

CONCEPT OF GARBHADHAN

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ABSTRACT

Fertilization is the basic process involved in evolving the progeny and to have progeny is the basic desire of every human being. Women owe their maximum fertility potential during 20s upto 35yrs of age after which fertility index starts dropping. Pregnancy should be by choice not by chance. Delay in marriage and first conception is the trend working couple adopts which directly or indirectly affects the ability to conceive naturally. People are under a lot of stress in their lives which hamper or brings down the quality of egg and sperm and thereby the conception. *Ayurveda* the science of life has wonderfully enlightened the concept of “*Garbhadhan vidhi*” i.e. the regimen followed during pre- pregnancy period to achieve conception. *Garbh Nirdharan samay*, *Garbh Sambhav Samgri*, *Garbhadhana Vidhi* and *Ahara* are some of the procedures which could be categorized under the topic of pre-conceptional care. *Ayurveda* has its own perspective in building up of a healthy progeny which will become the future of our society. This

aspect of ayurveda throws light on the importance of preconception care i.e. the couple should follow the protocol before they are trying to conceive.

KEYWORDS: *Garbhadhaan Vidhi*, preconception care, *Ayurveda*.

INTRODUCTION

As we all are well verse with the main objective of *Ayurveda* is to maintain the health of the healthy person and to cure the disease of the diseased person.^[1] *Ayurveda* says “*sarvam dravyam panchbhautikatvam*”^[2] It means everything in this universe is made up of five

basic elements which are *Akash* (space), *Vayu* (air), *Agni* (fire), *Jala* (water), *Prithvi* (ether). Our body is a complex form which basically is made up of these five basic elements in a subtle way. For achieving the highest state of existence these elements need to work together and maintain balance. *Ayurveda* gives immense significance to the preparation of both partners prior to conception. it includes internal purification as well as chanting of mantras which has direct impact on regulation of HPO axis in female and male partner as well. The aims and objectives of pre-conceptional care is to identify the high-risk factors, stabilising the previous disease, to discontinue the teratogenic medications, improve the base level health, to prevent the repetitive reproductive disease & to ensure that woman enters pregnancy with optimal state of health which would be safe for both herself & foetus.^[3]

Age for conception

Ayurveda says suitable age of male for conception is 25yrs and 16yrs for females.^[4] *Acharaya Vagbhatta* also describes the same age for conception as *Acharaya Charaka*.^[5]

At this age both male and female develops their secondary sexual characters and are mature psychologically and hence they should attempt for conception. Since both the partners are full of valour and vigour at this age, the born child also possesses these qualities.

Garbha Sambhava Samagri

- *Ayurveda* has beautifully explained the importance of four factors which are responsible for conception namely *Ritu* (fertile period), *Kshetra* (receptive field), *Ambu* (healthy and nutritious fluid), *Beej* (male and female gametes) *Acharaya Susruta* says germination of a seed occurs only when there is favorable season, fertile field, proper irrigation and nutrition to a good quality seed. The same way these four factors are responsible for conception to occur.^[6]

Ritu- Riturangnaya Rajah Samay- (Dalhan)

The *Ritu* (Kala) can be understood as age as well as fertile period.

Fertility is less in either extreme of life that is childhood as well as old age and is also due to postponement of first conception as the *Ritu Kala* declines as ageing proceed. Probability of chromosomal abnormalities is higher as ageing proceed. *Ritu kala* can be taken as age of female gamete (egg) as well as age of female and age of male as well. Once the *Ritu kala* is

over yoni gets closed as lotus flower closes its petals.^[7] *Shodhan Karma* done in preconception period helps in timely release of ovum which will aid in conception.

Kshetra- Kshetram Garbhashayah (Dalhan)

Kshetra means *Yoni*, *Garbhashaya* & *Yoni Marga* (*Shthana* of fertilization and fetus development) where and through which the development along with end result i.e. birth takes places. Success of conception and development of *Garbha* depends upon health status of *Garbhashaya*, *Yoni* and *Yoni Marga*. The abnormalities of *Kshetra* as whole mainly affect power of implantation. *Shodhan Karma* and *Ahara* prescribed in *Garbhadhan Vidhi* has a direct impact on the quality of egg and receptivity of endometrium as it makes not only the *Garbhashaya* health but also improves local blood supply and hence it makes the fertile bed more suitable for implantation and ultimately *Garbhadhaan*.

Ambu- Ambu Punaraharpakjo Vyapi Rasadhatu (Dalhan)

Ambu resembles *Rasa Dhatu* means nutritional elements that nourishes fetus. *Veerya* of *Aahar Rasa* from mother to fetus transported by *Upasneha* and *Upsweda* process through *Rasavaha nadi* of mother during early pregnancy and through *Nabhinadi* of *Garbha* during later stages of pregnancy.^[8] Inadequate nourishment to the implanted embryo can leads fetal deformities and may cause miscarriages and stillbirths. Therefore, *Ambu* play vital role towards the wellbeing of mother as well as the fetus. *Shodhana karma* explained in *Garbhadhan Vidhi* improves the *Jatharagni* and in turns improve the nutritious level of body. Thus, *Ambu* or the nutrition is also one of the essential factors for *Garbhadhaan*.

Beeja

Shodhana Karma which is performed preconceptionally not only ensures timely ovulation but also improves the quality of *Beeja* as seen clinically. In many cases drastic improvement has been achieved following *Shodhana Karma* and *Ayurvedic* treatment. This *Vidhi* Thus improving ovarian reserves as well as quality of ovum.

Garbhadhan Vidhi

Our classics explains specific sets of rules which have to be followed by the lady during her *Ritukala* and thereafter in attempt to have better progeny. According to them the women should not indulge in sexual activity at least for three days after the onset of menstruation.

Classics says to follow celibacy, sleep on grass bed, avoid day sleep, excessive talking, massage & bathing.^[9] ON deeper observation we found that all these are true because during initial days of menstruation the women require adequate rest, sympathy and certain time for herself because as per *Ayurveda Vata Dosha* is the main cause of pain and also causes *kshaya* of *Bala*, *Varana*, *Sukh* and *Aayu* in the body.^[10] Any kind of exertional activities are going to increase *Vata Dosha* in her body and hence rest is advised. These will also keep her away from the environmental xeno oestrogen's & mutagens which can cause mutation leading to foetal anomalies further when conception happen. On the fourth day after her menses, she should wear new clothes after taking bath and meet her husband. It is advised that she should see only her husband at that time, as classics says the offspring will resemble the first looked person after bath.^[11] Intercourse if done on the first day of menstruation diminishes the life of the man and if conception occurs by this the foetus would die during delivery. if conception happen to occur on the second day the child would die in the immediate post- natal period and if conception occurs on third day the child would have incompletely formed body parts or a short life. And conception by the fourth day, the child would have fully developed body parts and long life. So, it is recommended by our classics to have intercourse on fourth day of menses and thereafter as conception during that period delivers a baby who will be *Roopavan* (beautiful), *Satvavaan* (*Stherya*) and *Chirayu* (long life).^[12] *Purva Karma* consists of *Snehan*(unction) and *Swedan* (fomentation)of both man and woman and thereafter *Acharayas* has prescribed body detoxification by *Shodhan Karma* i.e.*Vamana* (emesis) and *Virechana* (purgation).^[13] After that doshas in the body of both partners come gradually to normalcy. Thereafter they should take *Asthapana* and *Anuvasana basti* (medicated enema). By undergoing these processes of purification all the minute *Strotas* of body gets open and proper channelization of *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala* occurs in the body and hence these procedures are must for every couple before conception. After purification the man should be managed with ghee and milk cooked with sweet drugs and the woman with oil and *Masha* (black gram).^[14]

PUMSAVAN VIDHI

(*Puman Syevyatha Anena Karmana Ithi Pumsavana Karma*) the process by which the female is changed to male in the foetus that is known as *Pumsavana*. This process is conducted during the third month of the pregnancy before the manifestation of the sex in the foetus.^[15] According to *Sushrutha* paste of drug like *Lakshmana*, *Vatashringa*, *Sahadeva*, *Vishwadiva* etc. should be made with cow's milk and 3- 4 drops of expressed juice should be instilled in right nostril to the woman desirous of a male baby and she should not spit this paste out.^[16]

According to *Charaka*, two intact buds from healthy twigs proceeded from the Eastern and Northern side growing in a cowyard of Banayan tree (*Ficus Indica* Linn), seeds of *Dhanya masha* and yellow mustard should be pasted with curd and is taken during *Pushya Nakshatra*. Both well developed or two seeds of white mustard added into a quantity of curd. The woman that has conceived should be made to drink it under the constellation of *Pushya nakshatra*. Another Pumsavana Medicine is made by the *kalka* of (a) *Jeevaka* (b) *Rishabaka* (c) *Apamarga* (d) *Sahachara* or if each easily available should be boiled with milk and given to the women to drink. Further in the likeness of a man very small proportions made of gold, or silver, or Iron made red hot in fire and then dipped into a measure of curd or milk or water should be swallowed without leaving remnant, under the influence of the constellation *Pushyami*. Under the same *Nakshatra* of *Pushyami* the woman may be made to inhale the vapours of a *Pistha* that is being baked on fire and then dissolving that *Pishtha* in a measure of water and the mixture should be cast over the door. The woman should use this water using a stick of cotton apply to her right nostril.^[17]

POSITION FOR INTERCOURSE

During the time of intercourse both the partners must be with *Prasanna Chittata*. The man should go to the bed by keeping his right leg first *Dakshina pada* while the women should encroach by her left leg first.^[18] The woman should be in supine position during intercourse so she can receive the seed (semen) and in this condition as every *Dosha* remains in normal position.^[19] Afterwards the lady is advised to avoid strenuous work and to maintain the celibacy till the signs of pregnancy arrive.

DIET

Ayurveda has given prime value to the importance of *Ahara* in one's life. It is one factor among the *Trayoupstambh*^[20] and hence upon *Ahara* thrives life of every person. Similarly, diet play an important role in successful conception. Diet for both the partners has been explained by our *Acharayas*. For male diet consists of milk and ghee prepared with the help of sweet drugs as all of them possesses *Madhura Guna* and *Sheet Veerya* it aids in increasing the quality of sperm in males and for women advised diet consists of *Taila* (oil) and *Masha* (black gram) which have got *Ushna Veerya* and *Aagney* properties and hence improves the *Aartava* in female body. black gram also is a rich source of folate. This diet is advised for the period of one month. *Asthanga Hrudaya* advocates the use of ghee *Phalaghrita* & *Mahakalyanaka Ghrita*^[21] and *Acharya Kashyapa* on the other hand explains *Lashuna Kshira*

(milk prepared by garlic) & ghee. A good diet and lifestyle is critical and advised to every couple for at least six months before trying to conceive. Ghee is one more component explained in pre-conceptional time and even during pregnancy. Ghee is rich in Vitamins A & E. It is rich in conjugated linoleic acid, has got antioxidant and Antiviral properties. It is rich in medium chain fatty acids which are absorbed directly into liver & burnt as energy. It also contains Butyric which helps in production of killer T cells in the gut thus helps in healthy immune system.^[22] Healthy lifestyle and good nutrition are the prerequisite prior to conception for every woman. This will help to minimise health risks of both mother and infant. And even she would not be devoid of her stores even after pregnancy.

DISCUSSION

The modern lifestyle gradually leads to increase in the stress which is major cause for infertility. Habits like alcohol consumption & the environmental toxicity affects the sperm count, its quality and motility. In females it affects the regulation of hypothalamic pituitary ovarian axis and thus ovulation. Our *Acharayas* has also explained about some conditions during which conception should be avoided for example a woman who is suffering with excessive hunger, thirst, fear, grief, anger, excessive desire for coitus, teenage, aged woman and a woman suffering from any chronic disease should avoid conception.^[23] Pre-conception care had focused not only on women who had previously an unfavourable outcome but it can also be given in woman who are desirous of healthy pregnancy. *Shodhana* could be planned in both cases. Woman approaching *Ayurvedic* system of medicine are explained about the role of *Shodhana*, *Garbhadhaan Vidhi* in achieving healthy progeny and also maintenance of pregnancy without any undue complications. Along with this dietary regimen has been explained for both partners which inculcate basic nutritional need of the body.

CONCLUSION

Ayurvedic modality can provide global solution to those women's who are seeking advice pre conceptionally. Pre-conceptional care includes a set of interventions that aim to identify and modify biomedical, behavioural and social risk to a woman's health or pregnancy outcome through prevention and management.^[24] The basic goal of preconception care is to prepare body for pregnancy, birth and beyond. Preconception care improves chances of falling pregnant more easily, having a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby and aiding recovery after the birth. Pre-conception care is essential to prevent complications to mother and foetus. Thus, *Garbh Sambhav Samgri*, *Shodhana*, *Garbhadhaan Vidhi* in pre-conception

has been proven to be beneficial to achieve healthy progeny. It can be easily achieved if the lady follows all regimen. *Garbhadhaan Vidhi* and *Ahara* in pre conception should be adopted by every female who wish to get pregnant and to have best experience during pregnancy and beyond.

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