

The Causes of Female Infertility from the Viewpoint of Traditional Iranian Medicine

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Abstract:

Fertility is one of the main goals of creation for survival. The high prevalence of infertility around the world and in Iran as well as the economic burden of different treatments of infertility has resulted in several problems for couples and the community. As a holistic approach, Traditional Iranian Medicine (TIM) has a particular viewpoint in this area, which can be helpful for current medicine. The purpose of the current study is to review the infertility etiology according to TIM to elucidate the different aspects of the problem and become familiar with the beliefs and viewpoints of Iranian traditional physician. This may bring new insight into identification and classification of the underlying causes of infertility.

To this end, we carefully evaluated the main texts of TIM such as Al-Qanun Fi Al-Tibb (The Canon of Medicine) by Avicenna, Kamel Al-Sena'eh, Kholaseh Al-Hekmat, Zakhireh Kharazmshahi, Exir Azam, Moalejat Aghili, and Almojaz. Infertility-related subjects under the entry of "gynecology", their sign and symptoms, and the underlying causes were investigated. Contextual analysis was performed and the discrepancies and congruities were summarized. Generally, the main etiologies considered for female infertility can be categorized as problems of oocytes, uterine, ovaries and fallopian tubes, dysfunction of other organs, and psychological and behavioral causes.

Iranian traditional physicians or "Hakims" believed that the components of oocytes come from all organs, particularly the main organs such as heart, liver, and brain. Therefore, dysfunction of other organs, especially the main organs can lead to infertility. Psychological factors also received great attention from hakims. This is an introductory investigation to become familiar with the viewpoints of Iranian traditional physicians toward infertility. Moreover, this can be an initiative for identifying alternative methods of diagnosis and treatment of female infertility.

Keywords: Infertility; Female infertility; Traditional Iranian Medicine.

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