

AYURVEDIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON METHODS OF INDUCTION OF LABOR

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ABSTRACT

Motherhood is the most essential phase in a woman's life, it starts from conception to raising a child. Of which pregnancy is the most crucial period. Any co-morbidities during this period may land into hazardous results, leading to rise in the need for cesarean sections. The rates of vaginal delivery are also reducing due to lack of physical activity, sedentary life style, irregular ANC follow-ups. Besides, various methods used for inducing normal labor in applied sciences is helpful, but associated with adverse effects. Thereby the measures said by the Ayurveda Acharya's can be implemented to full fill the purpose. The various medicines and procedures given in the samhitas have good outcomes and less adverse effects. Procedures like Basti and Yoni Pichu mentioned in the 8th and 9th month Garbhini paricharya, Yoni abhyanga, Yoni lepa, Nabhi abhyanga and lepa, Dhupana, Dhumpana, etc, have similar effect to that of the measures used in allopathic science. Therefore an attempt should be made to encourage use of these Ayurvedic methods for labor. Hence, in this article different

methods of inducing normal labor have been reviewed which are said by the Acharyas.

KEYWORDS: Sukha Prasava, Induction of labor, Ayurvedic review, Ayurvedic induction of labor, basti, pichu, lepana, dhupana.

INTRODUCTION

The most auspicious gift bestowed to a woman is the child bearing capacity. The true essence of Feminine is bearing a child. A woman feels incomplete except she has conceived at least once in her lifetime. Motherhood completes the woman as whole. Besides the irony behind is the noxious painful procedure that a woman undergoes during labor.

The Ayurveda acharyas have stated that a pregnant woman is just like a pot filled with oil, a slight oscillation of such may lead to spillage of oil.^[1] Similarly, any complications during the course of pregnancy or labor can cause the life of the mother or fetus. As per Kashyapa, Grabhini's one foot is on earth and the other in Yamaloka.^[2] Thereby, proper ANC followup is a must.

In today's era, the rate of cesarean sections is increasing day by day. In the survey done under NFHS 5 (2019-2021) programme, the rates of cesarean sections have raised from 17.2% in the year 2015-2016 to 21.5%.^[3] The underlying cause for this is life style changes and lack of proper ANC counselling. Vaginal Delivery is much safer than LSCS, the latter being a major operate requiring exploration of the whole abdomen, which might give rise to undue intra op or post op complications, resulting in longer hospital stays.

In Ayurveda many formulations and procedures have been advised to facilitate easy normal delivery like basti, yoni pichu, yoni dhupana, dhumpana, yoni abhyanga, yoni lepa, etc.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Review on Methods of Induction of Labor according to Ayurveda.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Review from Bruhatrayee, Laghutrayee and other Ayurvedic Literature sources.

Review of Literature

Prasava Nirukti

गर्भ विमोचनस्य इति | (अमरकोष)

प्रसवः गर्भ मोचनम् | (शब्दकल्पद्रुम)

- Prasava literally means 'to get rid of/release of garbha.'
- The process when the women expels a foetus is called PRASAVA.^[4]
- Samanya Prasava Kala

- Acharya Charaka and Kashyapa are of the view that from first day of the ninth month upto tenth month is the normal period of labor.^[5]
- Whereas Acharya Sushruta and Vagbhata are of the opinion that from the first day of ninth month upto twelfth month is the period of normal labor.^[6]

Prasava Prarambha Karana

Acharya Sushruta said, as in natural course of time, the ripe fruit being separated from stalk falls down and not otherwise, in the same way, in appropriate time Fetus positioned in uterus is released from the bond of the Nadi and proceeds for birth.^[7]

Prasava Avasthas

1. Prajayani Prasava

Sushruta says signs like laxity of abdomen, unlacing of the bonds of hridaya and a perception of the characteristic pain at the waist would indicate the imminent parturition.^[8]

2. Aasanna Prasava

According to Charaka signs seen in this avastha are exhaustion of limbs, droopy eyes, feeling of something coming down from the pelvis, heaviness in the lower part of the body, pain in groin, bladder region, pelvis, sides of the chest and back, onset of show, loss of appetite, etc.^[9]

Other Acharyas like Vagbhatta, Kashyapa and Bhavaprakasha are of the same view.^[10,11]

3. Upasthita Prasava

Sushruta in this avastha mentions signs like constant and severe pain in the waist and back, persistent involuntary motions of the bowels and urination, mucous discharge from the vulva.^[12]

4. Parivartita Prasava

According to Charaka when the fetus is descending down into the lower abdomen leaving the cardiac region and approached the area of basti, frequency of labor pain has increased, hence the wise physician should make the female lie on the bed. She should be asked to strain to facilitate delivery.^[13]

Acharaya Vagbhata and Kashyapa also share similar views, besides Kashyapa has added that there is leaking of liquor with pain when the fetus descends.^[14,15]

Effect of avi or accouchment force on labor

- The woman having normally situated fetus, dilatation of apara mukha and presence of grahi shula is very much ready to deliver the fetus.
- Inspite of existence of very severe grahi shula, the woman does not deliver early, if the avis are delayed, the fetus troubles the woman.^[16]

Role of Vata in Prasava

- In the process of labor Apana Vayu plays an important role.
- Garbhashaya being then sthana of Apana vayu helps in the Garbha Nishkramana kriya, due to its guna and swabhava.
- For anulomana of Apana Vata Sneha is essential, which will further facilitate Labor.

Measures for Sukha Prasava

- All the acharyas have given detailed description of the regimes to be followed in each month under the heading of Masanumasika Paricharya.
- These measures if adopted and followed will facilitate normal labor with least complications.
- The regimes stated under 8th and 9th month Garbhini Paricharya plays an important role in inducing normal labor.
- The 8th and 9th month paricharya stated by various acharyas is as follows

MONTH	CHARAKA ^[17]	SUSHRUTA ^[18]	ASHTANGA SANGRAHA ^[19]	ASHTANGA HRIDAYA ^[20]
8 TH MONTH		Asthapana Basti-decoction of Badara mixed with Bala, Atibala, Shatapushpa, Palala(flesh), milk, mastu, oil, Saindhava salt, madana phala, madhu and ghrita. Anuvasana Basti-oil prepared with Milk and decoction of madhura varga dravya	Asthapana Basti-decoction of Badara, Mamsa, Milk, Whey, Oil, Saindhava salt, Madanphala, Ghrita and madhu. Anuvasana Basti-Oil prepared with Madhura varga dravyas.	Anuvasana Basti-Ghee and madhura varga dravya. After this Niruha Basti with Kashaya of suska muli, badari, amla dravya mixed with pestle Shatapushpa, Ghrita, taila and Saindhava.
9 TH MONTH	Anuvasana Basti-Oil prepared with Madhur varga dravya. Pichu -With same oil.			Anuvasana Basti same as in 8 th month. Pichu with same oil.

Management of asana prasava

- Repeated inhalation of churna prepared from *kustha*, *ela*, *vaca*, *chavya*, *chitraka* and *chirabilva* (any one or all together).
- Or intermittent inhalation of dhuma of *bhurjapatra*, leaves of *simsipa* and *sarjarasa*.
- Gentle massage with luke warm oil over flanks, back, sacrum and thighs should be done, this aids in easy downwards passage of the fetus.^[21]

Management in case of failure of descent of fetus

- Inhalation of churnas of *kustha*, *ela*, *langli*, *vacha*, *chitraka*, *chirabilva* and *chavya* or smoke of *bhurjapatra* or resin of *simsipa* should be given; in between massage with lukewarm oil over waists flanks, back and thighs, then gentle kneading should be done.
- Inhalation of *bhurjapatra*, *nameru* and *guggulu* induces labor.^[22,23]

Treatment of delay due to obstruction

- Yoni Dhupana with slough of black snake or madanaphala.
- Hiranyapushpimula/ sauvarchala visalya worn on hand or feet.
- Throat and palate tickled by hair.
- Sirolepa with snuhi payas.
- Yoni lepana or Dhupana with *bhurjapatra*, *langli*, *tumbi*, snake's skin, *kustgha*, *sarsapa* (can be taken as single drug/ two of them/all).
- Oral intake of *kustha*, *kalka* of *talispatra* with *suramanda*/*kulattha* *yusa*/*asava* or *yusa*/*kwatha* of *bilwaja*.^[24]

Sukha prasavartha yoga according to Acharya Govindadas

- Mula of any one of the drugs i.e. *patha*, *langli*, *vasa*, *aparmarga* ground into fine paste applied on umbilical region, supra pubic region, vulva.
- Intake of *matulunga* *mula*, *madhuka* *churna* with honey and ghee.
- *Kalka* of *potakimula* with *tila* *taila* applied in yoni.
- Oral intake of *grahadhuma* or *hingu* with *saindhava* and *kanji*.
- Mantra *chikitsa*.

इहामृच्च सोमश्च चित्रभानुश्च भामिनी। उच्चैः श्रवाश्च तुरगो मन्दिरे निवसन्तु ते॥

इहममृतमपांसमुद्धृतं वै भव लघु गर्भमिमं विमुञ्चतु स्त्री ।

तदनलपवनार्कवासवास्तेसहलवणांबुधरैर्दिशन्तु शांतिम् ॥

मुक्ताः पाशा विपाशाश्च मुक्त सूर्येन्दुरश्मयः।

मुक्तः सर्वभयाद् गर्भ एह्येहि मा चिरं स्वाहा॥

(भै. र. 68/61-63)

➤ *Ubhayatrimasaka yantra*

16	6	8
2	10	18
12	14	4

- These should be written on *sarava* and if shown to garbhini, she will deliver with ease.
- *Ubhayatrikmsaka yantra* is called so because when added in any direction it sums upto 30.
- In this yantra : Nadi-16, rutu-6, vasu-8, paksha-2, dig-10,18, arka-12, bhuvana-14, abdhi-4; are written in 9 squares as shown above.^[25]

Sukha Prasavakar yoga according to Vangasena

- Lepa made from parusaka mula or shaliparni mula over umbilicus
- Langli kanda pounded with sour gruel applied over the feet of woman facilitates easy delivery.
- White kokilaksha mula chewed and fluid instilled in ear of the woman.
- Shyama and sudarshana creepers are pounded with water and this paste is placed on head until the juice reaches the feet, brings relief of apiun and facilitates delivery.
- Apamarga mula introduced in vagina and retained.
- Patha mula or vasa mula retained in the genital tract or applied as paste.
- Lepa of shaliparni mula made into paste with rice water; applied over nabhi, vasti and vulva.
- Kokilaksha chewed and its juice instilled into the ear, facilitates easy delivery in woman suffering from toxemia in pregnancy.
- Oral intake of drink prepared from patha leaves pounded with breast milk renders woman free from pain of abnormal delivery.^[26]

Sukha Prasavartha Samanya Yoga according to Rasa Ratna Sammucchaya

- Paste of karanjabija, kapittha, tulasi mula with milk applied over nabhi, hands and legs in asana prasava avastha or slough of black snake or snuhi payas on siras.

- Paste of Halini (langli-white flower variety) with milk or water applied in yoni, vasti, nabhi. Shweta pushpa can also be used instead of halini.
- Paste of yasti, matulunga mula with water.
- Paste of langlimula, honey, saindhava applied in yoni.
- Matulunga mula tied around kati of woman about to deliver, hastens the delivery of foetus.^[27]

DISCUSSION

Pregnancy is the most alluring journey for a woman. Utmost care and skilful management is essential during this period, which not only makes the journey smooth (no complications) but also leads to best outcomes. Thereby reducing the need of cesarean section and promoting vaginal delivery, is the need of the hour. In all opathy science too, there are many methods to induce normal labor. But it is accompanied with many adverse effects, like vigilant monitoring if not done may lead to demise of mother or child, etc. Hence natural less harmful approach said by the Ayurvedacharya's can be used to induce normal labor. The regimes put forward under Garbhinicharya if followed aptly, can also result in sukha prasava. Specifically the 8th and 9th month paricharya hold a big role in initiating normal labor. The Anuvasana basti said using madhura varga dravyas, helps in strengthening of the birth passage, on the other hand the sneha used oleates and smoothens the passage. In yoni pichu the oil used helps in ripening of the cervix, which in turn may lead to prostaglandin secretion. Nabhi abhyanga and lepa will help in strengthening the muscles, and promote good uterine contractions. Similarly yoni dhupana with slough of Krishna Sarpa contains nitrates in the form of nitrous oxide which when administered helps in dilatation of cervix and enhances uterine contractions. These procedures and formulations have almost similar effects to that of modern medicines to induce labor, hence an approach can be made to use them. Very few research work has been carried out in this field; hence there is a scope to encourage more research on this topic and thereby come up with evidences to induce vaginal delivery using Ayurvedic methods, in everyday practice.

CONCLUSION

Allopathic medicines are used as first line of treatment in emergency conditions, but besides this, efforts should be made to use ayurvedic medicines and procedures in areas where ever possible to fulfill the lacunas of modern medicines. They are equally effective and have least

complications, hence chikitsa said by the Acharyas for promoting normal labor should be taken into practice for healthy mother and progeny.

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