

PANCHAMRUT: NECTAR FOR A PREGNANT WOMAN

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ABSTRACT

Motherhood is ultimate and cherished desire of every woman. Mother is described first among the factors responsible for proper growth of the foetus. Nutritious diet is important for every person and even more important for pregnant women. According to the American college of Obstetrician and Gynecologist (ACOG), a pregnant woman need minerals and vitamins like calcium, iron, vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin D, vitamin B6, vitamin B12, folic acid daily in proper amount for the development of the baby. “*Panchamrut*” is the combination of cow milk, curd, ghee, honey and sugar which provide all these nutrients naturally required for the pregnant women and her foetus. It also has some additional benefits such as in mother improving digestion, enhance mental health and in foetus maintain weight and growth and so on. In *ayurvedic* classics these five elements are described in *garbhini paricharya* to get a healthy mother and foetus. Therefore, the use of *Panchamrut* on daily basis influences the maternal health and also the foetus in her womb.

Keywords: *Panchamrut*, Maternal health and Foetal growth.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the ancient system of medicine which contributes immense knowledge for healthy motherhood and the healthy progeny. Pregnancy is one of the most important phase of woman life. For a woman, motherhood is a life changing experience. It is an exciting and emotional time for both the parent. Pregnant mother need healthy diet for her developing baby and for herself also. For the mother and developing baby proper nutrition is required which is impeccably described in *Garbhini Paricharya* as per *Bruhatray*. Milk, curd, *ghrita*, *madhu* and *madhura dravya* were mentioned for the *garbhini* by different *acharyas*. The combination of these is *panchamrut*. *Panchamrut* is a

blend of 5 vital ingredients which, when combined together, enhance the quality of each other. It can be given throughout pregnancy period for the nourishment of developing baby.

Panchamrut – derived from ‘*Panch*’ + ‘*Amrut*’ i.e. mixture of five ingredients which are cow milk, cow curd, cow ghee, honey and sugar.

Cow milk-

Cow’s milk is *sheet* (cold), *madhura* (sweet) in taste, *sneegdha* (slimy & smooth) having property of *preenan*, *brihnan*, *medhya* (memory enhancer), *balya* (boost the bodily strength), *manaskar*, *shramahara* (cure dizziness), *panduhara* (cure anaemia),

deepaniya (increase appetite), *jeevniya* (strengthening effect).¹ It is *raktapittaharaka* (mitigates *rakta* and *pitta* aggravation) and *vatapittashamaka* (best to suppress *vata* and *pitta*), so relieve the symptoms of nausea, vomiting, anemia and dehydration.² It increases *ojas* from having similar properties. It acts as *rasayana* (immune modulator and rejuvenator).³

Cow milk contains carbohydrate, protein, fat, vitamins and minerals like vitamin C, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, pantothenic acid, vitamin B6, folate, vitamin B9, vitamin A, vitamin D, vitamin E and calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, zinc etc. essentially required for the maintenance of successful pregnancy. It also contains essential amino acid such as tryptophan, threonine, isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine and cystine.⁴

Milk Proteins demonstrate a no. of biological effect like effects on digestive function, anti-carcinogenic activity and as an immune modulator. Milk proteins have numerous Amino acids which are alkaline in nature. It supports the stomach during digestion and has the power to regulate the circulatory and central nervous system. It also cleanses the auto-synchronous human body. Lactoferrin- Helps in regulation of iron homeostasis, develops immunity for microbial infections due to its anti-inflammatory action. Hydrolysis of Lactalbumin generates peptides which activates phagocytosis via specific receptors, thus maintaining the immunity in the body.⁵

Cow milk is a healthy nutriment because of low calorie, less cholesterol and high micro-nutrients. It possesses rejuvenatory health protecting properties and is perhaps the best vitalizers. It has bio-protective role in pregnancy and is easily digestible^{6,7}.

It is found to be effective in curing fever, pain, diabetes and weaknesses.⁸

Cow curd-

Cow curd is *snigdha* (slimy & smooth), sweet in digestion (*madhura vipaka*), *balavardhaka*, *vatanashaka*, *pavitra* and *ruchikarka*.⁹

It is *rochana*, *agnideepaka*, *shukravaradhaka*, *snehana*, *balavardhaka*, *mamsvardhana*, *mangalakari* and used in *aruchi*, *mutrakruhha* & *karshya*.¹⁰

Increases *meda dhatu*, *shukra*, *kapha*, *pitta*, *rakta* and *Agni*, used in *aruchi* (Anorexia).¹¹

Curd contain carbohydrate, protein, fat, amino acids, vitamins and minerals like vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin K, vitamin B12, vitamin B2, vitamin D, Folic acid and calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, zinc, potassium, sodium etc.¹²

Curd from cow milk is considered as “*Vatanashak*”, blood purifier, “*Tridoshnashak*” and found useful in “*Pitta*”, blood related problems, piles and gastrointestinal disorders. Curd is an efficient probiotic with potential to control infections in a nondrug manner. Curd is considered as digestive, nutritive and is useful in various gastrointestinal ailments by checking or controlling the growth of harmful organism. Lactic acid producing bacteria are present in curd and buttermilk that produces antifungal metabolites viz. cyclic dipeptide, phenyl lactic acid as well as proteinaceous compounds and 3-hydroxylated fatty acid^{13,14}.

Curd contains amino acids those help in digestion which naturally low in early days of pregnancy.

Curd boosts the immune system, useful in insomnia; enhance normal functions of liver and a better supplement of calcium than milk. It helps in Folic acid deficiency and iron deficiency disorders commonly found in pregnant and lactating women. It is beneficial in vitamin D deficiency disorders and as well as in retarded growth and general weakness in pregnant women.¹⁵

Cow ghee-

Cow ghee enhances *smruti*, *buddhi*, *agni*, *shukra*, *oja*, *kapha* and *meda*. It is *sheeta* (cold), sweet in taste and digestion (*madhura vipaka*). It is *vatapitta nashaka* and *shoshahara*. Cow ghee is best amongst all *sneha*. It has thousand good qualities, and does a thousand actions, when processed properly.¹⁶

It is included one of those ingredients that can be consumed on a daily basis.¹⁷

Cow ghee sweet in digestion, *vata-pitta-visha nashaka*, beneficial for eyes, *Balya* (boost the bodily strength) and have the best qualities among all other animal's ghee.¹⁸

If it is consumed judiciously, then ghee prolongs life, enables good digestion, endows one with intellect, memory, strength and reproductive strength, and good complexion; it is especially good for the eyes; and it

protects the entire body. Thus *Ayurveda* supports the intake of ghee.¹⁹

Ghee is best suited for those desirous of *dhi, smrti, medha, agni, bala, ayu, shukra* and *caksusya*; for children and old people, for those desiring offspring, good complexion, softness of body (*sukumara*) and good voice; for those suffering from *ksata, ksheena, parisarpa*, disorders of *vata* and *pitta, visa, unmada, shosa, alaksmi* and *jvara*; it is best among all *snehas*, is *sheeta, vayasasthapana*; possesses a thousand good qualities, and does a thousand actions, when processed properly.²⁰

Cow ghee, the butter fat obtained from the cow milk has been claimed to have many medicinal properties like it is cooling in energy, rejuvenating, bestows luster and beauty, enhances memory and stamina, increases the intellect and promotes longevity. It is an aphrodisiac and protects the body from various diseases.²¹

Old ghee(1 – 10 years old) cures diseases such as *mada, apasmara, murchha*, and diseases of the *siras, karna, aksi* and *yoni*; it cleanses and heals ulcers; it possesses all the qualities as described to fresh ghee and does these functions in greater measure or more effective and hence it is also similar to nectar.²²

Ayurvedic classical texts described eight kinds of ghee from eight different animal milk and ghee made from cow milk is said to be superior among them.²³

Honey- It is *vatakaraka, Guru* (heavy), *Sheeta* (coolant), useful in *raktapitta* (bleeding disorders), *Kaphahara, Sandhanakara*²⁴ (heals wound and fractures quickly), *chhedana* (break up hard masses), *ruksha* (dry), *kashaya* (astringent) and *madhura* (sweet) in taste.²⁵

It is included one of those ingredients that can be taken on a daily basis (*pathya*).²⁶

It is sweet in taste and astringent in sub taste, *ruksha* (dry), *Sheeta* (coolant), *agnideepana* (improve appetite and digestive fire), *varnya* (improves skin complexion), *swarya* (improves voice quality), *laghu* (light), *sukumara* (improves softness of skin), *lekhana* (scrapes inner side of channels), *hrudya* (good for heart), *vajikarka* (aphrodisiac), *sandhana* (heals wound and fractures quickly), *Shodhana & ropana* (cleanses and heals), *sangrahi, prasadana* (improves

skin qualities), *sukshma marganusari, pittashleshmahara* (balances *pitta* and *kapha*), *medohara*, beneficial in *prameha, hikka, swasa, kasa, atisara, chhardi, trishna, krimi* and *visha, tridoshashamaka-kaphahar* due to *laghu guna* and *vatapittahara* due to *pacchhila, madhura* and *kashaya rasa*.²⁷

It is useful in *kushtha, vrana shodhana* (cleanses wound), *vrana sandhana* and *vrana ropana* (heals wound quickly). Acharya Vaghabhaatta describes same as Acharya Shushruta.²⁸

Nutritional component of honey are carbohydrate, protein, vitamin C and minerals. Honey also contains some important amino acids, such as all nine essential amino acids and all nonessential amino acids except for asparagine and glutamine. Proline was reported as the primary amino acid in honey, followed by other types of amino acids. Enzymes (diastase, invertase, glucose oxidase, catalase, and acid phosphatase) constitute the main protein ingredients of honey. It consists of 31 variable minerals such as phosphorus, sodium, calcium, potassium, sulfur, magnesium. The ingredients of honey have been reported to exert antioxidant, antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, antiproliferative, anticancer and antimetastatic effects.²⁹

It is said to be *yogavahi*³⁰, which means it acts as carrier. It enhances the quality of other four ingredients.

Jaggery Sugar-

It is *Shukravardhaka* (aphrodisiac), used in treating *kshata-ksheena* (injured patients and emaciated people).³¹

Gudasharkara is more *sheeta* (coolant), sweeter, *vrushya*, useful in *raktapitta* (bleeding disorders) and *trishna* (relieves thirst).³²

It consists of novel O-glycoside, dehydroconiferylalcohol-9'-O-β-D-glucopyranoside along with the already reported isoorientin-7, 3'-O-dimethyl ether were isolated as antibacterial compounds from sugarcane molasses. Pharmacological studies reveal that it has anti-inflammatory, analgesic, antihyperglycemic, antihypercholesterolemic, antithrombotic, diuretic and hepatoprotective effects.³³

DISCUSSION

Panchamrut contains sufficient protein and nutrients content such as vitamins and minerals which support proper foetal growth and infant birth weight.³⁴ It acts as *Rasayana* (immune modulator and rejuvenator) which helps to produce best quality of *Rasa*, *Rakta*, and other *dhatu*³⁵ (body tissues) that means it nourishes the blood, lymph, muscles; adipose tissue thus it promotes proper development of all *organs* and prevents chronic degenerative changes and illness. *Panchamrut* play an important role to maintain the physiological requirement of iron and calcium during pregnancy. Due to its contents it helps in digestion and improves acidity, nausea occurs generally in first trimester of pregnancy. It also maintains liver function which may disturb in second and third trimester of pregnancy. It also increases the intelligence, memory power in the developing baby & keeps the body and mind pleasant of the pregnant women. Thus it is beneficial for mother as well as for the baby physically and mentally.

CONCLUSION

Maternal health and the health of her foetus is a matter of great significance because it affects the society as well. "*Panchamrut*" the combination of five *dravyas* help to enhance the physical and mental health of a pregnant woman. It should be incorporated in her daily diet regimen. After above discussion *Panchamrut* also affect the growth of foetus in her womb. Therefore, *panchamrut* has all the nutrients which are necessary required for the pregnant women and her foetus.

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