



Trimester Wise Healthy Food in Pregnancy- An Ayurvedic Perspective

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Introduction

According to Ayurveda, pregnancy and delivery can be a rejuvenating experience and a positive highlight of a women's life. Among the branches of ayurvedic science, there is a separate department called *Strirog-Prasuti Tantra* (Gynaecology and Obstetrics) devoted to women and children's health, including pregnancy care.

Conception is the union of male and female seeds that creates an embryo. Ayurvedic science compares human conception to the germination and sprouting of plant seeds which eventually turn into a seedling that grows. High importance is given to the quality of seeds. The condition of the mother's uterus, like the earth where the seed grows, also plays an important role in the growth and development of a healthy baby. Pregnant women can use the principles of Ayurveda to care for themselves during pregnancy, and support their recovery period after their baby is born. Ayurvedic recommendations focus on diet, behaviour, activities, herbs and therapies.

The traditional system of medicine originated in India and emphasizes the use of natural remedies and lifestyle practices to promote health and well-being. Pregnancy is a time of tremendous physical and emotional change, and it's essential to take care of your mind and body during this period. Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, offers many tips and practices to help balance your mind and health during pregnancy.

Ayurveda considers the individual constitution or dosha of a person when making dietary and lifestyle recommendations.

The three doshas are Vata, Pitta, and Kapha, and each person has a unique combination of these doshas. During pregnancy, Ayurveda recommends balancing all three doshas to ensure the health and well-being of the mother and baby.

First Trimester:

Vata dosha is very dominant during the first trimester. Therefore, Ayurveda recommends warm, cooked foods and warm drinks to balance the Vata dosha. Include healthy fats like ghee and coconut oil in your diet to support the development of the baby's nervous system.

Pitta dosha can also be aggravated during the first trimester due to the increased production of hormones. To balance Pitta, avoid spicy, sour, and acidic foods. Instead, opt for cooling foods like fresh fruits, leafy greens, and dairy products like milk and yogurt.

Kapha dosha may also be imbalanced during the first trimester due to morning sickness and a lack of appetite. To balance Kapha, consume light, warm, and easy-to-digest foods like soups, stews, and cooked grains.

Sweet, cold, and liquid forms are helpful in this period – says Sushrut. (Because the foetus is unstable in the uterus in the early months) Some examples of the dietary substances are: -

Singhada (Trapa natans) (Water chestnut) - This is a 'Garbhasthapan food (stabilizes fetus). It helps to fix the placenta. Singhada powder 1 table spoon with luke warm milk and ghee is very useful. If possible, she should take 3 to 4 cups of whole milk every day. Daily use of Cow's ghee with milk is useful at this time of the pregnancy. In the third month rice with milk is advised to be taken frequently and in more quantity in the first course of the meals like early breakfast and lunch.

Coco-Melon Drink-

Ingredients – Coconut water, Water Melon, Lemon, Mint, Black Salt.

Benefits- Good for the health of Mother and Fetus.

Improve Immunity

Protects against infection

Effective in Fetus Growth

Reduce Blood pressure

Keep hydrated and good source of electrolyte, dietary fibres, Vitamin C, Minerals like sodium, calcium, potassium and magnesium.

Prevents common problem during pregnancy like acidity, constipation, morning sickness.

Coconut milk shake-

Ingredients- Coconut, milk, Rock sugar, Milk Powder, Cardamom, Ashwagandha powder, Cashew nuts, Charoli seeds, Raisins.

Benefits- Provide enough nutrition

Helps fetal growth

Helps to lower bad cholesterol

Helps lowering blood pressure

Improves immunity

Improves digestion

Relaxes muscles and nervous system

Lawric acid helps in milk production

Helps to prevent anemia

The Second Trimester: The Fiery Pitta

While the movement of the first trimester can elicit morning sickness and destabilizing feelings, the fire of Pitta impacts the second trimester most. This fire can manifest in indigestion, heart burn and increased intensity in your emotions. This is the time to incorporate Pitta pacifying techniques to cool that agitation and fire down.

During the second trimester, Pitta dosha is dominant, so it's essential to continue with cooling foods and avoid spicy and fried foods.

Vata dosha may also become imbalanced due to the growing baby's weight, which can cause aches and pains. To balance Vata, eat warm, nourishing, and grounding foods like root vegetables, nuts, and seeds.

Kapha dosha may be balanced during the second trimester, but it's important to continue eating light and warm foods to maintain a healthy digestive fire.

Pitta Pacifying Foods

Cooling foods like corn, cucumber, coconut water and watermelon. Additionally, continue to drink the ojas filled, high quality milk.

Gulkand Milk-

Ingredients- Milk, Gulkand, Mishri, Milk Powder, Ashwagandha powder, Cardamom, Fennel Seeds.

Benefits- Relieves acidity, tiredness, itching and fatigue

Has Cooling Property

Good anti-oxidant

Improves digestion

Relaxes Nervous system

Removes toxins from blood, thus acts as blood purifier

Energy Choco Truffles-

Ingredients- Dates, Peanuts, Almonds, Cashew, Milk Powder, Ashwagandha powder, Chocolate, Coconut oil, Grated Coconut

Benefits- Good source of Nutrition

Provide Strength and Vitality to mother and Fetus

Palatable and Relieves nausea

Good source of iron, potassium, magnesium, calcium

Increase Milk Production

Lauki Franky-

Ingredients- Grated Lauki, Wheat flour, Gram Flour, Asafoetida, Jeera, Turmeric, Rock salt, Mint, Tomato, Onion, Cucumber, Lemon, Green Chillies

Benefits- Good source of energy

Nourishes wholes body

Helps to Control Acidity

Stabilise Blood Glucose level

Good source of calcium, vitamin B and Iron

The Third Trimester: The Grounded Kapha

During the third trimester, Kapha dosha may become imbalanced due to the accumulation of fluids and weight gain. To balance Kapha, eat light, warm, and dry foods like roasted grains, cooked vegetables, and lentils.

Pitta dosha may also be imbalanced during the third trimester due to the increased heat and acidity in the body. To balance Pitta, consume cooling and hydrating foods like cucumber, watermelon, and coconut water.

Vata dosha can also be imbalanced during the third trimester due to the baby's movements and the pressure on the pelvic area. To balance Vata, consume warm, nourishing, and grounding foods like sweet potatoes, squashes, and soups.

Kapha Pacifying Foods

Eating foods that are easily digestible like cooked down rice. Additionally, continue to drink spiced, buttery milk for nourishing health and vitality.

Asthi Poshak Ladoo-

Ingredients- Moong dal, Suji, Ragi, Ghee, Edible Gum, Jaggery, Cashew nuts, Raisins, Nutmeg, dry dates, coconut, almonds, cardamom

Benefits- Nourishes bones and make them strong

Makes joints flexible

Boost energy

Good source of protein, iron, calcium

Enhance post partum recovery

Increase immunity

Ragi Appe-

Ingredients- Moong, Ragi, Rice, Onion, Tomato, Rock salt, Edible Oil

Benefits- Good source of iron and calcium

Improves milk production

Relieves Constipation

Control diabetes

Increase fetal growth

Conclusion

There is consistent agreement that a woman's nutrition and weight should be assessed and improved before, during, and after pregnancy to encourage and promote health of the woman and her offspring. Thus, we must not wait for definitive scientific proof of mechanisms that underlie the potential beneficial effects of quality nutrition in a childbearing woman before recommending nutrient-rich diets before and during pregnancy and during lactation.

