

AYURVEDIC APPROACH IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SUTIKA KALA (PUERPERIUM)

Mehjabin Hashina¹ Humtsoe Yanbeni²

¹MS scholar, ²Professor & HOD,

Department of prasuti tantra and stree roga , Govt. Ayurvedic college and hospital, Guwahati
-781014 , Assam

ABSTRACT

Ayurvedic science is one of the most ancient sciences. The matter regarding *sutika* and its management are very well described in almost all *Ayurvedic* classics which are collected and compiled for a better and easier study. *Sutika* is the women after expulsion of placenta and the time period upto 6 weeks thereafter is termed as *sutika kala* or puerperium or puerperial period. *Garbhini* is much prone to diseases due to aggravation of already excited *doshas*. This further may be aggravated during delivery and puerpura due to loss of blood and all-important *dhatu*s of the body and the women suffers from diseases that are incurable or get cured with difficulty. To prevent all these complications, special dietary regimen, living lifestyle and other required management are described in almost all *Ayurvedic* classics for the *sutika kala* under the heading *sutika paricarya*. The main objective of this *sutika paricarya* is to retain all lost things and reaches her pre pregnancy state along with prevention of all complication .A state of physical, mental and psychological wellbeing is re-established.

Keywords: *Garbhini, Sutika, Sutikaparicarya, Ayurveda, Postnatal care*

INTRODUCTION

The main aim of *ayurveda* is *swastha rakshana* and *vikara prasaman*¹. *Ayurveda* has given care to the *stree* (women) at every phase of her life in respect of *rajaswala paricarya* (menstrual care), *garbhini paricarya* (antenatal care), *sutika paricarya* (postnatal care).The term *sutika* is used after expulsion of placenta in all classics²,and management is given thereafter. Also the puerperium is the period of time encompassing the first few weeks following birth. The duration of this period is understandably inexact & it is considered by most to be between 4 & 6 weeks³. Although, a relatively complex time compared with pregnancy, the puerperium is characterised by many physiological changes. Some of these changes may be simply bothersome for the

new mother, although serious complication can also arise. Some mothers have feelings of abandonment following delivery because of a newly aimed focus upon the infant. Thus the puerperium may be a time of intense anxiety for many women. In *Ayurveda* also about 74 types of diseases are mentioned which can happen during this period if not managed properly. So, health of a mother in puerperial period is more important and special care & attention is needed to prevent all these complication. Due to vitiation of *vata* after delivery, digestive power as well as immunity and strength of mother become weak and lady remains in a compromised state where a minor ailment can cause a lot of harm to the body. So, alleviation of *vata* should be the first aim which can be

obtained by following *sutika paricarya*. Here *sutika paricarya* is discussed in detail to maintain health of a delivered woman.

Sutika kala as per various acaryas

1. *Acarya Charaka* has not given any specific duration⁴.
2. *Acarya Sushrut* and *Vagbhata*, explained *sutika kala* for 1 ½ month or until she gets her first menstruation after delivery & in case of *mudha garbha* 4 months ,can be considered as *sutika kala*^{5,6}.
3. *Kashyap* mentioned *sutika kala* as 6 months².
4. *Bhavaprakash* and *Yogratnakar* describes *sutika kala* for 1 ½ months or

after restoration of menstrual cycle & after that she can be free from *sutika paricarya*^{7,8}. In case of complicated labour only after subsidence of complication she should be free from *sutika paricarya*.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE OF SUTIKA PARICARYA

1. To relieve the exhaustion of labour.
2. To heal laceration in the external genital organs.
3. To restore vigour and vitality.
4. To support the involution process.

SUTIKA PARICARYA

Sutika paricarya (postnatal care) described in various classics are tabulated as follows

TEXT	AHARA KALPANA(DIET)	VIHAR (MODE OF LIFE)	AUSADHI(MEDICINE)
Charaka samhita	Liquid gruel of rice medicated with pippali (<i>piper longum</i>), pippalimula (<i>piper longum</i> 's root), chavya (<i>piper retrofractum</i>), chitrak (<i>plumbago zeylanica</i>), sunthi (<i>zingiber officinale</i>) for 5-7 days. ⁹	Abhyanga of abdomen with taila or ghrita then udaraveshtana with big clean cloth. Irrigation or bath with luke warm water. ⁹	Sarpi ,taila ,vasa, majja with pippali (<i>piper longum</i>), pippalimula (<i>piper longum</i> 's root), chavya (<i>piper retrofractum</i>),chitraka (<i>plumbago zeylanica</i>) & shringavera (<i>zingiber officinale</i>) churna. ⁹
Sushruta samhita	Sneha yavagu or kshira yavagu saturated with drugs of vidarigandhadi (<i>desmodium gangeticum</i> etc.) gana from 3 rd or 4 th to 6 th or 7 th days. meat soup of wild animals saturated with yava (<i>vulgaris sativus</i>), kola (<i>ziziphus mauritiana</i>), kulattha (<i>dolichos biflorus</i>) with cooked shali rice from 7 th or 8 th day to <i>sutika kala</i> . ¹⁰	Abhyanga with bala (<i>sida cordifolia</i>) Taila , then irrigation with decoction of bhadradaru (<i>cedrus deodara</i>) etc. drugs capable of suppressing vata. ¹⁰	Pippali (<i>piper longum</i>), pippalimula (<i>piper longum</i> 'root), hastipippali, chitraka (<i>plumbago zeylanica</i>) and shringabera (<i>zingiber officinale</i>) churna with gudodaka (jiggery water) for 2 or 3 days. ¹⁰
Ashtanga samgraha	Liquid yavagu prepared with either milk or vidaryaadi gana (<i>pueraria tuberosa</i> etc.)drugs for 3,5	Abhyanga with bala (<i>sida cordifolia</i>) taila, udarveshtana	Sneha with panchakola (pippali, pippalimula, chavya, chitrak, sunthi) churna or sneha with

	or 7 days, light diet with soup of yava (<i>vulgaris sativus</i>), kola (<i>ziziphus mauritiana</i>) and kulattha (<i>dolichos biflorus</i>) from 4 th , 6 th , or 8 th day to 12 th day. meat soup of wild animal, agreeable diet from 13 th to sutika kala ¹¹	after massage of abdomen with taila or ghrta, irrigation with luke warm water. massage, unguent, irrigation and bathing with jivaniya, brimhaniya, madhura and vatahara drugs. ¹¹	yavani (<i>trachyspermum amnii</i>), upakunchika (<i>nigella sativa</i>), chavya, chitraka, vyosha (sunthi, maricha, pippali) and saindhav with usna jala for 7 nights. ¹¹
Ashtanga hridaya	Panchakola (<i>piper longum</i> , root of <i>piper longum</i> , <i>plumbago zeylanica</i> , <i>piper retrofractum</i> , <i>zingiber officinale</i>) siddhapeya for first 3 days, vidaryaadi gana kwath siddha snehayukta yavagu or kshira yavagu from 4 th to 7 th day, after that gradually brimhana diet from 8 th to 12 th day, after 12 th day meat soup should be used. ¹²	Same like <i>astanga samgraha</i> . massage of yoni is described along with body ¹² .	Taila or ghrta with Panchakola (<i>piper longum</i> , root of <i>piper longum</i> , <i>plumbago zeylanica</i> , <i>piper retrofractum</i> , <i>zingiber officinale</i>) churna along with <i>usna gudodaka</i> (warm jaggery water for 2 or 3 days) ¹² .
KASHAPA SAMHIT	Pippali (<i>piper longum</i>), nagar (<i>zingiber officinalis</i>) yukta and saindhavarahita alpasneha yukta yavagu for first 3 or 5 days, then sasneha lavana yavagu, then sasneha-amla-lavan yukta kulattha (<i>dolichos biflorus</i>) yush with meat soup of wild animals and ghrtabhrista kushmanda (<i>benincasa hispida</i>), and moolaka (<i>raphanas sativus</i>). ¹³	Massage of back, pressure of abdomen and flanks then <i>udaravestana</i> . sudation in the yoni, hot water bath after swedan, fumigation with kustha (<i>sausserea lappa</i>), agaru (<i>aquilaria agallocha</i>) mixed with ghrta. ¹³	According to satmya <i>snehapana</i> and <i>manda</i> for 3 or 5 days. ¹³
	Usna kulattha (<i>dolichos biflorus</i>) yush on 2 nd day, panchakola yavagu on 3 rd day, chaturjataka (<i>cinnamomum</i>	Massage and oil filling of vagina then swedan. ¹⁴	Kwath of lodhra (<i>symplocus racemosus</i>), arjuna (<i>terminalia arjuna</i>), kadamba (<i>anthrocephalus indicus</i>), devadaru (<i>cedrus</i>

Harita samhita	<i>cardomomum, cinnamomum zeylanicum, messua ferra</i> mixed yavagu on 4 th day, shali rice on 5 th day. ¹⁴		<i>deodara</i>) etc. guda with haritaki (<i>terminalia chebula</i>) & sunthi (<i>zingiber officinale</i>) churna on 2 nd day morning. ¹⁴
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Amulet for sutika: The puerperal woman should tie amulet of trivrita (*operculina turpethum*) over her head.¹⁵

Kashyap described sutika paricarya according to place where sutika resides

anupa desha (marshy land)	Jangala desha (dry land)	Sadharan desha (ordinary land)	Mleccha cast (foreigners)
In marshy land usually diseases of vata and kapha occur. Because of high humidity in the area fat initially should not be use; instead scum of boiled rice treated with appetizing and strength producing things should be given. Swedan ,sleeping in free air.	She should be given <i>ghrita</i> or oil or any unctuous recepti in good quantity using decoction of pipalli etc. herbs. For strong women this unctuous material and to the weak women rice gruel should be given for 3 or 5 nights. it should follow the use cereal blended with unctuous things in regularly increasing method. <i>kashyap</i> mentioned that <i>vata</i> and <i>pitta</i> diseases occur frequently so high amount of unctuous diet should be given.	Here neither unctuous nor dry substances are advised. General management have to be followed.	Here use of blood meat <i>yusha</i> (soup), rhizomes, eatable roots and fruits throughout this phase.

General principal of treatment of sutika kala problems

- Avoidance of etiological factors.
- By giving congenial diet and properly administering oleaginous substances with due consideration to place of living, time factor and suitability of the diseases.
- Women should be treated with massage, anointment, irrigation, and *ghrita* along with *jivaniya* (life prolonging), *brimhaniya* (anabolic), *madhura* (sweet) and *vatahara* drugs.
- The woman who is diseased due to difficult labour should be given oleation and sudation which suppress the *vayu*.

BENEFITS OF SUTIKA PARICARYA:

After delivery body becomes weak and emaciated due to development of fetus and also unsteadiness of all *dhatus*, excretion of *kleda* (moisture) due to labour pain and loss of blood during delivery. *Sutika paricarya* helps to replenish those lost things and attain pre pregnancy state.¹⁶

DISCUSSION

Giving birth to a child makes a woman complete. But starting from the period of *garbhini* till delivery, a woman undergoes lots of changes in the body. Comparison of pregnant woman is done with the pot filled with oil, that slightest oscillation of such pot causes spilling of the oil. Pregnancy and delivery is a

physiological process, where we need to support it through proper diet, regimen and medicines, otherwise it may lead to many complications. Sutika kala in most of classic is described as *adyaardha masa* (1 ½ months) ,it is the duration till when *sutika paricarya* (post natal care) is required, which mainly decreases vata and do brimhana. Aim of post natal care is to maintain maternal and infant health preventing any complication & to establish infant feeding. It also helps to attain *sama dosha, sama dhatu, sama agni & sama mala* of the mother. It increases maternal and fetal health status.

CONCLUSION

As *sutika kala* is the most delicate and critical stage in a woman's life, so, special diet, regimens, medicines are required which are mentioned by various *acaryas* under the heading *sutika paricarya*. Post natal care (*sutika paricarya*) mentioned in *ayurveda* in a meticulous fashion helps a woman to adjust herself socially, mentally and psychologically, to grow up in every aspect and attain proper growth of newborn.

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CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

Dr. Mehjabin Hashina

MS scholar, department of prasuti tantra and stree roga, Govt. Ayurvedic College and hospital, Guwahati -781014, Assam

Email: hashina.mehjabin88@gmail.com

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