

Antenatal Care: Routine Care for Pregnant Women through Ayurveda - A Review Article

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has considered women as the most important factor in creating the universe. She plays a key role in the formation of new generation and has great impact on the progeny. In Ayurveda, it is said that women being vulnerable are prone to various diseases. Women are having various changes during menarche, reproductive period, pregnancy, menopause etc. Among this motherhood is the most important phase in every woman's life. In this phase she is constantly undergoing through various transformations on physical and psychological level and thus needs special care. Ayurveda has emphasized on protecting women in this phase by following various precautionary measures through diet and exercise and also treating diseases with the help of various Ayurvedic treatment modalities.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Garbhadhan, Garbhini Paricharya, Pregnancy care, Woman, Antenatal care.

I. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda has given wholesome approach of care of women in pregnancy period. Pregnancy care refers to antenatal and postnatal care. In these phases a woman is going through tremendous changes in her body. Also due to hormonal changes there are changes on physiological as well as mental status. Ayurveda emphasizes on formation of healthy progeny which is possible only when the woman is in proper physical as well as mental state. For that our Acharyas have given unique diet regimen, various Panchakarma procedures and other dos and don'ts for a woman expecting a healthy child.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim- To study pregnancy care in women through Ayurveda. **Objective:** To study the pregnancy care of women through Ayurveda using different Ayurvedic texts and its clinical application.

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

A. GarbhadhanPurvakarma (antenatal care):

1. **Panchakarma:** Panchakarma procedures are advised for both men and women in order to have all the Dhatu in their body in Prakrit Avastha. After that Basti is advised following diet containing of the Tail and MashaChurna.¹

a) **Masha** -Vrushya, Vatashamak, Balya.²

It has iron, folic acid, calcium, magnesium, potassium and therefore is good for woman's health.³

b) **Tail-** Vatahara⁴

Ayurveda knows the importance of proper physical and mental growth of both men and women thus it has given a particular age limit to conceive in order to have a healthy child.⁵

2. ApatyaKameshti Yadnya⁶

i) Purvakarma:

a. Yava-saktusevan- It is rich in fibre, iron, Vitamin B12,; thus helps to cure anaemia. It contains beta glucan which is known to boost the immune system.⁷

b. Yavsattu + Ghrut + Madhu + Dugdha– All these are great source of antioxidants, and various micro and macro nutrients in order to prepare the woman for pregnancy.

ii) PradhankarmaSevan of medicated Ghrutrich in Phosphorus, magnesium, calcium.

B) GarbhadhanPradhankarma

GarbhiniParicharya -

GarbhiniParicharya refers to unique form of diet in every month of pregnancy along with different procedures. Proper diet helps to form Prakrit Ras which is ultimately important in nourishment of pregnant woman, foetus and in the formation of breast milk.⁸

Table 1: 1) First trimester

	Charaka⁹	Sushrut¹⁰	Vagbhat	Harita
1st month	Non medicated milk	Sweet, cold and liquid diet	Medicated milk. ¹¹	Madhuyashti, Madhuka Pushpa with butter, honey and sweetened milk. ¹⁴
2nd month	Milk medicated with Madhur drugs.	Sweet, cold and liquid diet	Milk medicated with Madhur drugs. ¹²	Sweetened milk treated with Kakoli. ¹⁵
3 rd Month	Milk with honey Ghrut.	Sweet, cold liquid diet	Milk with honey Ghrut. ¹³	Krushara

CLINICAL IMPORTANCE

- 1) **Madhur Dravya**-All the Dravyain it are of Madhur Ras. It fulfills the need for increased amount of energy required forembryogenesis.
- 2) Madhur Ras= Prithvi +AapMahabhut.¹⁶Prithvi-Upachay(Anabolic), Sanghat, Gaurav,Sthairya(Stability).¹⁷

Aap- Upkleda, Sneha (Nourishing), Bandh, Mardav(Cushioning).¹⁸

- 3) During first trimester most women experience nausea and vomiting resulting in dehydration and loss of nutrients. Use of cold and sweet liquid diet and milk will prevent dehydration and supply required Nourishment.¹⁹

Table:2 2) Second trimester

	CHARAKA	SUSHRUT	VAGBHAT	HARITA
4th month	Milk with butter	Cooked Shashti rice with curd, dainty and pleasant food mixed with butter andmilk. Meat of wild animals	Milk with one Tola of butter. ²⁰	Medicated cooked rice.
5th	Ghrut prepared with butter extracted from	Cooked Shashti rice withcurd, dainty and pleasant food mixed with butter andmilk,	Ghrutprepared with butter extractedfrom	Payasa ²¹

month	milk.	meat of wild animals	milk.	
6th month	Ghrut medicated with drugs of Madhur group	Ghrut medicated with prithakparnyadi group of drugs	Ghrut medicated with drugs of Madhur group. ²²	Sweetened curd. ²³

CLINICAL IMPORTANCE

- 1) **Ksheer-** Milk provides nourishment and stability to the foetus.²⁴
- 2) **Sarpi-** Ghrut promotes memory, intelligence, Agni, Ojas, Kapha.²⁵
- 3) **Shashti Kshali-** Rich in carbohydrates, and provides energy to the body.²⁶
- 4) **Hrudyanna-** In second trimester there is development of foetus on mental and emotional level. Hrudyanna includes various Amla Ras Dravya which increases enthusiasm, pleases mind, and strengthens sense organs.²⁷
- 5) **Jangal Mamsa-** In 2nd trimester there is development of Mansa Dhatu in foetus.²⁸ According to "Samanya Vishesh Siddhant", Jangal Mansa will nourish Mansa dhatu in foetus. Also, Garbhini becomes

Karshya, therefore it also nourishes Garbhini.

- 6) **Gokshura-** The kidneys start making urine by 14 week of pregnancy.²⁹

Also, by second trimester most women suffer from oedema of feet and other complications of water retention. So Ghrut medicated with Gokshura is used which is a good diuretic and will prevent retention of water as well as its complications. It is beneficial for both foetus and mother.³⁰

- 7) **Dadhi-** According to modern science baby's digestive system will start to function in second trimester. Madhur Dadhi is advised to take in second trimester. The probiotics in curd help in proper functioning of digestive system.³¹

Table: 3 3) Third trimester

	CHARAKA	SUSHRUT	VAGBHAT	HARITA
7th month	Ghrut medicated with drugs of Madhur group.	Ghrut medicated with Prithakparnyadi group of drugs.		
8th month	Yavaguprepared with milk and mixed with Ghrut.	Asthapan Basti followed by Anuvasan Basti.	Yavaguprepared with Dugdhamixed with Ghrut ³²	Ghrutpurak.

9th month	AnuvasanBasti of oil prepared with drugs of Madhur group, vaginal tampon with the same oil.		Anuvasanbasti of oil prepared with drugs of Madhur group, vaginal tampon with the same oil. ³³	Different varieties of cereals.
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CLINICAL IMPORTANCE

- 1) Pruthakparnisiddha Ghrut- Prithakparnyadi group of drugs are diuretic, anabolic, relieve emaciation and suppress pitta and Kapha. Their regular use in seventh month might help in maintaining health of mother and foetus.
- 2) Yavagu Seven- It is Balya and Brihana thus; provides nourishment to mother and foetus.
- 3) Basti- Most women suffer from constipation in late pregnancy, therefore Asthapana Basti administered during eighth month which is best for Vata Anulomana relieves constipation. Besides this may also affect the autonomous nervous system governing myometrium and help in regulating their function during labour.
Pichu-Tampon of oil in vagina provides lubrication of cervix, vaginal canal and perineum thus helps in normal labour. This may destroy pathogenic bacteria of vaginal canal and prevent puerperal sepsis. Regular use of tampon might influence autonomic fibres governing myometrium and in regulating their functions.
- 4) Milk and Drugs of Madhura group- They have been advised for entire pregnancy period. Milk is a complete food and the drugs of Madhura group are anabolic, thus use of these will help in maintenance of proper health of mother and growth and development of foetus.
- 5) Vididhanya- Different varieties of cereals is rich source of protein.

Benefits of Garbhini Paricharya

All the rules of Garbhini Paricharya if followed properly during Garbhadharana and Garbhaprasavkal by the woman her Kukshi (Uterus), sacral region, flank and back become soft, Vayu moves into its right path; feces, urine and placenta are excreted or expelled easily by their respective passages; skin and nail become soft, women gain strength and complexion and she delivers easily at proper time a desired child who is

completely healthy³⁴.

B) Postnatal care- Due to nourishment of foetus from mother all the dhatus in mother become weak. Also due to loss of fluid and blood during labour mother's health becomes weak³⁵. Therefore she is prone to various diseases. Thus, needs immense care; this phase is called as "Sutika Kal". Different Acharyas have mentioned various diet regimens in Sutika Kal. All these help to fulfil the deficiencies occurred in women and maintaining the dosha in Prakrit form.

- 1) Bath- After delivery, bath should be taken twice daily with luke warm water³⁶.
- 2) Snehan- According to digestive power any of the Sneha among Tup, Tail, Vasa, Majja can be given. The Dravya of Panchkol Gana can be given with Sneha which improves digestion, relieves bloating by Vatanuloman³⁷.
- 3) After Snehan abdomen should be properly wrapped with big clean cloth in order to prevent Vata Prakop that place.

Aim of Sutika Paricharya

- 1) Agni Deepan
- 2) Yonishodan
- 3) Vatanuloman
- 4) Stanya Janan

III. DISCUSSION

- 1) It is very unique feature of Ayurveda that it has mentioned diet regimen according to every month of pregnancy.
- 2) It helps in the formation of healthy progeny
- 3) Besides this, the diet mentioned in it fulfills the need of various nutrients in woman's body thereby maintaining her physical as well as mental health throughout the pregnancy as well as her postpartum period.
- 4) Although Garbhini Paricharya is given thousand years ago it is time tested.

IV. CONCLUSION

From above it can be concluded that the aim of GarbhiniParicharya is not merely the formation of healthy progeny but also maintaining the health of women in order to protect their physical and mental wellbeing.

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