

## **Herbal Treatment for Endometriosis**

**“The body and that which is understood as the mind are both the mainstay of well-being as well as disease”**

**Charaka Samhita, Sutra 155**

In Ayurveda, endometriosis is within a set of diseases known as Yoni Vyaapat, the disorders of the genitourinary tract Dysmenorrhea (painful menstruation).

According to Charaka, bodily tissues are triggered to grow by repeated use of substances, which contain homologous qualities, but when these are used over and over again the tissues may atrophy. Another aspect of endometriosis in Ayurvedic medicine is in its relation to shleshmaka. This is the factor present throughout the body that binds together the cells of the various bodily tissues. Regardless of function, all cells are essentially shleshmic., responsible for stability, integrity of body organs and structures.

The uterus is a muscular organ, which has great stability and the capacity to undergo childbirth, with strong muscular contractions, using energy and blood strength and nervous energy. It is an organ that does not age, but maintains its integrity, producing enzymes and a hormone prostacyclin which protects the heart muscle.

In Ayurveda, indulgence foods are seen as those which are cold and fatty, hard to digest; over-indulgence foods which are sweet and sour and salty in taste; drinking too much water with meals and sleeping afterwards, excessive use of alcohol.

In China endometriosis is known as *neiyi*, meaning internal lump. The condition and its treatment by herbs is mentioned in the ancient book “Jin Gui Yao Lue” (The Golden Cabinet Prescriptions) written around 220AD.

General approaches to treatment are surgical and medical in orthodox medicine.

### **Herbal medicine for endometriosis**

Always consult with a trained Medical Herbalist before taking any herbs. They should not be taken alongside any hormonal treatments as they will interfere with the hormone effects of the

medical drugs. Do not use herbs with phyto-oestrogenic effects as they may unbalance oestrogen even more if the liver enzymes are not working effectively.

**Blue Cohosh Root** (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*)

*For endometriosis pain*

*This should be used from day 22 to day 28 of the cycle only. It is used by native Americans to help fertility. It helps to temper period pains and for inflammation of the uterus. It has also been used to prevent miscarriages.*

**Canada Fleabane Herb** (*Erigeron canadense*)

*For heavy endometrial bleeding It contains tannic and gallic acids and a volatile oil. Used as an astringent and diuretic and tonic. . It has been used to arrest haemorrhage of the lungs. It reduces inflammation. It is given in a infusion or as a fluid extract.*

**Chaste Tree Fruit** (*Vitex Agnus Castus*)

*To lower oestrogen load and reduce growth of endometrial tissue This is traditionally used for problems associated with the luteal phase. A three to four month course is usually necessary and some women may require up to six months to regulate ovulatory patterns. It is usually given as a morning and evening dose of tincture in water. It has been shown in research to stimulate ovulation and aids hypothalamic-pituitary function.*

**Jamaican Dogwood Bark** (*Piscidia erythrina*)

*For endometriosis of Fallopian tubes with nausea, pain, sweating Traditionally this is used as an analgesic, and anti-spasmodic and is anti-inflammatory, hence it's use for period pains. As with all herbs it is contra-indicated in pregnancy.*

**Helonias Root** (*Chamaelirium luteum*)

*To normalize oestrogen/progesterone balance, eliminate feelings of engorgement and bearing down sensation. This is felt to normalise ovarian function, including the process of ovulation and is specific for the treatment of ovarian cysts. It contains diosgenin, a steroidal saponin which may have effects on the ovary.*

**Castor Oil Packs**

Buy castor oil from a chemist.

Apply to lower abdomen nightly for 45 minutes to 1 ½ hours in the following manner.

Use three to four thicknesses of undyed wool, from an old blanket. Saturate this with castor oil and wring out lightly.

NB. This should then be heated in a special pot used only for this purpose. You may reuse the same cloth 20-40 times. Just store in the same pot and add more castor oil with each use.

This cloth is applied as hot as the body can bear to the area from the lower right rib border over the entire right side of the abdomen, just down to above the pubic bone. (Do not have it too hot as you must not burn your skin). Be sensible.

The pack is then covered with an oiled cloth or plastic and kept warm.

After the application, wash the area with a weak solution of bicarbonate (1 teaspoon to 1 quart of warm water).