



Necessity of Menstruation from the Viewpoint of Traditional Persian Medicine

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Dear Editor

Menstruation is the cyclic and regular discharge of blood and mucosal tissue from the inner lining of the uterus through the vagina. It is a result of the profound tissue remodeling that occurs each month in reproductive-aged women due to regular hormonal changes [1]. This phenomenon is necessary to prepare the uterus for conception and implantation the embryo and this is the ultimate function of this organ.

Persian medicine has a comprehensive approach to health and disease on its specific basis of temperament, or Mizaj. According to this viewpoint, each person has a unique temperament, determined by morphological, physiological and psychological features [2].

Based on the approach of Persian medicine, the health of women is based on healthy menstruation. This fact is so important that Avicenna (10 & 11th centuries) in his book (The Canon

of Medicine) has emphasized that normal menstruation in quantity, quality and time is the guarantee of women's health [3].

Based on this, the main question is: what is menstrual bleeding and why happens just in women? The accepted response for such question in Persian medicine- needless to refer to recent histological, hormonal and cellular knowledge- is the woman's nature. Women are colder and wetter than men hence cannot use all the available blood. As a result, there is always some amount of surplus blood above the body's needs that must be discharged [3,4].

This discharge is of great necessity and excess blood in the body may cause serious complications and diseases, just as in women with polycystic ovarian syndrome with a history of amenorrhea or oligomenorrhea. These serious complications are described in Persian medicine thoroughly [3,5]. The connection be-

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tween Mizaj and menstrual bleeding becomes more apparent when we see that heavy exercise causes cessation of menstrual bleeding. This is due to a greater demand and usage of available blood [6]. Based on Persian medicine this surplus blood is dedicated to the needs of the embryo that supposed to be created in the uterus. That is also, why women do not menstruate during pregnancy [3].

In other words, the blood that depletes every month from the uterus is what is expected by the embryo as food and when conception does not occur, this surplus blood must inevitably deplete. At this time, the menstrual cycle happens. As age increases, blood production in both sexes gradually decreases until it reaches to the

point where there is no surplus of blood in the woman's body as food for the fetus or, in the absence of the fetus, the uterus disposes of it; This is when menstruation is interrupted and menopause commences [3].

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

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