black gram, *Saussurea lappa*, *Asparagus racemosus*, and *Saindhva*.

#### 3. Tampons

Infused with Mushaka Taila, Udumbaradi Taila, Dashmoola & Shrimada (Mundi) Kwatha, Kakolyadi Taila, Dhatakyadi Taila, Suramanda.

#### 4. Dhupa (Incense therapy)

Guggulu, Pinus roxburghii, and barley with Ghee/paste of *Berberis aristata*, *Curcuma longa*, and Powder of *Acacia catechu*, Brihat Phala, *Myristica fragrans* Houtt., Pathya, Pugiphala flowers of green gram/Panchakashaya (*Luffa acutangula*, *Adhatoda vasica*, *Acorus calamus*, *Callicarpa macrophylla* Vahl. and *Azadirachta indica*) powder [6].

### **Homemade Remedies for Leucorrhoea**

- **Coriander seed infusion:** Soak coriander seeds in water overnight and

drink the stained water on an empty stomach in the morning.

- **Lemon water cleanse:** Use freshly squeezed lemon juice mixed with water to clean the vaginal area.
- **Lady finger consumption:** Eat lightly steamed or raw lady finger, which is believed to support vaginal health.
- **Bananas:** Eating one or two ripe bananas daily may help regulate digestion and overall well-being.
- **Cranberry juice:** drink a glass of fresh cranberry juice once a day to support urinary and vaginal health [1].

### Anti Leucorrhoea Diet

If discharge is profuse avoid these foods:

- **Sugar:** All sweet items such as, custard, ice-cream, pudding and pastry etc.
- **Mushroom:** They belong to mildew family; they may lead to fungal infections.

- **Hot and Spicy food:** should be reduced to least in diet as they can irritate the vaginal mucosa.
- **Fried and processed food:** As it can lead to hormonal imbalance and contribute in inflammation [1].

### Ethno-Medicinal Plants Used to Treat Leucorrhoea

#### *Abutilon indicum*

**Local name-** Kanghi

**Family-** Malvaceae

**Habit-** Herb

**Part Used-** Root powder is used for the treatment of leucorrhoea.



#### *Amaranthus spinosus*

**Local name-** Choulai

**Family-** Amaranthaceae

**Habit-** Herb

**Part Used-** Paste of whole plant or roots along with water or honey is applied for 21 days to cure leucorrhoea.

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*Asparagus racemosus*

**Local name-** Satawari

**Family-** Liliaceae

**Habit-** Climber

**Part Used-** Roots of this plants are used for the treatment of leucorrhoea.

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*Boerhaavia repens*

**Local name-** Punarnava

**Family-** Nyctaginaceae

**Habit-** Herb

**Part Used-** Whole plant extract is used to cure leucorrhoea.

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*Boerhaavia diffusa*

**Local name-** Laal Punarnava

**Family-** Nyctaginaceae

**Habit-** Climber

**Part Used-** Decoction of whole plant is used once a day in the early morning for 15 days to cure leucorrhoea.

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*Butea monosperma*

**Local name-** Chhola

**Family-** Fabaceae

**Habit-** Tree

**Part Used-** Seeds are used to treat leucorrhoea.

*Calotropis gigantea*

**Local name-** Safed Aak

**Family-** Asclepiadaceae

**Habit-** Shurb

**Part Used-** Decoction of roots with piper longum paste is used in women once a day in empty stomach for 10 days to treat leucorrhoea.

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*Catharanthus roseus*

**Local name-** Sadasuhagan

**Family-** Apocynaceae

**Habit-** Herb

**Part Used-** Juice of leaves mixed with honey is given for 7 days in the early morning to cure leucorrhoea.



*Cynodon dactylon*

**Local name-** Doob

**Family-** Poaceae

**Habit-** Herb

**Part Used-** Whole plant paste is used in the treatment of leucorrhoea.

*Ficus benghalensis*

**Local name-** Bargad

**Family-** Moraceae

**Habit-** Tree

**Part Used-** Root or Bark paste mixed with honey is used for 15 days to cure leucorrhoea.



*Ficus religiosa*

**Local name-** Pipal

**Family-** Moraceae

**Habit-** Tree

**Part Used-** Juice of root part of plant is used to cure leucorrhoea.



*Mangifera indica*

**Local name-** Aam

**Family-** Anacardiaceae

**Habit-** Tree

**Part Used-** Powder of seeds is useful for treatment of leucorrhoea.

*Mucuna pruriens*

**Local name-** Konch fali

**Family-** Fabaceae

**Habit-** Climber

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**Part Used-** Seeds of this plants is used to cure leucorrhoea.

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*Phyllanthus emblica*

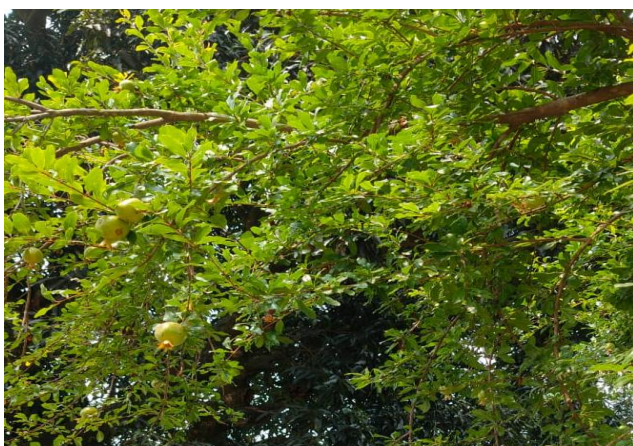
**Local name-** Amla

**Family-** Euphorbiaceae

**Habit-** Tree

**Part Used-** Paste of seeds and powder of fruits mixed with honey is used in the treatment of leucorrhoea.

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*Punica granatum*

**Local name-** Anar

**Family-** Punicaceae

**Habit-** Shrub

**Part Used-** Fresh flowers with sugar or water is used to treat leucorrhoea.

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*Saraca asoka*

**Local name-** Ashoka

**Family-** Fabaceae

**Habit-** Tree

**Part Used-** Dried bark paste is used to cure leucorrhoea.

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*Sida acuta*

**Local name-** Khareti

**Family-** Malvaceae

**Habit-** Herb

**Part Used-** Seeds mixed with water help to cure leucorrhoea.

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*Syzygium cumini*

**Local name-** Jamun

**Family-** Myrtaceae

**Habit-** Tree

**Part Used-** Dried powder of bark with cow milk is used in the treatment of leucorrhoea.

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*Terminalia arjuna*

**Local name-** Arjun

**Family-** Combretaceae

**Habit-** Tree



**Part Used-** Bark of the plant is used to treat leucorrhoea.

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***Woodfordia floribunda***

**Local name-** Dhawai

**Family-** Lythraceae

**Habit-** Shrub

**Part Used-** Dried flower powder mixed with honey is used for to cure leucorrhoea [7].

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**Conclusion**

Leucorrhoea or white discharge is a most common gynecological concern among women, particularly during puberty and reproductive years. The excessive and abnormal vaginal secretion can indicate underlying health conditions requiring clinical investigation. Herbal and home remedies have wonderful role in the treatment of leucorrhoea with less side effects. These remedies are easily available and cost effective for treating leucorrhoea and improving women overall health. Further research and advancement in this herbal preparation is required to enhance treatment efficacy, for ensuring better reproductive health.

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