



SIGNIFICANCE OF NITYA RASAYANA (KSHEER AND GHRITA) IN GARBHINI PARICHARYA - A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Pregnancy is a unique, exciting, and joyous experience in a woman's life. It celebrates the woman's amazing creative and nurturing powers while building a bridge to the future. A healthy baby is every mother's dream and the easiest way to ensure it is by paying attention to maternal nutrition. Ayurveda prescribes *Garbhini Paricharya* which is a detailed, systematic month-wise dietary and lifestyle regimen to be followed during pregnancy. Several Rasayan Dravyas have been mentioned in this regimen, but prime importance has been given to *Ksheer* and *Ghrita*. This document explores how intervention of *Nitya Rasayana* in pregnancy can promote proper nutrition in both mother and child.

Key words: Nitya Rasayan, Ksheer, Ghrita, Pregnancy, Garbhini Paricharya

INTRODUCTION

Pregnancy is a unique, exciting and joyous experience of a woman's life. It celebrates nature's amazing

creative and nurturing powers while building a bridge to the future.

A healthy baby is every mother's dream and the easiest way to ensure it is by paying attention to maternal nutrition.

Good nutrition is necessary not only to support baby's phenomenal growth but also empower woman to navigate physical demands of body. The impact of a mother's diet extends beyond immediate pregnancy. Studies suggest that children born to mothers who ate well during pregnancy are less likely to develop chronic diseases like obesity and diabetes later in life.¹ This highlights the long-term influence of prenatal nutrition, laying the foundation for a child's life-long health trajectory.² Ayurveda prescribes *Garbhini Paricharya* which is a detailed, systematic month wise dietary and lifestyle regimen to be followed during pregnancy.^{3,4,5} Several Rasayan Dravyas have been mentioned in this regimen but prime importance has been given to *Ksheer and Ghrita*. *Ksheer and Ghrita* are mentioned as *Nitya Rasayan*⁶ and include in *Nitya Sevniye dravya*.^{7,8} *Rasayana* word is made up of two words i.e. Ras+ Ayan which means: the one that brings about *Apyayana* of *Rasa Raktadi Dhatus* i.e. the building blocks of human life. *Rasayana* therapy improves the essence of *rasa*, nourishing it with nutrients. This leads to a longer life, enhanced memory and intelligence, freedom from disease, a youthful appearance, excellent luster, complexion, and voice, optimal physical development and sharper senses, and mastery over language and brilliance. By boosting immunity, *Rasayana* helps keep a person healthy and disease-free.⁹ Based on action, *Rasayan* can be classified as follows¹⁰

Kamya Rasayana (for the promotion of health of healthy)

Naimittika Rasayana (to cure specific diseases)

Ajasrika Rasayana (the regular use of nutritious foods to advocate health) *Ksheer and Ghrita* are the only two dravyas mentioned in *Aachar rasayan* that are consumed daily.⁶ These however are also described as *Aajsrik rasayan* by Acharya Sushruta.¹¹ Acharya Charak has mentioned '*Ksheerghritaabhyaso-rasayanamshreshtham*' as *Agraya* i.e. daily consumption of *Ksheer and Ghrita* is best among *Rasayan*.¹² "*Nitya Rasayan*" refers to consuming specific Ayurvedic *Rasayana* substances daily to maintain good health and well-being.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE: To assess the relevance of *Nitya Rasayana* (Ghee and Milk) in *Garbhini Paricharya*.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Materials related to the concepts of *Rasayana* and *Garbhini Paricharya* have been collected mainly from Ayurveda texts of Acharya Charak, Sushruta and Vagbhatta. We have also explored modern literature and searched various websites and reports to gather information on relevant and related topics.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Garbhini Paricharya

Garbhini Paricharya, Ayurveda's holistic approach to prenatal care, nourishes the mother and nurtures the developing fetus. Diet, herbs, and lifestyle practices foster a balanced internal environment for optimal fetal development and support the mother's well-being. This interconnected approach ensures a harmonious pregnancy journey.

Table 1- Month wise *Garbhini Paricharya* according to Acharya Charak, Sushruta and Vagbhatta.

Months	Charak ³	Sushruta ⁴	Vagbhatta ⁵
1	Milk	Madhur, Sheet, Liquid Diet	Medicated milk
2	Milk medicated with madhura rasa dravya	Same as first month	Same as Charaka. Milk medicated with madhura rasa (sweet taste)
3	Milk with honey and ghrita	Same as first month	Milk with honey and ghrita
4	Milk with Navneet	Cooked Shasti rice with curd, dainty and pleasant food mixed with milk & butter and Jangal mansa	Milk with 12gm of Navneet

5	Ghrita prepared with butter extracted from milk	Cooked Shastika rice with milk, Jangal mansa along with dainty food mixed with milk and ghrita	Same as Charaka
6	Ghrita prepared from milk medicated with madhura (sweet) drugs	Ghrita or rice gruel medicated with Gokshura	Same as Charaka
7	Same as in sixth month	Ghrita medicated with Prithakaparnyadi group of drugs Asthapanabasti with decoction of Badari mixed with Bala, Atibala, Satapuspa, Patala	Same as Charaka
8	KshiraYawagu mixed with Ghrita	Honey and Ghrita. Asthapan basti followed by Anuvasana basti of oil medicated with milk, madhura drugs	Kshirayawagu mixed with Ghrita, Asthapanabasti with decoction of badari, Anuvasana. basti with oil medicated with Madhura drugs
9	Anuvasanabasti with oil prepared with drugs of Madhura (sweet) group, and pichu (vaginal tampon) dipped in these	Unctuous gruels and jangal Mansaras till delivery	Same as charak

From the above table, it can be concluded that Ksheer (milk) and Ghrita in raw as well as processed form have been indicated in most of the months

Ksheera

Ksheera builds foundation of *Ojas and Bala* (strength) and is revered in Ayurveda for its nourishing and pacifying properties. Nature's complete food, Ksheera provides essential nutrients to support the Dhatus (bodily tissues) and promote overall well-being. This cornerstone of Ayurvedic nutrition finds mention in various classical texts for its role in balancing the Doshas and promoting health during all stages of life.

General properties of Ksheer (milk)

Ras- Madhur

Gun- Guru, Snigdha,

Virya- Sheet

Vipak- Madhur

Doshanghnata- vatpithar

Rogaghanta- Shwas- kasa, Raktpitta, Trishna, Ksheen kshat, Pandu, Amlapitta, Shosh GumlaUdarAtisar, Atisar, JwarDaha, Kshvayathu, Yonishukrapradosh, Mutrarog Pradar, Vatpit vikar, grathit purish,¹³

Murcha-Bhram mad -Ghrahini Arsh hridrog, Shool udavart pravahika garbhasrava, klamhar, Alvid-dhaphya, Vaman-virechan-aasthapan, Vyavaya-vyayam karshit Rakt-manas vikar kshaya ¹⁴

Table 2 - Properties of Ksheer according to Bruhatrayi

Properties	Charak 13	Sushruta 14	Vagabhatta 15
Preenana	+		
Bhrungan	+	+	
Vrushya	+	+	+
Medhya	+	+	
Balya	+	+	
Manaskar	+	+	
Jeevniye	+	+	
Shramhar	+	+	
Deepan	+		

Ayushyam		+	
Sandhan	+		
Sarvpranbhrutanam satmya	+	+	
Oja vardhan			+
Dhatuwardhan			+
Shleshmalam	+		
Guru		+	+
Pranada -Picchila - Shlakshan-Mrudu		+	
Sara		+	
Vajikaran		+	
Rasayan	+	+	
Stanyavardhan	+		
Shaman shodhan	+		

Nutritional profile of 100 ml Milk ¹⁶

Table 3 -

Energy (kcal)	65	Niacin (mg)	0.2
Protein(g)	3.5	Vitamin B6(ug)	0.06
Carbohydrates	4.7	Folate(ug)	8
Total sugars	4.7	Pantothenate(mg)	0.60
Fat	3.7	Biotin (ug)	2.6
Trans fatty acids	0.1	Vitamin C (mg)	2
Fibre (g)	0	Retinol (ug)	37
Thiamin (mg)	0.03	Vitamin E	0.06
Riboflavin (mg)	0.24	Potassium	162
Sodium(mg)	43	Calcium(mg)	124
Magnesium(mg)	11	Phosphorous(mg)	99
Iron (mg)	0.02	Zinc(mg)	0.5
Chlorine(mg)	92	Iodine(mg)	32

Ghrita

Ghrita (ghee), Ayurveda's celebrated "liquid gold," nourishes, detoxifies, and kindles Agni (digestive fire). Crafted from Navneet, it's a versatile wonder used internally, externally and even for sacred fire offerings. Renowned for balancing all three Doshas, Ghrita promotes healthy digestion, strengthens Ojas (immunity), and fosters longevity. Its natural lubrication soothes mucous membranes for healthy breathing, while external application nourishes and brightens the skin. In Ayurvedic medicine, Ghrita serves as a base for medicated preparations, enhancing their effects. Regular consumption and application are be-

lieved to promote mental clarity, memory, and a balanced nervous system.

General properties of Ghrita

Ras- Madhur,

Gun-Guru, Snigdha,

Virya- Sheet,

Vipak- Madhur

Karma - agnideepan, chakshushya,

Doshaghnata - Tridoshshamak

Roghnata -Unmad, Shosh, Jwarhar, Vishara, ¹⁸

Udavart, Apasmar, Shool, Anah ¹⁷

Ksheer-Kshat-Parisarp-Shastra-Agni-Pitatmanam ¹⁹

Table 4 - Properties of Ghrita according to Bruhat Trayi

Properties	Sushruta ¹⁷	Charak ¹⁸	Vagbhatta ¹⁹
Madhur	+	+	+
Saumya	+		
Mrudu	+		
Analpabhishyandi	+		
Snehan	+	+	+
Deepaniye	+	+	+
Smruti Mati-Medha Vardhak	+	+	+
Kanti - swar - lavanya	+	+	+
Saukumarya	+		+
Oj vardhan	+	+	+
tej - balkara	+		
Ayushya	+		+
Vrushya	+		+
Vaya sthapan	+	+	+
Guru	+	+	
Chakshushya	+		+
Shlesh Abhivardhan	+	+	
Agni vardhak		+	+
Shukra		+	+
Kaf-med vardhak	+	+	
Alaxminashak	+	+	+

Table 6 - Nutritional Profile of Ghrita²⁰

Water	0.24g	Vitamin B-6	0.001mg
Energy	876kcal	Choline, total	22.3mg
Protein	0.28g	Vitamin B-12	0.01µg
Total lipid (fat)	99.48g	Vitamin A, RAE	840µg
Calcium, Ca	4mg	Retinol	824µg
Phosphorus, P	3mg	Carotene, beta	193µg
Potassium, K	5mg	Vitamin E (alpha-tocopherol)	2.8mg
Sodium, Na	2mg	Vitamin K (phylloquinone)	8.6µg
Zinc, Zn	0.01mg	Fatty acids, total saturated	61.924g
Copper, Cu	0.001mg	Fatty acids, total monounsaturated	28.732g
Thiamin	0.001mg	Fatty acids, total polyunsaturated	3.694g
Riboflavin	0.005mg	Cholesterol	256mg
Niacin	0.003mg		

RECENT RESEARCH-

Several recent research have tried to delve deeper into the effects of milk and dairy on pregnancy outcomes. A few studies exploring the benefits of dairy

and how it might impact the baby's health after birth have been listed below :

- Sandra Abreu et al in their research titled- "Relationship between dairy product intake during

pregnancy and neonatal and maternal outcomes among Portuguese women”, concluded that dairy product intake during pregnancy may affect neonatal head circumference, placental weight, and gestational weight gain.²¹

- Xin Xin Pang et al in their research work - “Associations of Dairy Consumption during Pregnancy and Neonatal Birth Body Mass: a Prospective Study” inferred that Milk intake during pregnancy is associated with neonatal birth body mass, and increased milk intake in the second and third trimester of pregnancy may reduce the risk of SGA.²²
- Rocío Olmedo-Requena in their research work titled-“ Association Between Low Dairy Intake During Pregnancy and Risk of Small-for-Gestational-Age Infants” observed that an increased intake of dairy products by 100 g/day during the first half of pregnancy decreased the risk of having an SGA infant by 11.0 %, aOR = 0.89 (0.83, 0.96). An inadequate intake of dairy products is associated with a higher risk of SGA.²³
- Ludvigsson et al. Their study “ Milk Consumption during pregnancy and Infant Birthweight” reported that low milk intake during pregnancy was associated with an increased risk of IUGR.²⁴
- In their study, Mukhopadhyay et al., Maternal intake of milk and milk proteins is positively associated with birth weight: A prospective observational cohort study,” o inferred a positive association in the South Asian Indian population.²⁵

DISCUSSION

Our analysis of Garbhini Paricharya in various Ayurvedic texts reveals that raw and processed Ksheer (milk) and Ghrita (ghee) are recommended throughout pregnancy. Below is a detailed explanation of how these recommendations might work.

1st trimester

- Acharya Charak recommends the use of non-medicated milk in required amount (considering its digestibility) from the time of conception itself.

He has recommended milk alone or along with Madhura aushadhi during the first trimester.³

- This is the period of implantation. Ksheer and Ghrita have Garbhakar property. Thus, promoting healthy pregnancy.^{13,18}
- Embryo is described as Shleshmapindibhoot in 1st month. Ksheer and Ghrita both are Shleshmal in nature, promoting proper embryogenesis and implantation.²⁶
- During the first trimester, women often suffer from nausea, fatigue, and vomiting, which can lead to dehydration and nutrient loss. The recommended dietary regimen in liquid form during this period primarily consists of Ksheer and Ghrita. These foods possess Madhura Rasa (sweet taste), Madhura Vipaka (sweet post-digestive effect), and Sheeta Virya (cooling potency). This dietary approach provides high nutritional value, replenishing nutrients and correcting dehydration.

2nd trimester

- The importance of Rasayana dominates in the 2nd trimester of pregnancy due to organogenesis and rapid growth of the foetus.
- According to Acharya Charak, Dhaurud stage of Garbhini is attained in 4th month.²⁷ Navneet, a prior stage of Ghrita, has Hridya property promoting a healthy circulatory system.²⁸
- In the fifth month, the foetus's growth rate increases, resulting in Mamsa Shonitha Kshaya in the mother.²⁹ Nitya Rasayana, due to their Bhrumhana property, can overcome the Karshyatwa produced in pregnant women by bringing about Mamsa Poshana.
- Mana attains prominence in 5th and according to Acharya Sushruta³⁰ and is sustained by Manaskar property of Ksheer.¹³
- Buddhi is formed in foetus 30 during the 6th month, and since both Ksheer and Ghrita are Smriti Mati Medha Vardhak, they should be administered alone or along with other Medhya Rasayana.

- In the 6th month of gestation Bala -Varnahani occurs in the mother because these Bhavas increase in the foetus. Therefore, Nitya Rasayana is very beneficial since it is Deha Indriya Bala Prabha Varna Vardaka.³¹
- Ghrita has been described as the most unique substance since it possesses the effect of Sanskarohi-gunantaradhanam (It adopts the properties of herbs and substances with which it is processed, retaining its qualities)³². This quality of Ghrita makes it an excellent vehicle for drug administration. By the end of the second trimester, most women suffer from oedema of feet and other complications of water retention, which can be solved by the administration of gokshur medicated ghrita, which is an excellent diuretic.³³
- Researchers suggest that a drug given in the form of Ghrita would not only be digested and absorbed fast but also be able to reach some of the most distant areas of the body like the central nervous system (CNS) as well as the growing child in the womb.³⁴
- Ksheer and Ghrita are Daha Nashak which prove helpful in relieving burning sensation and acidity in pregnant women.¹³

3rd Trimester

- Factors such as sleep disturbances (common during pregnancy), seasonal variations, reduced food intake, and vomiting contribute to the aggravation of Vata dosha during pregnancy. The imbalance of Vata Dosha is a primary factor contributing to various physical and psychological issues in expectant mothers, including conditions like constipation and flatulence, premature rupture of membranes (PROM) and intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR) etc. Since both Ksheer and Ghrita possess the property of Vatashaman, they become crucial during pregnancy for the proper development of the fetus and minimise complications in the mother during pregnancy and delivery.
- During the 8th month, Oja fluctuates between mother and foetus.³⁵ Both Ksheer and Ghrita are

similar to the properties of Oja. Their consumption is necessary to stabilise it.³⁶

- Stanyavardhan milk production in the last month of pregnancy.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda, along with recent research, suggests a positive association between consuming milk and other dairy products and pregnancy outcomes. Thus, it can be concluded that in Garbhini Paricharya, Nitya Rasayan Dravya, especially Ksheer and Ghrita, provide adequate nutrition to the pregnant woman and growing foetus due to Madhura Ras, Madhur Vipak, and Sheet Veerya.

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