



AN OUTLOOK ON *GARBHINI PARICHARYA*: ANTENATAL CARE ACCORDING TO AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Motherhood is the most crucial and life changing event in a woman's life, which brings about a lot of metamorphic changes in the body right from conception. Every woman desires a hassle free pregnancy and childbirth without any complications. But the lifestyle and diet that has been followed in today's scenario which includes improper meal and sleep schedule, sedentary lifestyle which are responsible for various ailments in pregnancy. The prime motive of Ayurveda is to achieve optimum health by adopting proper lifestyle and dietary modifications. Since pregnancy is a dynamic process of fetal growth inside the womb, taking care of a pregnant woman is a critical task. Ayurveda provides herbal remedies, dietary regimen and lifestyle modulation for antenatal period in the form of *Garbhini Paricharya*. Implementing Proper month wise *Garbhini Paricharya* in antenatal period can reduce various disorders like Morning sickness, pregnancy anemia, pre eclampsia, IUGR and oligohydramnios. The procedures stated in *Garbhini Parichaya* also promote normal vaginal delivery and safe childbirth. This article is a humble attempt of introducing various codes of conduct suggested by *Ayurveda* to be followed in the antenatal period and discussing the benefits of imposing it.

Keywords: Pregnancy, Conception, lifestyle, Diet, normal delivery

INTRODUCTION: The pregnancy is the most wonderful and exciting journey of a woman where she undergoes a series of changes not only at the physical level but also at social and emotional level. At this stage she requires a properly planned diet and at the same time its essential to provide her a peaceful and harmonious environment. In Current situation many women are working and some of them continue to work until the last trimester. It can be challenging for her to cope with the physical and mental changes taking place at that time and stressful conditions of work place. To ensure a healthy pregnancy she needs to have a compatible diet and a lifestyle that favors a stress-free conception. In this context *Acharya kashyapa* suggested that whatever diet is consumed by the pregnant women becomes congenial

to the fetus, thus diet should be taken considering place of living time for season and digestive capacity it should never be neglected ^[1]. The common medical issues that a woman faces during pregnancy are Morning sickness, Anemia, pregnancy induced hypertension which can be corrected through medications and modulating lifestyle however some of them come across certain problems, which can be a matter of concern like recurrent abortions, eclampsia, oligo hydramnios, Gestational diabetes and Intra uterine growth retardation. Also the mental disorders in pregnancy like depression and anxiety are of growing concern. Various measures have been adopted and programs have been implemented by the government to improve the health standards of a pregnant woman.

Globally, maternal mortality declined by more than a third from 2000 to 2017. Yet, tragically, an estimated 810 women continue to die each day due to complications of pregnancy and childbirth - mostly from preventable or treatable causes. [2]. To fill this lacunae Holistic approach suggested by Ayurveda can be adopted and can prove to be a boon for treating pregnancy related ailments.

In Ayurveda various *Acharyas* have explained month wise code of conduct to be followed by pregnant women in the form of *Garbhini Paricharya*. The dietetic requirements keep changing according to advancement of pregnancy, which has been very well suggested in *Garbhini Paricharya*. In this antenatal period a lot of physiological, psychological and anatomical changes occur which needs to be taken care considerably. By following do's and don'ts mentioned in *Garbhini paricharya*, various pregnancy disorders can be reduced and it also promotes smooth normal vaginal delivery. *Garbhini Paricharya* is broadly explained by *Acharya Charak*, *Sushruta*, *Vagbhata*, *Harita* and *Bhela*. [3]

For this review study, thorough review of Ayurvedic Samhitas like *Charak Samhita* [4], *Sushrut Samhita* [5], *Ashtang Hridaya* [6], *Harit Samhita* [7], *Kashyap Samhita* and *Bhel Samhita* has been done, also useful literature available on web in the form of journals and articles has been reviewed as well.

Masanumasik Garbhini Paricharya (Month wise regimen for ante- natal period) as mentioned in the classics:

Regimen for the first month of pregnancy: According to *Acharya charak*, in the first month considering the digestive power and strength of the pregnant women, non-medicated milk should be given repeatedly in desired quantity.

Aacharya Sushruta suggests that a sweet cold and liquid diet should be taken from the first to third month

Opinion of *Acharya vagbhata* coincides with *Acharya charak* and *Acharya sushrut*

in giving non-medicated milk sweet cold and liquid diet in the first month.

Whereas *Haritha* suggests that during the first month *madhuyashti parushaka* and *Madhu Pushpa* drugs should be taken with butter and honey followed by sweetened milk.

Regimen for the second month of pregnancy: Milk medicated with *madhura* drugs should be given in the second month of pregnancy, this is suggested by *Acharya charak* and *Vagbhat*.

Sweetened milk treated with *kakoli* is advised by *Harita*.

Regimen for the third month of pregnancy: Milk along with honey and *ghrita* should be consumed is the regiment suggested by *Acharya charak* and *vagbhatt*. *Acharya sushruta* suggested that in the third month of pregnancy along with a sweet cold and liquid diet specially cooked *shashti* rice with milk should be consumed.

Krishra, which is an olio prepared with rice and *dal* should be consumed in this month according to *Haritha*.

Regimen for the Fourth month of pregnancy: In the fourth month milk should be administered along with butter in the approximate quantity of 20 gms (one *Aksha*). This is suggested by *Acharya Charak* and *Vagbhata*.

However *Acharya sushruta* suggested that along with milk and butter, cooked *sashti* rice with curd and meat of animals from *jaangal Desha* should be administered in the fourth month. *Acharya Haritha* favors the opinion of giving medicated cooked rice.

Regimen for the Fifth month of pregnancy: The regiment suggested by *Acharya charak* and *vagbhatt* in the fifth month is the *ghrita* prepared with butter extracted from milk.

Acharya Sushruta suggested that cooked *shasti* rice with milk, meat of animals of *Jaangal Desha* along with pleasant food mixed with milk and *ghrita* should be given in this month.

Yavagu (A gruel, prepared with water and rice) should be consumed in this month is the food suggested by *Acharya Bhel*. While *Payasa* (rice cooked with sweet and milk) is suggested by *Acharya Haritha*.

Regimen for the Sixth month of pregnancy: *Acharya Charak* and *Vagbhata* favors consumption of milk and *Ghrita* (*ksheer sarpi*) medicated by *Madhura Dravyas* in the sixth and seventh month.

In the sixth month *Acharya sushruta* had mentioned that *Yavagu* or *ghrita* Medicated with *Gokshura* should be taken.

Acharya Bhela opinionates the consumption of *Ghrita* and milk in this month while *Acharya Haritha* suggests sweetened curd.

Regimen for the Seventh month of pregnancy: *Acharya Sushruta* suggested to give *Ghrita* medicated with *Prthakparnyadi* group of drugs. Whereas *Acharya Bhel* specified the use of *Grita khanda* (A sweet dish) in the seventh month.

Regimen for the Eighth month of pregnancy: In the eighth month *Acharya*

charak says that a rice Gruel prepared with milk and mixed with *ghrita* should be given.

Acharya Sushruta indicated that in this month *Asthapan Basti* should be given with decoction of *Badari* mixed with *Bala*, *Atibala*, *Satpushpa*, milk, curd, *Mastu*, oil, salt, *madanphala*, honey and *Ghrita*. This should be followed by use of *Anuvasana basti* of medicated oil with milk and decoction of drugs of *madhura* group.

Acharya Vagbhata had incorporated the description of both *Charaka* and *Sushruta*. *Haritha* had advised use of *Ghritapuraka* (a kind of sweet preparation).

Regimen for the Ninth month of pregnancy: *Charak* and *Vagbhata* had advised *Anuvasna Basti* with oil prepared with the drugs of *madhura* group or the same as used in the eighth month. Vaginal tampon of this very oil should be given for lubrication in the vaginal canal and perineum *Aacharya Vagbhata* had prescribed meat soup with cooked rice and *Ghrita* and rice gruel mixed with a good quantity of fat. *Haritha* opines that in the ninth month different varieties of cereals should be used. *Bhela* says that *Anuvasana basti* with *kadambamasa* oil should be given and after this rice gruel should be given

Table no.1 Dietetics and mode of life contraindicated for pregnant women (Garpoghatkara Bhavas) [8]

| Ayurvedic texts | Contraindications in pregnancy |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Charak samhita</i> | Pungent things, excessive exercise and coitus, intoxicating substances and wine, riding over vehicles running on uneven paths |
| <i>Sushruta samhita</i> | Coitus, exercise excessive satiation, excessive emaciation sleeping in day time awakening in night, riding on vehicle, sitting in squatting position oleation, bloodletting and suppression of natural urges |
| <i>Ashtang sangraha</i> | Coitus, exercise, emaciation, trauma, night awakening, day sleeping suppression of natural urges, prolonged stay in hot sun, or near fire, anger, grief, fear, fasting, squatting. |
| <i>Ashtang Hridaya</i> | Excessive coitus, exercise, carrying of heavy weight untimely sleep, |

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | squatting grief, anger, fear, excitement suppression of desire fasting excessive walking use of hot pungent heavy and hard to digest food, sleeping in supine position bloodletting, should not be used |
| <i>Kashyap samhita</i> | Direct exposure to solar or lunar eclipse free meaning in acutely erect or flexed posture for long time carry heavy weight excessive laughing and trauma use of cold water and garlic is contraindicated |
| <i>Harita samhita</i> | Use of pulses, heavy or sour substances, garlic and onion, coitus exercise, anger, grief |
| <i>Bhavprakash samhita</i> | Sitting or sleeping in very soft and high place, going to river bank, drinking rainwater, use of meat |
| <i>Yogratnakar</i> | Use of sudation, emesis, <i>kshara</i> along with polluted and incompatible food. |

DISCUSSION: The traditional method of antenatal care in Ayurveda suggested in the form of *garbhini paricharya*, is relevant in today's context as well. Here we will try to scientifically analyze the code of conduct suggested by Ayurveda for antenatal care.

DIET: Ayurveda emphasizes on ensuring holistic nutrition and majority of dietetic regimen suggested in *Garbhini paricharya* is *satvik* in nature, which promotes positive health in pregnancy. During first trimester of pregnancy e most of the *acharyas* have specified use of milk sweet it and liquid diet which is compatible in nature. As during this trimester, many women experience nausea and morning sickness and vomiting which may also cause dehydration. So consumption of a sweet and liquid diet will provide required nourishment and will also prevent dehydration. Besides this the drugs of *Madhura gana* being anabolic will help in maintenance of proper health of mother and foetus^[9]. *Acharyas* have also illuminated consumption of milk during pregnancy as milk is a wholesome food, which is the rich source of protein and calcium essential for growth of the fetus *Haritha* suggested use of *Yashthimadhu* in first month of pregnancy as the drug has prostaglandin

synthetase inhibitory activity and antioxytotic activity e which will be beneficial in prevention of abortion and maintenance of pregnancy^[10]

Consumption of *Ghritha* is hugely advocated by almost all the *Acharyas* as *Ghritha* is *Rasayna* and boosts strength, hence it balances loss of *mamsa* (muscle tone), which generally occurs in the 6th month of pregnancy. Also *Ghritha* medicated with *Madhura dravyas* like *Dadimadi ghritha* has a good effect on Anaemia^[11]. From the second trimester onwards muscular tissue of the fetus grows sufficiently requiring more protein which is supplied by the use of meat soup.

Gokshura is advocated by the end of second trimester of pregnancy as it regularizes the water content of the body by virtue of its additive property and also having the *Deepana*, *pahchana* and analgesic property and released weakness due to its *balya* and *Rasayana* property^[12]. A study also concludes that *Gokshra sidha Yavgau* can provide symptomatic relief in toxemia of pregnancy (pre-eclampsia)^[13].

BASTI: As the last trimester of pregnancy is dominated by *vata dosha*, *Basti* is the ultimate treatment modality during this period. Most women experience constipation in late pregnancy due to pressure of

gravid uterus over the bowels and effect of progesterone^[14]. Use of *Asthapan* and *Anuvasana Basti* in 8th month will relieve this constipation besides this it may also affect the autonomous nervous system governing myometrium and help in regulating their function during labour favouring smooth vaginal delivery. A case series suggests that *Shatavaryadi ksheerpaka Basti* is effective in counteracting IUGR with its anabolic properties and also improves the amniotic fluid fetal growth and maternal well being^[15].

PICHU DHARANA: *Yoni Pichun* (tampon of oil) helps to provide the lubrication of vaginal tract and helpful in *Anulomana of vata* which facilitates smooth vaginal delivery, also it may destroy pathogenic bacteria present in vaginal canal and prevents puerperal sepsis^[16].

Contraindications: Those work which produce psychological or physical strain such as grief, exercise, coitus, excessive trauma may precipitate abortion especially in females with bad obstetric history. Overweight caring or vehicle riding may induce abortion due to sudden increase in intra abdominal pressure and prolong squatting in abnormal postures may influence placental and uterine blood flow due to pressure of gravid uterus on iliac vessels does can cause abortion intrauterine death of the fetus or other abnormalities. Sleeping in supine position is prohibited in pregnancy. This is probably because when the woman lies on her back the gravid uterus is known to compress the inferior vena cava. This can result in a range of negative consequences such as maternal hypotension and reduced blood flow to the fetus^[17]. Indulgence in food items like meat garlic and onion is contraindicated by some *Acharyas* due to the presence of *Rajo Guna* in those foods which increases

restlessness, stress and anger in the pregnant women and brings about poor digestion and health as a result. During lunar and solar eclipse specific rays are admitted which may produce abnormality of the fetus.

CONCLUSION:

Every women is desirous of giving birth to excellent progeny with long life. Getting good care in the antenatal period is very important for the growth and development of a healthy fetus. For this purpose a well planned diet and lifestyle is very essential during this period. The rich heritage of Ayurveda provided this month's wise regimen in the form of *Garbhini Paricharya*, which can reduce the disorders related to pregnancy to much extent which will help in attaining the ultimate goal of reducing maternal mortality rate. As the number of normal vaginal delivery is declining in the present era, the properly adopted *Garbhini parichaya* will surely encourage normal delivery as well.

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