



**SPECIAL REGIMEN DURING THE PERIOD OF GESTATION ACCORDING TO
AYURVED SAMHITAS**

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ABSTRACT

The concept of month wise special regimen during the period of gestation is unique and specific given by *Aacharyas*. *Ayurveda* has given great emphasis on *garbhini paricharya* (pre natal care) which has dual goal of easy parturition and healthy progeny. There are specific food regimen prescribed for *garbhini* (pregnant women) throughout nine months. Woman reproductive period bears a lot of importance, because it is very much near to disease. Every woman should be ensured free from complication during gestation period and then everyone can have safe delivery and get healthy progeny. The month wise regimen mentioned for *Garbhini* is in the form of food not in the form of drug. Hence it is best because food is *satmya* (habitual) to every one and supplementation of essential nutrient in the form of natural food, which helps in maintenance of proper health of mother and growth and development of fetus. This regular regimen of the *Garbhini* helps in easy parturition without complications.

KEYWORDS: Special regimen, Gestation, Garbhini, Satmya, Garbhini paricharya.

INTRODUCTION

The body is made up of *aahar*^[1] (food). Healthy body tissues depends directly on essential nutrients in food. This is very essential during pregnancy because a whole new body is being formed. Tremendous growth of a body from the moment of conception to the time of birth depends entirely on nourishment from the mother. *Ayurveda* consider *aahar* (food) to be best source of nourishment as well as medicine for the *Garbhini* (pregnant woman). The month wise diet is singularly unique to *Ayurveda*. It changes in accordance with fetus in *garbhashaya* (womb) and at the same time ensure the health of mother (pregnant woman) should follow a careful regimen of food and the behavior during pregnancy. This regimen is known as *garbhini paricharya* (pre natal care).^[2-4] The diet during pregnancy should be adequate to provide 1.The needs of growing fetus 2.The maintenance of maternal health 3.The strength and vitality required during labor 4.Successful lactation.^[5-7]

Aacharya Charak says that *Garbhini* (pregnant lady) is just like the oil filled bowl.^[8]

*Purnamiva tailapatramasankshobhayataantarvartnei
bhavatyupacharya //*

(Ch. Sha. 8/22)

Means the *Antarvartini* (pregnant lady) should be treated or cared just like a pot filled with oil, as slight oscillation of such pot causes spilling of oil, similarly slight excitement or stress to the lady can initiate abortion, etc.^[9]

To overcome the problem during pregnancy period many ancient books of the *Ayurveda* suggest some special life style called *Garbhini Paricharya* (rule to be followed during the pregnancy).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

During the study of Special Regimen during the period of Gestation various Samhitas along with their commentaries by different Authors were referred. References from modern sciences were also used to correlate the concept of Special Regimen during the period of Gestation. While studying about Special Regimen during the period of Gestation through Sushrut Sharirasthana, the commentaries of different authors were critically studied to interpret and conclude about Special Regimen during the period of Gestation.

Diet Schedule

Aacharya Charaka says that the pregnant woman who desires of producing a healthy and good looking child should give up non-congenial diet and mode of life and

protect herself by doing good conduct and using congenial diets and mode of life.^[10] She should use palatable, liquid, sweet and unctuous substances treated with appetizing medicinal herbs. This mode of life should continue till delivery.^[11] What so ever eatables or drinkables are consumed by pregnant woman, some will become congenial to the fetus, thus diet should be taken considering place of living time or season and digestive capacity it should never be neglected.^[12]

Aacharyas have mentioned some common articles beneficial for pregnant lady like *Sali* and *Shashtik* rice, Wheat flour (whole or unrefined), *Mudga* (green gram), flour of parched rice, butter, cow's ghee, *Madhu* (honey), *Draksha* (*vitis vinifera*), ripped mango, banana, jack fruit, fruit of *Amalaki* (*Emblica officinalis*), other sweet and sour substances, anointment with cooling agent, musk, sandal and camphor, wearing of garland, moonlight bath, massage, soft bed, cool air, anabolic or gratifying edibles, embracing beloved and other pleasing mode of life along with desired food.^[13] Milk provides nourishment and stability to the fetus, meat helps in achievement of pregnancy, provides nourishment to fetus, suppresses *Vata* of pregnant lady and meat soup is a good medicine for the woman.^[14]

Aacharya first advises the common diet schedule and then describes the diet plan according to the month of pregnancy. Pregnant woman should at least follow the monthly diet plan.^[15]

Monthwise Diet Schedule

1. First three month

- I. According to *Sushrutacharya* during the first three months pregnant woman should take of food abounding in sweet, cool and fluid articles. Several medical authorities recommended a food made of *Shashtika* rice with milk to be given to her specially in the 3rd month of gestation.^[16]
- II. According to *Charakacharya* during the 1st month if there be suspicion of conception, the woman should take unprocessed milk cold and in adequate quantity at food times. She should take only the wholesome food at morning and evening.
- III. During the 2nd month, only milk cooked with sweet drugs.
- IV. During the 3rd month, milk added with honey and *ghee*.^[17]

2. Fourth month

According to *Sushrutacharya* cooked *Shashtik* rice with curd and pleasant food mixed with milk and butter, meat of *Jangal* (wild) animals.^[18]

Charakacharya advised to take 10gm of milk – butter (*Ksheer–Navaneet* in 1 aksha praman).^[19]

3. Fifth month

Sushrutacharya advised to take cooked *Shashti* rice with milk, meat of *Jangal* (wild) animals along with food mixed with milk and *ghrita*.^[20]

According to *Charaka* *ghee* extracted from milk is given in 5th month.^[21]

4. Sixth month

According to *Sushruta* pregnant ladies are advised to take *ghrita* or rice gruel (*Yavagu*) medicated with *Gokshura* (*Tribulus terrestris*).^[22]

According to *Charaka* milk added to the *ghee* cooked with sweet drugs.^[23]

5. Seventh month -

Sushrutacharya advised to take clarified butter prepared with the (decoction of) *Prithakaparnyadi* group in adequate quantities which helps in proper growth and development of fetus.^[24]

6. Eighth month

According to *Sushruta*, for the purpose of restoring the *Vayu* for her body (nervous system) to the normal course and condition and for the cleasing of bowel, the enceinte should be given an *Asthapani Basti* (enema), composed of a decoction of *Badara* mixed with *Bala*, *Atibala*, *Shatapushpa*, *Palala* (flesh or mansarasa), milk, cream of curd, oil, *Saindhava* salt, *Madan* fruit, honey and clarified butter. After that she should have an *Anuvasana Basti* (enema) made up of oil prepared with milk and decoction of the drug known as the *Madhuradi-gana*. This restores the *Vayu* to its normal course and condition, which brings on an easy and puerperal disorders. Henceforth up to the time of delivery the enceinte should have liquid food (*Yavagu*) made up of emollient substances (fats) and soup of the flesh of *Jangala* (wild) animals. If treated on these lines the enceinte remains healthy, strong and parturition becomes easy and unattended with evils.^[25]

According to *Charaka* she should take milk gruel (*Yavagu*) added with *ghee* in food times.^[26]

7. Ninth month

She should be treated with unctuous enema (*Anuvasan Basti*) with the oil cooked with sweet drugs. A swab soaked with the same oil should be placed inside the vagina to lubricate the seat of fetus as well as the entire genital tract (*Yonipichu*).^[27]

Month wise regimen according to *Aacharya Sushruta* and *Charaka* is explained in table 1.

Table 1: Month wise dietary Regimen for Garbhini.

Months	Sushruta Shrira Ad-10	Charaka Sharir Ad-8
1 st	Sweet, cool and fluid diet	Congenial diet, Non medicated milk repeatedly in adequate quantity
2 nd	Sweet, cool and fluid diet	Milk cooked with sweet drugs
3 rd	Sweet, cool and fluid diet Shashtika rice with milk	Milk with honey and ghee
4 th	Shashtika rice with curd, pleasant food mixed with milk and butter, meat of wild animals	10 gm of milk with butter (Kheer Navaneet in 1 Aksha praman)
5 th	Shashtika rice with milk, meat of wild animal, food mixed with milk and ghrita	Ghee extracted from milk
6 th	Ghrita or rice gruel (Yavagu) medicated with Gokshura	Milk added to ghee cooked with sweet drug
7 th	Clarified butter with Prithakparnyadi group	Milk added to ghee cooked with sweet drug
8 th	Asthapan Basti than Anuvasan Basti (Enema)	Rice gruel prepared with milk and mixed with ghrita
9 th	Up to delivery same as 8 th month	Anuvasan Basti with oil cooked with sweet drugs

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We find the references about the special regimen during the period of gestation in *Sushruta Samhita*, *Charaka Samhita*, *Kashyapa Samhita*, *Bhaishajya Ratnavali*. *Aacharya Sushruta* widely explain this concept in *Sharirasthan Adhyaya 10-* & *Aacharya Charak* has given in *Sharirasthan Adhyaya 8* – The benefits of this dieteric regimen and lifestyle prescribed for the woman will have normal development of fetus. *Charaka* says that by this regimen woman remains healthy and delivers the child possessing good health, energy or strength, voice, compactness and much superior to other family members, also prevent other complication during the period of pregnancy, like stillbirth, abortion, preterm delivery, postpartum hemorrhage, etc. By use of this regimen & daily scheduled from 1st to 9th month her *garbadharni* (fetal membrane), birth canal, *kukshi* (abdomen), sacral region, flank and lower back becomes soft, *Vayu* moves in the right path or direction, feces urine & placenta are excreted or expelled easily by their respective passage at the time of birth will have no any complications and delivery occur easily at own right time.^[28]

According to *Ayurvedic* principles Rasa i.e. nutrients absorbed from the food is derived from diet taken by *Garbhini* and severs three purposes.^[29] They are nourishment of her own body, nourishment of fetus & formation of milk for nourishment of baby after birth. After description of normal articles which is more beneficial during pregnancy, monthly schedule of diet according to the condition of *Garbhini* like in 1st three months generally use of cold, sweet, liquid & more mineral containing diet frequently in small quantity like milk sweetened with honey, *Krisara (Khichadi)*, etc should be consumed. During this period woman mainly suffers with nausea and vomiting which leads to dehydration and loss of nutrients. Due to this reason, diet of the lady should contain easy digestable, liquid & sweet in small amount which fulfill the loss of water, nutrients and provide the energy quickly.

After 1st trimester, for the growth of fetus give cooked *Sali & Shasti* rice with butter milk, pleasant food mixed with milk & butter, meat or meat soup of *Jangala* (wild) animal, etc. gives good bio-available protein & iron for growth of fetus. At the end of 6th month pedal or whole body edema occurs, for this *Ghrita (ghee)* medicated with *Gokshura* is mentioned. *Gokshura* is good diuretic & also remove the retention of urine.

In 2nd & last trimester more requirement of fat & protein is necessary for growth & development of fetus. According to *Ayurveda Mansa Dhatu* holds the *Meda Dhatu*, this may be the reason that protein is also advised in large amount along with fat (*ghee & butter* in *Aksha Praman*). Gradually from 1st to last trimesters *Vata dosha* is aggravated, so for suppressio of *Vata dosha* intake of *Snigdha ahara* is important.

Edema persist in last trimester, in 7th month medicated *Ghrita* with *Prithakparnyadi* group like *Prithakparni*, *Gokshura*, *Erand*, *Shatavari*, *Brihati*, etc. is advised mainly to remove edema & also helps in growth & development of fetus. *Prithakparnyadi* group supports *Vata & Pitta*, acts as good diuretics & as growth promoting agents. In last of 3rd trimester due to pressure of gravid uterus over large intestine & effect of progesterone, the *Garbhini* have constipation, so *Anuvasan & Asthapan Basti* (enema) is advised, which relieves constipation & suppresses the aggravated *Vata*. *Basti* also stimulates the autonomous nervous system governing myometrium & helps in regulating their functions during labour.^[30]

CONCLUSION

The food which is advised for *Garbhini* is specific to fetus and mother, it helps in easy delivery and also helps in lactation hence completely fulfill the objectives of gestation period. The month wise regimen for *Gharbhini* is unique & specific in *Ayurveda*. Regimen mentioned for *Garbhini* is in the form of food not in drugs, so it is best because *ahara* (food) is *Satmya* (congenial) to

everybody and supplementation of essential nutrient in the form of natural food during pregnancy is better than the drugs. Milk is the wholesome diet & these drugs helps in maintenance of proper health of mother, growth & development of fetus. Regular schedule diet of the *Garbhini* prevents the complication of pregnancy and gives good quality progeny by proper growth and development of fetus.

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