

## SUTIKA PARICHARYA REVIEW AND ITS CLINICAL IMPORTANCE

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## ABSTRACT

During the postnatal period, which encompasses the time immediately after the separation of the placenta up to six weeks, also known as the puerperium or puerperal period, postnatal care plays a crucial role. In *Ayurvedic* literature, this care is referred to as *Sutika Paricharya*. Ancient *Ayurvedic* scholars have extensively described the dietary regimen, lifestyle, and other necessary management practices for the entire pregnancy and up to six months after delivery. The pregnant woman (*Garbhini*) is particularly vulnerable to diseases due to the aggravation of already imbalanced *doshas*. This susceptibility can further increase during delivery and the puerperium phase due to blood loss and depletion of essential body tissues. Therefore, special and proper care is essential during both pregnancy and the postnatal period. The objectives of postnatal care include ensuring a normal puerperium with the delivery of a healthy baby, restoring the mother's health to maintain the well-being of both mother and infant, preventing illness, establishing infant feeding, providing emotional support, and educating the mother about herself and the future of her child.

## INTRODUCTION

Postpartum period is an important phase of transition in women's life following childbirth. This period is also known as puerperium, starts following the expulsion of the placenta until complete physiological recovery of various organ systems when maternal physiological and anatomical changes return to the nonpregnant state & usually takes 6 weeks.<sup>[1]</sup> The

postpartum period divides into three arbitrary phases, i.e., acute phase - the first 24 hours after delivery of the placenta, early – upto 7 days, and late – up to 6 weeks to 6 months. Each phase has its unique clinical considerations and challenges.<sup>[2]</sup> Whole of this period is critical to the health and survival of a mother and her newborn as it is the most vulnerable time during the hours and days after birth. Lack of care in this time period may result in death or disability as well as missed opportunities to promote healthy behaviours, affecting women, newborns, and children.<sup>[3]</sup> About 39% of neonatal deaths occur on the first day of life in India, about 57% during the first three days and the majority of maternal deaths occur between the third trimester and the end of the first week after birth. The WHO guidelines on postnatal care recommend essential routine postnatal care for all mothers and their newborns, extra care for low birth weight and small babies, and early identification and referral or management of emergency conditions.<sup>[4]</sup> The guidelines further recommend postnatal visits within 6 to 12 hours after birth, and follow-up visits from 3 to 6 days, at 6 weeks, and then at 6 months.<sup>[5]</sup> In Ayurveda, the postnatal period is called as *Sutika Kala*, and the care given during this whole postpartum period is mentioned as *Sutika Paricharya*. A woman who has just given birth to a baby is called as *Sutika* (~postnatal woman) and almost all Acharyas have mentioned *Paricharya* (~care) for a *Sutika* only after the expulsion of the placenta. *Prasava* (~labor) is a strenuous activity which causes *Dhatu Kshaya* (~depletion of body tissues) and thereby depletion of *Bala* (~strength) of the woman which is the need behind exclusive care for both women and infant after delivery. *Paricharya* is mentioned extensively in classics which includes *Ahara* (~diet), *Aushadha* (~medicines) and *Vihara* (~regimens). These are mentioned for a period of at least one and half month upto 6-month duration which aims at restoration of health of the postnatal woman in all aspects. By following these regimens, she attains *Dhatu Paripoornatha* (replenishment of *Dhatu*) and reaches her overall health status as pre-pregnancy stage. A gamut of care throughout pregnancy and the postpartum period is critically important and in India, the coverage of PNC service utilization is considerably low given the risks of postpartum complications. Ayurveda suggests systematic way of caring postpartum women i.e. *Sutika Paricharya* which should be adapted as possible in all cases.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To review the literature of *sutika*, *sutikakala*, *sutikasamanya* & *vishistaparicharya*, *pathya* & *apathya* with Clinical significance of *sutikaparicharya*.

## Defination

A woman who has just given birth to a child followed by expulsion of the placenta is called as *Sutika*.<sup>[6]</sup>

## Sutika Kala

According to different Samhitas.

**Table No. 1: Sutika kala according to different Samhitas.**

Samhitas	Time period
Charaka	Not specified
Sushruta	45 days
Ashtanga Sangraha	45 days
Ashtang Hridaya	45 days
Kashyapa	6 months
Bhavapraksha	45 days
Yogaratanakara	45 days

*Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned that after 45 days of regulated & specific dietetics & mode of life the woman become free from the epithet of *Sutika*. Some *Acharyas* opinions that *Sutika Kala* is until the next *Rajodarshana*.

## SUTIKA PARICHARYA

Care of the woman during puerperium come under the heading of *Sutika Paricharya*. It involves the following principles,

- 1) *Vatashamana*
- 2) *Agnideepana*
- 3) *Pachana*
- 4) *Raktavardhaka*
- 5) *Stanyavardhaka*
- 6) *Yonisanrakshaka*
- 7) *Garbhashayashodhaka, Kostashodaka*
- 8) *Dhatupusti, Balya*

## SAMANYA PARICHARYA

- 1) Use of amulet for Puerperal Women<sup>[7]</sup>: The *Sutika* should fix amulet of *Trivruta* over her head. It is sort of psychological support to her. Thus may protect her from harmful things.
- 2) *Prasuta Snana*: On auspicious period of 10th or 12th day, according to the rituals of family the bathing ceremony of puerperal women should be performed.

## 3) Paricharya:

## According to different Acharyas

<b>Samhita</b>	<b>No. of days</b>	<b>Ahara</b>	<b>Vihara</b>
<i>Charaka Samhita</i>	5-7 days	1)Snehapana, Yavagupana 2)Pipplyadidravys	1) Abhyanga 2) Parisheka
	<i>Kramavat</i>	<i>Appyayan &amp; Swasthavrittupalana</i>	
<i>Sushrut Samhita</i>	2-3 days	1)Vataharaaushadhadravys hapanana 2)Ushnagudodaka with pippalydidravys	1)Sarvadaihiakabalataila abhyanga 2)Parisheka with vatahara - Bhadra-darvyadidravys
	3-4 or 6-7 days	1)Snehayavagu/ksheerayavagu with Vidariganadravys	
	8 <sup>th</sup> day	1) Jangalmamsa rasa 2) Yava, Kola, Kulathayusha 3) Shaliodanabhojana	
<i>Ashtanga Sangraha</i>	3/5/7 days	1)Snehayogya- Snehapana with Panchakolachurna with saindhava 2)SnehaAyogya- Vatahara/ laghupanchamoolakwathapana 3)Ksheerayavagupana- Vidaryadiganasiddh	1)Sarvadaihiakabalataila abhyanga 2)SthanikaUdaraabhyanga- grita/taila 3)Udarvesthana 4)Ushnodakaparisheka- ubhayat 5)Acchadana 6) Avgahana
	8-12 days	1)Yava, Kola, Kulathayusha 2) laghuannapana	
	After 12 days	1) Jangalmamsa rasa 2) Jeevaniya, brihmaniya, Madhura, vataharadravysadhitannapana	
<i>Ashtang Hridaya</i>	2-3 days	1)Snehayogya- Snehapana- mahatimatra with panchakolachurna 2)Ushnagudodaka with panchakolachurna / Vataharaaushadhitoyapana 3)Snehaayogya-without sneha above dravys 4) Peya - Purvoktadravys	1)Yoniabhyanga & sarvadaihiakabhyanga 2)Sthanikaudaraabhyanga - ghrita/taila 3) Udaravestana 4) Udvartana 5) Parisheka 6) Avagaha
	4-7 days	SnehaYavagu/ KsheeraYavagu	
	8-12 days	Jeevaniya, brihmaniya, Madhuravarga siddha hriddyaannapana	
	After 12 days	Mamsa rasa	
<i>Kashyapa</i>	3-5 days	1) Mandapana 2) Hitabhojana 3) Snehapana 4)Snehayuktayavagupana-	1) Rakshoghnadravys 2) Ashwasana 3)Kukshi, Pristha, Parshwaabhyanga

		<i>pippali, nagara-lavanarahitayavagu</i>	<i>samvahana in nyubjashayana</i> 4) Udarapidana 5) Udaravesthana 6) Ushnabalatailapuritacharmasana 7) Yoniswedana- priyangu etc 8) Ushnodakasana 9) Vishranti 10) Dhupana-kustha, guggulu etc.
	5-7 days		
	7-12 days	<i>Snehayuktayavagupana- with lava</i>	
	12 days	1) Kulathayusha 2) Jangalamamsa rasa 3) Grithabharjitashaka	
	1 month	<i>Snehana, Swedana, Ushnajalasevana</i>	
<i>Harita</i>	<i>After Prasava</i>	<i>Kwathapana - Lodhra, arjunadidravya</i>	1) Yoni apurana 2) Abhyanga 3) Usnajalaswedana 4) Mangalavachana 5) Yosharthapradarshana
	1 <sup>st</sup> day	<i>Upavas</i>	
	2 <sup>nd</sup> day	1) Guda, nagar, haritakisevana 2) Ushnakulathayushasevana	
	3 <sup>rd</sup> day	<i>Panchakola Yavagupana</i>	
	4 <sup>th</sup> day	<i>Chaturjatamishrita Yavagupana</i>	
	5/ 10/ 15 days	<i>Shali, Shastikodana</i>	

#### 4) VISHISTHA PARICHARYA

It is explained on the basis of types of Desha.

	<b>Ahara</b>	<b>Vihara</b>
<i>Anupa Desha</i>	1) Mandaprayoga with agni-balavardhakadravya 2) Ushnadravayasevana	Swedana NivataShayana
<i>Jangal Desha 3-5 days</i>	1) Snehopachara	1) Snehopachara
<i>Sadharana Desha</i>	Neither too sneha nor rukshadravyas	
<i>Videsha Jati</i>	Rakta, Mamsaniryuha, Kandamoola, Phala	

Depending upon the sex of child

**Table 9: Vishistha paricharya according to sex of child.**

	<b>Sex of child</b>	<b>Pathya</b>
5-7 days	Male	<i>Tailapana, Deepaniyaaushadhi samskaritayavagupana</i>
5-7 days	Female	<i>Ghratapana Deepaniyaaushadhi samskaritayavagupana</i>
After	<i>Mandadiprayoga</i>	

## 5) DISCUSSION

### 1) *Abhyanga*<sup>[9]</sup>

During the postnatal period, *Abhyanga* is given to the *Sutika* (woman who has just given birth) for therapeutic purposes. *Abhyanga* can be done locally on specific areas like the abdomen or genital region, or it can be a full-body massage. Medicated ghee and oil, such as *Bala Taila*, which has *Vatsanshamaka* (calming Vata) and *Shramahara* (relieving fatigue) properties, are commonly used for the massage.

*Abhyanga* helps in toning the pelvic floor, abdominal, and back muscles, relieving muscle spasms, and promoting recovery from soft tissue injuries by improving blood flow. It also improves digestion, increases red blood cells, prevents anemia, and enhances blood flow. *Abhyanga* on the lower back aids in proper drainage of lochia. *Yoni Abhyanga* tones the vagina and perineum, preventing laxity and prolapse, and promotes healing of wounds.

Additionally, it prevents thrombosis by rubbing & friction improves the venous blood flow by dilating superficial blood vessels. *Abhyanga* at lower back helps for proper drainage of lochia. *Yoni Abhyanga* tones up vagina and perineum and prevents laxity and prolapse, alleviates pain and heals vaginal and perineal wounds.

In summary, *Abhyanga* during the postnatal period provides various benefits, including muscle toning, pain relief, improved circulation, and support in the healing process.

### 2) *Parisheka & Avagaha*<sup>[10]</sup>

*Parisheka* is pouring hot water in a stream-like manner. It has several therapeutic benefits in the context of postnatal care. *Parisheka* is considered to be *Vatakaphahara*, meaning it helps balance the Vata and *Kapha doshas* in the body. It also has *Vedanahara* properties, meaning it relieves pain and discomfort. The practice of *Parisheka* promotes *Agnideepti*, which enhances digestion and metabolism. It contributes to *Twakaprasannata*, which refers to the clarity and radiance of the skin. Additionally, *Parisheka* helps in *Srotoniramalata*, ensuring the proper elimination of abnormal blood clots that may have accumulated in the uterine cavity after childbirth. It also aids in subsiding *Vata Dosha*, bringing about a sense of calm and balance. Overall, *Parisheka* plays a significant role in postnatal care by promoting physical comfort, supporting the elimination of toxins, and restoring the body's natural balance.

### 3) *Udaraveshtana (Pattabandana)*<sup>[11]</sup>

By tightly wrapping the abdomen with a long cotton cloth after bath, it serves as a preventive measure against the imbalance of *Vata Dosha*. This wrapping compresses the hollow space created after the expulsion of the fetus. The wrapped cloth provides support to the back and abdomen, aiding in the process of uterus shrinking back to its normal size. Additionally, it helps in realigning the back after pregnancy, leading to improved posture. Overall, this practice plays a vital role in maintaining the stability of the abdominal region, facilitating the postpartum recovery process.

### 4) *Yonidhupana*<sup>[12]</sup>

Vaginal defence is lowered due to hypoestrogenic state and patient is prone for infection. *Dhupana* will maintain the hygiene of the perineum. It keeps episiotomy healthy, fastens its healing process. The drugs used like *Kusta*, *Agaru*, *Guggulu* have the properties like *Jantugna*, *Kandugna*, *Shothahara*, *Vranashodhana*, *Ropana*.<sup>12</sup> In *Yonipindana* vagina is advised to cover completely. This restricts entry of *Vata* and prevents vagina from various infections.

## 6) MODE OF ACTION OF DIET

### 1) *Snehapana*

The *Sneha* (*Ghrita*/ *Taila* / *Vasa*/ *Majja*) given to *Sutika* is mixed with *dravyas* like *Pippali*, *Pippalimoola*, *Chavya*, *Chitraka*, *Shrungavera*, *Yavani*, *Upakunchika*. These all should be advised considering *Prakruti*, *Agni*, *Kala*, *Desha* of *sutika*. These *dravyas* do *Agnideepana* & *Amapachana*. It also avoids *Vataprakopa*. These *dravyas* helps to digest the *Sneha* and act as appetizer.<sup>[13]</sup>

*Ghrita* (clarified butter) has multiple health benefits. It helps balance *Vata* and *Pitta doshas*, provides strength and nourishment to the body, promotes rejuvenation, stimulates digestion, and supports healthy blood formation. *Ghrita* is rich in essential fatty acids, including omega-6, which has anti-inflammatory properties. It also contains 17 essential amino acids and vitamins A, D, E, and K.<sup>[14]</sup> Overall, *Ghrita* is a valuable dietary component that contributes to overall health and well-being.

### 2) *Garbhashayashodhana*

Drugs like *Panchakola*, when taken with warmed jaggery water, help in the elimination of impure blood from the uterus. These drugs have properties that cleanse and contract the

uterus, promoting the removal of remaining impurities and facilitating proper uterine involution. They also normalize the lochial discharge. *Kashyapa* advised *Udarapeedana* for *Shonita Shuddhi*<sup>[15]</sup> techniques like *Udarapeedana*, abdominal massage, may stimulate the uterus, aiding in the expulsion of residual blood clots.

### 3) *Snehayavagu or Ksheerayavagu*

*Yavagupana* with *Sneha* or *Kwatha* stimulate the agni, it is *grahi*, *laghu* in nature, *dhatuposhana*, *tarpana* properties, easily digestible & absorbable, reduces thirst thus does the maintenance of water in the body. *Ksheera* is rich source of proteins, vitamins and calcium provides energy & maintains tissue.<sup>[16]</sup>

### 4) *Yusha*

*Yusha* is prepared of *Yava*, *Kola*, *Kulatha*. It is semisolid, rich in protein. It act as *Agnideepaka*, *Balya*, *Swedajanana*, *Pusti Sukhaprasadana*.<sup>[17,18]</sup>

### 5) *Mamsa rasa*

Meat is an excellent source of iron, Vitamins, essential amino acids and trace elements. *Madhura*, *brimhaniya* drugs are anabolic and helpful to recover maternal system from stress and strain of labour and help in galactogenesis and enhance the property of maternal milk.<sup>[19]</sup>

### 8) *PATHYA*

- 1) *Sutika* should use *Hitakaraka Ahara & Vihara*.
- 2) *Sutika* should have bath with warm water.
- 3) Adequate sleep.
- 4) For drinking, boiled water should be used.
- 5) *Abhyanga* should be done with luke warm oils & *Parishek*, *Avagahana* etc. with always lukewarm water.
- 6) *Udaravesthana* should be done.
- 7) Diet must contain *Garbhashayashodaka*, *Sthanyavardhaka*, *Stanyajanana*, *Vataharadravya*.
- 8) Use birth controls measures.
- 9) Pelvic floor exercise (kegal's exercise).

### 9) *APATHYA*

- 1) Excess exercise

- 2) Sexual intercourse
- 3) Mental & Physical stress
- 4) Cold water, Cold wind & Cold things etc.
- 5) Contraindication of *Panchakarma*
- 6) Anger, Fear, Depression
- 7) *Diwaswap, Atapasevana*

#### 10) CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF *SUTIKA PARICHARYA*

- In the postnatal period, the digestive fire, known as *Sutikaagni*, is usually low or weak. Therefore, there is a need for treatment to improve digestion, which is achieved through *Agnideepana* (stimulating the digestive fire). This treatment is necessary for a few days immediately after delivery, even before administering *Brimahana* (nourishing) drugs. The drugs used during this time are specifically aimed at increasing the digestive fire and have *Agnivardhaka* (fire-stimulating) properties.
- Use of *Snehana* suppresses *Vata*.
- *Uttama Rasa* produces *Uttamastanya* which depends on quality of Agni.
- *Yava, Kola laghuannapaana* is advised after 5 days, this form of food helps to replenish *Dhatu*.
- For the promotion of proper lactation and tissue nourishment, the usage of *Mamsa Rasa* (meat products) and *Brimhanadravyas* (nourishing substances) is advised. These substances can be *Jeevaniya* (life-promoting), *Brimhaniya* (nourishing), or *Madhuradravyas* (sweet substances). They act as *Dhatuvardhaka* (tissue-nourishing) agents and support the maintenance of adequate lactation.
- *Abhyanga* is advised by using *Balataila* in *Nyubja* position, which might help to restraint vitiated *Vata*, spiralling the abdominal muscles.
- *Parisechana* by using kwatha prepared by *Vataharadravyas* act as *Vedanahara, Kledahara*.
- *Udarapattabandhana* is the practice of wrapping the abdomen with a long and clean cloth. This wrapping helps the abdomen regain its normal position and prevents the accumulation of *Vata* in empty spaces.
- *Dhupana* as *Rakshoghna* and *Vedanahara* is mentioned by using *Kushtha, Guggulu* and *Agaru*.

- To prevent the complaints during *Sutika* Kala such as UTI, Backache, Thirst, Anxiety, Anger, Disturbed Sleep, Depression etc.

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