

CRITICAL EVALUATION OF MASANUMASIKA GARBHINI AHARA – A REVIEW

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Abstract

Woman's diet and activities performed during the period of pregnancy reflects on fetus. Hence Ayurveda has given great emphasis on Garbhini Paricharya for nine month by different acharyas. It describes rules about diet. Many changes occur in the body of the mother during pregnancy to create a suitable environment for the growth of the fetus. Maternal body composition, nutritional stores, diet, and the ability to deliver nutrients through the placenta determine nutrient availability for the fetus. Prenatal nutrition, activities and behavior of women influences fetal normal growth and development. In this paper an attempt has been made to explain the month wise importance of garbhini paricharya with scientific explanation with special reference to development of fetus. The goal is protection, nourishment of both the growing fetus and the mother.

Key words: Garbhini; Masanumasikaa; Garbhini paricharya; Ahara; Nutrition.

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INTRODUCTION

India's wisdom of Ayurveda complements modern obstetrics, offering advice for a healthy pregnancy, smooth delivery and a blissful, healthy baby. The development of fetus mainly depends on nourishment supplied by rasa by pregnant woman's diet. It is said by Acharya's that what so- ever eatable or drinkable are consumed by the pregnant woman, same become congenital to the fetus. In the initial stage of pregnancy when the specific organs of the fetus though present are not explicit, it obtain its nourishment from rasa by pregnant woman's diet by the process of Upsneha (attracting moisture) and Upweda (osmosis). Afterwards when body parts are conspicuous, a part of nourishment is obtained by Upsneha and part through the passage of umbilical cord.^[1]

Maternal body composition, nutrition stores, diet and ability to deliver nutrients through the placenta determine nutrients availability for the fetus. Hence the diet should contain all the rasas which provide strength and complexion to the fetus. Ayurvedic text says a pregnant women is to be treated as delicately as, if one is carrying a pot full to the brim with oil, without spilling a drop.^[2] It believes that a women at the last stage of pregnancy should be considered as with one feet on the earth and other one on the world of Yama.^[3] This statement literally indicates the importance of extreme care of pregnant women during pregnancy.

So Ayurveda has given great emphasis on Masanumasika Garbhini Paricharya advised by different acharya.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

References have been collected from all available literatures, websites, published articles, and also from modern books. To conclude the study all available literatures and

published articles referred and a humble attempt has been made to draw conclusion.

Masanumasika Garbhini Paricharya

First month of pregnancy

According to Acharya Charaka, in the first month of pregnancy, the shape of fetus resembles Sleshma (mucoïd character) in which all the body parts are present but they are not conspicuous.^[4] Pregnant woman also suffers from fatigue, thirst, etc. in this month.

Regimen for first month of pregnancy

Madhura (sweet), Drava (liquid) and Sheeta (cold) diet consumption.^[5]

Milk consumption in the morning and evening as per her digestive power.^[6]

Second month of pregnancy

In the second month all the mahabhuta (five great elements) necessary in the formation of embryo get processed by the combine action of sleshma (mucoïd character), pitta and vayu and become solid. If this solid mass has oval shape, the born child would be male, if elongated the female and with rounded mass, the hermaphrodite.^[7]

Regimen during second month of pregnancy

In this month sweet cold and liquid diet should be taken.^[8]

Milk medicated with madhura (sweet) drugs

Third month of pregnancy

In the third month all the indriyas (sense organs) and minor body parts become apparent, five buds one for forehead and four for upper and lower extremities develop.

Regimen during third month of pregnancy

Milk with honey and ghrita (ghee), Sasti rice with milk, Krishara (olio prepared with rice and pulse).

Fourth month of pregnancy

During this month various body parts become more conspicuous and fetus becomes more stable. Due to stability of fetus women feels more heaviness in the body in this month. When body parts are conspicuous, a part of nourishment is obtained by upasneha (attracting moisture) and part through the passage of umbilical cord. According to Acharyas Dauhridaya utpatti is also mentioned in this month which means desire of the fetus is expressed by mother's desire. Hence dauhridaya should always be fulfilled; negligence can cause abnormalities or even death of fetus.

Regimen during fourth month of pregnancy

Navanita (fresh butter) in the quantity of one aksha (10g).

Cooked sasti rice with curd

Pleasant food mixed with milk and butter or mixed with meat soup (jangala mamsa rasa) should be given.

Fifth month of pregnancy

According to Acharya Charaka, accumulation of flesh and blood in fetus is relatively more in this month and due to this, pregnant women become emaciated as rasa is driven to nourish flesh and blood.^[9] Mana (consciousness) becomes more enlightened.

Regimen during fifth month of pregnancy

Pleasant food mixed with ghee and milk or mixed with meat soup (jangala mamns rasa) should be given.

Harita advised Payasa (rice cooked with milk and sweetened) in this month.^[10]

Sixth month of pregnancy

In sixth month of pregnancy fetus derives relatively more accumulation of energy and complexion hence pregnant women suffers, loss of strength and complexion and feel more tiredness. Enlightenment of buddhi also takes place in this month.

Regimen during sixth month of pregnancy

Ghee or Yavagu (rice gruel) prepared with gokshura (*Tribulus terrestris*).

Seventh month of pregnancy

In the seventh month all the major and minor body parts are fully developed. As fetus attains over all maturity in this month, the women feels exclusively klanta (exhausted) or has relatively more loss of flesh and blood.

Regimen during seventh month of pregnancy

Ghee medicated with prithakparnyadi group is advised.

Eighth month of pregnancy

According to Ayurvedic philosophy oja (essence of dhatus) remains unstable in this month due to immaturity of fetus. It moves from mother to fetus and fetus to mother through rasa carrying channels. Due to this transfer of ojas, mother and fetus become happy or dull alternately. So this month is not fit for labour according to classics as the life of fetus and mother both are in danger due to unstable oja. According to modern science birth before 36 weeks may be associated with respiratory compromise and failure.

Regimen during eight month of pregnancy

Yavagu (rice gruel) with milk and mixed with ghrīta; for anulomana of vāyu, the asthāpana basti (a type of enema) should be given with decoction of drugs like Badari (*Zygodium jujuba*), Bala (*Sida cordifolia*), Atibala (*Abutilon indicum*), Satapuspa (*Antheum sowa*), Palaka (green leaves), mixed with curd, mastu (expressed part of curd), oil, salt, madanphala (*Grandia spinosa*), honey and ghrīta.

This should be followed by use of Anuvasana basti of oil medicated with milk and decoction of drugs of madhura group.

Meat soup should be given to pacify vata.

Ninth month of pregnancy

By the end of nine month baby attains complete maturity and is able to survive in the world on its own. The mother is prepared to give birth to the child.

Regimen during ninth month of pregnancy

Anuvasana basti with oil prepare with the drugs of madhura group should be given.

Yoni pichu (cotton balls soaked with medicated oil is kept in the vagina) will help in lubrication of the Garbhasthan (uterus and cervix) and Garbhamarga (vaginal canal and perineum).

Yavagu (rice gruel) with ghrīta and mansarasa (meat soup) with cooked rice should be given.

Daily bath with cold decoction of pounded leaves of drugs capable of suppressing vata should be given.

DISCUSSION

Ahara

Ayurveda considers food to be the best source of nourishment. The rasa derived from the diet taken by the pregnant woman serves three purposes,

- Nourishment of her own body,
- Nourishment of the fetus and,
- Nourishment of the breast or formation of milk.^[1]

First month

Milk is vata and pitta shamaka.^[7] According to Acharya Charaka Vata is Sarva Sharia Dhatu Vuhakara i.e. vata helps in controlled division of cells.^[8]

Second and third month

In this month sweet cold and liquid diet should be taken.^[5] Milk medicated with madhura drugs being anabolic will help in maintenance of proper health of mother and fetus. Milk is Prithvi and jala mahabhuta predominant which helps in moistening and shaping of embryo.^[6] Milk is natural source of folic acid and it is also good source of carbohydrate, fats Protein (all most all amino acids), and all vitamins (except vitamin C), minerals, enzymes which is essential for fetal and mother's nutrition.

Fourth month

Navaneet and ghee with milk fulfills the increased nutrient of the fetus and also supplies the nourishment to mother. Jangala mansa is prinana (replenishing), hridya (cardiac tonic), pranajanana (vitaliser) in qualities^[11] and also high protein content of meat helps in musculature tissue formation of fetus and iron and B complex vitamin helps in blood formation.

Shahsti rice is cooling, unctuous, sweet, light (laghu) and stabilizing in qualities^[12] and curd and navneeta is an appetizers, digestive stimulants, aphrodisiac, increases unctuousness and strength.^[13] Hence because of these qualities shashti rice with curd help in stabilizing the fetus and provide strength to mother.

Fifth month

As explained in fourth month ghee, milk and meat required for the rapid growth of the fetus and also for the better health of mother. Payasa is having the qualities like balya (restorative), vrushya (aphrodisiac) and rasayana (rejuvenation)^[14] which will help in musculature tissue formation of fetus and relives emaciation of garbhini in this month.

Sixth month

Yavagu gives strength to the body tissues and pacifies the vata dosha.^[15] So it is very useful in reliving tiredness of garbhini and also nourishes to fetus. Gokshura (*Tribulus terrestris*) have diuretic and nephro-protective properties.^[16] So it helps to reduce odema and other complication of water accumulation by gravid uterus in the later month of pregnancy.

Seventh month

Vidarigandhadi group is anti-inflammatory, prajasthapana (procreant) vayasthapana (rejuvenator), balya (tonics), brumhana (weight promoting) and angamarda prashanama (restorative) pacify vata and pitta.^[17] Vidari kandha (*Pueraria tuberosa*) has calming, strengthening and anti-inflammatory properties. In this way the diet and decoction will help in growth and development of fetus in this month.

Eight month

Yavagu, masarasa, milk etc used in this month will help in providing strength to the pregnant

woman. Anuvasana basti will help in softening of vaginal passage for easy delivery of baby. By use of all other regimen, pregnant woman remains free from diseases, and delivers the child possessing best health, energy, complexion, voice and compactness of the body.

Nine month

Tampon of oil may destroy pathogenic bacteria of vaginal canal and prevent puerperal sepsis, besides this tampon may also soften vaginal passage so that delivery of baby becomes easy in comparatively less effort as well as there is minimum possibility of tear of birth canal. It is just possible that the regular use of tampon might influence autonomic fibers governing myometrium and help in its relaxation during labour.

General diet in pregnancy

Shali and shashti (varities of paddy), Munga (lentils), wheat (godhuma), saktu (roasted corn flour) of paddy's poppy, Butter, ghrita, milk, rasala (shrikhand), honey, sugar, Banana, Amalki (*Emblica officinalis*), Grapes, Ripe mango.

Diet should be avoided

Brinjal, suran (*Amorphophallus campanulatus*), papaya, celery, onion, chilli, garlic, ginger, pepper, mustard, carom seeds, jaggery.

CONCLUSION

Diet and regimen mentioned in ancient Ayurvedic literature is scientific. Every pregnant woman who is desirous for giving birth to a healthy child must follow the rules which are mentioned during antenatal period. Properly followed diet and regimen ensures proper growth of fetous and also provide strength to the pregnant women for easy delivery.

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