Journal of Ayurveda and Integrated Medical Sciences

www.jaims.in
**Sutika Paricharya - Post Natal Care in Ayurveda**

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**ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda give importance for the care of mother at every phase of her life specially when it comes to antenatal care and postnatal care. A postnatal period beginning immediately after the separation of placenta and extending up to 6 weeks, otherwise called as puerperium or puerperial period. Postnatal care certainly related with Sutika Paricharya explained in Ayurvedic classics. Garbhini and Sutika Paricharya are well described by our Ancient Ayurvedic scholars in their respective Samhitas. They have described dietary regimen, living style, and other required management for whole pregnancy and up to 6 month after delivery. In this stage mother should be educated to take care of herself and the new born baby. This period is of happiness and contentment, on one hand and physical and mental fatigue due to delivery, on the other hand, she become weak or emaciated after loss of blood and body fluid during delivery. Garbhini is much prone to the disease due to aggravation of Doshas. This further may be aggravated during delivery and puerperium due to loss of blood and other important Dhatus of body. Therefore she needs special and proper care during pregnancy as well as during puerperium. The regimen that helps the woman to regain her lost vitality and helps her body to revert back to prepregnant state is called Sutika Paricharya, as during this period she restores her health and strength.

**Key words:** Sutika Paricharya, Garbhini, Postnatal care, Puerperium.

**INTRODUCTION**

As per modern medical science the puerperium is the period following child birth during which the body tissues especially the pelvic organ revert back to the pre pregnant state both anatomically and physiologically.¹

Ayurveda has always given importance to care the Stree (female) at every phase of life in respect of Rajaswala Paricharya (menstrual care), Garbhini Paricharya (Antenatal care) and Sutika Paricharya (post natal care). In Ayurveda, the term Sutika (puerperial women) can be used only after expulsion of placenta.² Mithyochar (inappropriate physical and mental behavior) in this period definitely results in incurable disease.³ It is said in Ayurveda about 74 types of diseases can happen in this period if not managed properly. Due to development of fetus, instability of body tissues, exertion of labour pains and excreations of moisture and blood, the woman becomes very weak. After following proper puerperial care woman regain all the lost things and reaches pre pregnancy status.⁴

**Sutika Paricharya**

The postnatal phase is named as ‘Sutika Kala’ in Ayurveda. This term is obtained from the word ‘Prasuta’ (mother following delivery). There are different opinions about the duration of this period, which ranges from six weeks to six months and some believes that it lasts until the re-establishment of menstrual cycle. Ayurveda classics has described management of Sutika, but Kashyapa has described in
detail about it. Sutika Kala (duration of puerperium / post natal phase) mentioned by various Ayurvedic classics can be tabulated as follows.

**Table 1: Sutika Kala (duration of post natal phase)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ayurvedic text</th>
<th>Sutika Kala (duration of post natal period)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sushruta Samhita</td>
<td>Following 1½ month of regulated specific dietetics and mode of life of the woman becomes free from the epithet of Sutika and have cited the opinion of others that the women should be called Sutika till she does not restart her menstrual cycle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astanga Hridaya</td>
<td>Same as Sushruta Samhita i.e 1½ month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashyapa Samhita</td>
<td>Six months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga Ratnakar</td>
<td>Special dietetic management for 1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhavprakash</td>
<td>In addition agreeing explanation of Sushruta (i.e. 1½ month), he has cited that following subsidence of complication and aggravation of Doshas, the woman should give up specific mode of life following four months.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following delivery, Ahara Rasa reaches the breast and forms milk, remaining Rasa getting transformed into the blood circulating in the whole body reaches to reproductive system. Following achievement of refill of Dhatu and steadiness of body, the blood gathered in uterus is discharged cyclically.

Sutika Paricharya includes mainly three parts Ahara (Diet), Vihar (Lifestyle) and Aushadhi (Post natal visit and medicines). As per medical science has advised post natal examination i.e. twice daily for first three days and subsequently once a day till the umbilical cord drops off. At each examination should see about temperature, pulse, respiration and breast examination, progress of normal involution of uterus, examination of lochia for the abnormality, check urine and bowels and advise on perineal toileting including stitches if any. Next visit at 6 weeks to see the involution of uterus and should complete by then and there after once 2 or 3 month till end of one year.

**Table 2: Showing Ahara, Vihara and Aushadi Kalpana for Sutika**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Ahara Kalpana (diet)</th>
<th>Vihara (mode of life)</th>
<th>Aushadhi (medicines)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charaka Samhita</td>
<td>Liquid gruel of rice medicated with Pippali (piper longum), Pippalimula (piper longum’s root), Chavya (piper retrofractum), Chitraka (plumbago zeylanica), Shrinagvera (ziniber officinale) for 5 -7 days. Use of Brihagana drugs from 6th or 8th day.</td>
<td>Abhayanga of abdomen with Taila or Gita then Udaveshstan a with big clean cloth. Irrigation or bath with luke warm water.</td>
<td>Sarpi, Taila, Vasa or Majja with Pippali (piper longum), Pippalimula (piper longum’s root), Chavya (piper retrofractum), Chitraka (plumbago zeylanica), Shrinagvera (ziniber officinale) Churna. Anupana-Ushna Jala for 5 or 7 nights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sushrut Samhita</td>
<td>Sneha Yavagu or Kshara Yavagu saturated with drugs of Vidanigandra di (Desmodium gangeticum etc.) Gana from 3rd or 4th to 6th or 7th days. Meat soup of wild Abhyanga with Bala (Sida cordifolia) Taila, then irrigation with decoction of Bhadradasru (Cedrus deodara) etc. drugs capable of suppressing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pippali (piper longum), Pippalimula (piper longum’s root), Chavya (piper retrofractum), Chitraka (plumbago zeylanica), Hastipippali and Shrinagvera (ziniber officinale).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Astanga Sangrah

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ashtanga [13]</th>
<th>Long, piper longum’s root, piper retrofractum, plumbago zeylanica, ziniber officinale) Siddha Peya for first 3 days. <strong>Vidaryadi Gana</strong> (Pueraria tuberose etc.) Kwatha Siddha Snehavukta Yavagu or Kshira Yavagu from 4th -7th day, after that gradually Brimhana diet from 8th-12th day, meat soup should be used. <strong>Panchakola</strong> (piper longum, piper longum’s root, piper retrofractum, plumbago zeylanica, ziniber officinale) Churna. Anupana - Ushna Gudodaka (warm jaggery water) for 2 or 3 days. <strong>Kashyap Samhita</strong></th>
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<tr>
<th>Astanga Hridaya</th>
<th><strong>Panchakola</strong> (piper)</th>
<th><strong>Kashyap Samhita</strong></th>
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</thead>
</table>

**Description:**
- **Altav.**
- **Abhyanga** with **Bala** (Sida cardifolia) **Taila.** Udarveshtan a after massage of abdomen with **Taila** or **Ghrita.** Irrigation with luke water. Massage unguent and bathing with **Jivaniya and Brimhaniya, Madhur and Vatahara drugs.**

**Sneha** with **Panchakola** (piper longum, piper longum’s root, piper retrofractum, plumbago zeylanica, ziniber officinale) **Churna** or **Sneha** with **Yawani** (Trachypermum amum ammi), **Upakunchika** (Nigella sativa) Chavya (piper retrofractum), Chitraka (plumbago zeylanica), Vyosh (Zingiber officinale, Piper nigrum, Piper longum) and **Saindhava Anupana** - **Ushna Jala** for 7 nights. **Snehapana** acc. to **Satmya.**

**Anupana - Manda** for 3 or 5 days.**Kashyap Samhita**

**Pippali (piper longum), Nagar (ziniber officinale) Yuktia and Saindhavarah ita Alposneha Yukta Yavagu for first 3 or 5 days, then Sasnehalavana Yukta Yavagu, then Sasneha- Lavana Amla Yukta Kullatha (Dolichos biflours) Massage of back, pressure of abdomen and flanks, then Udarveshtan a. Sitting over a small chair covered with leather bag filled with hot **Bala** (Sida cardifolia) **Taila,** then sudation in the Yoni with oleo prepared.

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**Anupana - Manda** for 3 or 5 days. **Kashyap Samhita**
Yusha with meat soup of wild animals and Ghritabrishta Kushamand (Benincasa hispida) and Moolaka (Raphanus sativus).[14] with Priyangu (Callicarpa macrophylla) etc. hot water bath after proper sudation, fumigation, with Kushtha (Saussurea lappa), Guggulu (Commiphora mukul) and Agaru (Aquilaria agallocha) mixed with Ghrita.[16]

Harita Samhita

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ushna Kulattha</strong> (Dolichos biflorus) Yusha on 2nd day, Panchakola (piper longum, piper longum’s root, piper retrofractum, plumbago zeylanica, zingiber officinale) Yavagu on 3rd day, Chaturjatak (Cinnamomum zeylanicum, Elettaria cardmomum, leaves of Cinnamomum zeylanicum, Mesua ferrea) mixed Yavagu Vaginal filling with oil and massage followed by sudation with hot water.[17] Decoction of available drugs out of Lodhra (Symplocos racemosa), Arjuna (Terminalia arjuna), Kadamba (Anthocephalus indicus), Devadaru (Cedrus deodara), Beejaka (Pterocarpus marsupium) and Karkandu (a verity of ziziphus mauritiana). Then Nagara (zingiber officinale) and Haritaki (terminalia chebula) Churna with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>on 4th day, cooked rice of Shali or Shastika on 5th day.[17] jaggery on 2nd day morning.[17]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Amulet for Sutika (Puerperal Women)

The puerperal woman should tie amulet of Trivrata (Operculina turpethun) over her head.[18]

Puerperal management according to the sex of child: oil should be given for drinking to Sutika in case of delivery of male child and Ghrita in case of female child.[19]

Pathya and Apathya for Sutika[20]

Pathya

1. Sutika should have bath with much quantity of warm water.
2. Boiled water should be taken for drinking purpose.
3. Parisheka, Avagahana etc. are always with luke warm water.
4. She should do Udarveshtana.
5. Snehana and Swedana must be done everyday as per Desha, Kala etc.
6. Kashyapa has given the special indication of Madana for Sutika.

Apathya

1. Physical and mental stress, anger etc.
2. Cold water, cold wine and cold things.
3. The sexual intercourse.
4. There is contraindication of Panchakarma for Sutika.
   (a) Due to administration of Asthapanas, the Amadosha of Sutika would be increased.[21]
   (b) Due to Nasya Karma, emaciation, anorexia, body ache would be created in Sutika.[22]
Benefits of Sutika Paricharya

It can be concluded that the Sutika who is weak due to development of foetus, loss of Dhatu, excretion of Kleda, blood and exhaustion due to labour pain can regain her pre-pregnancy state by following this Paricharya. We can summarize post natal care in Ayurveda as follows,

1. Strengthen and improves digestion power.
2. Tones muscles, calms nerves and greases all joints.
3. Increase psychological alertness, apparent thinking and emotional steadiness.
4. Helps woman’s body reserve into her normal shape.
5. Effortless lactation and more restful feeding.

DISCUSSION

The speciality of giving birth to a child made a woman usually for her creative point of view in the life. In Sutika Kala, proper Sutika Paricharya cause complete involution of uterus and other pelvic organ, so that they reach to their pre pregnant state. Aim of puerperium is to maintain maternal and infant health preventing any complication and to establish infant feeding. Abhayanga have been described in all most all of Ayurvedic classics. Abhayanga causes toning up of muscles of pelvic floor, abdomen, back and vagina. Ayurveda advocates Bala oil (sida cardifolia), Dasmoola oil, sesamum oil for Abhayanga during postnatal period. Abhayanga can prevent the thrombosis because rubbing and friction during massage dilate superficial blood vessel and thus improves venous blood flow. Vaginal massage facilitates proper drainage of Lochia i.e. vaginal secretion, pacifies Apana Vata and tones up vagina. Swedana for Sutika has been described by Acharya Sushruta, Kashyapa, Harita and Yogaratnakar. Since Swedana is having the property of Vatashamana, hence it is beneficial during Sutika Kala where Vata is vitiated. In general all the texts have advised massage, oral administration of fat with drugs and decoction for 3-7 days after delivery.

CONCLUSION

As Sutika Kala is a critical period for women, it needs a proper management and care with specific diet, mode of life and Aushadi. In Sutika Kala there is vitiation of Vata, therefore it is most advisable to take Vata Shamaka drugs. During Sutika Kala, woman needs a special management and care for proper and healthy growth of new born baby as well as for maintenance of her own health.

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http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.v2i3.8227

Source of Support: Nil, Conflict of Interest: None declared.