

Month Wise Diet Regimen in Pregnancy

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Abstract – According to ayurveda pregnancy and child birth is indeed a holistic condition. During pregnancy she is like “A cup filled with oil right upto brim is carried without spilling even a single drop, every step has to be taken with care”. She needs extra care with regards to the health since there is another life depending on her. Ayurveda emphasis on the importance of caring of the mother before, during and after pregnancy. Improper diet and malabsorption can lead to growth retardation and congenital anomalies. To overcome such hazards and to keep her vital pure, our stalwarts prescribes month wise diet regimen for pregnant woman starting from conception till delivery. Proper garbhini parichrya i.e. diet, conduct of behavior and medications ensure normal pregnancy with normal delivery of healthy baby from healthy mother.

Keywords – Ayurveda, Month Wise Regimen, Garrbhini Paricharya

I. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda deals with wellbeing of mankind. Everything which affects the mother has impact up on the fetus. Maharshi Charaka says that with the normalcy of all six factors i.e. shukra (sperm), artava (ovum), atma, ashaya (uterus), kala (time) and use of appropriate diet along with mode of life by pregnant woman ,she remains healthy and delivers the child possessing good health, energy or strength, voice, compactness and much superior to other family members . The fetus obtains its nourishment from rasa which is supplied by the mother by process of *upasnehan* (attracting moisture) and *upaweda* (osmosis) . Mahrshi Kashyapa explains that the rasa formed from mother’s diet performs three functions (1). Nourishment of woman’s body. (2). formation of milk. (3). nourishment to the fetus. Improper diet and or mode of life can lead to anomalies of fetus.

So to reduce the complications like damage to fetus, risk of miscarriage, toxemia, anemia and other unforeseen complications related to pregnancy garbhini paricharya i.e. antenatal care should be followed by the pregnant woman, which is described in our classics.

II. FIRST TRIMISTER

In the 1st month of pregnancy Maharshi Charaka has advised that once having doubt about conception, she should take non medicated milk repeatedly in desired quantity considering her digestive power and strength. Congenial diet should be taken in morning and evening. In the 2nd month milk medicated with madhura (kakolyadi) group and in 3rd month milk with honey and ghrita.

Maharshi Sushruta has advised sweet, cold, and liquid

diet from 1st to 3rd month. He furthermore advised that with above diet, specially cooked shashti rice should be added in 3rd month.

III. SECOND TRIMISTER

Maharshi Charaka has advised butter extracted from milk in the quantity of 1 *aksha* (2 tola=20 grams), or milk with butter in 4th month, ghrita prepared with butter extracted from milk in 5th month and ghrita prepared from milk medicated with the drugs of madhura group in 6th month respectively.

While maharshi Sushruta has mentioned cooked shashti rice with curd, dainty and pleasant food mixed with butter and meat of wild animals in 4th and 5th month. Ghrita or yavagu (rice gruel) medicated with gokhshur in 6th month.

IV. THIRD TRIMISTER

In 7th month Charaka has prescribed same diet as in 6th, rice gruel prepared with milk and mixed with ghrita in 8th month. In 9th month anuvasana basti with oil prepared with the drugs of madhura group or vaginal tampon prepared with the same should be applied for the lubrication of garbhashthana (cervix, uterus) and garbhamarga (birth canal, perineum).

Maharshi Sushruta has advised ghrita medicated with prithakparnyadi (vidarigandhadi) group of drugs. This helps in proper growth and development of fetus.

He has indicated asthapan basti prepared with badar qwath (decoction) to clear the retained feces and cause anulomana (regulation) of vata which lead to normal delivery without any complications. He has not prescribed any specific dietetic regimen for 9th month. However in the regimen of 8th month after use of enema, continuous use of unctuous gruels and meat soup of wild animals upto the period of delivery is advised.

V. DISCUSSION

The first three months of pregnancy are very crucial. During this period major organs develops and the body of woman undergoes a lot of physiological changes to gear up for healthy pregnancy and smooth labor eventually. There is tendency of nausea and vomiting due to which she fails to get proper nourishment. To prevent dehydration and to supply proper nourishment to the mother and fetus use of cold, sweet, liquid diet, milk, honey, ghrita, drugs of madhura group is advised.

The milk described in classics is cow’s milk. It contains water (85.5-88.7%), lactose (3.8-5.3%), Fat (2.4-5.5%),

proteins (2.3-4.4 %) organic acids and other miscellaneous substances like vitamins, etc. which plays vital role in the nutrition of both mother and fetus. It offers rich source of calcium and minerals which are essential for healthy bones. During pregnancy there is increased demand of calcium by the growing fetus to the extent of 28 grams, 80 % of which is required in last trimester. Adequate calcium intake prevents osteoporosis. Adequate vitamin D level supports the production of serotonin, hormone associated with mood, appetite and sleep its deficiency has been associated with depression, fatigue. It is a source of potassium which regulates the body's fluid balance and helps in vasodilatation. Potassium intake with decrease sodium reduces the risk of cardiovascular diseases. It is also needed for muscle activity and uterine contractions. Rich amount of protein helps to maintain muscle development. It is utilized for building up the strength of uterus as well fetal tissues. Its deficiency can cause several health problems in fetus including low birth weight baby. It prevents neonatal rickets.

Milk is excellent source of vit B₂ (Riboflavin), helps to convert food into energy i.e. process crucial for exercising muscles, niacin is important for normal function of several enzymes in the body, phosphorus helps to strengthen the bones and generates energy. A result published in European journal of clinical nutrition, shows that teenagers of both the sexes were generally taller and less at risk of getting type II diabetes mellitus whose mother had drunk at least 150 milk/day during pregnancy. It boosts their IQ level because of protein content which helps to produce the hormones made by thyroid gland, has the direct effect on the development of fetal brain. Ayurveda also describes it as a complete food which promotes immunity, acts as rejuvenator, improves satva guna and tends to enhancement of positive characteristics.

Honey is a natural sweetener and possesses natural antibiotic and analgesic action. During pregnancy the natural defense mechanism of the body weakens therefore chances of infections are more, here honey acts as antibiotic and improves defense mechanism. During this period, due to high progesterone level, muscle tone and motility of the entire gastrointestinal tract are diminished, cardiac sphincter is relaxed and regurgitation of gastric content into oesophagus may produce chemical oesophagitis and heartburn, honey helps to reduce heartburn and discomfort in the gut. It is rich source of dextrose, dextrin, sucrose vitamin B and C which maintains adequate blood glucose level of mother required by fetus through placenta for metabolism. It reduces morning sickness or nausea and vomiting, and sense of unwell caused by hormones.

Ghrita contains fat 99.5%(saturated 61.9%, trans 4% , monosaturated 28.7%, polysaturated 3.7%), vitamins like A, E, K, high amount of DHA (docosahexaenoic acid, omega -3 fatty acid) which is vitally important as they are critical build blocks of fetal brain and retina. Ayurveda also describes that it is ssmritivardhaka (enhances memory) and buddhiwardhaka (augmenting intelligence). Consumption of DHA and EPA (eicosapeanoic acid) improves childhood development when ingested during

pregnancy and lactation.

Ghrita prevents constipation and aid digestion which are the common problems arises during pregnancy due to high progesterone (described earlier), diminished physical activity, and pressure of gravid uterus on pelvic colon by stimulating secretion of gastric acid by its deepana property.

The fetus develops body tissues in the 4th month, so swayoniwardhan dravyas i.e. jangal mamsa (fat content) has prescribed for sufficient growth of fetal tissues. It contains rich amount of proteins vitamins. Milk, curd, butter also advised as they contain GABA (Gamma Amino Butyric Acid) that is essential for brain functions. Butter contains water (16%), carbohydrates (0.19%), sugar (1-9%), omega 3, 6, vitamins like A, C, D, E, K, B, B₂, B₅, B₆, B₁₂, folate 3mcg, minerals like iron, calcium, potassium, magnesium. It protect against fungal infection, calcium content helps protecting against decay of teeth.

Vitamin D, E, K absorbs other minerals like calcium, magnesium, iodine, selenium which in turn provides energy. Vitamin E helps in proper development of fetal brain. The flavonides present in same kind of butter helps in reducing the oxidative stress during pregnancy. Vitamin K plays a key role in blood clotting. This is important particularly during labor and just after delivery. It inhibits vascular calcification and thus may protect against cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis.

Shasti rice which mentioned in classics is sweet and astringent in taste, easy to digest, soft having cool potency. It pacifies tridosha and helps in protecting circulatory, respiratory, and digestive system. It is ideal for anemic patient to induce blood generation (erythropoiesis). It has very low glycemic index and contains proteins (16.5%) thiamin (27-32%) riboflavin (4-25%), niacin(2-36%). It is beneficial in bleeding disorders, emaciation, hemorrhoids which a common complaint during pregnancy, diabetes, skin disorders, UTI, stomach ulcers and helps to increase mother's milk(galactogogue).

By the end of second trimester most of the women suffer from edema on feet and other complications of water retention. There is active retention of sodium and potassium Gokhshura may prevent it as it is natural diuretic. It eliminates excess of water from body. It has antihypertensive effect (easyayurveda.com). The stasis of ureter is marked between 20-24 weeks which may lead to difficult urination. Also there is inflammation of bladder mucosa due to venous and lymphatic obstruction especially in primigravida in late pregnancy.

Medicated enema with oil and the tampons with the same soften the birth canal and increase its elasticity. It regulates the apan vayu which plays important role during pregnancy and labor. It may not help in complications such as cephalopelvic disproportion, contracted pelvis ante-partum hemorrhage but in same extent helpful in prolonged labor due to vitiated vata. In other study Devraj T.L., and Chaturvedi G.N. reported that it increases Sr. protein, Hb %, and reduces ESR thereby suggesting that it arrests the disease process and improves metabolism of protein.

VI. CONCLUSION

Ayurveda describes garbhiniparicharya i.e. antenatal care. The diet during pregnancy should be adequate to provide: 1) the maintenance of maternal and fetal health, 2) The strength and vitality required during labor and 3) Successful lactation. During pregnancy there is increased calorie requirement due to increased growth of maternal tissues, fetus, placenta and increased metabolic rate. The diet should be light, nutritious, easily digestible and rich in protein, minerals and vitamins. Ayurveda advices such type of diet under the title garbhiniparicharya according to requirement of mother and fetus.

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