

REVIEW ARTICLE- NAVJATA SHISHU PARICHARYA (NEONATAL CARE) IN AYURVEDA**Dr. Pratima K. Hiwale*¹ and Dr. Anil B. Kale²**¹P. G. Scholar Kaumarbhritya Dept. Government Ayurved College, Osmanabad.²Professor and HOD Kaumarbhritya Dept. Government Ayurved College, Osmanabad.Article Received on
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DOI: 10.20959/wjpr201811-12425***Corresponding Author****Dr. Pratima K. Hiwale**P. G. Scholar
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College, Osmanabad.**ABSTRACT**

Navjata shishu paricharya (care of the new-born) starts right from birth of the baby and continues up to the early neonatal stage of the life. In *Ayurveda* and modern science neonatal care has been explained for the easy adaptation of the baby after birth to outer environment without any complication so that the new-born mortality and morbidity gets reduced. *Navjata shishu paricharya* (care of the new-born) has been described in *Brihatrayi* with varied details. The steps included in *Navjata Shishu Paricharya* are *Prana pratyagamana* (neonatal resuscitation), *Ulva parimarjana* (cleaning of the vernix caseosa), *Naalchedan* (cutting of umbilical cord), *Mukh vishodhan* (cleaning of

oral cavity), *Garbhodak vama* (cleaning of new-born's stomach), *Snana* (neonatal bath), *Jata karma* (birth rite) and *Raksha karma* (protection of baby). The modern paediatrics also describes care of the new-born and resuscitation in the discipline of the Neonatology. The cultural practices mentioned in *Ayurvedic* compendia literally go hand in hand with that of the steps of resuscitation. The harmful cultural practices must be avoided and useful practices must be selectively promoted.

KEYWORDS: Navjata Shishu Paricharya, Pranapartayagamana, Mukha vishodhna, Jatakarma, Raksha karma.

INTRODUCTION

New born infants are different in their physiology and the health problems that they experience. Neonatal period is characterised by transition to extra Uterine life and rapid growth and development. This is the phase in life with the greatest risk of mortality. It is also most critical period for long term physical and neurocognitive development. New born

health is the key to health and survival. More than 50% under five mortality occur in the neonatal period. Complications in preterm babies account for 35% of all neonatal deaths and constitutes as most important cause of neonatal mortality. Bacterial infections (sepsis, pneumonia, diarrhoea) contribute 33% of neonatal deaths. Other causes of neonatal mortality are birth asphyxia (20%) congenital malformation (9%) and malnutrition.^[1] To prevent these complications neonatal care is most important component involved. Various procedures were advised in the management of new-born child by Acharyas with a few differences in sequence of the procedures. It includes.

Immediate care of new born

- a. *Ulva- parimarjana* (cleaning of vernix caseosa)
- b. Resuscitation of the normal baby
- c. Resuscitation of unconscious or asphyxiated baby
- d. Cutting of umbilical cord.

General care

- a. Bath
- b. Feeding
- c. Bed and Clothes
- d. Protective measures.

Immediate care of new-born

Ulva - Parimarjana

The *garbha* is covered with a fine paste like substance called *ulba* (vernix caseosa). At birth, the skin is covered by a white coloured paste- vernix caseosa formed by secretions from sebaceous glands and degenerated epidermal cells and hairs. It protects the skin from the macerating action of amniotic fluid. The procedure of cleaning of vernix caseosa from the body of a neonate is known as *ulba shodhanam*. Vernix caseosa is a powerful media for maintaining thermal stability of the baby, thus prevents hypothermia. Therefore one should not rush for removing vernix caseosa immediately. Soon after birth, the baby should be smeared with ghee mixed with *saindhava*.^[2] This throws light on the fact that our ancient scholars were aware about the need of maintenance of thermal stability of the baby. Ghrita being a bad conductor of the heat may give sufficient protection from hypothermia. *Saindhava* helps in removing the Vernix caseosa.

Resuscitation of the normal baby**Clearing of the airway**

According to *Acharya Charaka*^[3] the throat, lips, pharynx and tongue should be cleared by fingers of the attender. The nails of the fingers should be trimmed off properly and should be covered by a clean cotton swabs prior to this. By this method we can remove the mucous present in the oral cavity so as to facilitate the smooth entry of air through it. This is also a source of stimulation to baby because it produces gag reflex and irritation. *Acharya sushruta* has promoted the use of *ghrita* and *saindhava* to clear the secretions of the oral cavity.

Stimulation to baby

- Cleaning of face with hot water or cold water. In summer cold water and in winter hot water is advised.^[3]
- Fanning with *krishnakaapaalikasoorp*.^[3]
- Auditory stimulus by striking two stones near the ear of baby.^[3]

Resuscitation of unconscious baby

- Clearing of the airway is a source of stimulation to the baby because it produces gag reflex and irritation.
- Cleaning of face with hot water or cold water. In summer cold water and in winter hot water is advised.^[3]
- Fanning with *krishnakaapaalikasoorpa*.^[3]
- Auditory stimulus by striking two stones near the ear of baby.^[3]

If the baby does not respire by these procedures he should immediately be transferred to neonatal intensive care unit. A loud cry immediately after birth along with proper cardiovascular functioning signifies establishment of *praana pravritti*.

4. Cutting of umbilical cord

The cord should be clamped and severed, when the baby gets devoid of *prasoothiklesha* and attains proper respiratory and cardiovascular functions. This period of time facilitates the entry of around 100- 150ml of blood from mother to neonate, which is rich in immunoglobulins for boosting the immune mechanism of the baby. Immediate clamping of the cord is advised if the baby is preterm, case of Rh- incompatibility, baby of diabetic mother, asphyxia and in case of LBW.

According to *Acharya Charaka*,^[3] the umbilical cord should be tied with *karpasasutra* at a distance of 8 *angula* from the naval side. Then it is cut just above the knot with *ardhadhaara sastra*. The other end of the *sutra* is loosely tied around the neck of the baby to prevent contamination from stool and urine and also the chances of bleeding.

Ashtanga Hridaya^[2] has a difference in opinion about the distance at which it is to be cut 4 *angulas*. After the procedure, the stump has to be smeared with *kushta taila* to prevent secondary infections and for easy healing as a prophylactic measure.

2. General care of infant

Snana (Bath)

Bathing was commonly practiced since ancient days and till recent past. Now a day, bath is not done immediately after birth, due to the fear of hypothermia. But cleaning of the baby with hot water is good enough to remove the blood so as to reduce the chances of infection from it. The chances of hypothermia are prevented by using *ushnodaka* during ancient days.

Sushruta^[4] said the baby has to be bathed in *kwath* of *ksheerivrikshas* or of *sarvagandha* (fragrance) drugs, made by dipped heated metal bars of gold or silver which helps in reducing the typical odour occurring during labour.

Ksheerivriksha kashaaya has been proved to be highly antiseptic protecting the baby from infections. The *kwaatha* is subjected to gentle heating so as to prevent hypothermia and also make it aseptic.

Shushruta said to massage with *bala* oil, and then give bath for that *kala*, *dosha*, *bala* of the child should be viewed.

Abhyanga

After birth, massage with oil is popular in Indian culture and may prove beneficial as it provides insulation against heat and insensible water loss. *Bala* oil massage therapy helps in promotion of strength, supports healthy neurological development, maintenance of health, and provides warmth to new-born besides stimulating the nervous system into action soon after birth.

Jaatakarma (Birth ceremony/Immediate care of new born)

Jaatakarma is the first sacrament done after birth. Prevalent from the times of *chaturvarnya*, *Jaatakarma* was performed in diverse manners by different groups. The first reference of *jaatakarma* is seen in *aschalayansutra*. Retaining the socio cultural aspects and adding on matters of medical importance. Acharya charaka^[6] has explained *jaatakarma* as below.

1. **Praasam:** The baby given to ingest a combination of honey and ghee processed with mantras.
2. **Stanapaanam:** The right breast should be advanced to be sucked.
3. **Udaka kumbha sthaapana:** water pot processed with mantras should be kept along the side of his head.

Acharya shushruta^[7] states that baby should be given to lick gold *bhasma* mixed with honey and ghee with index finger.

Ashtang Hridaya^[8] prescribes a *prashya* for baby to confer intelligence, long life and good strength.

The first feeding with *madhu* and *ghrita* gives sufficient stimulation to gastro intestinal intrinsic nerve plexus, so as to pass meconium at the earliest. This procedure might also have assisted the *Acharya* to assess the patency of gastrointestinal tract.

1. **Ghrita-** *Ghrita* is the rich source of fat therefore it act as *balya*.
2. **Madhu-** Immunoglobulins pollens present in *madhu* evokes the immunity system of baby. Honey also providing nutrition.

Initial immunization- Feeding of *madhu* and *ghrita*.

3. **Breast feeding-** helps in uterine involution in mother and assessment of sucking, rooting and swallowing reflexes in baby.

Feeding

According to *Acharya Charaka*^[5] initiate the breast feeding immediately at birth after *jatakarma sanskara*.

These days exclusive breast feeding without the addition of infant formula or any solid food is advised for the initial six month right from first day of life. Artificial feeding is reported to

be associated with likely morbidity from pneumonia, diarrhoea, ear infections, necrotizing enterocolitis etc. in infants. Colostrum, the thick yellowish milk produced during first few days of lactation is rich in vitamin, protein and protective antibodies and hence must be administered to the new-born promptly. Otherwise also the breast milk contains an ideal balance of nutrients that promote growth and development of a baby and also promotes its ideal mental development.

Clothes and Bed

Charaka has described various qualities of beds and clothes.

Shushruta has advised that the baby should be wrapped with soft clothes. Baby bed should be made to sleep on a cushion made of soft clothes, keeping the head on east side.

Protective measures (*Rakshakarma*)

Charaka said to protect new-born from various infections.

- To use twigs of *adani*, *pilu*, *khadira*, *parushaka* for hanging
- *Sarshapa*, *atasi*, *tandula* tied around and inside of *sutikagara*. *Tandulabali* obligation should be given for 10 days.
- *Rakshoghna* drugs like *vacha*, *hingu*, *sarsapa*, *atasi*, *lashuna*, etc. are kept in a packet and hanged in upper portion of doorframe. Also small packets containing these drugs also are tied in the neck of the puerperal women and new-born, overcooking pots, water pots and bed
- Inside *sutikagara*, fire should be lit daily with woods of *kankakantaka* or *Tinduka*. Attendant present in *sutikagara* should remain awaken.
- *Santi homa* should be performed daily.

Sushruta and *Vagbhata* also said same things using fumigation with *rakshoghna* drugs. They also said to tie *bhurjapatra* having hymen like *arya*, *aparajita* written with *gorochan*. *Vagbhata* has recommended that on 6th night of the birth of the child, all family members and friends remain awaken and *raksha karma* should be performed by offering sacrifices.

The various drugs mentioned in *Dhupana* karma have antiseptic and antimicrobial properties which have been proved so experimentally in various studies in recent times. Present neonatal care includes special aseptic measures to be adopted aiming to prevent any infection of the new-born. Right from the initiation of the birth process, measures for sepsis and antisepsis

such as clean hands, clean surface, use of sterile surgical instruments (blade/scissor), clean handling of the cord, use of surgical mask, gloves etc. are to be religiously followed until handling and resuscitation of the new-born baby. Appropriate hygiene is advised throughout the new-born care to decrease infection episodes during infancy.

Pichudhaaranam

Classically, *moordhataila* is indicated when *vaatakopa* occurs in *jatroordhwa* region. *Abhyangam*, *parishekha*, *pichu* and *vasti* are the four types of *murdhataila*. Of the four, the simplest but effective one is *Pichu* (due to longer duration of contact with the drug). Hence, as far as a neonate is concerned, this procedure is helpful in reducing the *prasootiklesha*, especially that related to *siras*. It also facilitates the cure of some birth injuries like Erbs palsy, brachial palsy.

CONCLUSION

In view of above description it can be concluded that *Navjata shishu paricharya* (care of new-born) mentioned by *Acharya* is not only wholesome but in scientific manner. *Navjata shishu paricharya* proves it to be the base of neonatal care which includes resuscitation, prevention of hypothermia, promotion of rooming in, early breast feeding, prevention of aspiration and infection. If these things are practiced along with modern science instruments and principles it will be highly beneficial to new-born baby. Then the useful and beneficial practices among these should be identified and studied, these useful practices should be promoted and harmful practices should be avoided. The basic principles of resuscitation, that is TABC (Temperature, airway, breathing and circulation) are same in modern science and *Ayurveda* which all should be followed.

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