

**BREASTFEEDING (MATRUSTANYA): A DIVINE GIFT TO A
NEWBORN****Dr. Dattatraya G. Parde^{1*}**

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Kaumarbhritya/Balroga, Government Ayurvedic
College, Osmanabad, Maharashtra- 413501.

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Corresponding Author*Dr. Dattatraya G. Parde**

Assistant Professor,
Department of
Kaumarbhritya/Balroga,
Government Ayurvedic
College, Osmanabad,
Maharashtra- 413501.

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda give more value on nutrition at all stage of life, in order to protect health of an individual. Breast milk is most important food for almost all infants in the first year of life. In ancient time description of breast feed accessible from Vedas, represent the most important holy texts, in Vedas breast milk are symbols of long life and sugariness of nectarines. The ancient Ayurveda texts like Charak Samhita, the Sushruta Samhita, and Kashyap Samhita, stated the importance of breastfeeding, and value of breast milk. Milk is the only one primary diet for children in the early year of life. According to ancient texts, breastfeeding should continue up to the eruption of teeth, for at least six months. In Sushruta Samhita undoubtedly indicated concerning solid foods at the age of six months, when teething starts. Early

weaning and late weaning both are dangerous in infants. The modern sciences stated that the breast milk contains numerous antibodies, which improve immunity in infants and propose power to fight against various types of viruses and bacteria. Breastfeeding also helps in reducing risk of having asthma, allergies disorders, ear infections, respiratory illnesses, and diarrhea like diseases in your baby. Breastfeeding provides most favorable development and protection from various acute and chronic diseases. Breastfeeding helps to mothers, with recovery from pregnancy, uphold pregnancy gap and lifelong health advantages. Breastfeeding also gives benefits to society by many economical and environmental ways. Breast feeding also helps in saving of electricity and fuel as, it used in the preparation of formula feed or cow milk.

KEYWORDS: Breastfeeding, colostrum, infants, KashyapSamhita, nutrition.

INTRODUCTION

Breast milk is the best gift from mother to her baby. In Ayurveda stanya(Breast milk)is stated as Updhatu (byproduct) of Rasadhatu. According to Acharya Kashyapa during pregnancy period the formation of stanya (milk) is due to Raktadhatu and normal Stanya pramana (quantity of milk) is two Anjali. As Charaka stated that when pregnant lady take Ahara, then Ahara rasa is equally divided in three parts:

- 1st part for the nourishment of pregnant lady self
- 2nd part for the breast milk
- 3rd part for the development of fetus.

Stanya(milk) is an essence of Madhura Aahara Rasa, which produced by well digested food and collected from all over the body, enters in breast, which are essence of Rasa Dhatu.^[1] The breast milk has Varna, Gandha, Rasa, Rupa, and Sparsha in Prakrit (normal) state and which absolutely mix in water, such milk is valuable for baby.^[2] Human milk is the most suitable of all other milk for infants. Acharya Sushruta have also suggested that breastfeeding must be continued up to next conception of mother. Acharya Charaka, Sushruta and Vagbhata have described the characteristics of Stanya like, Madhur in Rasa, Kashaya in Anurasa, Sheet (sweet), Laghu (light weighted), Pathyaka (favourable), Jeevaniya (prolonging life), Bruhaniya(helps in weight gaining), Deepaniya (digestive), and Satmya(wholesome).^[3] Acharya Sushruta and Vagbhata stated that on 3rd or 4th day of delivery milk started secrets in breast. According to Acharya Kashyapa, the love and affection about a child is one of the causes responsible for Stanyapravartan (ejection and secretion of milk). Acharya Sushruta also says that, the touch and affection causes ejection of milk. Stanya is Vatahar, Pittahar and Raktadoshahar in nature and gives immediate relief in Abhigatjanya eye disorders. It is used for Nasya in Raktapitta and Aaschotan in Netraroga. According to Brihatrayi and Laghutrayi, Stanya (Milk) is said to be a whole food for babies and is Satmya for all. Breast feeding develops a strong emotional attachment between a mother and her baby. The amino acid tryptophan present in milk helps the baby to get a sound sleep for the duration of night time.

SUBSTITUTE OF STANYA (BREAST MILK)

In Ayurvedic texts, there are clear guidelines about the substitute milk in case of non availability of milk of mother. According to Acharya Sushruta, if mother is not capable to nourish her baby due to some reasons then Goat or Cow's milk must be given in appropriate

quantity.^[4] Likewise, Acharya Vagbhata has also advised that goat or cow's milk must be given to the child after adding some drugs like, Laghu-panchmoolamixed and sugar.^[5]

SHUDDHASTANYA AND ASHUDDHASTANYA (IDEAL OR VITIATED BREAST MILK)

Shuddhastanya or ideal breast milk offers subsequent characteristics such as Arogya (health), Avyahatabala (strength/power), Avyahataanga (Appropriate physical growth), Vardhatesukham (development), Anapatti (immunity against diseases) and Ayu (long life span).^[6] On the other hand, Ashuddhastanya (vitiated breast milk) develops various pathological conditions which may causes morbidities in the baby.^[7] Production of ideal breast milk has been identified with immunological outcomes in both the breastfeeding infant and the mother.^[8] AcharyaSushruta described Shuddhastanya as sheet (cold), clean, free from impurities, Sankhabh, sweet in taste, mixes uniformly in water, without formation froth or streaks when added to water. This kind of milk benefited to good health, growth and development of baby, strength to the body.^[9]

BREASTFEEDING

Breast milk is a dynamic fluid that changes in composition during the day and the course of lactation. It provides the specific nutrients for the baby, which is essential for the nourishment of baby. The changing composition of breast milk keeps pace with the infant's individual growth and changing nutritional requirements. Infant growth and development is dependent on breast milk.^[10] Anthropometry and physical examination of infant, are indicator of nutritional outcomes.

MILK FORMATION

A variety of hormones stimulate glandular tissue for lactation during pregnancy and lactation period. If infants sucking the nipple of breast that signals reach to hypothalamus which release prolactin and oxytocin from the pituitary gland. These hormones are passed to breast by blood, where it promotes secretion of milk and contraction of myoepithelial cells of the mammary glands leading to ejection of the milk from the glands.

Initiation of breast feeding

Recommendation of WHO and UNICEF is initiation of breast feeding is done within 1 hours and exclusive breast feeding till 6 month of age.^[11] Breastfeeding on demand is Breastfeeding whenever the baby or mother wants, with no restrictions on the length or frequency of feeds.

Breastfeeding make available all the micronutrients essential for an infant during first 6 month of life but it does not provide iron and Vitamin D in sufficient quantity.

TEN STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL BREASTFEEDING^[12]

Step 1	Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care staff
Step 2	Train all health-care staff in skills necessary to implement this policy.
Step 3	Inform all pregnant women about the benefits of breastfeeding.
Step 4	Help mothers initiate breastfeeding within a half-hour of birth.
Step 5	Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation, even if they should be separated from their infants.
Step 6	Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breast milk unless medically indicated
Step 7	Practice rooming-in - allow mothers and infants to remain together - 24 hours a day.
Step 8	Encourage breastfeeding on demand.
Step 9	Give no artificial teats or pacifiers (also called dummies and soothers) to breastfeeding infants.
Step 10	Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from the hospital or clinic.

MATERNAL CONDITIONS WHEN BREAST FEEDING IS CONTRAINDICATED

Some condition in Mothers when breast feeding is contraindicated:

- a. HIV infection
- b. Herpes simplex virus type -1. If lesions on breasts, avoid Breast feed until active lesions have healed.
- c. Maternal medications - When mother take Sedating psychotherapeutic drugs; radioactive iodine^[131], excessive use of topical iodine; cytotoxic chemotherapy then stop Breast feeding permanently.

MOTHERS WHO CAN CONTINUE BREASTFEEDING

- a. Breast abscess
- b. Hepatitis B - Infants should get vaccine.
- c. Hepatitis C
- d. Mastitis - If painful, remove milk by expression
- e. TB in mother
- f. Maternal use of nicotine, alcohol, amphetamines and cocaine can cause sedation in mother and baby.

BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING

Ayurvedic and modern text have complete facts regarding to advantage of breastfeeding. According to Acharya Kashyapa good growth, strength, longevity and good health of child depend on breast feeding.^[13] Acharya Charaka^[14] and Vagbhata^[15] give similar description. Breast feeding should begin, as soon after birth as possible. Some advantages of breast feeding to the child are described as below:

a. Breastfeeding is gold standard for infants nutrition and it have some long term and short term benefits

Short term benefits	Long term benefits
Best nutrition, immune protection and help in growth and development.	Prevent against atopic diseases in children with a family history.
Reduce morbidity, mortality and hospital admission related to diarrhea and respiratory tract infection.	May protect against type 2 DM when children reach adolescence.
Prevent atopic diseases	Increases in performance in intelligence tests.
Reduce risk if SIDS (Sudden infants death syndrome)	

- b. Colostrum contains antibodies called immunoglobulin such as IgA, IgG and IgM in mammals. Colostrum also contains carbohydrates, lipids, proteins, vitamin A etc. and sodium chloride, potassium, growth factors and antimicrobial factors. The antibodies in colostrum provide passive immunity.
- c. Exclusive breast-feeding for six months protects the infants from recurrent episodes of otitis media.
- d. Breastfeeding reduced the risk of recurrent urinary tract infections in infant.^[16]
- e. Breastfeeding reduces the risk of sudden infant death syndrome in Infant.^[17]
- f. Breast feeding for six month delays the occurrence of atopic dermatitis, cow milk allergy, and wheezing in early childhood.^[18]
- g. Exclusive breastfeeding for six month or more diminish the risk of recurrent respiratory tract infection.^[19]
- h. Breastfeeding is associated with a reduction in childhood obesity risk.^[20]
- i. Breastfeeding also helpful in slight prevention of childhood acute leukemia or lymphoma.^[21]
- j. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life is associated with a significantly lower rate of NIDDM.^[22]

- k. Breastfeeding soon after birth provides protection against pregnancy due to lactational amenorrhea.^[23]
- l. Mothers who breast feed their babies have a reduced risk of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, and endometrial cancer.^[24]
- m. Breast milk contains about 3.5 g of fat per 100 ml of milk. Breast-milk fat contains long chain polyunsaturated fatty acids (docosahexaenoic acid or DHA, and arachidonic acid). These fatty acids are important for the neurological development of a child.
- n. The concentration of protein in breast milk (0.9 g per 100 ml) is lower than in animal milks. The much higher protein in animal milks can overload the infant's immature renal system and gastrointestinal system.
- o. Colostrum is thick milk that is clear and colorless or yellowish and high in protein, which is exactly what your baby needs in the first few days. Colostrum contains antibodies that protect baby from infections Helps baby pass the dark, tarry stools he has in the first day or two.

p. Benefits To Baby^[25]

- Breast milk provides human species specific nutrients for best growth of the baby.
- Breast milk is easily digestible.
- This is ready to serve.
- Breastfeeding protects against hypothermia.
- Breast milk contains many growth factors, immune factors and other bioactive substances that protect the baby against infection.
- It decreases the risk for many adult onset diseases like obesity, type-2 diabetes mellitus and hypertension.
- Breastfeeding is protective for many other chronic ailments also like asthma.
- Neurological and visual development is enhanced by breastfeeding.
- This has been observed that breastfed babies have higher intelligence quotients than those who were not breastfed.

q. Benefits To Mother^[25]

- This is the most convenient method of feeding a newborn.
- Breastfeeding decreases the postpartum blood loss in the mother and thus also protects against anemia.

- Lactational amenorrhea in mother who are exclusively breastfeeding their babies serve as a contraceptive measure.
- This protects the mother against obesity and helps her to shape her body after pregnancy.
- Breastfeeding decreases the risk of breast and ovarian cancer.

r. Benefits To The Family^[25]

- The expenses of buying other milk are saved.
- Health care cost is also decreased because of less frequent episodes of illness in the baby.
- Breastfeeding enhances maternal- child emotional bonding.

s. Benefits To The Society^[25]

- Breastfeeding is more eco-friendly as it needs no fuel for its preparation.
- Breastfed babies are better human resource, thus improving the productivity and economy of a country.

CONCLUSION

For infants breast milk is best source of nutrition and immunological support. In Ayurveda detail explanation of breast milk benefit, disorders of breast milk, effect on the child, importance and formation of breast milk, substitute milk, general treatment of Stanyakshaya are described. Breast feeding is gold standard for infants nutrition and it have some long term and short term benefits. Colostrum is thick milk that contains antibodies called immunoglobulin such as IgA, IgG and IgM. The antibodies in colostrum provide passive immunity.

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