

**GARBHASANSKARA – NUTURING THE FUTURE THROUGH
ANCIENT WISDOM****¹*Dr. Shweta and ²Dr. Prabha Kumari**

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ABSTRACT

Garbhasanskara, a concept rooted in ancient Indian traditions, refers to the practices and beliefs surrounding the prenatal development of a child and the impact of maternal actions on the unborn child. The term comes from "garbha," meaning womb, and "sanskara," meaning education or nurturing. Garbhasanskara considers that the physical well-being, emotional state, and surroundings of a woman can exert a significant impact on the developmental process of the baby. This practice encompasses activities such as meditation, cultivating a happy mindset, and adhering to ethical principles in order to establish a nurturing environment for the fetus. The concept believes that these prenatal events have a profound impact on the child's subsequent health and personality. This abstract provides an introduction to Garbhasanskara, including its historical context and its contemporary significance. It demonstrates how Garbhasanskara can be a beneficial method for modern prenatal care and parenting.

KEYWORDS: Garbhasanskara, Prenatal Care, Maternal health, Fetal development, Ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

Garbha Sanskar, meaning "education of the womb," is much more than a set of rituals; it is a comprehensive methodology that spans from conception to childbirth.

शुक्रशोणितजीवसंयोगे तु खलु कुक्षिगते गर्भसञ्ज्ञा भवति | (Cha. Sha. 4/5)

According to Charaka, the journey of Garbha (the fetus) begins with the sacred union of sperm (Shukra) and ovum (Shonit) in the womb, which is further enriched by the presence of the soul (Aatma).

संस्कारो हि गुणान्तराधानमुच्यते | (Cha. Vi. 1\21 (2))

Sanskar means to replace undesirable traits with desirable ones.^[1] We can understand this simply as making modifications. This integration underscores the deep connection between the mother's mental and emotional state and the developing fetus.

By engaging in Garbha Sanskar, parents, especially the mother, embrace practices that aim to instill positive attributes in their child, potentially shaping their future well-being. This ancient wisdom encourages nurturing the unborn child through thoughtful actions that promote social, physical, spiritual, and mental health. Modern scientific insights align with these traditional beliefs, revealing that an unborn child's capacity for sensory and cognitive development is remarkable. Thus, Garbha Sanskar not only bridges ancient knowledge with contemporary understanding but also offers a pathway to fostering a harmonious and thriving future generation.

NEED OF THE STUDY

- **Start Strong from the Beginning:** By focusing on positive habits and traits, both parents can give their child the best start in life right from conception.
- **Handle Modern Stress Better:** Use Ayurvedic Diet and Regimen to manage today's hectic lifestyle and create a calm and healthy environment for your baby.
- **Get the Right Support:** With smaller, modern families, it's crucial to have the right guidance during pregnancy—Garbha Sanskar provides that support.
- **Prepare for a Healthy Baby:** Follow simple Ayurvedic practices to make sure both parents are in the best shape possible before trying to conceive, which helps in having a healthier baby.
- **Influence Your Baby's Well-being:** Understand how what a mother eats and how she lives can affect the baby's mood and mental health, ensuring a happier, more balanced child.

Cultural and Historical References to Garbha Sanskara

The concept of "Garbha Sanskara" or "Garbh Sanskar," which involves various cultural and philosophical practices believed to influence the unborn child. This concept is prevalent in several Indian traditions and texts. Here are some references-

1. **Abhimanyu and the Chakravyuha** - The story of Abhimanyu is a notable example in the Mahabharata. According to the epic, Abhimanyu learned how to enter the Chakravyuha (a complex military formation) while he was still in his mother Subhadra's womb. This is used to illustrate the belief that a fetus can hear and retain information while in the womb. This narrative supports the idea of Garbha Sanskara by suggesting that the fetus can be influenced by external stimuli.
2. **Prahlada and Devotional Songs**- Prahlada, a devotee of Lord Vishnu, was born to the demon king Hiranyakashipu. It is said that Prahlada's mother, while pregnant, listened to devotional songs and stories about Vishnu. This practice is believed to have influenced Prahlada's devotion, despite his demonic heritage, demonstrating the impact of Garbha Sanskara.
3. **Ramayana and the Putra Kamesthi Yagya** - In the Ramayana, King Dasharatha performed the Putra Kamesthi Yagya (a ritual for progeny) to be blessed with sons. The divine offering of "Payasa" (a sweet pudding) was given to his queens, leading to the birth of Lord Rama and his siblings. This event is sometimes cited as an example of how ritualistic practices and offerings can be seen as forms of Garbha Sanskara, intended to ensure the well-being and qualities of the offspring.
4. **Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and Stories from Epics** - Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, an Indian freedom fighter, had a mother who reportedly read stories from the Ramayana and Mahabharata during her pregnancy. This is used to illustrate the belief that exposure to heroic and moral stories can influence the character and qualities of the unborn child.
5. **Bhagavad Gita** - In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna speaks about the importance of dharma (righteousness) and how one's actions affect not just oneself but also future generations. Although not explicitly about Garbha Sanskara, the text supports the idea that the moral and spiritual state of the parents can influence the unborn child.

These examples reflect the belief that various forms of mental, emotional, and spiritual stimuli during pregnancy can impact the development and characteristics of the child. This concept, rooted in ancient Indian traditions, suggests that positive influences and practices during pregnancy contribute to the well-being and virtues of the unborn child.^[2]

Essential Steps to Prepare for a Healthy Pregnancy (Suprajajanan)

Suprajajanan is an Ayurvedic practice that focuses on the meticulous preparation of the couple planning to conceive. It is designed to ensure that both partners are in optimal health and alignment before pregnancy begins.^[3] This involves several key steps:

1. Dehashudhi (Body Purification)

- **Purification Process:** Begin a three-month period of purification to cleanse the body and enhance reproductive health. This includes detoxification practices like panchkarma, dietary adjustments, and lifestyle changes to prepare the sperm and ovum for conception.

2. Pre-Conception Preparation

- **Holistic Readiness:** Both partners are encouraged to adopt a balanced diet, engage in regular exercise, and manage stress effectively. This holistic approach helps create
- A nurturing environment for the future baby.

3. Alignment with Ayurvedic Principles

- **Seasonal and Lunar Considerations:** Choose an auspicious time for conception based on Ayurvedic recommendations, which consider seasonal changes and lunar phases to enhance fertility and ensure a harmonious start for the baby.

Four Essential Factors for a Healthy Fetus According to Ayurveda

A farmer needs an ideal planting season, healthy seeds, fertile soil, and adequate water for successful cultivation. Similarly, Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of the right ovulation period, healthy sperm and ovum, a well-prepared uterus, and proper maternal nourishment for a healthy birth.

Ritu - the timing of conception based on ovulation, enhancing the chances of a healthy pregnancy.

Kshetra - the health of the uterus, which must be well-prepared to support the fetus.

Ambu - maternal nutrition and overall health, ensuring that the fetus receives essential nutrients.

Beeja- the health of the sperm and ovum, which are crucial for a successful conception.^[4]

Panchakarma in Garbha Sanskara (Key Concepts and Benefits)

Panchakarma is a crucial Ayurvedic detoxification process for preparing the body for conception. It involves three main procedures:

1. Vamana (Emesis)

Induces vomiting to expel excess Kapha (mucus) from the upper body. It Cleanses the digestive system, improves metabolism, and creates a balanced environment for conception by removing blockages that could affect fertility.

2. Virechana (Purgation)

It helps to eliminate excess Pitta (bile) from the digestive tract. It Purifies the liver and intestines, balances digestive fire (Agni), and addresses menstrual disorders and hormonal imbalances, enhancing reproductive health.

3. **Vasti (Enema):** Administers medicated enemas to cleanse the colon and balance Vata dosha. It detoxifies and rejuvenates the lower abdomen, supporting overall digestive health and hormonal balance.^[5]

Benefits

- **Purification:** Removes toxins and balances Doshas (body energies), improving overall health and fertility.
- **Hormonal Balance:** Helps to correct hormonal imbalances, supporting a healthy menstrual cycle and increasing the chances of successful conception.
- **Enhanced Fertility:** By cleansing and rejuvenating the body, Panchakarma prepares both partners for optimal reproductive health.

These procedures help in creating a healthier environment for conception, aligning with Ayurvedic principles for enhancing fertility and wellness.

Primary Activities to Support Garbha Sanskara

The pregnant women should following activities on a daily basis to practice Garbhsanskar and to make the pregnancy positive, joyful and virtuous.

1. **Garbhsamvad-** It is useful to give positive vibrations in a positive manner to the unborn.

Method – First Pregnant women must calm down the mind and then put both of their hands on the stomach, starting the Garbhasamvad with very loving and warm feelings.

The best way to cure feelings and emotions in a child

2. **Prayer** – Great souls are incarnated through prayer. In ancient times, for the best offspring the couple perform yagna and austerities to invoke the divine souls.

By Prayer, the child is born intelligent, gentle, patient, bright and healthy.

3. Yoga- Pranayama – Meditation

- Yoga provides adequate nutrients to the unborn by improving blood circulation and also maternity process easy. Meditation makes body and mind active.

Aasana's and Pranayama to be done during pregnancy:

- ✓ Tadasana (Mountain Pose)
- ✓ Trikonasana (Triangle Pose)
- ✓ Virbhadrasana (Warrior Pose)
- ✓ Sukhasana
- ✓ Shavasana
- ✓ Baddha Konasana (Butterfly pose)
- ✓ Vajrasana
- ✓ Nadi shodhana, Ujjayi, Shitali, Brahmari Pranayama

- **Walking during Pregnancy**

- 1) First Trimester- 10-20 minute walk for 3 days a week, and by the end of the trimester they can scale it up to 15-20 minutes for at least 5 days
- 2) Second Trimester- 5-6 days a week with 20- 30 minutes per day
- 3) third Trimester- Walking as per mood and convenience.

- OM Chanting during pregnancy- It helps to lower the blood pressure, reduce mental tension and stress also improve the function of the heart.

Chanting OM also helps in the spiritual development of the baby because of the sound and positive vibrations.

Do 3 to 15 times OM chanting daily.

4. Diet Regimen during Pregnancy- Garbhini Paricharya

During pregnancy, a woman should focus on a nourishing diet that includes Shashtika Shali (60-day rice), Godhuma (wheat), Yava (barley), and Mudga (green gram) for essential nutrients. She can also incorporate Saindhava (rock salt), Amalaki (*Emblica officinalis*), Antarikshajala or Divyodaka (rainwater), Ghrita (clarified butter), fresh cow milk, Madhu (honey), and Jangalamamsa (meat from arid regions) to enhance her health.^[6]

Additionally, she should take Rasayana Dravyas such as Ksheer (milk) and Sarpi (ghee) along with Satvika Ahara, which includes pure, wholesome foods prepared with care. It is

important to avoid Vriudh Aahara (old or stale foods) to maintain optimal health for both mother and baby.

MONTH WISE DIETARY REGIMEN OF PREGANANT LADY

| MONTH | CHARAK ^[7] | SHUSHRUT ^[8] |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| 1 st Month | Non medicated ksheer(milk) | Madhur, Sheet, Liquid Diet |
| 2 nd Month | Milk medicated with drugs mentioned in madhura skanda. | Same as first month |
| 3 rd Month | Milk with Ghrita and Honey | Same as first month and shasti rice with milk |
| 4 th Month | Milk with Navneet in aksh matra | Cooked sasti rice with curd, pretty and pleasant food mixed with milk & butter and Jangal mansa |
| 5 th Month | Milk with ghrita | Cooked shastika rice with milk, jangal mansa along with delicate cuisine combined with milk and ghrita |
| 6 th Month | Milk medicated with Madhura drugs + Ghrita | Ghrita or yavagu medicated with gokshura. |
| 7 th Month | Same as in sixth month | Ghrita medicated with prithakaparnyadi group of drugs |
| 8 th Month | Kshira Yawagu mixed with ghrita | Asthapana basti with decoction of badari mixed with bala, atibala, satpuspha, patala etc, honey and ghrita. Asthapana basti is followed by Anuvasana basti of oil medicated with milk and Madhura drugs |
| 9 th Month | Anuvasanabasti of oil medicated with Madhura drugs and Yoni pichu | Jangal mansa rasa up to the period of delivery |

5. Music Therapy

Listening to soothing music can lower stress and anxiety levels in the mother, creating a calmer environment which benefits both her and the baby. Studies suggest that fetuses can respond to sounds. Gentle, rhythmic music might stimulate auditory development and promote a sense of comfort. Music therapy can also help the mother relax, which may lead to better sleep quality and overall physical health during pregnancy.

During labor, familiar and soothing music can help manage pain and discomfort, providing psychological relief. A harmonious auditory environment can contribute to a more positive and peaceful pregnancy experience, impacting both maternal and fetal health.

6. Shloka Vachana

In Indian Vedic tradition, the verse and the scriptures, are having special importance. Many values of life are irrigated through verse and auspiciousness. Concentration and language are

purified from the recitation of original Sanskrit language shlokas. There are deeper beliefs and secrets of verse, which sharpens thinking process and mind power.

7. Activities for Brain Development

During pregnancy, about 80% of the baby's brain develops and the input of message to the brain is done by the five senses (Eye, Ear, Nose, Tongue, Skin). If the activities related to these senses are performed well by the mother, the development of these organs within the baby is expected to be very good.

Practicing brain activity during pregnancy develops logic and intelligence in the child. Willingness to learn new things and curiosity is developed in the child.

DISCUSSION

Garbhasanskar, rooted in ancient Indian traditions, offers a holistic approach to prenatal care by integrating physical, mental, and spiritual practices. Key components include a carefully selected diet rich in nutrients and Ayurvedic purification techniques like **Panchakarma**, which aim to detoxify and prepare the body for conception. Modern scientific insights support these practices, highlighting their relevance in promoting maternal and fetal health.

Music therapy, an addition to Garbhasanskar, demonstrates the impact of auditory stimulation on both the mother and unborn child. Soothing music can reduce stress, enhance relaxation, and support fetal development, aligning with contemporary research on prenatal auditory exposure. Additionally, practices such as **Shloka Vachana** and sensory activities contribute to cognitive and emotional development, echoing the ancient belief in shaping a child's future through prenatal influences.

CONCLUSION

Garbhasanskar merges traditional practices with modern insights, providing a comprehensive framework for enhancing prenatal care. By incorporating dietary recommendations, purification techniques, and practices like music therapy, expectant parents can foster a supportive environment for both maternal and fetal well-being. Future research could further validate these practices, bridging ancient wisdom with contemporary scientific understanding.

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