

AYURVEDA SIGNIFICANCE OF CONCEPT OF SWASTHAVRITTA W.S.R. TO
PREGNANCY AND NEONATAL CARE: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda aimed primarily to preserve the health of whole mankind and in this regards Ayurveda texts encompasses several preventive principles which resist invasion of diseases or disease causative factors. The theories and principles described in Ayurveda for general maintenance of health come under the subject of *Swasthavritta*. The Ayurveda aspect of *Swasthavritta* can be correlated with preventive, therapeutic, social and community medicine. The concept of *Swasthavritta* helps to build healthy society by restoring normal health and preventing occurrence of pathological conditions. *Ayurveda Swasthavritta* gives prime importance to the health of pregnant women and suggested various regimens for antenatal and postnatal care. The considerations of Ayurveda guidelines are not only important during pregnancy to complete pregnancy period successfully but also important to ensure healthy delivery of baby. Considering importance of health of Garbhini this article presents health benefits of concept of *Swasthavritta*.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Garbhini, *Swasthavritta*, *Sutika Paricharya*.

INTRODUCTION

The theories and principles of Ayurveda science not only helps to maintain physical and mental health but also provides ways of good ethical and spiritual conduct, the concept of *Swasthavritta* is one such aspect of Ayurveda which provides ways of healthy living. This subject of Ayurveda promotes general health, minimizes adverse

effects of diseases, cure injury and boost internal strength. The concept of *Swasthavritta* works towards the primary health care promotes longevity and improves quality of life. The specific regimens suggested under the concept of *Swasthavritta* for health restoration are depicted in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Specific Regimens of Concept of *Swasthavritta*.

S. No.	Specific Regimens	Suggested Activities
1	Daily Regimen	Evacuation of natural urges, brushing of teeth, <i>Anjana</i> , medicated smoke and exercise, etc.
2	Seasonal Regimen	<i>Katu</i> , <i>Tikta</i> and <i>Kashaya Rasa</i> predominant foods need to avoid in <i>Shishir Ritu</i> . <i>Madhura</i> , <i>Snigdha</i> , <i>Sheeta</i> and <i>Drava Guna</i> foods suggested in <i>Grishma Ritu</i> , etc.
3	Ethical Regimen	Avoidance of violence, avoiding criminal activities, speaking truth and not hurting others, etc.

As mentioned above *Dinacharya*, *Rithucharya* and *Sadvrutta* are essential components of healthy regimes. Ayurveda not only suggests conduct for general health management but it also focuses towards the health restoration during specific condition like pregnancy. Ayurveda suggested particular conducts for women to manage health during pregnancy and after delivery as *Garbhini Paricharya* and *Sootika Paricharya*

respectively. The concept of Ayurveda *Swasthavritta* encompasses many guidelines for *Garbhini Paricharya* including specific *Aharas*, *Viharas* and *Aushadhas*. Similarly daily and dietary conducts recommended after delivery under the heading of *Sootika Paricharya* to maintain health of mother as well as newborn baby.

The dietary, daily and psychological regimens suggested in Ayurveda during pregnancy and after pregnancy not only help to maintain health of mother but also contributes significantly towards the health restoration of foetus. *Masanumasik Pathya*, *Garbhopaghatakar Bhavas* and *Garbhasthapak Dravyas* are important factors required to consider for healthy progeny.

The Ayurveda regimens related to the pregnancy care offers following major benefits

- Helps in proper growth of fetus and mother (*Paripurnatya*)
- Avoid chances of uncomplicated pregnancy (*Anupaghata*)

- Support healthy delivery and longevity (*Sukhaprasava*)

Similarly ayurveda advised some conducts like oral administration of *Sneha*, decoctions, medicated soups and practicing massages, etc. to overcome health issues after delivery under the concept of *Sutika Swasthavritta*. Here various ayurveda principles suggested for *Stanyavardhaka*, *Agnideepana*, *Pachana*, *Raktavardhaka*, *Dhatupusti*, *Garbhashayashodhaka*, *Yonisanrakshaka*, *Kostashodaka* and *Vatashamana* purposes. The specific measures as mentioned in **Figure 1** recommended for pregnancy and post-pregnancy care in Ayurveda literatures.

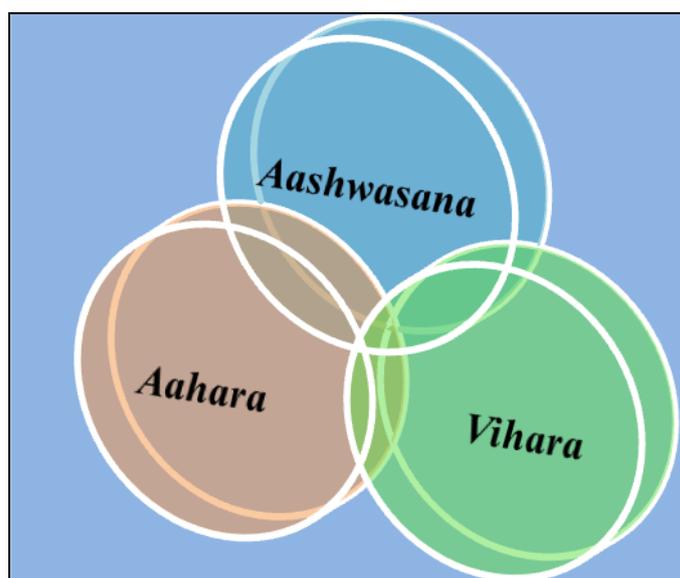


Figure 1: Conduct to be advised for healthy progeny.

Aashwasana means psychological reassurance helps in mental boosting and motivate female to take care herself during pregnancy and new born baby after delivery.

Specific *Aahara* helps to maintain normal health during pregnancy and after delivery. It is advised to have additional protein, minerals, vitamins and fluids to lactating mother for neonatal care. Cooked *Salirice*, *Kola* and *Kulattha* should be used to regain digestive strength after pregnancy.

Abhyanga suggested as *Vihara* with *Ghrita* and *Taila* to impart *Vatshamaka* effects, massage also recommended for new born baby to restore optimum physical and muscular buildup. *Abhyanga* nourishes skin, prevents dehydration, tones up muscles, soothes whole body, improves physical as well as mental wellbeing and prevent topical infections.

Snehapana recommended for mother to suppress *Vata Dosha* and to increase appetite, it calms down mental anxiety and boost peristaltic movements of intestine. The *Katu & Tikta Rasa* of drugs (*Pippali & Chitraka*) used

for *Snehapana* helps to improve digestion thus acts as appetizer.

Udarveshtanam is process of wrapping abdomen with big cloth to regain normal physical state of abdomen after pregnancy; this conduct reduces excessive extension of abdomen caused by pregnancy. This procedure helps to improve posture and cure discomfort associated with abdomen extension.

Dushtashonitshuddhi is process to purify blood using drugs like *Pippli*, *Shringabera* and *Chitraka* along with warm *Jaggery* water. These drugs facilitate uterine contraction to excrete blood clots from uterus.

Yonidhoopana means fumigation, it is stated that genital organs become prone to the infection after delivery therefore *Dhoopana* of *Kushtha & Guggulu* can offer antibacterial actions to protect genital infection during this period.

Udvardhana suggested as massage with powdered drugs to get relief from muscular spasm and body pain.

Pathya

- Warm water washing
- *Hitakarakaahara & Vihara*
- Proper sleep
- Mild pelvic exercise as recommended
- *Abhyanga* with lukewarm oils
- Lukewarm water for drinking purpose
- *Sthanyavardhaka, Garbhashayashodaka, Vataharadravya* and *Stanyajanana* diet.

Apathya

- *Diwaswapan*
- *Atapasevana*
- Sexual conduct
- Excess physical & mental stress
- Exposure to cold winds

CONCLUSION

The pregnancy and post delivery period is very crucial state in woman's life in terms of health concern. Therefore it is required to adopt physical and ethical conduct suggested by Ayurveda *Swasthavritta* for retaining good health status. This *Swasthavritta* regimen includes *Aahara, Vihara* and *Aushadhis* for health management of pregnant women as well as mother of new born. Some drugs like *Pippali, Citraka* and *Cavya*, etc. advised along with *Ghrita* for curing health of mother and baby during lactating period. *Acharya Harita* mentioned decoction of *Arjuna, Kadamba, Devadaru, Karkandhu* and *Bijaka* for lactating mother to improve health of mother as well as baby.

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