

**CONCEPT OF STANYAPANA VIDHI (BREASTFEEDING) IN
AYURVEDA ONE OF THE GREATEST WONDERS OF THE WORLD****Dr. Shweta Govind Mulaje^{1*}, Dr. Vishakha Pachore² and Dr. Vidhya Sarode³**

Pg Scholar¹, Reader², Hod Stirog Evum Prasutitantra³, Department of Stiroga Evum Prasuti
Tantra A.R.A.H. Manchi Hills, Sangamner.

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***Corresponding Author**

Dr. Shweta Govind Mulaje

Pg Scholar, Department of

Stiroga Evum Prasuti

Tantra A.R.A.H. Manchi

Hills, Sangamner.

ABSTRACT

One of the most basic necessities of a newborn baby is adequate nutrition. Breastfeeding is widely believed to be the best diet for human newborns. Breast feeding is characterized as a sanskara of kid in Ayurveda, and it should begin with the bewitching of mantras. Aside from the intense bonding it fosters, breast milk is also the ideal food for them. Likewise in Ayurvedic texts, formation of stanya (breast milk), causes of stanya pravriti (or milk ejection), dhatri (wetnurse), dhatri-pariksha (examination of wet-nurse), stanapan-vidhi (breast feeding), stanyasampat (merits of breasts), stanyanasha hetu (causes of cessation of milk formation), stanyaviridhi dravyas (drugs increasing quantity of milk), stanya apanayakala (weaning period), abnormalities of breast-milk and its treatment etc. are discussed in detail. Other than this, the Ayurvedic description of the dhatri (nursing mother) is remarkable. This is an attempt to bring the Ayurvedic concept of breast milk and breastfeeding to the modern era.

KEYWORDS: Stanya, breastfeeding, newborn, stanapan vidhi, dhatri.

INTRODUCTION

One of nature's wonderful creations to protect newborns everywhere shortly after birth is breastfeeding. Breastfeeding prevents 8,23,000 annual deaths in children under the age of five and 20000 annual deaths in mothers from breast cancer, according to global epidemiology.^[1] The National Breastfeeding Promotion Programme, or MAA (mothers' absolute affection), was introduced by the Indian government to make sure that the public, especially mothers, is sufficiently informed about the advantages of breastfeeding. Even

though it's one of the most crucial interventions for a child's survival, only 64.9% of Indian children are breastfed exclusively for the first six months of life. One can prevent about 20% of deaths of newborns and 13% of deaths of children under five by starting breastfeeding early.^[2] Throughout history, Acharya's has placed a great deal of emphasis on breastfeeding, taking into account its correct formation, secretion, feeding technique, abnormalities, and management.

CONCEPT OF BREASTFEEDING IN AYURVEDA

Forming stanya in the breast is the ahara rasa, or the essence of digestion. As a result, stanya is referred to as the rasa upadhatu. The breast milk which has Varna, Gandha, Rasa, Rupa, and Sparsha in Prakritik condition and which mix in water completely, such milk is beneficial for baby. Human milk is the most appropriate of available other milk for infants. The ejection of breastmilk is mainly due to suckling reflex of baby.^[3,4] Colostrum, the first milk, is rich in many nutrients that newborns require greatly. Therefore, it is advised that the mother begin feeding her child as soon as possible after birth. Acharyas^[5] say it is lower in fat and higher in protein than mature milk. *Acharya Sushruta* and *Vagbhata* state that milk secrets are revealed through it on the third or fourth day following delivery. *Acharya Kashyapa* asserts that one of the factors causing Stanyapravartan is a child's love and affection. As per *Acharya Sushruta*, affection and touch induce milk ejection. Stanya is Abhighatjanya, Vatahar, Pittahar, and Raktadoshahar, and it provides immediate relief from ocular conditions. It is utilized for Aaschotan in Netraroga and Nasya in Raktapitta. Stanya is said to be a complete meal for infants and to be Satmya for everyone, according to Brihatrayi and Laghutrayi. A mother and her newborn develop a close emotional bond as a result of breastfeeding. Tryptophan, an amino acid found in milk, aids in a baby's ability to fall asleep soundly at night. Two anjalis are used to represent the entire amount of breastmilk. However, it differs from person to person and is mostly influenced by the hormonal balance and nutritional status of the mother.^[6,7]

FORMATION OF STANYA (BREAST MILK)

As per Charaka, the Ahara rasa is divided into three equal parts when a pregnant lady consumes it.

1st part for nourishment of pregnant lady self.

2nd part for breast milk.

3rd part for development of fetus.

According to acharyas, rasa (rasa-prashad bhag, or body fluids) is what forms sthanya.^[3,4] During pregnancy, *Acharya Kashyapa* also talks about the creation of stanya from rakta, which is a term that refers to blood or red blood cells as well as blood vessels, the liver, and the spleen. The interplay of hormones and reflexes (sucking, rooting, and oxytocin) results in the production of milk. Many hormonal factors stimulate the glandular tissue to produce milk during pregnancy and lactation.^[8] Signals from the nipple of the breast are picked up by sensory nerves and sent to the hypothalamus, where they trigger the pituitary gland to release oxytocin and prolactin. These hormones are then carried by the blood to the breasts, where it promotes secretion of milk and contraction of myoepithelial cells of the mammary glands leading to ejection of the milk from the glands. In less than a minute after the beginning of suckling, milk begins to flow.^[9]

CAUSES OF STANYA PRAVRITI AND APRAVRITI (MILK EJECTION OR CESSATION)

Thought, sight, or touch, as well as physical contact with the child, are all factors that result in milk ejection, according to *Acharya Sushruta*, but affection for the child is primarily responsible.^[3] It's particularly intriguing that the hypothalamus frequently receives an emotional signal strong enough to trigger milk ejection when a mother caress her infant or hears them cry. Numerous psychogenic factors have the ability to suppress oxytocin secretion, which in turn lowers milk ejection.^[9] Prolactin's "Milk Secretion" Sucking, milk expression, breast emptying, and night feeds are reflex boosting factors, while improper position, uncomfortable breast, prelacteal feeds, and top feeding are reflex hindering factors. Oxytocin "Milk ejection" Worry, tension, pain, and doubt are inhibiting elements, while thinking fondly about baby, hearing baby, seeing baby, and mother being relaxed/comfortable/confident are boosting aspects.^[10]

CONCEPT OF DHATRI (OR WET-NURSE)

In the event that the mother is unable to feed the baby, *Acharya Vagbhata* advocated arranging for two wet nurses.^[10] Ayurvedic literature describes the examination of wet nurses (including physical and physico-psychological attributes), so that breast feeding results in optimal child growth and development. According to *Acharya Charaka*, a wet-nurse should be samman-varna (same in caste), young, humble, non-addict, similar in desha and jati (sub caste), affectionate to the infant, free from diseases, jivitvatsa (having living child), have an acceptable volume of breast milk, and so on.^[11]

STANA-SAMPAT (MERITS OF BREASTS)

The breast that has an adequate nipple and is not atiurdhawa, ati lamba, or ati krisha is referred to as stanasampat by *Acharya Charaka*.^[11] The ideal breast is supposed to be one that is comfortable to suckle from.

Stana-Asampatjanya Prabhava (Effect of Abnormal Breast of Mothers)

The *Acharya Sushruta* clarified a number of anomalies brought on by nursing with imperfect breasts. In actuality, breastfeeding success has little to do with breast size. If a mother or wet nurse feeds an infant breast milk from an unusually shaped and sized breast, it may result in an array of different consequences. For example, a moist nurse with an elevated breast may cause Karala, which is characterized by a gaping mouth and projecting teeth, while a long, sagging breast may cause the newborn to die by blocking their nose and mouth openings or by causing Uchavasa-rodhat, which is an obstruction during inspiration.^[3]

STANYA-SAMPAT (CHARACTERISTICS OF NORMAL BREAST MILK)

Acharya Sushruta described that sheet (cold), clean, free from impurities, Sankhabh, sweet in taste, mixes evenly in water, not producing any froth or streaks when mix in water. This type of milk provides good health, growth and development of body, strength to the body.^[3] According to *acharya Charaka*, the milk which is normal in colour, smell, taste and touch, dissolved absolutely in water because of its watery nature. This milk provides nourishment (Pusttikar) and good health (Aarogyum) to the child.^[4]

STANAPAN-VIDHI (METHOD OF BREAST FEEDING)

Breastfeeding is covered in great length in Ayurvedic writings. According to *acharya Charaka*, a mother should commence breastfeeding, especially with her right breast, after taking a bath, changing into clean clothes, and tying Prajasthapan medicines (such as Aindri, Brahmi, Satavari, and Amogha, among others) on her head.^[11] *Acharya Sushruta* stated that following a child's appropriate bathing and cleaning of breasts in addition to releasing a tiny amount of milk and reciting the specified Mantra, breast feeding commences.^[3] *agbhata and Misra* have similar descriptions.^[6,12] Moreover, in Ayurveda, it is evident that breastfeeding a child by a variety of women results in ranged disorders among children.

These days, there is increased emphasis on breastfeeding due to the many advantages it offers both the mother and the child. At each feeding, the mother should maintain a comfortable posture, lift the baby's head slightly, and offer the baby a different breast.

Proper position of baby while breast feeding includes:

- a. Supporting whole of baby's body.
- b. Ensure baby's head, neck and back are in same plane.
- c. Entire baby's body should face mother.
- d. Baby's abdomen touches mother's abdomen.^[13]

Attachment of baby on mother's breast, signs of good attachment are:

- a. Baby's mouth wide open.
- b. Lower lip turned outwards.
- c. Baby's chin touches mother's breast.
- d. Majority of areola inside baby's mouth^[13]

There are some important facts to be remembered during breast feeding as

- a. the baby should be gently tickled behind the ears or on the soles to wake them up during the early hours of life, as most babies fall asleep after a few sucks or are kept asleep for many hours. However, the act should not cause the baby any discomfort.
- b. The infant needs to be satiated for a minimum of two hours before he begins to cry for his next meal.
- c. Burping the infant is advised after every feed to prevent regurgitations.
- d. A baby should not be fed by the hour but rather on demand.
- e. A breastfed infant does not need to drink any more water.
- f. The term "exclusive breastfeeding" refers to "an infant's consumption of human milk with no supplementation of any type (no water, no juice, no nonhuman milk, and no foods) except for vitamins, minerals, and medications".
- g. Bottle feeding should be avoided because it causes nipple confusion and leads to refusal to breastfeed.
- h. It is generally agreed that exclusive breast feeding for the first six months is sufficient to support the baby's normal growth up to these months.
- i. Breast feeding should be initiated from the start (or from the first feed after birth), and no water, glucose water, tea, or other beverages should be offered at that time.

BENEFITS OF BREAST FEEDING

Breastfeeding serves as essential for bodily growth and development, as well as maintaining a happy, healthy infant free of diseases.^[14]

- It is naturally sterile, and breastfeeding protects the newborn from many infections and ailments by immunizing him or her against basic health threats.
- Breast milk remains constantly at the proper temperature for the child.
- Breast milk protects the infant from a wide range of pathogens and illnesses.
- Breast milk contains several digestive enzymes that are good for the baby's newly established digestive mechanism.

ADVANTAGES OF BREAST FEEDING TO THE CHILD

Breast milk is the best meal for nearly all infants during their first year of life. In mammals, colostrum contains antibodies known as immunoglobulins such as IgA, IgG, and IgM. Other immunological components of colostrum include innate immune system components such as lactoferrin, lysozyme, lactoperoxidase, complement, and proline-rich polypeptide. Colostrum antibodies give passive immunity.

The following advantages are gained by a breastfed child.

- 1) Breast milk contains approximately 3.5 g of fat per 100 mL. Breast-milk fat contains long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids (docosahexaenoic acid, or DHA, and arachidonic acid, or ARA) not found in other milks. These fatty acids are essential for a child's cerebral development. DHA and ARA are added to some newborn formulas, although this provides no advantage over breast milk and may be less effective than those found in breast milk. Lipase in milk aids digestion by providing the newborn with readily available free fatty acids.
- 2) The major carbohydrate is lactose, a disaccharide found in milk. Breast milk contains approximately 7 g lactose per 100 mL, which is greater than most other milks and is an essential source of energy. Second, the high lactose content improved calcium and iron retention.
- 3) Breast milk contains a good balance of amino acids for a baby. Breast milk has a lower protein concentration (0.9 g per 100 mL) than animal milks. The substantially higher protein content of animal milks can cause an excess of waste nitrogen compounds in the infant's undeveloped kidneys. Casein is found in lower concentrations in breast milk. It produces significantly softer, more readily digestible curds than other milks.

- 3) Unless the mother is low in vitamins, breast milk usually includes enough for an infant. Iron and zinc are present in relatively low concentrations, however they have a high bioavailability and absorption.
- 4) Exclusive breastfeeding for four or more months appears to reduce the risk of respiratory hospitalization in infancy to one-third or less of the risk found in non-breastfed infants.^[14,15]
- 5) Exclusive breastfeeding also result in protection against diarrhea-specific morbidity and mortality throughout the first 2 years of life.^[16] It provided immunity against necrotising enterocolitis, and common pathogens like *E. coli* as well as other aggressive bacteria such as *V. cholerae* and *Salmonella typhi*.^[17,18]
- 6) Breastfeeding lowered the chance of developing urinary tract infections after birth.^[19]
- 7) Breastfeeding reduced the risk of sudden infant death syndrome in children under the age of one by half.^[20]
- 8) Breastfeeding for at least 4 months appears to prevent or delay the onset of atopic dermatitis, cow milk allergy, and wheezing in childhood.^[21]
- 9) A study found that introducing solid meals before the age of four months was associated with a sixfold increase in the risk of obesity in children who were never breast-fed (or formula-fed infants) or who stopped breast-feeding before the age of four months.^[22,23]
10. Additionally, breastfeeding may help slightly avoid childhood acute lymphoma or leukemia.^[24]

ADVANTAGES OF BREAST FEEDING TO THE MOTHER

- 1) Numerous studies have shown that mothers who breastfed their babies experienced less anxiety and more mutuality than those who bottle fed the.^[25]
- 2) Reductions in postpartum weight retention were also observed following the promotion of extended breastfeeding.^[26]
- 3) An extended period of breastfeeding was linked to a lower incidence of coronary heart disease.^[27]
- 4) Breastfeeding mothers are at lower risk of developing endometrial, ovarian, and breast cancers.^[28-31]

SUBSTITUTE OF BREAST MILK (DURING ITS UNAVAILABILITY)

There are guidelines for substitute milk in Ayurvedic scriptures in the event that mother's or wet nurse's milk is unavailable. When a mother or wet nurse is unable to feed for any reason, Acharya Susruta^[3] recommended giving goat or cow's milk in the right amounts till the

mother or wet nurse does not regain sufficient milk or else until the child cannot flourish effectively without milk. According to *Vagbhata*^[7], a child should drink goat or cow's milk after it has been medicated with either a laghu-panchmoola decoction or both sthiraas paired with sugar. Human and cow's milk differ in an array of physiological, biochemical, and nutritional ways.

Stanya Apanayanakala (Weaning Period)

After teeth erupt, a child should be gradually weaned and given goat or cow's milk along with a light, brihana diet, according to *Acharya Vagbhata*.^[7] The weaning technique known as Stanya apanayana-vidhi is also covered in great length in Ayurvedic books. During the weaning phase, solid and table foods take the place of milk or formula. Most infants stop breastfeeding between the ages of 6 and 12 months, once they are comfortable with solid foods and liquids from a bottle or cup. Weaning starts at six months of age; at first, one food should be introduced at a time. Milk should be given until the child is twelve months old, at which point formula or cow's milk should be progressively supplemented. Encourage using a cup instead of a bottle when introducing solid food.

CONDITIONS UNFIT/CONTRAINDICATION OF BREASTFEEDING

According to Ayurvedic texts, mothers who are kshudhita (hungry), shokaarta (grieving), shranta (tired), dustadhatu (vitiation of bodily tissues), garbhini (pregnant), javerita (suffering from fever), kshina (emaciated), atisthula (obese), and taking non-congenial diets, should not breast feed their children.

There are few maternal contraindications to breastfeeding in modern medicine: moms with septicemia, active tuberculosis, typhoid fever, breast cancer, or malaria should not breast-feed. Some circumstances, such as substance misuse and severe neuroses or psychoses, mothers with active HIV infection, and children with galactosemia, make breastfeeding impossible.

TREATMENT OF STANYANASA (CESSATION OF BREAST MILK) AND STANYAKSHYA (LOSS OF MILK)

In cases of stanyanasa and stanyakshya, Acharyas explain numerous therapy formulations such as grains, meat, cow's milk, sugar, curd, and utilization of desired objects to cure stanyakshya.^[12] Happiness, the lack of sorrow, wrath, fear, and a desire to move less.^[10] Use stanyajanan dravya (drugs that increase milk production) as a decoction of the roots of Viran,

Shalli, Shshthika, Ekshuvalika (Saccharum officinarum), Darbha (Imperata cylindrical), Kusha (Desmostachya bipinnata), Kasha (Saccharum spontaneum), Gundra, Itkata, and Katrina.^[11] Pestled tila (Sesamum indicum), lashuna (Allium sativum), fish, sringataka (Trapa natans), vidarikanda (Pueraria tuberosa), madhuka, alabu^[12], Satavari (Asparagus racemosus) pestled with milk.

CONCLUSION

World Breastfeeding Week is observed every year on 1-7 August since 2010. You shouldn't require superpowers to juggle breastfeeding and work. This year the slogan for breastfeeding week was 'Let's make breastfeeding and Work, work.'

Breastfeeding is a beautiful connection of mother's pleasure and infant's privilege. Stana (Breast) is also termed as pranavatana (where prana resides) by Acharya Bhela, as it is the store of nectar for baby. Nature has designed the breast nearer to heart at the site of anahat chakra which connects the mother and baby emotionally. It's very important to have a balance between working life and breastfeeding as breastfeeding is beneficial to both mother and baby.

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