

THE CONCEPT OF *GARBHINI PARICHARYA*: ANTENATAL CARE IN *AYURVEDA* -A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

In *Ayurveda* pregnancy is considered a very special and divine time in a woman's life. It is often seen that a pregnant woman's aura is mainly gleaming and golden. Thus our *Acharyas* evolved the concept, about the type of *Ahar*(dietetics) and *Vihar*(lifestyle) during pregnancy that a pregnant women should go around with and keep away from in terms of *Garbhini Paricharya*. Pregnant woman desiring a healthy and good looking child should give up uncongenial diet and mode of life and shield herself by doing good manners and using appropriate diet and mode of life. Pregnancy is an important chapter in a woman's life and any carelessness in this phase may become unfavourable to both mother and baby. The awareness about pregnant women reflects on the standard and health of the child. *Ayurveda* considers *Ahar* to be the

best gut source of sustenance as well as medication for the pregnant woman. The genuine *Garbhini Paricharya* would result in proper growth of the foetus and its delivery, the wellbeing of the mother and hence her ability to cope with the strain of labour. *Garbhini Paricharya* has described monthly *Ahar*(dietetics)and *Vihar* (living style) throughout pregnancy. Dietary regimen and way of life which are contraindicated during pregnancy are called *Garbhpaghatkara bhavas* should abstain from a pregnant woman as well as the use of *Garbhashtapak dravya* is favourable for the foetus.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda*, *Ahar*, *Vihar*, *Garbhini Paricharya*, *Garbhpaghatkara bhavas*, *Garbhashtapak dravya*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda in which 'Ayu' means life and 'Veda' is science. It is a traditional system of medicine that deals with the whole person: mind(*mana*), body(*sharir*), and spirit(*aatma*). *Ayurveda* is a science of life which is preventive as well as curative. Women have great importance because she creates life. They play important role in facilitating changes in family life. Women are treasured by the richness of continuing the human race. In the elegant phase of pregnancy and bringing a new life into the world women go through many adaptational changes in psychological and physiological parameters.

Ayurveda stated the role of *ahar*, *vihar*, and *vichar* for a pregnant woman's emotional and physical welfare, which brings out positiveness in the physical, psychological, intellectual, and emotional development of the foetus. Mother and child should be considered as a one unit during the antenatal period of 280 days, the foetus is a part of the mother. Careful attention is required to ensure cautious motherhood and a healthy foetus in her womb, which is known as antenatal care. Therefore the health of pregnant women is maintained through appropriate *Garbhini Paricharya* (antenatal care) right from conception till delivery. During this period where the foetus is in mother's womb the foetus obtains all its building material, nutrition and oxygen from the mother's blood. *Masanumasik Garbhini Paricharya* is very special idea of *Ayurveda*. *Garbhini Paricharya* means taking care of the pregnant woman with the help of dietary regimen, life style, medications and counselling and making her ready for *sukhaprasav* both physically and emotionally.

Foetus is completely conditional on mother for its nutrition. Food consumed by *garbhini* is used for nourishment of her own body, to supply nutrition and helps the growing foetus (*garbha*), to nourish the breast through which breast milk is formed, for nutriment of new born baby. *Garbhopadrava bhava* affects the quality of life of pregnant woman and thus poor pregnancy outcome such as low birth weight, intrauterine growth retardation can occur, to prevent this one should follow *Garbhini Paricharya*.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim

1. To study the concept of *Garbhini Paricharya*:antenatal care in *Ayurveda*.
2. To improve the quality of women's life.
3. Encourage normal growth & development of foetus.

Objective- To apply in the principle of *Garbhini Paricharya* in today's modern life style.

Garbhini Paricharya

It is divided in to three phases -

1. *Masanumasik paricharya*(Month wise regimen)
2. *Garbhoghatakar bhavas* (Dietetics and mode of life contraindicated for pregnant women)
3. *Garbhasthapak dravyas*(The drugs beneficial for maintenance of pregnancy)

***Masanumasik Paricharya*(Month wise regimen)**

During Pregnancy foetus starts to get it's nutrition from mother through placenta. Adequate diet is needed for monthly constant and development of the embryo. The requirement of nutrition changes according to developmental stage of foetus mothly. By following these monthwise dietary regimen prescribed the pregnant woman remains healthy and delivers heathy baby who is with good energy, strength, voice & complexion, for this *Ayurvedic Acharyas* have given in detail monthly dietic regimen called as *Masanumasik paricharya* (mothly regimen) for woman right from the beginning of confirmation of pregnany upto ninth month of pregnancy.

Garbhini Paricharya helps in -

1. Softening of the placenta (*apara*), pelvis, waist, sides of the chest and back.
2. Downward movement of *vata* (*vata anulomana*) - this is needed for the normal expulsion of foetus during delivery.
3. Normalization of the urine and stool and their elimination with ease.
4. Promotion of strength and complexion.
5. Delivery with ease of a healthy child having excellent features in proper time.
6. To keep the foetus safe from known and unknown risks.
7. Nourish the mother's own body.
8. To perform normal delivery without any danger to mother and baby.

Table No.1: Showing the monthly dietary regimen described by *Ayurvedic Acharyas*.

MONTH	CHARAK ^[1]	SUSHRUT ^[2]	VAGBHAT ^[3]	HARITA ^[4]
1	Non medicated milk repeatedly in desired quantity	Sweet, cold and liquid diet	Medicated milk	<i>Madhuyashti, madhukpushpa, parushak</i> with Butter and Honey followed by

				sweetened milk
2	Milk medicated with <i>madhura rasa dravya</i>	Same as 1st month	Same as <i>Charaka</i>	Sweetened milk treated with <i>kakoli</i>
3	Milk with honey and <i>ghrita</i>	Same as 1st month, specially cooked <i>shasti</i> rice with milk	Same as <i>Charaka</i>	<i>Krishara</i> (a dish prepared with rice & pulses)
4	Butter extracted from milk (1 <i>aksha</i>) Or Milk with butter	Cooked <i>Shashti</i> rice with curd, food mixed with milk and butter, meat of wild animals	Milk with 1 <i>aksha</i> of butter	Medicated cooked rice
5	<i>Ghruta</i> prepared with butter extracted from milk s	Cooked <i>Shashti</i> rice with milk, meat of wild animals	Same as <i>Charaka</i>	<i>Payasa</i> (rice cooked with milk & sweetened)
6	<i>Ghruta</i> prepared from milk medicated with drugs of <i>madhur</i> group	<i>Ghruta</i> or rice gruel medicated with <i>gokshura</i>	Same as <i>Charaka</i>	Sweetened curd
7	<i>Ghruta</i> prepared from milk medicated with <i>madhura dravyas</i>	<i>Ghruta</i> medicated with <i>prithakparnyaadi</i> (<i>vidarigandhadi</i>) group of drugs	Same as <i>Charaka</i>	<i>Ghritakhanda</i> (a sweet dish)
8	<i>Yavagu</i> (rice gruel) prepared with milk and mixed with <i>Ghruta</i>	<i>Asthapanabasti</i> (decoction of <i>badari</i> mixed with <i>bala</i> , <i>atibala</i> , <i>shatapushpa</i> , <i>patala</i> , milk, curd, <i>mastu</i> , oil, salt, <i>madanphala</i> , honey and <i>ghrita</i>) followed by <i>Anuvasana Basti</i> (oil medicated with milk & decoction of <i>madhuradravyas</i>)	<i>Yavagu</i> (rice gruel) prepared with milk and mixed with <i>Ghruta</i> , <i>Asthapanabasti</i> , <i>Anu vasanabasti</i>	<i>Ghritapuraka</i> (a kind of sweet preparation)
9	<i>Anuvasanabasti</i> (oil medicated with milk & decoction of <i>madhuradravyas</i>), Vaginal tampon of oil	<i>Asthapanabasti</i> , <i>Madhura</i> , <i>snigdha dravyaahara</i>	Same as <i>Charaka</i>	Different varieties of cereals

Benefits of Monthly Regimen (*Masanumasik Paricharya*)

By following monthly regimen woman remains healthy and delivers the child having good health, energy, strength, voice, compactness, and much superior to other family members. By using this regimen from first month to ninth month *garbhadharini* (fetal membranes & vaginal canal), *kukshi* (abdomen), sacral region, flanks, back become soft, *vayu* moves into

it's right path. Feaces, urine and placenta are expelled easily by their respective passages, skin and nails become soft, women gain strength and complexion.^[5]

Garbhopaghathakara Bhavas

(Dietetics and mode of life contraindicated for pregnant women)

Garbhopaghathakara bhavas are the ahara and vihara which are harmful to the *garbha* (foetus). These may cause some congenital anomalies in the child and are not leading to the birth of a healthy baby with all the good qualities. These can be grouped under two different headings namely *ahara* (diet) and *vihara* (behavior). According to *Acharya Charak* the pregnant women should avoid excessive use of pungent things, exercise and coitus. Excessive use of heavy, hot and pungent substances, harsh and violent activities (beyond owns capacity) should be avoided. Avoid intoxicating substances. Ride over vehicle can be harmful. Excessive use of non veg food, coitus, heavy exercise, lifting of heavy weights, sleeping in day and waking up in night, suppression of natural urges can be dangerous to foetus. Acts likely to promote anger and disgrace, talking in high pitch is unfavourable. All these psychological and physical exertions like carrying heavy weights or vehicle riding may bring on abortion due unforeseen increase in intraabdominal pressure.

If the *garbhini* is leaved unprotected to *Garbhopaghatakara bhavas*, that may lead to following complications-

- Intrauterine death (IUD)
- Pre-mature labour
- Abortion
- Intrauterine growth retardation (IUGR)

Garbhopaghathakara Bhavas

Table No. 2: Showing the *Garbhopaghathakara Bhavas* described by *Ayurvedic Acharyas*.

Charaka	Pungent things – hot drugs, excessive exercise, coitus. ^[6]
Sushruta	Coitus, exercise, excessive satiation (<i>santarpana</i>), emaciation (<i>apatarpana</i>) Sleeping in day, awakening in night, riding on vehicle, squatting position (<i>utkatukasana</i>), untimely use of oleation (<i>snehana</i>), bloodletting, suppression of natural urges. ^[7]
Ashtang hridaya	Excessive coitus, exercise, carrying heavy weight, squatting or abnormal position, grief, anger, fear, excitement, suppression of natural urges and desires, fasting, excessive walking, hot, heavy, <i>vishtambhi</i> (hard to digest) food, sleeping in supine position, use of red garments, bloodletting, purifying

	measures (<i>shodhan karmas</i>), use of wine or meat. ^[8]
Harita	Coitus, exercise, anger, grief, walking, use of pulses, edibles producing burning sensation, heavy or sour substances, hot milk, clay, <i>surana</i> (<i>Amorphophallus campanulatus</i> Blume), garlic (<i>Allium Sativum</i> Linn), onion (<i>Allium cepa</i> Linn.). ^[9]
Kashyapa	Erect or flexed position for long time, tremoring, excessive laughing and trauma, use of cold water and garlic, avoid looking at declining moon, setting sun, carry heavy weight for long, perform oblation of ghrita in burning fire for pacification. ^[10]

Garbhasthapak dravya (The drugs beneficial for maintenance of pregnancy)

Garbhasthapak dravyas prevent the effect of *Garbhopaghatakar bhavas* and help in the proper maintenance of *garbha*. They can also be used in the treatment and prevention of abortion. These are to be considered a routine as they are beneficial for the maintenance of proper health, growth and development of the mother as well as the foetus. Some of the *Garbhasthapak* medicines are *Aindri* (*Bacopa monnieri*), *Bramhi* (*Centella asiatica*), *Shatvirya* (*Asparagus racemosus*), *Sahastravirya* or *Durva* (*Cynodon dactylon*), *Amogha* (*Stereospermum suaveolens*) *Shiva* (*Terminali chebula*), *Arishtha* (*Picrorhiza kurroa*). These are taken oral route as preparation in milk or ghee.^[11]

A bath with a cold decoction of these listed drugs should be given during *pushy nakshtra*. Drugs of the *jivaniya gana* can also be used for the same purpose. *Kashyap* has stated that the emulate of *Trivrita* (*opercula tharpethum*) should also be tied to the waist of pregnant women.^[12]

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As per the,

1. *Masanumasik Pathya* (Month wise regimen)
2. *Garbhopaghatakar bhavas* (Dietetics and mode of life contraindicated for pregnant women)
3. *Garbhasthapak dravyas* (The drugs beneficial for maintenance of pregnancy)

We have discussed various customs about diets (*ahar*) and living style (*vihar*) that should be followed and which is harmful to mother and baby and should be avoided during pregnancy. Hence, the ancient knowledge described in *Samhitas* is not only unique but also well organised with modern medical science.

CONCLUSION

The ancient *Ayurveda* literature described in *Samhitas* is particular and knowledge-based according to modern science. So, *Garbhini Paricharya* (antenatal care) should be followed as per *Ayurveda*. Pregnancy and childbirth are the gifts of nature if proper dietary regimen and living style is not taken care of during pregnancy; it may cause many complications for mother and foetus which may lead to difficult *prasava*. To get a favourable outcome of pregnancy, our *Acharya* has advised *Garbhini Paricharya* right from conception till delivery.

Ayurvedic fundamentals about the concept of *Garbhini Paricharya* help in improving the physical and psychological state of the pregnant woman and make them ready to sustain the strain and stress of labour which result in *sukhaprasav*. So, appropriate *Garbhini Paricharya* should be followed right through pregnancy.

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