

Clinical Applications of Maternal and Childcare

Seminar Article

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Abstract

Every child deserves to have a healthy start in life and every mother should have access to quality healthcare during pregnancy and childbirth. As pregnancy and childbirth are one of the most critical events in a woman's life cycle that maintain the continuity and existence of human species in this world. According to WHO, more than 800 women die every day and every 7 minutes one woman dies in India from complications in pregnancy and childbirth. Ayurveda, the ancient science of life focuses on protection of health based on life style followed by curing diseased one. This science believes in planned progeny rather than an accidental one. For that, certain principles are described in our classics for the care of the lady in pregnancy period from pre-conception period to the very first day of conception and till the day of delivery. As well as maternal care in the periparturient period and the care of new born which lays utmost importance on *dehika*, *manasika* and *vachika* state and *ahara-vihara* of a pregnant lady. The whole aim of giving these principles are to protect the mother and growing fetus from various hazards and help the mother to regain her normal health. The paper focuses on implication of Ayurveda's profound knowledge of *garbhini*, *sutika* and *shishu paricharya* in preventing maternal as well as new born mortality and morbidity. This proves Ayurveda as a science of life.

Key Words: *Pregnancy, Childbirth, Maternal care, Ayurveda.*

Introduction

Ayurveda, the ancient science of life focuses on protection of health based on life style followed by curing the sick. It has always given importance to care the stree at every phase of her life respect of rajaswala, garbhini and sutika paricharya.

Pregnancy, the most energetic and challenging phase in a woman's life which ends satisfactorily after delivering a healthy progeny and regaining of pre-pregnancy health by a lady. According to WHO, approximately 810 women die every day from complications in pregnancy and childbirth and among them 94% of all maternal deaths occur in low lower middle income countries (1).

According to Ayurveda, care of woman's body starts much earlier than her actual pregnant state. It lays utmost importance on *dehika*, *manasika* and *vachika* state and *ahar-vihar* of a pregnant lady. Describing the benefits of garbhini paricharya Charak emphasized its significance by stating.

A woman following the garbhini paricharya will give birth in proper kala to a progeny who is swastha sampat, sukha aayukara, prashastha (2). And the diet taken by her nourishes her own body, growing fetus and her breast for lactation (3).

Month-wise regimen according to acharya Charaka and Sushruta is compiled along with some interpretations.

During first trimester of pregnancy most women experience nausea and vomiting, thus cannot take proper diet due to the increased vata. Hence intake of madhur dravya siddha ksheera will prevent dehydration. As madhura dravya are agni deepana, vatahara, balya and brhmana. Thus fulfil the requirements of garbhini.

Jangala mamsa yukta hrudya dravyas help in nourishing the muscular tissue of fetus.

By the end of 2nd trimester fetus get well developed due to which woman starts suffering from pedal edema and other complications of water accumulations. To prevent this mutrala dravyas are advised.

Vata is best treated by basti. Hence anuvasana basti with madhura and vatahara siddha aushadhi will alleviate vata. Pichu of the same may prevent the pathogenic infections of vaginal canal and prepare the vagina to undergo the stress of labour.

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Table no 1: Showing the month wise indicated foods during pregnancy

Month	Charaka (4)	Sushruta (5)	Interpretations
1st	Anaushadhi Siddha Sheeta ksheera (pravara jeevaniya (6)) and satmya bhojana	Madhura, sheeta, drava ahara Madhura varga dravyas (7)- kakolyadi gana, shali, shashtika, godhuma, masha, kushmanda, mridwika	Satmya, Jeevaniya, garbha, srava hara brmhaniya and balya - aatma enters the garbha, As implantation of the garbha takes place in this month and there is fear of garbha srava and garbha pata hence madhura rasa dravya gives sthirata to garbha . To alleviate the Increased vata causing nausea and vomiting Liquid diet intake prevents dehydration Madhura rasa being agni deepakara, balya, brhmaniya help in maintenance of health and nourishes breast for lactation.
2nd	Madhura (Madhura skandha dravyas (8)- shatavari, shatapuspha, yashtimadhu, mridwika) aushadhi sidhha ksheera	Madhura, sheeta, drava ahara	Continues same as first month Along with that garbha attains ghanata by the action of tridoshas. Madhura dravyas fulfill the requirements of garbhini as the major body organs of garbha are very rapidly developing and maintains the tridoshas by controlling vata.
3rd	Madhu (sheeta, sandhana kara (9), Yogavahi and tridoshanashaka (10))sarp (smriti, buddhi, oja, agni vardhana (11)) (vishama matra) sidhha ksheera	Madhura, sheeta, drava ahara	Formation of pancha pindakas and minute manifestations of organs and systems – sandhana karma by madhu Maintains the balance of tridosha Development of mental activities and cerebral functioning.
4th	Ksheera and One Aksha Navaneeta (hrudyaya (12))	Shastika odana with dugdha, Ksheera sarp (yukta, jangal mansayukta hridaya anna (dadima, amra, badar, amlavetas, karamarda, matulunga (13))	Organs and systems distinctly developed, the fetal circulation is established, muscular tissue grows hence to fulfill the requirements bala vardhana, brmhaniya, sthairyakruta mamsakara ahara advised . Navneeta and amliya dravyas hitakara to hridaya Vatahara ahara significance is to avoid fetal abnormalities as fetus starts perceiving the outer world as chetana dhatu gets vyakta in garbha hridaya.
5th	Ksheera and Ghrita	Shastika odana with dugdha, Ksheera sarp (yukta jangal mansayukta hridaya anna	Progressive development of mind and all other organs and systems. Considerable increase in weight of fetus
6th	Madhura aushadhi sidhha ksheera and sarp	Shwadanshra (madhura dravya (14)) sidhha sarp or yavagu (hrudyaya, tarpaniya, brmhaniya, bala vardhaka (15))	Increased weight leads to complications in garbhini like retention of fluid, pedal edema hence diuretic advised Yavagu maintains the bala and increases the agni to increase the food intake. synaptic connections start developing hence medya dravyas like vacha help in proper development of nervous system.
7th	Madhura aushadhi sidhha ksheera and sarp	Vidarigandhadi (vidarigandha, shatavari, gokshura, punarnava, sahadeva, sariva (16)) sidhha sarp	complete development of fetal body parts.

8th	Ksheerayavagu and sarpi	Aasthapana basti followed by anuvasana basti (ksheera bala tail)	Madhura varga vatahara aushadhi siddha basti- controls the vata which in turn gives sthirata to the ojas. anuloma gati of apana vata evacuates the retained fecal matter and doshas if any . Affects the nervous system controlling myometrium and helps in regulating their functioning during labour.
9th	Madhura aushadhi sidhha taila anuvasana and yonipichu (ksheera bala tail)	Snigdha yavagu and jangal mansarasa till delivery	Basti- helpful in getting the proper positions of garbha for easy delivery Yoni pichu facilitates the easy passage during normal labour, tail gives bala to yoni and aushadhi siddha is sarva roga nashaka (17), destroys pathogenic bacteria

Pumsavana vidhi

A procedure mentioned by our acharyas which is misunderstood as a vidhi to get a male progeny. But Pumsavana karma aims mainly at garbha dharana and garbha stheerikarana. The samskara vidhi in which aushadhi dravyas are used to achieve a healthy male/female progeny before the conspicuousness (vyaktabhava) of organs (18). The aushadhi dravyas mentioned by acharyas like vatashruna, lakshmana, jivaka, sahadeva and many more in different vidhis act on the garbha. The time for pumsavana is before conception and immediate after conception for achieving healthy progeny as well as for proper implantation and stability (19). It is achieved by the action of these dravyas which madhura, jeevaniya, balya and vatahara.

Many methods have been explained by acharyas. Among them some are-

- Paste prepared with milk of any of these dravyas lakshmana, vatashruna, sahadeva, vishwadewa etc. The extracted juice should be instilled in right nostril for a male progeny (20).
- The paste of jivaka, rishabaka, apamarga and sahadeva collectively, individual or few of them should be taken during pushya nakshtra after cooking with milk (21).

The above mentioned dravyas act as garbhastapakara and give sthirata to garbha. Hence acharyas signified this samskara vidhi for begetting a healthy progeny of desired sex.

As a regimen includes a list of dos and don'ts. Garbhini paricharya includes both as suggested by acharyas avoiding of some dietetics & mode of life during pregnancy which are harmful to the garbha (fetus) as well as garbhini.

Some of those are avoiding use of pungent drugs and indulging in exercise and coitus (22). A woman should totally give up atisantarpana, atikarshana, diwaswap, ratri jagarana, bhaya, krodha and all those aahar- vihar which are vatahara which further will hamper the agni and vitiates the doshas (23). The ahara - vihar included here are agni mandyakara and doshakara specifically vata kara. The imbalanced state of doshas will directly have an impact on dehika and mansika stithi of a garbhini. This may lead to the abnormalities in fetus and complications during delivery. Hence following the proper regimen will prevent them.

Sutika paricharya

A woman is termed as sutika until the re-commencement of menses²⁴. It is a transitional period and vata dominant awastha. As sutika sharir is thought to be empty after delivery due to exertion of rakta and kleda (25). During this period all the systems especially genital organs revert back to approximate pre pregnant state, anatomically and physiologically. Hence acharyas advised sutika paricharya to prevent complications and to regain health of mother.

Table No. 2: Showing the recommended regimen for post partum condition

Sutika awasta (26)	Recommended regimen (26)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vata prakopa • Dhatu shaithilya • Remains of dushita rakta • Agni mandya • Dhatu kshaya 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abhyanga with bala taila • Ushna udaka pariseka & internal use of kwatha of vatahara dravyas • paniya- panchakola churna + luke warm jaggery water for 2-3 days • Sneha yavagu or ksheera yavagu processed with vidarigandhadi gana for 3days (i. e 4th to 7th day) • Jangala mamsa rasa processed with yava, kola, kulattha along with shali dhanya to be given according to bala & agni 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relieves the pain at back, flank and abdomen developed due to prasava, yoni regains tonicity, helps in expulsion of residual clot in uterus • Deepana, pachana, shulaghna, dhatushaithilyahara mamsa and raktha vardhaka • Balya, tarpaniya vata hara • Act as rasayana and helps the women to recover puerperal period. • Balya & brmhana, source of iron, vitamin, essential amino acids.

The advised regimen is recommended based on desha, kala, rutu and prakruti of a lady. The main motive of this regimen is to improve immunity, involution process, lactation and digestive power.

The prathama kalamaryada of sutika awastha is the first 10 days which are crucial as a woman is more prone to suffer from various infections of genital organs. Acharya Kashyapa advised a rakshogna upakrama i. e. yoni dhupana to prevent yoni dushti/vrana dushti (27). As the dravyas like kusta, guggulu and agaru have property of rakshogna means yoni rakshana. This shows that dhupana dravyas may have properties like antimicrobial, anti inflammatory and analgesic²⁸.

Sutikagaar

Sutikagaar which can be correlated to the modern days maternity ward mentioned in our samhitas make us realize the way our acharyas understood the importance of stree in garbhini and sutika awastha.

The main aim of constructing sutikagar is to protect the mother and child from evil things and infectious diseases (sutika rogas). Acharya Sushruta states raksha mangala sampannam i. e. dravyas having antiseptic properties and auspicious to mother and child should be stored in sutikagar (29).

Kashyapa has enlisted a number of rakshogna dravyas in dhupa kalpa adhyaya. Some of them are ghruta, guggulu, agaru, sarshapa, vacha, nimba, sarjarasa etc. which are antibacterial, anti parasitic and antifungal (30). He states use of rakshogna dravya fumigation will protect from rakshasa, bhuta and pishacas. The dhatri should use these for protecting new born, growing and diseased child (31).

Shishu paricharya

In ancient ayurvedic texts, acharyas have given prime importance to care of new born which starts from birth to viable stability of the newborn. In general, the care of a normally delivered newborn at birth includes prevention of asphyxia, hypothermia and initiation of breast feeding. It includes various procedures like pranapratyagama, snana, much vishodhana, pichudharana, garbhodaka vama, nala chedana, jatakarma, raksha karma involved in the resuscitation of the newborn (32, 33).

Some of procedures are -

- Ulva parimarjana - cleaning of vernix caseosa with saindhav and ghruta soon after delivery is advisable as it prevents infections to newborn others opine as vernix caseosa serves to conserve heat hence it should not be cleaned.
- Mukha vishodhana - saindhava and ghruta are used to clear the airways i. e. oral cavity and nasal cavity. Clearing of secretions from airways prevents the aspiration of secretions
- Pichu dharana - sneha pichu (ghrita) covering the unfused cranial sutures at anterior fontanelle provides a protective mechanism.

- Nala chedana - specific measurements are mentioned to cut the umbilical cord with an intention of preventing paka (inflammation) of it.
- Pranapratyagama - includes general and specific measures. All the measures may prove helpful for baby to initiate the important act of breathing helpful in respiration and heart functioning.
- Jatakarma - feeding schedule of neonate slightly differ from acharya to acharya. But all dravyas mentioned are madhur rasa pradhana, vata pitta hara, jeevaniya, balya, vayasthapaka, rakshogna. The importance of administering breast milk after 3/4 days of birth is to avoid vata pittaja rogas. Some acharyas advised breast feeding immediately after birth right from the first day.
- Raksha karma - with the aim of protecting the new born from various opportunistic infections. Hanging on the walls sutikagaar, spreading over the floor, placing the packets and fumigation of rakshogna dravyas like sarshapa, guggulu, vacha, khadira, kushta, guggulu and many more will prove helpful in preventing infections as they act antimicrobial, antiparasitic and antifungal (34).

Discussion

After reviewing of garbhini and sutika paricharya it can be said that our acharyas have described a scientific description of paricharya of both garbhini and sutika. A brief regimen of each and every step in paricharya is explained to prevent untoward effect.

Pre-conception care has to be taken for healthy conception of garbha. To maintain the balance of doshas and fulfill the requirements of a garbhini each and every step of paricharya has to be followed. As the regimen mentioned includes the madhura rasa pradhana, snighdha dravyas which controls vata, maintains agni and stagewise develops the fetus and protects the mother's health by preventing the untowards effects like garbha srava and garbha pata, nausea, vomiting in 1st trimester, dauhrudini vimana complications, improper development of anga pratyangas, karshana of garbhini in 2nd trimester, pedal edema, improper positions of garbha, improper gati of vata and complications of prasava kala in 3rd trimester.

Sutika paricharya is the regimen through which a mother regains her pre-pregnancy health. As sutika is more prone to the diseases and its complications following the sutika paricharya prevents it by improving the immunity of the purpeurial lady.

Navajata shishu paricharya is a procedure through which we are aiming in protecting the new born from various pathogenic infections and inauspicious things. And the new born is congenial to adapt to the new environment immediate after delivery.

Conclusion

Garbhini paricharya indirectly saves the lives of mothers and babies not only by promoting and establishing good health before childbirth but also normal healthy delivery and helpful to the mother in

post natal period. Sutika paricharya helps the mother to regain her earlier normal health and strength which had gone through various physiological and emotional changes.

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