



## AYURVEDA FOR PREGNANT WOMEN DURING COVID-19 ERA – A REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

The Novel corona virus disease (COVID-19) is highly communicable viral infection caused by SARS-CoV 2. WHO mentions that pregnant women or recently pregnant women seem to have an increased risk of developing severe COVID-19. Due to physiological changes in the body and immune system, pregnant women can be badly affected by respiratory infections. It is therefore important that they take precautions to protect themselves against COVID-19. Overall, 10% of pregnant women suffered from COVID-19. Ayurveda mentions Garbhini paricharya (antenatal care of the pregnant) which recommends ahara (dietary regimen) and vihara (specific activity for physical, emotional and mental wellbeing) that is required for the safe motherhood and healthy progeny. Here is an attempt to understand how Garbhini paricharya helps in preventing corona.

**KEY WORDS:** Garbhini paricharya, COVID-19, Pregnancy

### INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a “science of life” which is having explanation for all the queries.

As Dridabala mentions,

यदिहास्ति तदन्यत्र यन्नेहास्ति न तत् क्वचित् ।

That is whatever mentioned in *Ayurveda shastra* is present everywhere and whatever is not mentioned is not present anywhere. *Ayurveda* has not mentioned diseases like COVID-19. However, they explain the things briefly which should be understood using *Arthapatti tantrayukti*.

*Acharya Sushruta* quotes,

स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्य रक्षणं आतुरस्य विकार प्रशमनम् ।

Which means the aim of the *Ayurveda* is to cure the disease of the diseased individual and to maintain the health of a healthy individual by following the *paricharya*'s mentioned.<sup>1</sup>

As *garbhini* is *sukumara* and *abala*, she is easily prone for infections. *Acharyas* have priorly mentioned certain norms to be followed by the *garbhini*, so that she can prevent the forthcoming diseases.

*Garbhini paricharya* mentioned by our *acharyas* refers to antenatal care given to the pregnant women. Various *ahara*, *vihara* and *ausadhas* in the form of do's and dont's are explained for maintenance of the physical and mental health of the pregnant women.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Review regarding *Garbhini paricharya* was done from ayurvedic & modern text books, journals, internet sources.

### DISCUSSION

*Dravyas* used in *garbhini paricharya* majorly includes *ksheera* (milk), *ghrita* (ghee) and *madhura varga dravyas* which acts as *rasayana* (immunomodulators).

- *Bala* – owns properties like *balya* (improves strength), *kshayahara* (relieves emaciation), *ojovardhaka* (improves immunity). It is also proven to have anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory, anti-pyretic and anti-microbial properties.<sup>2</sup>



- *Yashtimadhu* – contains phytochemical such as flavonoids like glycyrrhin, glabridin that has been proved to have anti-viral activity against the SARS corona virus.<sup>3</sup>
- *Ashwagandha* – it is observed that one of the compound present in *Ashwagandha* called withanone is quite effective and useful in blocking and weakening the structure of M<sup>pro</sup> (enzyme, which plays a key role in viral replication and transcription).<sup>4</sup>
- *Amalaki* – *Amalaki* is *balavardhini* (improves strength and immunity), *rasayani* (immunomodulator) and proved to have anti-microbial activity.<sup>5</sup>
- *Shatavari* – anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial and potential immunomodulatory properties.<sup>6</sup>
- *Palasha* – mentioned in the 1<sup>st</sup> month of *garbhini paricharya* by *Vagbhata I*, has an unique *krimighna*(anti-viral) properties.<sup>7</sup>
- *Jeevaniya gana dravyas* – mentioned by *Acharya Charaka* in *sutrasthana* 4<sup>th</sup> chapter owns the properties of *balya* and *rasayana*

#### Vihara:

- *Abhyanga* – it helps in healing and promoting health. It makes the *garbhini balavan* and traps the entry of foreign body.
- *Garbhini snana* – *Acharyas* have mentioned the use of certain drugs for *snana* which includes *bilva* (*Agle mermelos*), *karpasa* (*Gossypium herbaceum*), *agnimantha* (*Clerodendrum phlomidis*), *jatamamsi* (*Nardostachys jatanansi*), *eranda patra* (*Ricinis comunis*) which owns anti-viral properties. *Snana* is also *malapaha* (which removes the *mala*).
- *Manidharana* (amulet) – *trivrut manidharana* by *garbhini stree* has been mentioned by *Acharya Kashyapa* which also owns anti-viral properties.
- *Rakshogha dravya dhupana* – use of *rakshogha dravya* in *sutikagara* has been mentioned by the *Acharyas*. *Dhupana* of *rakshogha dravyas* like *guggulu* (*Commiphora mukul*), *nimba* (*Azadiracta indica*), *hinggu* (*Ferula foetida*) has anti-viral properties and thus, helps in sanitization, purification and disinfection of *sutikagara* as well as helps in treating diseases such as cold, fever and *graha doshas*. Almost all the *rakshogha dravyas*

have antiseptic, insecticidal, anti-pyretic and anti-inflammatory properties.

- *Devathacharana* – by performing *yajna* and *yaaga* we can tackle the communicable diseases because the drugs offered during *yajna* like *haridra* (*Curcuma longa*), *apamarga* (*Achyranthes aspera*), *vidanga* (*Embelia ribes*), *kushta* (*Saussurea lappa*), *devadaru* (*Cedrus*) etc owns *krimighna* property. It will work like a natural purifier of air through which we can avoid droplet infections of air.

*Achahara rasayana* – out of various types of *rasayana*, *achara rasayana* is a unique non-pharmacological therapy which comprises of wholesome diet, ideal lifestyle, etiquettes to be followed by a person at social level with all the benefits described for the *rasayana*. Due to its effects on improving immunity, *rasayana* therapy may have direct relevance in the prevention and management of SARS COVID infection. *Acharya Charaka* in *chikitsa sthana* 1<sup>st</sup> chapter described *achara rasayana* which indicates its importance to keep the disease away from humanity. *Achara* means following good discipline or doing behaviour modification for a healthy life. Proper implementation of these principles results in the *dhatu samya* (equilibrium of dhatus) which is the ultimate aim of *Ayurveda*. For instance:

- *Satyavadinam* – when patient tries to hide the history of contact, it might aid in the spread of the disease.
- *Shoucha param* – in corona outbreak maximum importance is given to personal hygiene interms of hand washing, social distancing, wearing face mask. The same can be correlated with *shoucha param*.

*Achara rasayana* helps the individual in understanding the society and to know the role of individual in the society. Recommendations of WHO and MHA guidelines in controlling the pandemic of COVID-19 have close resemblance with the principles explained in *achara rasayana*.

- *Yogasana* - *Yoga* is one way which can naturally uplift vitality. However, the benefits of yoga are not just limited to stress relief and mental wellness but also can recharge the body, get rid of the toxins, and keep the vital organs functioning properly. Certain *yogasanas* can help support, balance and boost the immune system. *Yoga* reduces stress



systemically in the body, which in turn, cuts down inflammation and degeneration.

- *Pranayama – pranayamas like nadi shodhana, brahmari, sheetali, ujjayi strengthens the immune system including pranavaha srotas.*
- Avoiding *garbha upaghatara bhavas* like *yana, advagamana* also helps in preventing the disease.
- Along with this *hasta parimarjana*, avoiding travel and social distancing would help prevent the disease.

## CONCLUSION

*Ayurveda* mainly focuses on an individual's health and recommends preventive measures for a healthy lifestyle rather than mere prescription of drugs. The risk and severity of infections are increased during pregnancy due to combination of physiological and immunological changes. Several general measures which are described by *Acharyas* are useful to reduce incidences of upcoming disease like covid-19 and complement therapeutic management as add-on treatment. By avoiding unhealthy lifestyle, adopting the geographical needs and by following the *paricharya* mentioned in *Ayurveda*, *Garbhini* can effectively prevent the acquired disease like SARS-CoV.

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