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Relation between HIV and Infant Feeding - A Review Article

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ABSTRACT

Breast feeding increases the risk of HIV transmission from mother to child. Transmission through breast feeding is associated with increased maternal viral load in plasma and breast milk. Modern medical science suggests HIV infected women should give breast milk with accompanying prophylactic antiretroviral therapy to lower the risk of HIV transmission. According to Ayurveda, mother with vitiated breast milk should avoid breast feeding as it is responsible for developing many diseases in the child.

Key words: HIV, Breast milk, Stanya Dushti.

INTRODUCTION

HIV is a virus spread through certain body fluids that attacks the body's immune system. These fluids must come in contact with a mucous membrane.^[1] HIV may spread from mother to child during pregnancy, birth or breast feeding. The risk can be high if a mother is living with HIV and not taking antiretroviral therapy.^[2]

Preliminary studies indicate that more than one third of these infected infants are infected through breast feeding. These studies suggest an increase in infection rates of 10-14% between the ages of 4 to 6 weeks and 18-24 months.^[3]

According to Ayurveda mother's milk is complete diet for the child. It increases longevity, provides nutrition with palatability to the child.^[4] Mother's milk is contraindicated in the baby, when it is vitiated with

Doshas.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To provide the guidelines for in the area of HIV and breast feeding.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

All the materials were collected from different websites and WHO guideline books related on relation between HIV and breastfeeding.

All the materials were collected from different Ayurvedic texts related on relation between HIV and breastfeeding.

DISCUSSION

According to Ayurveda, Breast milk is formed from the *Rasa Dhatu*. After digestion of food, the digested sweet essence part of *Rasa* circulating through entire body by action of *Vyana Vayu* reaches to the breast and is termed as *Stanya*.^[7] The milk that is normal in color, smell, taste and touch and when put in a pot filled with water it mixes evenly is known as *Shuddha Stanya*. Normal growth and development through nutrition is depending upon *Shuddha Stanya*.^[8] When *Stanya* is vitiated through different *Doshas* due to *Nidana Sevana* from mother and this vitiated *Stanya* develops different disease in the child.^[9] Breast feeding is beneficial for the baby for proper growth. It is contraindicated in some special condition like the mother is malnourished, the *Dhatu* of the mother's

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body are vitiated and the mother intakes *Viruddha Ahara*.^[10]

According to Ayurveda, vitiated *Stanya* leads to many diseases. *Sharira Bala* or immunity depends upon *Dhatu*s and *Dhatu*s depend upon good circulation of *Prana*. When immunity is lost, naturally general condition of the body will also deteriorate. Possibly because this reason our *Acharyas* have not permitted the mother with *Pradushta Dhatu* to breast feed her baby.

According to modern overall breast feeding provides substantial benefits to both children and mothers. It significantly improves child survival by protecting against diarrheal diseases, pneumonia and other fatal infections. It enhances quality of life through its nutritional and psychosocial benefits.^[5] In contrast artificial feeding increases risk to child health and contributes child mortality. Breast feeding contributes to maternal health in various ways including prolonging the interval between births and helping to protect against ovarian and breast cancers.

Increased maternal RNA viral load in plasma and breast milk is strongly associated with increased risk of transmission through breast feeding, as is breast health, and it has been suggested that exclusive breast feeding could be associated with antiretroviral therapy.

According to WHO recommendations, mothers known to be HIV infected should be provided with lifelong ART prophylaxis interventions to reduce HIV transmission through breast feeding. Mothers known to be HIV infected and whose infants are HIV uninfected or of unknown HIV status, should exclusively breastfeed their infants for the first six month of life, introducing appropriate complimentary food there after, and continue breast feeding for the first twelve months of life. Breast milk should then be stopped, once a nutritionally adequate and safe diet without breast milk can be provided.^[6]

According to the modern science off springs of the HIV infected women should avoid breast feeding altogether or be given breast milk with accompanying

prophylactic antiretroviral therapy to lower the risk of HIV transmission.

CONCLUSION

According to Ayurveda, *Tridosha* vitiated *Stanya* should not be fed to the child and according to WHO with antiretroviral treatment exclusive breast milk should be fed to the baby for six month in developed countries. In under developed countries, HIV infected mother should not feed breast milk to the baby because of unavailability of antiretroviral treatment.

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