GARBHINI PARICHARYA: ROUTINE CARE FOR PREGNANT WOMEN THROUGH AYURVEDA

Dr. Mohammad Aadil1 Dr. Yatendra Kumar Sethi2 Dr. Shruti Joshi3 Dr. Sarika Yadav3 Dr. Mahendra Prasad4

1 P.G. Scholar, P.G. Department of Kriya Sharir, National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed to be University (De-novo), Jaipur

2 P.G. Scholar, P.G. Department of Kriya Sharir, National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed to be University (De-novo), Jaipur

3 P.G. Scholar, P.G. Department of Kriya Sharir, National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed to be University (De-novo), Jaipur

4 Assistant Professor, P.G. Department of Kriya Sharir, National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed to be University (De-novo), Jaipur

ABSTRACT

Care during nine months of pregnancy is termed as Antenatal care or Garbhini Paricharya. Ayurveda classics give importance to caring of mother before, during and also after pregnancy. This refers to care with recommendation of Aahara (specific dietary regimen), Vihara (normal daily activities) & Yoga and Pranayama. It can be studied under three sub-headings: Masanumasika Paricharya, Garbhopaghatakara Bhava (Activities and substances which are harmful for foetus), Garbhashapaka Dravya (Substances beneficial for maintenance of pregnancy). Attempt has been made to understand the physiological significance of Garbhini Paricharya in detail.

Keywords: Antenatal care, Garbhashapaka Dravya, Garbhini Paricharya, Garbhopaghatakara Bhava, Masanumasika Paricharya, Yoga.

INTRODUCTION:

In any community, mothers and children combinedly constitute a priority group which comprises approximately about 71% of the population. In a developing country like India, women of the child bearing
age (age group 15 to 44 Yrs.) constitute about 22.2% and children under 15 yrs. age constitute about 35.3% of the total population. Both of them together constitute nearly about 57.5% of total population.

Ayurveda classics give importance to caring of mother before, during and also after pregnancy. Woman health is very much important as womanhood represents the bearing capacity of foetus inside the womb and its delivery in a healthy status. She contributes to overall health of the society by bringing up the child properly. A woman has to manage the dual role in the society, both as a house wife and also as professional in the present era. Due to this reason, health of women becomes very important. This elegant phase of pregnancy and delivery brings about adaptation changes in bio-physiological as well as psychological parameters in puerperium, which may adversely affect her health in absence of proper care.

Both mother and child are considered as a single unit, because during this Antenatal period, foetus acts as a part of mother for a period of about 280 days. During this span of life, foetus gets all the building material and oxygen from mother’s blood. Therefore, it is said that, child health has close relation with maternal health. If a mother is healthy, she brings forth healthy baby, the chances for a premature birth, still birth or Abortion are rare. Antenatal period is very important phase of life of both mother and child and is also known as Garbhini Paricharya in Ayurveda classics.

Birth and growth of Purusha occurs from Ahara Rasa. Therefore, this should be maintained healthy. Garbha (foetus) is considered as a small form of Purusha, the birth as well as growth of a child depends upon the diet and deeds of the mother.

The food consumed by a pregnant woman gives:

- Nourishment to foetus and help in growth of foetus.
- Nourishment to the mother's own body.
- Nourishment to the breasts by which the breast milk formed maintains new-born baby.

It is very important for pregnant woman to follow a careful regimen of food and also behaviour during the whole course of pregnancy. This whole regimen is termed as “Garbhini Paricharya” in Ayurveda.

**DISCUSSION:**

**GARBHINI PARICHARYA**

Garbhini Paricharya can be easily studied under three sub-headings:

1. Masanumasika Paricharya (i.e., monthly dietary regimen).
2. Garbhopghatakara Bhava (Activities and substances which are harmful for foetus)
3. Garbhasthapaka Dravya (Substances beneficial for maintenance of pregnancy)

**1. Masanumasika Paricharya:**

During pregnancy period, nutrition is supplied to foetus from mother with the help of placenta. For constant as well as proper growth of embryo an adequate amount of nutrition is required month-wise. This requirement varies according to each developmental stage of foetus. Masanumasika Paricharya can be studied under two headings:

a. Aahara and Aushadha (Month wise dietary and medicinal regimen) according to Masanumasika Vruddhi of Garbha
b. Vihara (daily routine activities) and Ayurveda procedures according to Masanumasika Vruddhi of Garbha.

a. **Aahara and Aushadha (Month wise dietary and medicinal regimen) according to Masanumasika Vruddhi of Garbha**

In Ayurveda classics, a month-wise dietetic regimen has been mentioned in detail for women starting from the first month up to the ninth month of pregnancy. Requirement of nutrients get increased during pregnancy period. Therefore, the dietetic requirements of the mother also get changed month wise according to...
Masanumasika Vruddhi of Garbha. By following the diet according to the foetal development, its proper growth occurs and also in good manner. Dietary regimen for maintenance of good nutritional requirements month-wise is described as:

**First month of pregnancy**

**Garbha Sthiti:** During the first month of gestation, embryo takes jelly form because of the intimate mixture of all the five Mahabhuta. During this month, there is no particular form of embryo and its organs are both manifested and latent.

**Diet:** Cold milk in a small quantity but frequently. *Madhura* (sweet), *Sheeta* (cooling to the body) and liquid diet is preferred in this month for maintenance of foetus.

*Madhura, Sheeta* and *Drava Susanskrit Aahara* (sweet, cold and liquid diet) is easy to digest, *Agni Dipaka* (i.e., appetizers), prevent dehydration and supply optimum nourishment which is required. *Madhura rasa* is excellent for formation of *Dhatu*, it is *Vata Shamaka* and anabolic in nature. This helps in maintenance of proper health of mother and also growth and development of the foetus.

Milk helps in providing proper nourishment and gives stability to the foetus. It also prevents abortion. Milk is congenial, increase intellectual level (*Medhya*), strength (*Bala*) and is lactogenic.

**Medicine:** *Yashtimadhu* with white sandalwood power, red sandalwood powder in cow's milk. *Ksheerkakoli, Devdaru* (*Cedrus deodara*), milk.

**Second month of pregnancy**

**Garbha Sthiti:** The molecules of the primary elements being acted upon by *Sheeta*, *Ushma* and *Anila* are condensed in second month. A lump-like appearance indicates male sex, an elongated like shape of the matter denotes that the foetus belongs to female sex whereas its tumour like shape predicts absence of any sex. According to *Garbhopanishad*, *Shira* (head) is formed in second month.

**Diet:** Frequent intake of cold milk in small quantity. Intake of *Madhura, Sheeta* and liquid diet like milk, coconut water, fruit juices, *Peya, Kanji* (which has not become sour).

All these food products should be given in small quantity but taken frequently. Fruits to be avoided are Pineapple, Papaya and Sugarcane.

**Medicine:** *Ashmantaka, Tila, Pippali, Manjishtha, Shatavari* to be taken. These are taken in same quantity and a *Kashaya* (decoction) is prepared and then taken with milk and sugar. Lotus stem, *Nagakeshar* milk, or butter-milk, lotus, *Bilva* fruit, Camphor and Goat milk can also be used.

**Third month of pregnancy**

**Garbha Sthiti:** During the third month, five limb-like protuberances appear at the places from where the five organs- namely two hands, two legs and the head are to be developed and the minor limbs and organs of the body are to be formed in the shape of extremely small papillae. As *Mana* gets manifested, there is feeling of happiness & sadness. Heart beat is also felt.

**Diet:** Honey and *Ghrita* (clarified butter) in unequal quantity with milk and the fruits which are given in previous month. *Madhura, Sheeta* and liquid diet is given.

**Medicine:** *Vrikshadani, Ksheerkakoli, Priyangu and Sariva* to be used. Sugar, *Nagakeshara* milk, Sandalwood powder, *Khus*, lotus, cold water with milk can also be used.

**Fourth month of pregnancy**

**Garbha Sthiti:** During the fourth month of gestation, clear differentiation of all body parts and sub parts occurs. Foetal heart is manifested, so woman is termed *Dauhrudini, Chetna* /consciousness arise & desires are expressed via mother. The foetus gets stabilized. Therefore, pregnant woman specifically gets excessive heaviness in her body. According to *Garbhopanishad*, there is appearance of digits, *Jathara* (GI-tract) and *Kati Pradesha* (pelvic region).
Diet: milk with butter, rice with curd, pleasant food mixed with milk & butter, fruit juice, coconut water, Hrudya fruits i.e., Mango, Watermelon, white pumpkin, yellow pumpkin, snake gourd (Chichinda) Berry (Badara), pomegranate, Amrataka.

Ghrita has property of pacifying Pitta-Anila. It is beneficial for Ojas causes Varnaprasadana14.

Medicine: Use of Sariva, Rasna, Bharangi or Yashtimadhu decoction. If pregnant woman feels thirsty, burning and pain abdomen, then milk boiled with banana root, lotus, Khus is given in the same quantity. For Thirst: Shunthi, Musta, sandalwood powder to be given15.

Fifth month of pregnancy

Garbha Sthiti: On comparison to other months, there is an excessive increase in flesh and blood of the foetus during fifth month of gestation. Therefore, at that time the pregnant woman grows excessively thinner16. Mana becomes more enlightened.

Diet: Cooked Shastika rice with milk, Jangala Mamsa along with dainty food mixed with milk and Ghrita. Mamsa Vardhaka (foods which promote bulk in foetus), i.e., meat soup, black gram: Rakta Vardhaka Aahara (which increase blood), i.e., Pomegranate, Chikoo, Apple, spinach, beetroot, Amlaki, Guava etc. to be given.

Mamsarasa provides nourishment to the growing foetus and also pacifies Vata17. Jangala mamsa (meat) is considered to be the excellent source of proteins, vitamins, fats, minerals (iron and other minerals) and is also a source of a range of endogenous antioxidants18.

Shali and Shashtika rice, Mudga (i.e., green gram), wheat, flour of parched rice etc. and the fruits which are sour and sweet like Panasa (Jack fruit), Kadali (banana), Amalaki, Draksa etc. are easy to digest and are nutritive for pregnant women19.


Sixth month of pregnancy

Gabha Sthiti: On comparison with other months, there is excessive increase in the strength and complexion of the foetus during sixth month of gestation. Therefore, during this time, the pregnant woman loses her strength and complexion considerably21. There is more enlightenment of Buddhi/intellect.22 According to Garbhopanishad, ear, face, nose & its bone formation occurs.

Diet: Ghee, Rice, Gokshura, Siddha ghee (processed ghee).

Gokshura (Tribulus terrestris) has diuretic as well as nephroprotective property. Ghrita which is medicated with Prithakparnyadi (Vidarigandhadi) group has properties like diuretic, anti-inflammatory, Balya, Brihana (anabolic), Vata and Pitta Dosha pacifying23.

Medicine: Prishnaparni (Urania picta), Bala, Gokshura, Drum stick, Yashtimadhu decoction24.

Balya (Strengthening): Eranda, Gorakshakarkati (papaya), Vidarikanda, Shatavari, Bala, Atibala, Ashwagandha, Mashaparni.

Varnya (for complexion): Sandalwood power, lotus, Usheera, Sariva, Manjishtha, White Durva, Vidarikanda, Yashtimadhu.

Seventh month of pregnancy

Garbha Sthiti: There is an all-round development of the foetus during seventh month of gestation. Therefore, pregnant woman becomes exceedingly deficient in all aspects of her health25. According to Garbhopanishad, foetus becomes viable during this month.

Diet: Ghrita prepared from milk and medicated with Madhura(sweet) drugs

If there is itching in the area of lower abdomen, thigh or breast, then following medicines are used26:
- Badara Kashaya: which is processed with sweet medicines, butter milk.
- Massage with Kanher siddha oil.
- Yashvimadhu decoction Parisheka.
- Excess use of salt and large quantity of water should be avoided. Take Bala, Gokshura, Musta, Lajjalu, Nagkeshar powder and honey.
- Use of Shringataka (Trapa bispinosa) lotus, grapes, Musta, sugar, Yashvimadhur decoction.

Eighth month of pregnancy

Garbha Sthiti: During the eighth month of pregnancy, the Ojas formed in the body of foetus moves inside the body of the mother and vice-versa with the help of the channels which carries nourishment from the mother to the foetus because of the immaturity of foetus. Therefore, at that time, the pregnant woman often has a wavering feeling of joy as well as sorrow. Similar is the condition with the foetus. It is because of this unsteadiness of Ojas, delivery of foetus during this month is dangerous. In view of this, experts advise that even the reckoning of eighth month of pregnancy should be avoided.

Diet: Ksheera Yavagu mixed with Ghrita.

Snigdha Yavagu helps in giving strength to the body, nourishes the body tissue and also pacifies the Vata Dosha.

Medicine: Take Lodhra, Pippali powder with honey and milk.

- Milk processed in Kapittha (Eeronia elephantum) Kantakari and snake gourd, Bruhati, Cane Sugar.

Ninth month of pregnancy

Garbha Sthiti: From 1st day of ninth month to the end of the 10 month –it is period of labor. Beyond this, the intrauterine stay of foetus is abnormal.

Diet: Unctuous gruels and Jangala Mamsarasa up to the period of delivery.

During 8th and 9th month, there is pain in abdomen and sometimes bleeding also occurs through vagina. Therefore, pain killer and Stambhana medicine can be used.

Medicine: Shunthi, (Zigiber officinale), Yashvimadhu, Deodar are pain killers. Sariva, Yashvimadhu, Ksheerkakoli are Kashaya medicines for Stambhana.

If pregnancy continues up to 10th month, then use of only Shunthi, Ksheervidari Kashaya or only milk Siddha with Shunthi.

b. Vihara (daily routine activities) and Ayurveda procedures according to Masanumasika Vruddhi of Garbha

Monthly regimen is very important to make pelvis, waist, sides of the chest and back healthy as well as flexible and also for Anulomana of Vata- all of these are necessary for normal delivery. Normalization of the urine as well as stool and their elimination become easy due to proper routine.

Vasti:

Most of the women experience constipation in pregnancy period due to pressure exerted by gravid uterus over the bowel and also due to effect of progesterone. For clearance of the retained faeces and Anulomana Gati of Apana Vayu, Asthapana Basti (i.e., administration of drugs through anus) should be given followed by Anuvasana Basti. This process facilitates the easy delivery without any type of complication. Tail Picchu (Vaginal tamponing) is helpful in destroying pathogenic bacteria of vaginal canal and prevention of sepsis. Along with this, tampon also softens vaginal passage, thus helping in normal labour. For this reason, Vasti is prescribed during these months:
Eighth month:

- Asthapana Basti (decoction enema) - with Badara Kashaya, Bala, Atibala, Milk, oil, salt, honey and Ghee.
- Then give Anuvasa Basti (Oil enema) of milk, Madhura Aushadhi Siddha Kashaya (decoction prepared with drugs of sweet taste) oil, so that pregnant woman maintains strength and soft vaginal passage and delivery becomes easy31.

Ninth month:

Anuvasa Basti with Madhura Aushadhi Siddha oil and put oil tampon in vagina32.

**Yoga**

Yoga provides a wide range of activity to unborn child and also to mother in numerous ways. It soothes the mind, refocus the energy and also prepare woman psychologically for labour process. Various Asana create more space in pelvis which makes expulsion of foetus easy.

**Yoga during First trimester**

- **Trikonasana** (Extended triangle pose) - It strengthens the muscles of pelvic floor, thighs and calf muscles. It increases the flexibility of spine and improves digestion process33.
- **Virbhadrasana** (Warrior pose) - It stretches the groin area, strengthens the body and back muscles and tones up the lower body. Increases stamina and flexibility and relieves backache25.
- **Vrikshasan** (Tree pose) - It stretches the legs, back and arms which invigorates the body. It helps to improve concentration25.

**Yoga during Second trimester**

- **Vajrasana** (Thunderbolt pose) - This asana enhances digestive system which increases the energy uptake. Alters blood flow and nervous system impulses in the pelvic region. Relieves stomach ailments like hyperacidity and it is the only asana that can be practiced after taking meals34.
- **Matsya kridayasan** (Flapping fish pose) - Stimulates digestion and relieves constipation. It relaxes the nerves of legs and this is an ideal asana for relaxed sleep. It improves blood circulation34.
- **Marjariasana** (Cat stretch pose) - Is very helpful in toning the female reproductive system and muscles of pelvis. This asana increases the flexibility of neck, spine and shoulders muscles which are essential for bearing down efforts during labour34.
- **Tadasana** (Mountain pose) - Stretches the entire spine and helps to clear the congestion of spinal nerves. It also helps in developing physical and mental balance. It stretches and strengthens the rectus-abdominus muscle which an accessory muscle for bearing down34.
- **Bhadrasana** (Gracious pose) - This asana benefits the digestive system and helps in relieving various stomach ailments. It helps in toning the muscles of female pelvic region. Along with meditation, it relieves mental stress34.
- **Kati chakrasana** (waist rotating pose) - Tones up the muscles of waist, back and hips. It induces the feeling of lightness and relieves physical and mental stress34.

**Yoga during Third trimester**

- **Ardha titaliasana** (Half butterfly pose) - Is an excellent asana for loosening of hip joints, which enables fast and easy delivery34.
- **Poorna titaliasana** (Full butterfly pose) - Tones up pelvic girdle. It relieves the tension from inner thigh muscles and removes the tiredness of legs. This asana increases the stretching ability of perineum34.
Chakki Chalanasan (Churning mill pose) - Is an excellent asana for toning the nerves and muscles of pelvis and abdomen and prepare them for delivery.\(^{34}\)

Uthanasana (Squat and Rise pose) - This asana strengthens the muscles of back, uterus, thighs and ankles. It tones up the pelvic girdle and this asana is equivalent to sweeping floor. Hence enabling fast and easy delivery.\(^{34}\)

**Pranayama (Breathing technique):**

*Pranayama* is not only helpful in pregnancy, rather it is a gift given by *Ayurveda* to human race for long and healthy life. Various *Pranayama* which can be practiced during pregnancy period include:

**Anuloma - Viloma Pranayama**
- It strengthens the body mentally and physically.
- During labour, breath holding for maximum duration can provide great help for pushing during labour.
- It provides more oxygen to the body; therefore, more oxygen is transferred to the foetus.

**Bhramari Pranayama**
- It is an effective breathing exercise for releasing agitation, anger and calming the mind.
- It is very useful for pregnant women as it eases the process of childbirth by controlling the breathing during the labour process.
- It improves concentration power and remove toxins from body.\(^{35}\)

2. **Garbhopghatakara Bhava (Factors which harm the foetus):**

*Ayurveda* is the science which also suggests avoiding some diet & mode of life which are contraindicated during pregnancy period and which are harmful for *Garbha* (foetus). These are termed as *Garbhopghatakara Bhava*. These factors may cause some congenital defects in the child and are not in the favour of the birth of a healthy child having all the good qualities. Various *Garbhopghatakara Bhava* according to different *Acharya* are mentioned in Table No.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charaka(^{36})</th>
<th>Sushruta(^{37})</th>
<th>Astang Samgraha</th>
<th>Astang Hridya</th>
<th>Kashyapa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pungent drugs, Exercise, Coitus</td>
<td>Coitus, Exercise, Excessive emaciation, day-sleep and awakening in night, Grief, Riding on vehicle, fear, Squatting, Oleation, Bloodletting, Suppression of natural urges etc.</td>
<td>Pungent drugs, Exercise, Coitus, Emaciation, trauma, Conveyance causing excessive jerks, night awake, day sleeping, Suppression of natural urges, Indigestion, prolonged stay in hot sun or near fire, Anger, grief, fear, terror, fasting, squatting, looking or hearing disliked things etc.</td>
<td>Excessive coitus, Exercise, carrying heavy weight, covering with heavy sheet, untimely sleep, squatting, grief, anger, excitement, suppression of natural urges, fasting, excessive walking, use of pungent, hot, heavy, hardly digestible food, use of red garment, us of wine and meat, sleeping in</td>
<td>Erect or flexed posture for long time, shaking, excessive laughing, trauma, cold water, garlic, looking declining moon, setting sun, seeing solar or lunar eclipse, misbehave with guests, rough behaviour with beggars, perform oblation of <em>Ghrita</em> for pacification, oppose full ewer, <em>Ghrita</em>,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. **Garbhasthapaka Dravya (Substances beneficial for maintenance of pregnancy):**

**Garbhasthapaka Dravya** are the substances helpful in counter acting the effect of the **Garbhopgatakara Bhava** and help in proper maintenance of the **Garbha**. These drugs can also be used in the treatment as well as prevention of abortion. These are to be used in routine, since they are beneficial for the maintenance of proper health, growth and development of the mother as well as foetus. Some of the **Garbhasthapaka Aushadhi** are **Aindri** (Bacopa monnieri), **Brahmi** (Centella asiatica), **Shatatvini** (Asparagus racemosus), **Sahasravirya** (Cynodon dactylon), **Amogha** (Stereoespernum suaveolens), **Avyatha** (Tinospora cordifolia), **Shiva** (Terminalia chebula), **Arista** (Picrorhiza kurroa), **Vatyapushpi** (Sida cordifolia), **Vishwaksenakanta** (Callicarpa macrophylla) etc. All these drugs should be taken orally as preparations in milk and **Ghee**. Bath with cold decoction of all of these drugs should be given during **Pushya Nakshatra**. These drugs should be kept in close contact with the mother and can be used as amulets around the right arm or on the head. Also, the drugs of **Jeevaneeya Gana** can be used in a similar way. **Acharya Kasyapa** has advocated that amulet of **Trivritta** (Operculina turpenthum) can also be tied in the waist of pregnant woman.

**CONCLUSION**

Health of the women is affected by all the factors including the social, family, and community context and beliefs during pregnancy either in a positive way or in negative way. Special foods and rest for pregnant women are suggested in some cultures of the society, but in others, pregnancy is not even acknowledged. In these such cases, women continue working hard and the nutritional taboos may deprive them of essential nutrients. This adds up to nutritional deficiencies, particularly the iron, protein, and certain vitamins.

**Garbhini Paricharya** as described in **Ayurveda** classics is very unique and specific. It saves the lives of mothers as well as babies not only by promotion and establishment of good health before birth of child, but also by normal healthy delivery. It is also beneficial to the mother in post-natal period. It can be considered as **Suputra Janana**.

**REFERENCES**

1. K Park, Textbook of Preventive and Social Medicine, Jablpur; 21st ed.; BanarasidasBhanot Publisher; 2011: 481, 484
8. Vaidya Mrs. S Koppikar, Garbhini Paricharya (Regimen for the pregnant woman), Bombay
10. Vaidya Mrs. S Koppikar, Garbhini Paricharya (Regimen for the pregnant woman), Bombay


15 Vaidya Mrs. S Koppikar, Garbhini Paricharya (Regimen for the pregnant woman), Bombay


20 Vaidya Mrs. S Koppikar, Garbhini Paricharya (Regimen for the pregnant woman), Bombay


24 Vaidya Mrs. S Koppikar, Garbhini Paricharya (Regimen for the pregnant woman), Bombay


26 Vaidya Mrs. S Koppikar, Garbhini Paricharya (Regimen for the pregnant woman), Bombay


28 Vaidya Mrs. S Koppikar, Garbhini Paricharya (Regimen for the pregnant woman), Bombay

29 Vaidya Mrs. S Koppikar, Garbhini Paricharya (Regimen for the pregnant woman), Bombay


33 Brenda Plakans Tools for Teaching Prenatal Yoga: The First Trimester March 11 2008


35 Garbhakranti Pranayam in Pregnancy http://mydreambaby.in

