



CONCEPTUAL REVIEW ON CHILD CARE: AN AYURVEDIC ASPECT

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ABSTRACT

Children are the future pillars of society. A healthy child can only make a society strong and healthy and so the nation also. *Ayurveda* showed the importance of child care many years ago being ancient science by giving *Bala* or *Kaumarbhritya* as a separate branch or *Anga* of *Ayurveda*. Early childhood is a critical period in development, with cognitive and socioemotional domains forming the building blocks of children's later life. Realizing the fact an unhealthy mother can never be able to give birth to a healthy child and so a child not healthy at the time of birth will not become a healthy adult. In *Ayurveda Kaumarbhritya* or *Bala*, *chikitsa* includes *Kumar Bharanm*, *Dhatree Kshirdosha Sanshodhan*, *Garbhopakram Vigyan*, *Sutikaupakram*, etc.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda* childcare, *Kaumarbhritya*, healthy child, *Kumar Bharanm*.

INTRODUCTION

In *Ayurveda*, perfect health is defined as "a balance between body, mind, spiritual and social wellbeing. This definition perfectly matches when the care of life will be taken from the preconception period up to the adolescent age in the case of pediatric care. In *Ayurveda*, by seeing the definition of *Kaumarbhritya* or *Balaroga* we found the care of the child should be taken from the preconception period up to the adolescent age along with *Dhatri Chikitsa* for the healthy child. This enormous purpose of *Ayurveda* is seen in the definition of *Kaumarbhritya* itself, so there is a necessity to follow the principal of *Ayurveda* towards child development in today's modern era. India has the highest number of child birth as well as child death for any single nation in the world.^[1] By knowing the fact it is necessary to know the role of *Ayurveda* in pediatric care in today's era by *Ayurveda* principles of healthy conception, pregnancy, delivery, and child care during intrauterine life and after birth through many activities like *Brahmacharya Palan*, *Punsawan Karma*, *Garbhini Paricharya* by *Ahar*, *Vihar*, *Masanumasik Upkrama*, *Sutikagar Nirman*, *Abhyanga*, *Snana*, *Lehan Sanskara*, *Medhya Dravya*, *Dhupan*, *Dhatri Yojana*, *Dhatri Chikitsa Kridanak* and many more for the health of the child. **Aim:** To study the principal of *ayurveda* in pediatric from preconception to adolescent age. **Objective:** To study the conceptually advices of *ayurveda* towards pediatric care. **Materials and methods:** *Kashyap Samhita*, *Harit Samhita*, *Charak Samhita*, *Sushrut Samhita*, *Ashtang Hridaya/Sangraha*

read thoroughly, and various research articles related to *Bala roga* or *Kaumarbhritya* studied to understand the role of *Ayurveda* in pediatric care.

Definition

कौमारभृत्यनामकु मारभरणधात्रीक्षीरदोषसंशोधनार्थं

दृष्टस्तन्यग्रहसमुत्थानाञ्जव्याधीनामुपशमनार्थम् ॥ सु.सू. 1/13 गभोपक्रमविज्ञानं
सूतकोपक्रमस्तर्था । बालानां रोगशमनी वक्रया बालवचकवस्ततम् ॥ हा.सं. प्रथमं सूत्रान 2/16
'कुमारस्य भरणमवधकृत्य कृतं कौमारभृत्यं ।' च.सु.30/28- चक्र.

The word *Kaumarbhritya* made up from two words
कौमार + भृत्य

Kaumar Nirukti: (Monnier Williams, Sanskrit- English Dictionary) 1. कु मार कु + मार -- कु - Deterioration, Deficiency.
मार (मृ) Easily dying.

Bhritya Nirukti: भृत्यः 'भृञ् भरि' To get / To Carry / To Care / To protect / Nourishment.

Childcare approach in Ayurveda

In *Asamgotriya Sharir* / *Atulya Gotriya Sharir* *Ayurveda* talked about marriage out of the same *Gotra* for the healthy progeny. When conception occurred in parents belonging to the same *Gotra*, there are chances of suffering the upcoming offspring by different diseases.^[2] *Brahmacharya Palan's* approach is also helpful in having good progeny. The conception of the proper

physical and mental condition of the father and mother in a favourable environment is important for a healthy child.

Childcare during intrauterine life

- **Punsawan Karma**

Punsawan Karma adopted for healthy progeny should be done after conception but before the conspicuousness of the organ or up to two months.^[3]

- **Garbhini Paricharya (Antenatal care) for healthy progeny**

It includes *Masanumasik Upkrama*, *Garbhoghatak Bhavaa*, and *Garbhasthapak Dravya's* explanation. *Acharya Charaka* said that the pregnant woman desirous of producing a through (healthy and good-looking) child should give up a non-congenital diet and mode of life and protect herself by doing good conduct and using a congenital diet as a mode of life.

Aims of Garbhini Paricharya: Nourishment of *Garbha*, to avoid the *Garbhavyapada* and *Sukha-prasava* are the basic aim of *Garbhini Paricharya*.^[5] **Specific decoction (water) for pregnant woman's bath**^[6] *Acharya Vagbhata* has given use of a cold decoction of the pulp of *Bilva*, *Karpasa*, *Phamohana*, (petals of rose), *Pichumanda*, *Agnimantha*, *Jatamansi*, and *Eranda Patra* or the water prepared with *Sarvagandha* (all fragrant) drugs should be used for bathing by the pregnant woman.

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Garbhini Dwara Mani-Dharan (Amulet for pregnant woman)^[7] The pregnant woman should wear the amulet made of 'Trivritta' at her waist.

Month-wise regimen (Ahar, Vihar, and Aushadhi) for pregnant woman: *Acharyas* described specific month-wise management for a pregnant woman to fulfill her requirements and of the growing fetus also. The requirements of the developing embryo are different in different months so *acharya* mentions *Paricharya* according to the need of the embryo or foetus.

Clinical Importance of Garbhini Paricharya

First Trimester

Embryogenesis takes place in the first trimester hence an increased amount of energy is required during this period. All these energies will be provided by *Kshira*, *Ghrita*, *Krusara*, *Payasa*, and *Kshira* medicated with *Madhur ausadhi*. During the first trimester of pregnancy, most women experience nausea and vomiting, and thus cannot take proper diet which results in dehydration and loss of nutrients. The use of a cold and sweet liquid diet and milk will prevent dehydration and supply the required nourishment. Drugs of the *Madhura* group being anabolic will help in the maintenance of proper health of the mother and foetus.

Second Trimester

Fourth month onwards muscular tissue of the foetus grows sufficiently requiring more protein which is supplied from animal sources such as meat, milk, cheese, butter, etc. Milk provides nourishment and stability to the foetus. Cooked *Sasti* rice advised in *Garbhini Paricharya* is rich in carbohydrate and provide energy to the body. Meat provides nourishment to the foetus and helps in the muscular growth of the foetus. By the end of the second trimester, most women suffer from edema of feet and other complications of water retention. So *Ghrita* medicated with *Gokshura* is used which is a good diuretic that will prevent the retention of water as well as its complications.

Third Trimester

Ghrita medicated with *Prithakparnayadi* group of drugs are diuretic, anabolic, relieve emaciation, and suppress *Pitta* and *Kapha*. Their regular use in the seventh month might help in maintaining the health of the mother and foetus. *Yavagu* consumption in eight months which is *Balya* and *Brimhana* provides nourishment to the mother and foetus. Most women suffer from constipation in late pregnancy, *Asthapana Basti* administered during eight months which is best for *vata Anulomana* relieves constipation. Besides this may also affect the autonomous nervous system governing myometrium and help in regulating their function during labour. The tampon of oil in the vagina provides lubrication of the cervix, vaginal canal, and perineum thus helping in normal labour. This may destroy pathogenic bacteria in the vaginal canal and prevent puerperal sepsis. Regular use of tampons might influence autonomic fibers governing myometrium and regulating their functions. Milk and drugs of the *Madhura* group have been advised for the entire pregnancy period. Milk is the complete food and the drugs of the *Madhura* group are anabolic, thus use of these will help in the maintenance of proper health of the mother and the growth and development of the foetus.^[8] *Acharya* says that by following the *Garbhini Paricharya* from the first to ninth month her *Garbhadharini* (fetal membrane or vaginal canal), *Kukshi* (abdomen), sacral region, flanks, and back become soft, *Vayu* moves into its right path or direction; faeces, urine, and placenta are excreted easily by their respective passages; skin and nail become soft, woman gain strength and complexion; she delivers a desired, excellent, healthy child possessing all the qualities and long life.^[9]

Childcare after delivery in Ayurveda

The Different Steps of Navajata Shishu Paricharya according to Acharya's Vagbhata:^[10] *Ulvaparimarjana* (Cleaning of Vernix caseosa), *Pranapratyagamana* (resuscitation of newborn), *Nalachhedan* (umbilical cord cutting), *Snana* (bathing), *Pichudharana* (Maintain temperature), *Suvarnaprashana* (Ayurvedic immunization), *Garbhodakavamana* (Stomach wash), *Jatakarma*. The first minutes after birth are critical to reducing neonatal mortality. The measures of newborn care describe in our ancient texts indicate their wisdom

regarding resuscitation, prevention of hypothermia; maintaining hygiene for the prevention of infection and normal breathing, etc. The concept of immunization by explaining *Suvarn Lehan* and *Medhya Dravya* can help in child care in a great sense in today's modern era.

Suvarna Prashana

सुणिथप्रशानं हेतुम् वननबलिधनम् । आयुष्यं मङ्गलं पण्यं षिण्यथ ग्रहापहम् । ।
मासात् परममव्यावधवभनथ च धृष्यते । षड्वन्मरुतैः श्रुतु धरैः सुणथप्रशानाद्भित् । ।
का. स. स. लेहनाध्या

The *Suvarna Lehana Sanskara* is described in *Kashyapa Samhita*. Metallic purified Gold is rubbed on a clean rubbing stone with water and is mixed with.

Table 01: Pharmacological action of some drugs^[12,13]

Drugs	Proved Pharmacological Actions
<i>Yashtimadhu</i> (<i>Glycyrrhiza Glabra</i>)	Enhance the macrophage membrane function.
<i>Guduchi</i> (<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>)	Inhibit lipid peroxidation and superoxide and hydroxyl radicals in vitro.
<i>Amlaki</i> (<i>Embolica officinalis</i>)	Strengthen the defense mechanism. against free radical damage induced during stress.
<i>Haritaki</i> (<i>Terminalia Chebula</i>)	In immune-modulation studies, humoral immunity was enhanced where T-cell counts remained unaffected in the animals, but the cell-mediated immune response was stimulated.

Kumar Aagar Varnana (pediatric ward), *Kumar Dharan* (caretaker of the child), and *Kridanaka* (Toys of the child) also play a role in childcare.

Consequences of impaired child growth in modern science

Maternal and child undernutrition are the underlying cause of 3-5 million deaths annually and account for 35% of the disease burden in children younger than 5 yr. Several major disorders of later life, including coronary heart disease, hypertension, and type 2 diabetes, originate from impaired intrauterine growth and development. These diseases may be consequences of 'programming, whereby a stimulus or insult at a critical, sensitive period of early life has permanent effects on structure, physiology, and metabolism. The 'fetal origins' hypothesis (Barker hypothesis) proposes that alterations in fetal nutrition and endocrine status result in developmental adaptations that permanently change the structure, physiology and metabolism, thereby predisposing individuals to cardiovascular, metabolic, and endocrine diseases in adult life.

DISCUSSION

In *Ayurveda* pediatric care starts from the preconception like *Asamgotriya Matru pitru Niyojan*, *Brahmacharya* rules, During pregnancy (intrauterine care) by *Punsawan Karma*, *Garbhini Paricharya* by *Masanumasik Upkrama*, *Garbhopghatka Bhavaa* explanation, *Garbhashthapakdravya Dravya*, etc. After delivery by *Navajata Shishu Paricharya*, by different *Sanskaran* like *Suvarna Lehan*, *Medhya Dravya*, *Bal-yavsthanurup Chikitsa*, *Dhatri Yojana*, *Kumar Aagar*, *Kumar Dharan*, *Kridanak* description, etc.

CONCLUSION

In *Ayurveda*, eminent thinking for pediatric care is found by knowing the care taken from preconception up to the adolescent age by different *Karma*, *Ahara*, and *Vihar*

Aushadhi Yojana for having healthy children. As we have seen in modern science gives consequences of impaired growth are due to impaired intrauterine growth and development the childcare should as explained in *Ayurveda* should take from preconception up to the adolescent age as explained by Acharya by different *Sanskara* and *Karma* is a need of today's modern era.

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