Significance of Rasayana Dravyas for Garbha Poshana - A review

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ABSTRACT

Garbha paricharya refers to a complete and systematic care provided to the garbhini in turn protecting the garbha. Garbha paricharya or antenatal care is one of the most important aspects in Prasuthi Tantra. The proper garbhi charya would result in the proper development of the foetus, uncomplicated delivery, the health of the mother and thus her ability to withstand the strain of labour and have an eventless post-partum phase. The care of the pregnant women reflects on the quality and health of the offspring. Because of this, Acharyas has given a detailed, systematic and month wise regimen along with a list of do’s and don’t’s to be followed in the antenatal phase along with the importance of Madhura dravyas endowed with Rasayana properties in Garbhi Paricharya. Hence an attempt to analyze importance of rasayana dravyas mentioned in garbhi paricharya especially for garbha poshana.

Keywords: Garbhi paricharya, Garbha poshana, Rasayana dravyas.

INTRODUCTION

Entire gestational period is important for achievement of healthy baby along with prevention of complications during pregnancy. Following Garbhi paricharya from conception till delivery will nourish the pregnant lady and helps in proper growth and development of the fetus. It also helps facilitate normal delivery by preventing other complications as well as improves the physical and psychological condition of the garbhi helping her to sustain the exhaustion of labor. Garbhi paricharya is based prescription of herbs with special qualities like jivaniya, balya, medhya and rasayana along with a nutritious balanced diet including the daily practise of intake of ksheera, ghrita and navaneeta [1].

Maternal nutrition plays a critical role in fetal growth and development. Nutrition is one of the intra uterine environmental factors that alters expression of the fetal genome and may have lifelong consequences. Whatever diet the garbhi takes, raktdhatu produced from it indirectly forms the aapa and from rasadhatus garbha nabhi nadi is formed [2]. The right diet is considered the most important factor for proper growth of the fetus, maternal health and even for lactation after childbirth.

Importance of Garbhi paricharya

In the first trimester, Garbhi may suffer from garbhopadravas like chardi where there is slower intestinal transit time and gastric emptying. Furthermore, there will be gastritis like symptoms such as burning sensation in the chest region, which is worsened with increased fluid loss associated with vomiting. The fetus is in the formative stage during the first three months of pregnancy. During this stage, the embryo is nourished directly by percolation. Therefore, the diet should include more liquid type of food like milk having madhura rasa having antacid like properties to replenish the lost fluids. Madhura rasa has anabolic properties, which help in maintaining the health of both the foetus and the mother [3].

In the second trimester, there will be development of mamsa, shonitha, snayu. Hence for the sufficient growth of the fetus, more of carbohydrates and proteins in diet are being advised by supplementation of food like shashthika, shali and mamsa rasa. By the end of the second trimester, the garbhi may suffer from symptoms of water retention results in pada sopha. Use of gokshura is recommended which has diuretic properties to amend these complications [4].

In the last trimester, dravyas like satavari, vidari, brahmi, bala, draksha, dadima, which has the qualities of
jeevaniya, balya, hridya, brumhana, rasayana, ruchya and shoshahara are indicated. Most of these dravyas are primarily of madhura rasa, sarva dhatu vivardhana, tarpana, preenana and sandhanakara properties. The use of sneha dravyas such as ksheera, navaneeta and ghrita, which are of high nutritional value in terms of carbohydrates, proteins, fat and calcium are also advised. The regular use of these dravyas will help in the nourishment the fetus as well as relieving the garbhnii from the anticipated symptoms. There is no scope for katu and kashaya rasa dravyas due to their prominent ushna, tikshna and ruksha gunas, which have minimal nutritive value and can hinder the normal growth and development of the garbha.5

Significance of rasayana dravyas for garbha poshana

Administration of different Rasayana dravyas imparts benefits such as dirghayu, medha, arogya, smriti, prabha, varna, deha bal, indriya bal, kanti, vyadhikshamatva.6 Rasayana dravyas nourishes and maintains the cell life, encourages the growth of new cells, prevents recurrent infection, expels the damaged cells, eliminates the toxic metabolites and pollutants, maintains the balance between mind and body, stabilizes physiological process and promotes homeostasis. Drugs having Rasayana properties also possess neuroprotective, haemopoietic, anabolic, nutritive and anti-inflammatory properties.

Foods and drugs having rasayana properties when administered they are directly helps in tissue nourishment. Rasayana helps in rasa samvahanana, this medium of uttama poshana contributes to prashasta dhatu nirmana. Drugs such as shatavari, kharjura, draksha, ksheera and ghrita are considered to be rasa vardhaka rasayanas.7 Ksheera, ghrita and shatavari are the few of the examples of rasayanas acting at the level of rasa. Several rasayana dravyas are known to promote digestion of food and vitalize the metabolic activity resulting in turn to improve nutritional status at the level of dhatus. By promoting the competence of srotas i.e., the micro circulatory channels in the body leading to better bioavailability of nutrients to the tissues and improve tissue perfusion. This is another mode through which rasayana dravyas helps in promotion of nutritional status.

DISCUSSION

Drugs like amalaki, ksheera, mamsa rasa, ghrita, navanita, madhu, sharkara along with drugs mentioned in the month wise regimen such as shaliparni, madhuyashli, parushaka, gokshura, vidarigandhasi varga, jivaniya gana dravya and madhura gana dravyas like bola, gokshura, kharjura, draksha, shatavari, jivanti, ashwagandha etc. endowed with madhura rasa, sheeta veerya, madhura vipaka and with rasayana properties are mentioned in garbhnii paricharya.8,9,10 Rasayana drugs possess mainly madhura rasa, sheeta vipaka, madhura vipaka with properties of jivaniya, balya, brumhana, garbha sthapana, ojas vardhana etc. As the word rasayana defines itself as the one that brings about apiyayana of rasa raktaadi dhatu, the manipulation of these factors in the intrauterine life can give a definite scope in the growth and nourishment of the mother and fetus and also in the prevention of diseases.

Madhura rasa helps in the growth of the sapta dhatus and ojas. It improves the general strength and complexion and also it is vishagna and daha prashamana.11 Goghrita is recommended for both food and medicine. It possesses the action of rasayana, chakshushya, medhya and ayushya. The specific properties of ghrita which enhances ojas and bala will be of great benefit to the garbhini who is likely to experience bala varna hani and klnata during the mid pregnancy period. Ghee medicated with Jivaniya, Brmhaniya, madhura and vatahara dravyas are to be administered which are mentioned in the garbhnii paricharya as a precautionary measure to avoid such foetal malnutrition.

Majority of these drugs, besides promoting nutrition at the level of rasa, agni and srotas, also possess different pharmacological activities which may be of great importance in many disorders in pregnancy such as pregnancy induced hypertension, intrauterine growth retardation, gestational diabetes, recurrent abortion and all those disorders having defective immunologic component involved in its pathology. The immuno-modulatory activity of rasayana dravyas will play a major role in its prevention. As rasayana does the prinana of sarvadhatus, supplementing rasayana drugs at this early stage of development of fetus, the adhyadhatus gets adequate nourishment along with the consequent nourishment of uttarottara dhatu, thereby forming healthy tissues.

CONCLUSION

Fetus is dependent on mother for its nourishment and oxygen and its growth can proceed to abnormality in response to maternal nutrient insufficiency. The care of the pregnant lady reflects on the quality and health of the offspring. As there is a continuous growth of the embryo or fetus there would also be variation in its requirements of food and nutrition. Inadequate nutrition is a significant factor contributing to complications of pregnancy like low birth weight, IUGR, high mortality, prematurity, nutritional anaemia and perinatal loss as well as their sequels of mental and physical disabilities. So health of the pregnant women is maintained through proper garbhnii paricharya right from the conception till delivery considering the different physiological changes taking place in garbhnii along with the requirement of growing fetus. Different drugs and dietary articles having rasayana properties are prescribed during pregnancy. Thus use of rasayana drugs supports the maternal nutrition and also plays major role in fetal nourishment.

Source of Support

None.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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