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Importance of *Vata* in *Garbha Utpatti*

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ABSTRACT

Vata is described as a beholder of *Yantra* and *Tantra*. *Yantra* is whole body and *Tantra* is controlling of whole body organization. *Vata* has major role to play right from the time of conception to till one's last breath. *Vata* also programs the fetal growth (*Kruta Garbhakruthinam*). So *Vata* along with many other components plays a major role in *Garbha Angavayava Utpatti*. The aggravation of *Vata* during pregnancy causes abnormalities in the fetus. By proper management of *Vata* during pregnancy results in healthy progeny, so there is a need to know the role of *Vata* in *Garbha Utpatti*.

Key words: *Garbha, Angavayava Utpatti, fetus.*

INTRODUCTION

Shareera (body) is considered as confluence of *Tridosha, Dhatu* and *Mala*. *Tridosha* commands prime importance as they are primary and essential constitutional factors. Among them *Vata* has major role to play since it is indicative of continuity of span of life and among *Agreya, Vata* is best in giving life and consciousness. In our classical books the importance of *Vata* in the formation of *Garbha* is explained in particular. In order to get healthy progeny and to prevent health deformities of fetus the proper knowledge of role of *Vata* in *Garbha Utpatti* should be understood hence an attempt is being made to understand the role of *Vata* in *Garbha*

Utpatti.

Vata is derived from root word "*Va*" meaning movement.^[1] Synonyms of *Vata* are *Mrutyu, Yama, Niyama, Prajapati, Aditi, Vishwakarma, Vishwaroopa, Sarvaga*.^[2] *Panchabhoutikatva* of *Vata* is *Vayu* and *Akasha Mahabhoota*.^[3] *Sthana* of *Vata* are *Pakwashaya, Kati, Sakthi, Shrotham, Sparshanam* and *Vishesha Sthana* is *Pakwashaya*.^[4] *Gunas* of *Vata* are *Rooksha, Laghu, Sheeta, Khara, Sookshma, Chala*.^[5] *Prana, Udana, Samana, Vyana* and *Aapana* are the types of *Vata*. *Prana Vata* maintains proper functions of *Buddi, Indriya* and *Chitta* and performs functions such as sneezing, belching, respiration and eating. *Udana Vata* function includes speech, enthusiasm, energy, strength, complexion and memory. *Vyana Vata* function includes all body movements such as rapid movements, flexion, extension, closure and opening of eye lids. *Samana Vata* receives food into digestive tract, digests it, separates the essence from excrements and liberates them to their respective pathways. *Apana Vata* is concerned with expulsion of *Shukra, Arthava, Shakruth, Mutra* and *Garbha*.^[6]

Importance of *Vata*

- Every action / movement of body / body parts are under the influence of *Vata*.^[7]

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- *Vata* is responsible for maintenance of *Ayu, Bala and Shareera Dharana*.^[8]
- *Pitta* and *Kapha* move in the direction of *Vata* in our Body. So, if *Vata* is balanced *Pitta* and *Kapha* are automatically balanced.^[9]

Paribhasha of Garbha

The union of *Shukra* (sperm), *Arthava* (ovum) and *Atma* (soule) inside the *Kukshi* (uterus) is known as "*Garbha*".^[10]

Shad Dhatu of *Garbha* (6 major components of fetus) are *Pancha Maha Bhoota* and *Chetanadhisthana Bhoota (Atma)*.^[11]

Importance of Vata in fetal development

Garbha Sthapana

Kashyapa says the *Vibhajana* (splitting) and *Dharana* (retention) action is done by *Vata*.

Development of Garbha

The development of the fetus mainly depends upon the inflation done by *Vayu* and nourishment supplied by *Rasa* is the opinion of *Sushruta* and *Bhavamishra*.

Behind the umbilicus there is definitely the location of *Jyothisthana* (the place of light / fire). The *Vayu* by its blowing action excites/stimulates this fire, which in turn performs development of body.^[12]

Shape and features

Vayu gives definite shape to the fetus in the opinion of *Charaka*.^[12]

According to *Sushruta* the *Vata* associated with *Agni* splits the upward, downward and oblique running channels, resulting in development of fetus.^[12]

Stages of development of fetus from Kalala to Angavayava Utpatti according to Haritha^[12]

- *Beeja* (sperm and ovum together) attains the shape of *Kalala* by the action of *Agni* situated in a *Pachamahabhoota*.
- Further the internally situated *Kalala* gets the shape of *Budbuda* by the action of outside *Vayu*.

- This *Budbuda* again becoming *Kalala* gets solidified in the shape of *Pinda* (solid) by the action of *Panchabhutagni*; by further metabolism of this mass becomes a heap of solid substance.
- Then *Vyana vata* forms the *Panchatatvas*, arms, legs, head and other body parts. The internally situated *Vyana Vata* reaching different parts gives this solid mass a shape of body.
- *Udana Vata* situated in neck and heart forms oral cavity and its aperture.
- *Apana Vata* situated downwards clarifies the *Apana Dwara* (anal orifice).
- Similarly, internally situated *Vayu* comes out of the body making different orifices they are nine external meatuses they are oral, both nasals, both eyes, both ears, anal and urinary system are formed.

Table 1: Components of fetus derived from Vayu^[13]

Components	Charaka	Astanga Sangraha	Astanga Hrudaya	Kashyapa	Haritha
Sparsha (sense of touch)	+	+	+	+	+
Sparshanendriya (organs of sense of touch)	+	+	-	+	-
Rauksya (roughness)	+	-	-	+	-
Prerana (impulsion)	+	-	-	+	-
Cheshta/Parispandanana (activity of body)	+	+	-	+	-
Dhatu Vyuhana (formation of dhatu)	+	-	-	+	-
Uchwasa (expiration)	+	+	+	-	+

Beside these, inspiration, opening and closure of eye-lids, contraction and relaxation, movement, propulsion and retention by *Charaka*. *Laghava* (lightness) and *Praswasa* (inspiration) by *Vagbhata*. *Prana* and *Apana* by *Kashyapa*. *Karna* (ears), *Sweda* (sweat/perspiration), *Chankramana* (walking) and other characters of *Vata* by *Haritha* have also been enumerated.

Formation of *Srotas* and *Peshi*^[14]

Vata combined with *Ushma* for the same purpose, creates the *Srotas* (pores, channels, passages) entering into the muscle tissue. The *Vata* and *Pitta* dividing the muscles into *Peshi* (individual muscles).

Formation of *Antra*, *Guda* and *Basti*^[14]

Prasada of *Asruk* (blood) together with *Shleshma*, while undergoing cooking by *Pitta* is traversed by *Vata* by this *Antrani* (2 intestines), *Guda* (rectum and anal canal) and *Basti* (urinary bladder) get formed inside the abdomen, just like essence of gold gets formed by blowing air (on the molten gold).

Formation of *Ashaya*^[14]

Residing for sometimes at certain places (in the fetal mass) *Vayu* makes for the formulation of *Ashayas* (hollow organs).

Table 2: Formation of *Garbha Varna*^[15]

Complexion depends on both *Dosha* and *Mahabhuta*.

Complexion	Responsible <i>Doshas</i> and <i>Mahabhutas</i>		
	<i>Charaka</i> and <i>Vagbhata</i>	<i>Sushruta</i>	<i>Harita</i>
<i>Gaura</i> (fair)	<i>Teja</i> <i>Jala</i> <i>Akasha</i>	<i>Taja</i> <i>Jala</i>	<i>Pitta</i>
<i>Krushna</i> (black)	<i>Teja</i> <i>Pruthvi</i> <i>Vayu</i>	<i>Teja</i> <i>Pruthvi</i>	<i>Vayu</i> <i>Rakta</i>
<i>Syama</i> (swarthy)	all <i>Mahabhuta</i> in equal	–	<i>Vata</i> , <i>Kapha</i> and <i>Rakta</i>

<i>Gaurasyama</i>	–	<i>Teja</i> <i>Jala</i> <i>Akasha</i>	–
<i>Krsnasyama</i>	–	<i>Teja</i> <i>Pruthvi</i> <i>Akasha</i>	–
<i>Pingala</i> (tawny)	–	–	<i>Pitta</i> <i>Rakta</i>

Table 3: *Netra varna* (cause of color of eye)^[16]

According to *Sushruta* and *Vagbhata*

If <i>Teja</i> is followed by	Color of eye / nature
<i>Rakta</i>	Red
<i>Pitta</i>	Yellow
<i>Kapha</i>	White
<i>Vata</i>	Pink, dry, abnormal shape and size

During formation of eye if *Teja* is followed by *Vata* then the eyes would be dry, pink and abnormal in shape and size.

Multiple pregnancy by *Vata*^[17]

Excessively increased *Vayu* situated in the uterus divides the *Shukra Arthava* into multiple separate pieces. The number of fetuses corresponds to the number of pieces.

Improper function of *Vata* and its effect on *Garbha*^[18]

Vata undergoing aggravation during pregnancy due to non-fulfillment of longings of women during pregnancy, makes the fetus to born as *Kubja* (dwarf), *Kuni* (of distorted arms), *Pangu* (lame, distorted legs), *Mooka* (dumb) or *Minmina*.

The fetus obtains abnormalities due to infidelity, inauspicious action done in previous life by the mother and father and aggravation of *Vata* during pregnancy.

Other conditions like *Garbhavyapath* and *Moodagarbha* and during *Prasavakala* variation in *Prasuta Marutha* effects *Garbha Nishkramana Kriya*. These are the effect of vitiated *Vata*.

DISCUSSION

In *Garbha Upanishad* we will find a very minute and explicit description of each and every stage of embryonic development and that too in its initial stages. After *Garbha Upanishad Acharya Harita* has described these stages minutely. In all the descriptions there is a major role of *Vata* in *Garbha Utpatti* like action of splitting, action of retention, action of development, action of giving shape and features, formation of *Srotas* and *Peshi*, formation of *Antra*, *Guda* and *Basti*, formation of *Ashaya*, formation of *Varna*, formation of different parts by *Vyana Vata*, forming oral cavity by *Udana Vata* and formation of external meatuses, are the normal function of *Vata* in *Prakruta Avasta*. Due to any cause if *Vata* gets vitiated it results in unhealthy progeny. So in order to get a healthy progeny and to prevent congenital malformations *Vata* should be maintained in its normal state which is made possible by following proper *Garbhini Paricharya*. The knowledge of role of *Vata* in *Garbha Utpatti* helps in proper management of pregnant which results in getting healthy progeny.

CONCLUSION

Vata is *Amoorta* but its functions are wide spread and remote through the body. By the knowledge of role of *Vata* in *Garbha Utpatti* the better prevention on congenital diseases and malformations can be done. The medical science is worried about the increasing rate of new born defects of new born which is becoming a challenge to healthy society. As we all know prevention is better than cure it is our responsibility to prevent congenital malformation and get healthy progeny by following ayurvedic principles which is possible by proper knowledge of Ayurvedic principles. Here, a small attempt is made to understand the role of *Vata* in *Garbha Utpatti*.

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