

Ayurveda Perspective for Puerperium Management

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda medicine is one of the oldest medical systems which is known as the Science of life. It is based on curative and preventive measures. Ayurveda advises caring for a woman in her life, especially during the puerperium or post-natal period. In Ayurveda, it is known as sutika kala which is considered as the period, after the expulsion of the placenta and extends up to the six weeks. The woman in this period is called as sutika. As well as special regimen and post-natal care of the puerperal woman are mentioned under the sutika paricharya in Ayurveda classics. After the delivery, the woman's body may be lost of strength due to exhaustion during labour and loss all of dhathus and blood. Thus, there is a risk for the puerperal woman who is suffered from several diseases. In Ayurveda Acharya's have mentioned, the importance of following sutika paricharya to prevent from the complications and to regain all physical and mental wellbeing of the puerperal woman her pre pregnant state.

Keywords: *Sutika kala, sutika, puerperium, sutika paricharya*

INTRODUCTION

Pregnancy is one of the most critical period in woman's life. In this period, there are several physiological and anatomical changes. Ayurveda places a high value on women's health care, particularly during pregnancy and postpartum.

In Ayurveda, postnatal period or puerperium is called as *Suthika Kala*. And the woman in this period called as *Suthika* and also the care given during this whole postpartum period is mentioned as *Sutika Paricharya*. After delivery the woman become exhausted and emaciated. It more prone to be complication after delivery. According to Ayurveda, extra care is important to prevent 75 types of diseases which can be happen in this period. And it

was described more clearly in Ayurveda texts under the *suthika* paricharya.[1-5]

Sutika Kala

The puerperium or post natal period is called as *sutika kala*. The time from the delivery of the placenta and last for six weeks. This is a phase of regaining the lost strength and attaining a pre-pregnant state for the woman after the strenuous and lengthy process of the childbearing and labour by regulating the diet and mode of life and undergoing specific procedures and medications. There are different opinions on that in different classics. Charaka has not given any definite duration or specific regimen for the management of *sutika*. Susruta and Vagbhata have mentioned the one and half

month duration or until the woman gets her first menstrual cycle after labour. According to Kashyapa, The *sutika kala* is explained as six months period as the *dhathu* like *raktha* resume to their original state. Yogarathnakara and Bhavaprakasha described either after one and half months or after the restoration of the menstrual cycle the woman can be free from diet and code restriction. In cases of complicated labour (like *mudhagarbha*) after the subsidence of complication and aggravated *dosha* the woman should be free from the regimen. Adhyardha masa or 45 days is a well-accepted period of *sutikavastha* in uncomplicated, normal delivery cases.

Sutikagara

Sutikagara has used to construct a special place for the woman to have her delivery and lead her post-delivery life for a particular duration. It is an aseptic room which is constructed to stay the woman who has given birth to a child for at least 10 days after delivery. And Unlike the modern maternity homes '*Sutikagaras*' are individualized.

Sutika Paricharya

The women become emaciated and have *shunya sharirata* due to nourishing the developing fetus's excretion of *rakta* and *kleda*, exertion of the lengthy delivery process and bearing down effort. There for, the puerperal woman has to be re-established in her non-pregnant state. Care of the puerperal women or post-natal care is mentioned under the *sutika paricharya*. By following *sutika paricharya* the woman to regain her strength in other conditions. Acharya Kashyapa has described toe types of *paricharya* as *samanya paricharya* (general) and *vishishta paricharya* (specific). Both internal and external administration including *ahara*, *vihara* and *aushadha*, consider as *samanya paricharya*.

Principles of the sutika paricharya

Agnideepana, *Pachana* (metabolism and appetite for repairs), *Vatashamana*, *Raktavardhaka*, *Stanyavardhaka* (increase quality of lactation), *Yonisanrakshaka*, *Garbhashayashodhana* (cleansing uterus), *Kostashodaka* (cleansing, *Dhatupusti*, *Balya* (increase the maternal strength).

Table 1: Sutika paricharya according to opinions of various ayurveda text.

Ayurveda classics	Duration	Ahara (foods)	Viharana (regiman)	Aushadha (medications)
Charaka's view	For 5-7 days	liquid gruel (<i>Yavagu pana</i>)of rice medicated with <i>Pippali</i> , <i>pippalimula</i> , <i>chavya</i> , <i>chitraka</i> , and <i>shringavera</i> .	<i>Abhyanga</i> with <i>ghrita</i> and <i>taila</i> over the abdomen, Abdomen is <i>Udveshtana</i> (wrapped by using big clean cloth) and <i>Prisheka</i> by using hot water	<i>Sneha pana- ghrita</i> , <i>taila</i> , <i>vasa</i> and <i>majja</i> with <i>Pippali</i> , <i>pippalimula</i> , <i>chavya</i> , <i>chitraka</i> , and <i>shringavera</i>
Sushruta's view	2-3 days	<i>Vatahara</i> <i>aushadhadravya</i> <i>kwathapana</i> , <i>Ushna</i> <i>gudodaka</i> with <i>pippalydidravyas</i>	<i>Abhyanga</i> with <i>balataila</i> , <i>Parisheka</i> with <i>vatahara</i> – <i>dravya siddha kwatha</i>	<i>Pippali</i> , <i>pippalimula</i> , <i>chavya</i> , <i>chitraka</i> , and <i>shringavera</i> , <i>yava</i> , <i>kola</i> and <i>kulatta</i>
	3 days	<i>Sneha yavagu</i> or <i>kshira yavagu</i> with <i>vidarigandhadi</i> group of drug, <i>Shali dhanya</i> along with <i>yava</i> , <i>kola</i>		

		and <i>kulatta siddha jangala mamsa rasa</i>		
Vagbhata's view	For 3, 5, or 7 days	<i>Snehapana</i> with <i>panchakolachurna</i> , <i>Ushna gudodaka</i> with <i>panchakola churna</i> , <i>Vatahara aushadhi toyapana</i> <i>Peya Vatahara Ausadha</i> <i>Peya Ksheera Yavagu / Yavagu Pana</i> (Pippalyadi gana aushaga)	<i>Abhyanga</i> with <i>balataila</i> , <i>sneha pana</i> with	<i>Taila/ ghrita</i> with <i>Panchakola churna</i> . <i>Ushnagudodaka</i> (warm jaggery water)
Kashyapa's view	3-5 days	<i>Manda sewana</i> , <i>yavagu sewana</i>	<i>Abhyanga</i> and <i>mardana</i> , <i>pata bandhana</i> , <i>yoni snehana</i> , <i>yoni swedana</i> , <i>dhupana</i>	<i>Bala thaila</i> , <i>kulatta</i> , <i>kushmanda</i> , <i>nagara</i> , <i>pippali</i>
	later	<i>snehayukta yavagu sewana</i> , <i>yusha and mamsa rasa sevana</i>		

Vishista Parisharya

Table 2: Sutika paricharya according to different desha.

Anupa desha	Jangala desha	Sadharana desha
No <i>snaha pana</i> due to predominance of <i>vata</i> and <i>kapha dosha</i> <i>Ushna padarta sewana Manda prayoga Swedana Vayu virahita stana sayana</i>	Doing <i>snehana</i> due to predominance of <i>vata</i> and <i>pitta</i> . Hence <i>sneha</i> is said to be <i>satmya</i>	<i>Sadharana ahara vihara</i> is advised. Neither excessive use of <i>sneha</i> nor excessive use of <i>ruksha dravyas</i> is said to be beneficial

Table 3: Sutika paricharya on the basis of sex of child.

Time	Gender of child	Paricharya
5-7 days	Male	<i>Tailapana Deepaniya aushadhi yavagupana</i>
	Female	<i>Ghritapana</i> <i>Deepaniya aushadhi yavagupana</i>
Followed by	Both sex	<i>Manda prayoga</i>

DISCUSSION

The *sutika kala* is a critical period in woman's life. During *sutika kala*, ligaments and muscles associated with uterus starts to regain their average size. The expanded uterus shrinks back to normal position. According to Ayurveda the process of labour is initiated and controlled by *vata*. The fully stretched uterus is suddenly vacated after delivery thus filling with *vata* which means in this period there is vitiation of *vata*. So *vata samana* is important during postnatal period. Loss of body fluid and blood and

exhaustion during labour pain cause *dhatu kshaya* and loss of immunity. So *sutika* becomes more prone to diseases and complications. Therefore she must be improved in appetite, immunity, breast milk production and flow; and cleansing of uterus which should be free of remnant parts of placenta to avoid further infections. As *sutika's Agni* (digestive fire) is *manda.agni deepana* is needed treatment immediately after delivery. Administating of *Agni vardhaka* drugs (like *panchakola*) helps to improve digestion. *Agni* here indicates *dhatavaghn* promoting the

metabolism of the body and it produces *uttama stanya*. *Yava, kola, mamsa rasa, kulatta yusha, lagu, annapana* is advised and it helps to replenish the *dhatu*. *Grita, thaila, vasa* or *majja* with *Pippali, pippalimoola, chavya, chitraka* and *sringavera* cause *dhatu shuddhi* and *garbhasha shodhana*. Local administration like *udara pariveshtana* and *yoniparisheka* also helps to *garbhasha shodhana*. *Thaila abhyanga* is recommended by using *bala thaila* which might help to restraint vitiated *vata* and expulsion of remnant *dosha*. *Parishechana* (washes) by using *kwatha* prepared by *vata hara dravya* act as *kledahara* and *vedanahara* (reduce pain).[6-10]

CONCLUSION

The puerperal woman needs to special care after delivery to regain the energy and strength. After the labour she will change both physical and emotional state. There for the woman needs special care, special *ahara* (diet), *viharana* (special regimen) and special medicines (*aushadha*) within this critical period. There for *sutika paricharya* in Ayurveda is well designed to re-establish *sutika* in puerparium.

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