



Review Article

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A COMPARATIVE REVIEW OF AYURVEDIC CLASSICAL GARBHINI PARICHARYA AND MODERN SCIENCE ANTENATAL CARE

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ABSTRACT

In this article we have reviewed antenatal care according to Ayurveda and Modern Science. In all Granthas many references have been cited regarding Garbhini Paricharya. Ayurveda gives more importance to diet for a healthy living, hence all kinds of Paricharya comprises focuses mainly on dietary habits. According to various Acharyas, Garbhini Paricharya is a systemic supervision undertaken in order to ensure proper nutrition of mother and fetus, its full growth and no defects in it along with no complications and pleasant delivery. Normal diet and mode of lifestyle of pregnant women, Garbhopaghatakar bhava (Contraindicated diet and mode of life or factors which harm fetus), Garbhasthapak dravya (drugs which useful for maintenance of pregnancy) are major aspects of Garbhini Paricharya. According to Modern Science Antenatal Care is a type of preventive health care. Antenatal Care includes prenatal screening and diagnosis to rule out and prevent maternal death, miscarriages, birth defects, low birth weight, neonatal infections and other problems. So Antenatal Care should be done in integrated way i.e., as per Modern science and as described in Ayurveda.

Keywords: Garbhini Paricharya, Antenatal care, Masanumasik dravya, Garbhopaghatakar bhava.

INTRODUCTION

Literature review of Garbhini Paricharya according to Ayurveda

The word "Paricharya" is derived from the root word "Chara-Gatau" with prefix "Pari". Charya refers to service or nursing. Hence, Garbhini Paricharya is the care given to a pregnant woman in all aspects.¹

Right from the first day of conception to the last day (parturition) a pregnant woman should follow a specific daily regime. This is very important for her as well as the growing 'Garbha' (embryo). This has been described in Ayurvedic Samhitas. The rules to be observed by pregnant woman are described in 'Garbhini Paricharya'. The importance of Garbhini Paricharya lies in the fact that if these rules are observed by Garbhini then her immunity as well as that of the growing child is increased and improved.

Sushruta has advised that the woman from the very first day of pregnancy should remain in high spirit, decorated with ornaments, wear clean white garments and perform religious rites, do auspicious deeds and worship deity and brahmins. Her sleeping and sitting place should be covered with soft cushion or mattress, which should not be very high or possess elevated upper portion for headrest and should be perfect and very comfortable. She should use palatable, liquid, sweet and unctuous substances treated with appetizing ingredients. This mode of life should be continued up till delivery.²

Aims of Garbhini Paricharya

Nourishment of Garbha, to avoid the Garbhavyapada and Sukhprasava, are the basic aim of Garbhini Paricharya.³

Monthly regimen for a pregnant woman

Along with the above-mentioned generalized dictums, Acharyas have described a specific month wise management for a pregnant woman to compensate her requirements and of the growing fetus as well, which are as follows:

Milk and drugs of Madhura group have been advised for entire pregnancy period. Milk is a wholesome diet. It provides nutrition and stability to the fetus. The drugs of Madhura group contain anabolic property. Hence, the use of these drugs will help in maintenance of proper health of Garbhini and development of fetus.⁴

During 1st trimester of pregnancy, most women have the complaints of nausea and vomiting. So, they cannot take proper diet. Use of cold, sweet, liquid diet and milk will prevent dehydration and provide their daily required nourishment.

From 4th month onwards, muscular tissues of fetus grow sufficiently. Mamsa Dhatu gets well-nourished with its Svayoni Vardhana Dravyas i.e., Jangala Mamsa. Hence, Sushruta advised the pregnant woman to take Jangala Mamsa. Kashyapa says that the meat soup which is taken by a woman not only helps her in conceiving pregnancy, but also provides nourishment to the fetus. It also suppresses Vata in pregnant woman.⁵

By the end of 2nd trimester, most of the pregnant women suffer from complications of water accumulation such as edema over feet etc. due to disturbances of renal function. Use of Gokshura may prevent these disturbances, as it is a good diuretic.⁶

The drugs that are mentioned in Vidarigandhadi group (Prithakpamyndi group) are diuretics and anabolic. Thus, they relieve emaciation and renal disturbances. So, their regular use in seventh month helps in maintaining the health of mother and in proper development of the fetus. By the use of Yavagu, which is advised by Charaka in 8th month, the pregnant woman remains free from diseases and delivers the child with best health, energy, complexion, voice, compactness of the body. The only adverse effect of this is that the child may become tawny in complexion.⁶

By the Asthapana and Anuvasana basti Anulomana of Vayu occur which in turn leads to Sukha and Nirupadrava prasava (normal vaginal delivery). So, the Garbhini who follows the above said Upakramas (regimen) becomes Snigdha (unctuous), gains strength and delivers normally and easily without any complication.⁷

Generalized dictums that should be followed by Garbhini

Our ancient Acharyas knew well that not only the food and environment play a vital role in the development of fetus but also maternal psychic impressions have great impact on a growing fetus. Hence, they have given equal importance to all factors. The do's and don'ts which influence these factors are as follows:

- Aahar (Dietary regimen)

Take congenial diet, use Hridya drava, Madhura, Snigdha substances treated with Deepana dravyas, Use Jeevaniya group of drugs both externally and internally, use butter, ghee and milk, take the diet according to living place, season and agni, Use hot water.

Avoid tikshna, ushna, guru ahara and aushadhas, avoid madakaraka dravyas (intoxicating substances) like wine etc, avoid excessive intake of meat, give up atitarpana (excessive unctuous) and atikarshana (excessive emaciating) ahara, avoid dried, wet, putrefied, and vishtambi ahara (stale food).⁸

- Vihara (Physical regimen)

Maintain good conduct. The Sleeping and sitting places for Garbhini should be covered with soft cushion or mattress should contain soft, perfect and very comfortable pillow.⁹

Avoid excessive vyayama (exercise), not to ride over vehicles, avoid divaswapna (sleeping in day time) and ratrijagarana (staying awake till late at night), avoid akala poorvakarma, panchakarma, raktamokshana, and avoid Utkatasana (supine position), avoid vega vidharana (suppression of natural urges), avoid outing, visiting of lonely places.¹⁰

Literature review of Antenatal care according to Modern

The aim of Antenatal care according to Modern Science is to maintain the physiology of pregnancy, to prevent or to detect the complications at the earliest, ensure that physical defects which are likely to become overt during pregnancy are detected and treated, to improve the psychology of the mother.¹¹

Antenatal advice

- Explain the patient about the importance of regular checkup.
- Maintain or improve if necessary, the health status of the woman to the optimum till delivery by judicious advice and changes in diet, drugs and hygiene.
- Improve and tone up the psychology and remove the fear of the unknown by talking sympathetically to the patient.

Dietary regimen

The diet should be adequate for maintenance of good maternal health, to fulfill the needs of growing fetus and to provide strength and vitality required during labor followed by successful lactation in puerpura.

The increased calorie requirement is to be compensated by exogenous supply of diet or drugs. The ante natal diet ideally should consist light, nutritious, rich in protein, minerals and vitamins and should be easy to digest. Dietetic advice should be given with due consideration to the socio-economic condition, food habits and taste of the individual.

Supplementary nutrition therapy

There is negative iron balance during pregnancy and the dietetic iron is not enough to meet the daily requirement especially in the second trimester of the pregnancy. Thus, supplementary iron therapy is needed for all pregnant mothers from 20 weeks onwards. The essential vitamins like Ascorbic acid-50 mg, Riboflavin – 2 mg and Nicotinic acid 15 mg should be given daily from 20th week onwards. Folic acid - 5 mg should be started from the first week onwards to prevent neural tube defects in fetus.

Physical regimen

- Rest and sleep

Patient should not feel tiredness. Hard and strenuous work should be avoided specially, in first trimester and in the last 6 weeks. In an average, the patient should be on bed for about 10 hours per day especially in the last six weeks.

- Care of the breasts

If the nipples are retracted, correction is to be done in the later months by manipulation or by using nipple shields.

- Coitus

Coitus should be avoided during first trimester and also during the last 6 weeks for fear of abortion in the former and introduction of infection and premature onset of labor in the later period.

- Travel

Travel by vehicles having jerks is better to be avoided.

- Smoking and alcohol

Heavy smokers have smaller babies and there is also more chance of abortion. So, it is better to stop smoking. Alcohol consumption is to be avoided to prevent fetal growth retardation or mal-development.

- Immunization

Immunization in pregnancy is a routine for tetanus and diphtheria. Others have to be given when epidemic occurs.

- General advice

The patient should be persuaded to attend for antenatal check-up positively on the schedule date or visit. She is instructed to report to the physician even at an early date if some untoward symptoms arise.

CONCLUSION

In Ayurvedic Garbhini Paricharya, diet, exercise and mental status are very important because due to development of fetus many changes occur in the mother's body with increase of Kapha Dosha which further results into Agnimandya (indigestion), which is a major causative factor in number of diseases. Hence, in order to maintain a healthy gestation and conduct a pleasant parturition dietary changes and life style modifications should be inculcated keeping both sciences in mind.

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