

# Unit 1 · Strī Viśiṣṭa Śarīra Vijñāna, Topic (a): Introduction to Prasūti Tantra and Strīroga

Unit 1 · Strī-viśiṣṭa Śarīra-vijñāna — Introduction to *Prasūti Tantra* & *Strī-roga*, Nirukti of "Strī", and *Vayobheden* Strī-saṃjñā

## **Learning goals**

By the end of this chapter you should be able to: (i) define *Prasūti Tantra* and *Strī-roga* within Aṣṭāṅga-Ayurveda; (ii) explain the **nirukti (vyutpatti)** of the word **"Strī"** using Sanskrit grammatical tradition; (iii) quote and interpret the **classic verse on vayobheden** (age-wise) strī-saṃjñā and relate it to Ayurvedic practice.

## 1) What are Prasūti Tantra and Strī-roga?

Ayurveda is traditionally organised into eight branches (aṣṭāṅga). Prasūti Tantra (obstetrics) and Strī-roga (gynaecology) are taught together as the science dealing with women's reproductive health, pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium. Vagbhata enumerates the eight branches succinctly:

"कायबालग्रहोर्ध्वाङ्ग श्राल्यदंष्ट्रा जरावृषान् । अष्टावङ्गानि तस्याहुः चिकित्सायेषु संस्थिताः ॥" kāyabālagrahordhvāṅga śalyadaṃṣṭrā jarāvṛṣān | aṣṭāvaṅgāni tasyāhuḥ cikitsāyeṣu saṃśritāḥ ||

Here, *bāla* refers to *Kaumāra-bhṛtya* (paediatrics), *vṛṣa* to *Vājīkaraṇa* and so forth; *Prasūti Tantra* and *Strī-roga* are subsumed primarily under *Kāyacikitsā* and share interfaces with *Kaumāra-bhṛtya*, *Rasāyana*, and *Bhūta-vidyā* for psychophysical well-being.

#### Scope for the BAMS student:

- Normal and abnormal menstruation (rtucakra, artava), conception (garbhādhāna), antenatal care (garbhinīparicaryā), labour and delivery (prasava-vidhi), puerperium (sūtikā-paricaryā), lactation (stanya-pravṛtti/dūṣṭi), and
  diseases of the female genital tract.
- Classical nosology connects each topic with *doṣa-dhātu-mala-srotas* and *saṃprāpti*, which is why the subject is placed early in 3rd BAMS.

# 2) Nirukti (vyutpatti) of the word "Strī"

In Ayurvedic writing we preserve Sanskrit technical terms. For academic rigour, *nirukti* must come from **vyākaraṇa** tradition—"from where and how the word is derived," not merely its poetic meaning.

#### 2.1 Dhātu and affixes involved

- **Dhātu (verbal root): styai / ṣṭyai** (śabda-saṅghātayoḥ 'aggregation/compaction') given in the **Uṇādi-sūtra** tradition.
- **Uṇādi affix: dṛraṭ** is added to the root by the rule **styāyater dṛraṭ (Uṇādi 4.167)**; by elision rules only **r** remains from dṛraṭ. Subsequent phonetic operations delete *ai* and *y* (rules **ṭeḥ 6.4.143** and **lopo vyor vali 6.1.66**). Finally, the **feminine affix h̄īp** (Pāṇini 4.1.15 under the *striyām* adhikāra, 4.1.3) is applied, yielding the stem **strī**.

**Summary derivation:**  $styai + drat \rightarrow (phonetic elisions) \rightarrow base with <math>r \rightarrow + \dot{n}\bar{n}p \rightarrow str\bar{n}$ .

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Grammarians gloss it as **"styāyate 'syāṃ garbhaḥ"**—"in whom the embryo expands"—a semantic explanation attached to the grammatical derivation.

#### 2.2 Notes from the grammatical tradition

- Many everyday nouns are explained only through Uṇādi-sūtras, an auxiliary to Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī used to
  account for difficult derivations without forcing etymology.
- Pāṇini's **striyām (4.1.3)** governs the use of feminine affixes; *strī* is a canonical example cited by commentators.

**Exam tip:** When asked "Strī-śabdasya niruktiḥ," write the root **styai/ṣṭyai**, cite **Uṇādi 4.167 (styāyater dṛraṭ)**, and mention application of **n̄īp** under **striyām**.

# 3) Vayobheden Strī-samjñā — classic age-wise nomenclature

Traditional sources give special names to a girl according to age, widely used in *saṃskāra* and *vivāha* literature. The most cited verse (attributed to **Saṃvarta** in *Dharma Bindu* compilations) reads:

"अष्टवर्षा भवेद् गौरी नववर्षा तु रोहिणी । दशवर्षा भवेत् कन्या अथोर्ध्वं रजस्वला ॥" aṣṭavarṣā bhaved gaurī navavarṣā tu rohiṇī | daśavarṣā bhavet kanyā athordhvaṃ rajasvalā ||

(\*Variant readings replace "atho/ata" with "ata" and the last pāda with "कन्यादानं प्रशस्यते" in other compendia such as *Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa Saṃhitā* 1.513.55. For teaching in *Prasūti Tantra*, the above reading—ending with **rajasvalā**—is preferred when explaining age-bound female appellations.)

## 3.1 Explanation of the terms

	Saṃjñā	Age indicated	Sense/usage
Ga	urī	8 years	A pre-pubescent girl of eight. Cultural appellation in saṃskāra contexts.
Ro	hiṇī	9 years	Nine-year-old girl.
Ka	nyā	10 years	Ten-year-old maiden; kanyā-dāna discussions in smṛti texts relate to this stage.
Ra	iasvalā / Rtumat	i Above 10	One who has attained menarche (onset of raias/artava).

**Pedagogical note:** This  $samj\tilde{n}\tilde{a}$  system is **normative-cum-ritual**; it is not a clinical claim about the biological age of menarche in all populations. In clinical  $Str\tilde{i}$ -roga, menarche is treated empirically, and Ayurvedic physiology explains artava as  $upadh\tilde{a}tu$  of rasa with its own  $k\tilde{a}la$  and srotas. (See §4.)

# 4) Linking the samiñā to Ayurvedic physiology

### 1. Artava (Rajas) as upadhātu of Rasa

Classical teaching (as preserved in standard treatises and commentaries) identifies **Artava (Rajas)** and **Stanya** as the two *upadhātus* of **Rasa**. This is consistently presented in modern scholarly summaries of the classics and is crucial to  $Str\bar{i}$ -roga pathophysiology (vitiation of  $rasa \rightarrow effect$  on artava/stanya).

## 2. Monthly artava flow

The monthly accumulation and outward flow of *rakta/artava* from the uterus at a proper time is described by Vagbhata (*Aṣṭāṅga Saṃgraha* tradition) and echoed in compendia: in each month *rakta* gathers in the *garbhāśaya* and, at the due time, flows out—this physiologic rhythm is the basis for normal *rtucakra* and for *garbhādhāna* 

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timing.

#### 3. Clinical utility of vayobheden samjñā

- **Counselling & consent:** Terminology helps frame age-appropriate counselling during *rtumatī*-onset education and menarche-related anxieties (*rajodarśana* guidance).
- Doṣa-anubandha: Early menarche with ati-darśana may indicate pitta-rakta provocation; delayed menarche with alpādarśana may involve vāta-kapha and agni disturbances—tie your short notes to rasa/artava concepts for scoring.
- Sāmprāpti-vighatana: After assessing āhāra-vihāra, correct agni and rasa-vaha srotas to normalise artava.

**How to write a 10-marker:** Quote the *vayobheda* verse; give 2–3 lines explaining each term; then connect to *artava* as *rasa-upadhātu*, *srotas*, and *doṣa* implications. Add one contemporary remark on menarche variability (without statistics) to show clinical maturity.

# 5) Key definitions you should remember

- **Strī** (秦和): *styai/ṣṭyai* + draṭ (Uṇādi 4.167) + n̄ɪp → strī; woman—the person in whom the embryo (*garbha*) may expand (*styāyate*), per the grammatical gloss.
- Artava / Rajas: Menstrual blood and, by context, ovum; considered upadhātu of Rasa.
- Rajasvalā/Rtumatī: One who has the cyclic manifestation of artava (menstruation).
- Prasūti Tantra: Branch covering conception to puerperium; interfaces with Kaumāra-bhṛtya and Rasāyana.
- Strī-roga: Diseases of the female reproductive system including artava-vyāpada, yonivyāpad, vandhyatva, etc.

# 6) Worked exemplar — how to cite in your answer

If asked "Vayobhedena strī-samjñā vyākhyāyatām", write the verse neatly, in Devanāgarī, then gloss:

गौरी (६ वर्षे): प्रौढत्वपूर्व अवस्था ; रोहिणी (९ वर्षे): नववयस्का ; कन्या (१० वर्षे): विवाह-पूर्वा ; राजस्वला (अथोर्ध्वम्): artava-प्रादुर्भावानन्तरं ☐ This nomenclature is from saṃskāra/vivāha literature (Saṃvarta, Dharma Bindu). Clinically, menarche marks entry into rtumatī stage; in Ayurveda, artava is rasa-upadhātu, so rasa-agni and rasa-vaha srotas status govern menstrual health.

## 7) Quick review (3-2-1)

- 3 takeaways: (i) Strī—derive it correctly from styai/ṣṭyai (Uṇādi 4.167) + n̄ip; (ii) Memorise the vayobheda shloka;
   (iii) Tie menarche to rasa-artava-srotas.
- 2 linkages: Prasūti Tantra ↔ Kaumāra-bhṛtya (continuum mother-child); Strī-roga ↔ Kāyacikitsā (systemic dosa/agnī).
- 1 examiner's favourite line: "Artava, as rasa-upadhātu, reflects rasa status; therefore correcting āhāra-vihāra-agni restores rtucakra."

## **Self-assessment**

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#### A. Short-answer prompts

- 1. Write the **nirukti** of "Strī," naming the **dhātu** and **pratyaya** used.
- 2. Explain Rajasvalā and relate it to rtucakra and artava physiology.
- 3. Enumerate the eight branches of Ayurveda with the **exact** Sanskrit half-verse.

#### B. MCQs (single best answer)

- 1. The Unadi rule cited for forming strī from styai/styai is
  - a) jāgrbhyo kvin (Unādi 4.55)
  - b) styāyater drat (Unādi 4.167)
  - c) gamer iniḥ (Uṇādi 4.6)
  - d) pātṛtudivaciricisicibhyas thak (Uṇādi 2.7)

Ans: b.

- 2. In the vayobheda verse, Rohiṇī denotes a girl of
  - a) 7 years b) 9 years c) 10 years d) Above 10 years

Ans: b

3. The *adhikāra* sūtra of Pāṇini under which **n̄īp** is applied for feminine forms is—
a) *striyām* (4.1.3) b) *uraṇ raparaḥ* (1.1.51) c) ṭeḥ (6.4.143) d) *lopo vyor vali* (6.1.66)

Ans: a

In Aṣṭāṅga enumeration, Vājīkaraṇa is indicated by the term—
 a) bāla b) graha c) jarā d) vṛṣa

Ans: d.

5. According to classical teaching summarised in standard texts, **Artava** is an *upadhātu* of— a) *Rakta* b) **Rasa** c) *Māṃsa* d) *Meda* 

Ans: b.

### References

#### Classical / primary

- **Vāgbhaṭa, Aṣṭāṅga Hṛdaya, Sūtrasthāna 1** enumeration of *Aṣṭāṅga Ayurveda* (cf. verse "कायबालग्रहोर्ध्वाङ्ग...") with standard commentaries.
- Uṇādi-sūtra tradition (rule 4.167: styāyater ḍraṭ), with derivational steps for strī; Pāṇinian references 4.1.3 (striyām), 4.1.15, 6.1.66, 6.4.143.
- Saṃvarta-smṛti (as compiled in Dharma Bindu): Vayobhedena strī-saṃjñā verse—"अष्टवर्षा भवेद गौरी... अथोर्ध्वं रजस्वला."
- Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa Saṃhitā 1.513.55 records a close variant ("...कन्यादानं प्रशस्यते").

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