



Review Article

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Significance of Rasayana Dravyas for Garbha Poshana- A review

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ABSTRACT

Garbhini paricharya refers to a complete and systematic care provided to the garbhini in turn protecting the *garbha*. *Garbhini paricharya* or antenatal care is one of the most important aspects in *Prasuthi Tantra*. The proper *garbhini charya* would result in the proper development of the foetus, uncomplicated delivery, the health of the mother and thus her ability to withstand the strain of labour and have an eventless post-partum phase. The care of the pregnant women reflects on the quality and health of the offspring. Because of this, Acharyas has given a detailed, systematic and month wise regimen along with a list of do's and don't's to be followed in the antenatal phase along with the importance of *Madhura dravyas* endowed with *Rasayana* properties in *Garbhini Paricharya*. Hence an attempt to analyze importance of *rasayana dravyas* mentioned in *garbhini paricharya* especially for *garbha poshana*.

Keywords: *Garbhini paricharya, Garbha poshana, Rasayana dravyas.*

INTRODUCTION

Entire gestational period is important for achievement of healthy baby along with prevention of complications during pregnancy. Following *Garbhini paricharya* from conception till delivery will nourish the pregnant lady and helps in proper growth and development of the fetus. It also helps facilitate normal delivery by preventing other complications as well as improves the physical and psychological condition of the *garbhini* helping her to sustain the exhaustion of labor. *Garbhini paricharya* is based prescription of herbs with special qualities like *jivaniya, balya, medhya* and *rasayana* along with a nutritious balanced diet including the daily practise of intake of *ksheera, ghrita* and *navaneeta* [1].

Maternal nutrition plays a critical role in fetal growth and development. Nutrition is one of the intra uterine environmental factors that alters expression of the fetal genome and may have lifelong consequences. Whatever diet the *garbhini* takes, *raktadhatu* produced from it indirectly forms the *apara* and from *rasadhatu garbha nabhi nadi* is formed [2]. The right diet is considered the most important factor for proper growth of the fetus, maternal health and even for lactation after childbirth.

Importance of *Garbhini paricharya*

In the first trimester, *Garbhini* may suffer from *garbhopadravas* like *chardi* where there is slower intestinal transit time and gastric emptying. Furthermore, there will be gastritis like symptoms such as burning sensation in the chest region, which is worsened with increased fluid loss associated with vomiting. The fetus is in the formative stage during the first three months of pregnancy. During this stage, the embryo is nourished directly by percolation. Therefore, the diet should include more liquid type of food like milk having *madhura rasa* having antacid like properties to replenish the lost fluids. *Madhura rasa* has anabolic properties, which help in maintaining the health of both the foetus and the mother [3].

In the second trimester, there will be development of *mamsa, shonitha, snayu*. Hence for the sufficient growth of the fetus, more of carbohydrates and proteins in diet are being advised by supplementation of food like *shashtika, shali* and *mamsa rasa*. By the end of the second trimester, the *garbhini* may suffer from symptoms of water retention results in *pada sophu*. Use of *gokshura* is recommended which has diuretic properties to amend these complications [4].

In the last trimester, dravyas like satavari, vidari, brahmi, bala, draksha, dadima, which has the qualities of

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jeevaniya, balya, hridaya, brumhana, rasayana, ruchya and shoshahara are indicated. Most of these dravyas are primarily of *madhura rasa, sarva dhatu vivardhana, tarpana, preenana* and *sandhanakara* properties. The use of *sneha dravyas* such as *ksheera, navaneeta* and *ghrita*, which are of high nutritional value in terms of carbohydrates, proteins, fat and calcium are also advised. The regular use of these dravyas will help in the nourishment the fetus as well as relieving the *garbhini* from the anticipated symptoms. There is no scope for *katu* and *kashaya rasa dravyas* due to their prominent *ushna, tikshna* and *ruksha gunas*, which have minimal nutritive value and can hinder the normal growth and development of the *garbha*.⁵

Significance of *rasayana dravyas* for *garbha poshana*

Administration of different *Rasayana dravyas* imparts benefits such as *dirghayu, medha, arogya, smriti, prabha, varna, deha bala, indriya bala, kanti, vyadhikshamatva*.⁶ *Rasayana dravyas* nourishes and maintains the cell life, encourages the growth of new cells, prevents recurrent infection, expels the damaged cells, eliminates the toxic metabolites and pollutants, maintains the balance between mind and body, stabilizes physiological process and promotes homeostasis. Drugs having *Rasayana* properties also possess neuroprotective, haemopoietic, anabolic, nutritive and anti-inflammatory properties.

Foods and drugs having *rasayana* properties when administered they are directly helps in tissue nourishment. *Rasayana* helps in *rasa samvahana*, this medium of *uttama poshana* contributes to *prashasta dhatu nirmana*. Drugs such as *shatavari, kharjura, draksha, ksheera* and *ghrita* are considered to be *rasa vardhaka rasayanans*.⁷ *Ksheera, ghrita* and *shatavari* are the few of the examples of *rasayanans* acting at the level of *rasa*. Several *rasayana dravyas* are known to promote digestion of food and vitalize the metabolic activity resulting in turn to improve nutritional status at the level of *dhatu*. By promoting the competence of *srotas* i.e, the micro circulatory channels in the body leading to better bioavailability of nutrients to the tissues and improve tissue perfusion. This is another mode through which *rasayana dravyas* helps in promotion of nutritional status.

DISCUSSION

Drugs like *amalaki, ksheera, mamsa rasa, ghrita, navanita, madhu, sharkara* along with drugs mentioned in the month wise regimen such as *shaliparni, madhuyashti, parushaka, gokshura, vidarigandhadi varga, jivaniya gana dravya* and *madhura gana dravyas* like *bala, gokshura, kharjura, draksha, shatavari, jivanti, ashwagandha* etc. endowed with *madhura rasa, sheeta veerya, madhura vipaka* and with *rasayana* properties are mentioned in *garbhini paricharya*.^{8,9,10} *Rasayana* drugs possess mainly *madhura rasa, sheeta virya, madhura vipaka* with properties of *jivaniya, balya, brumhana, garbha sthapana, ojas vardhana* etc. As the word *rasayana* defines itself as the one that brings about *apyayana* of *rasa raktadi dhatu*, the manipulation of these factors in the intrauterine life can give a definite scope in the growth and nourishment of the mother and fetus and also in the prevention of diseases.

Madhura rasa helps in growth of the *sapta dhatus* and *ojas*. It improves the general strength and complexion and also it is *vishagna* and *daha prashamana*.¹¹ *Goghrita* is recommended for both food and medicine. It possesses the action of *rasayana, chakshushya, medhya* and *ayushya*. The specific properties of *ghrita* which enhances *ojas* and *bala* will be of

great benefit to the *garbhini* who is likely to experience *bala varna hani* and *klantata* during the mid pregnancy period. Ghee medicated with *Jivaniya, Brmhaniya, madhura* and *vatahara dravyas* are to be administered which are mentioned in the *garbhini paricharya* as a precautionary measure to avoid such foetal malnutrition.

Majority of these drugs, besides promoting nutrition at the level of *rasa, agni* and *srotas*, also possess different pharmacological activities which may be of great importance in many disorders in pregnancy such as pregnancy induced hypertension, intrauterine growth retardation, gestational diabetes, recurrent abortion and all those disorders having defective immunologic component involved in its pathology. The immuno-modulatory activity of *rasayana dravyas* will play a major role in its prevention. As *rasayana* does the *prinana* of *sarvadhātu*, supplementing *rasayana* drugs at this early stage of development of fetus, the *adhyadhatus* gets adequate nourishment along with the consequent nourishment of *uttarottara dhatu*, thereby forming healthy tissues.

CONCLUSION

Fetus is dependent on mother for its nourishment and oxygen and its growth can proceed to abnormality in response to maternal nutrient insufficiency. The care of the pregnant lady reflects on the quality and health of the offspring. As there is a continuous growth of the embryo or fetus there would also be variation in its requirements of food and nutrition. Inadequate nutrition is a significant factor contributing to complications of pregnancy like low birth weight, IUGR, high mortality, prematurity, nutritional anaemia and perinatal loss as well as their sequels of mental and physical disabilities. So health of the pregnant women is maintained through proper *garbhini paricharya* right from the conception till delivery considering the different physiological changes taking place in *garbhini* along with the requirement of growing fetus. Different drugs and dietary articles having *rasayana* properties are prescribed during pregnancy. Thus use of *rasayana* drugs supports the maternal nutrition and also plays major role in fetal nourishment.

Source of Support

None.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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