

## CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW OF GARBHADHAN SANSKAR - ONE STEP TOWARDS HEALTHY PROGENY

Bharti Vats<sup>1</sup>, Suniti Tanwar<sup>2</sup>, J K Panda<sup>3</sup>

1. PG scholar, Department of Prasuti Tantra Evum Stri Roga. 2. Associate professor, Department of Prasuti Tantra Evum Stri Roga. 3. HOD, Department of Prasuti Tantra Evum Stri Roga. Shri Krishna Government Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Kurukshetra, Haryana.

Corresponding Author: [drbhartivats@gmail.com](mailto:drbhartivats@gmail.com)

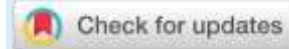
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## ABSTRACT

Every parent desire healthy progeny. So, a planned Pregnancy is much better than an unplanned one. The FEBAD hypothesis [The Fetal Basis of Adult Disease] postulates that Prenatal insults such as nutrition or environmental stimulation can disturb the developmental programming leading to a higher risk of disease in later life. In the current era of a sedentary lifestyle, stress factor, alcohol intake & unhealthy environment affects the quality and counts of sperm in male & menstruation & ovulation in females which leads to HPO (Hypothalamo-pituitary Ovarian) dysfunction. In Ayurveda *Garbhadhan sanskar* is to get a healthy progeny by improving the quality of beej (sperm & ovum) by *beej shuddi* through *shodhan* (purification) of both parents before conception so would-be-parents are prepared physically & mentally for *shreshhtpraja*. The appropriate age to marry and for conception is also mentioned by our acharyas. The *ahar-vihar-vichar* which should be followed by a female during the menstrual phase is mentioned as *Rajsavalacharya* by *Acharya Charaka*. By the first ANC visit, Organogenesis is well underway & the interventions to avoid malformations may be too late. So, before pregnancy, it is the best time to ensure all the factors that her body is ready for pregnancy through preparing *Ritu-Shetra-Ambu-Beej* as *Garbhadhan Samagri*. This conceptual study aims to make people aware of pre-conceptual care as per ayurvedic rituals and regimens.

**Key words:** Garbhadhan vidhi, Beej suddi, Shreshhtpraja, pre-conceptual care

## INTRODUCTION

In addition to various challenges in the field of maternal health, the marked rise in chronic and developmental illness in offspring has been an issue of concern in the medical community<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly evident that modifiable prenatal factors may be significant determinants in many of these health problems, a reality which recently prompted FIGO [the international federation of obstetrics and gynecology] an organization that represents obstetrical & gynecological association from 125 Countries, to release a special communication urgently calling for concerted action in the field of maternity health care as it relates to preventable childhood disorders<sup>2</sup>. Pregnancy is a physiological Condition requiring additional nutrients to fulfill the requirements of the fetus. Aahar is considered as medicine in ayurveda. *Vihar* (lifestyle) & *Vichar* (state of mind) are also equally important to maximize pregnancy outcomes. Our ancient text has mentioned *Aahar - Vihar - Vichar* for the couple planning for Parenthood. All the regimens and rituals are given step by step to get a healthy progeny devoid of any anomalies.

Aim and Objectives:

- 1] Conceptual study of *Garbhadhan Sanskar* for achieving a healthy progeny.
- 2] To make people aware of Aahar, Vihar, and Vichar to be followed during the preconceptional period as per ancient text.
- 3] To overcome any defects in the beej [sperm and ovum] by negating the physical and psychological issues.
- 4] To overcome any congenital defects in the coming progeny.

Material and Methods:

There is a total of 16 *sanskar* as per hindu mythology. *Sanskaras* are, in one context, the diverse rites of passage of a human being from conception to cremation. *Garbhadhan sanskar* is one among the 16 *sanskar*. *Garbhadhan* [ceremony of conception] as the name suggests, *Garbhadhan* is the bestowing of wealth into the *garbha* [the mother's womb]. In other words, *Garbhadhan* means 'gifting the womb.' It

is the first *sanskar* among 16 *sanskar*. Human life starts with *Garbhadhan sanskar*, so it has its unique importance in an individual's life. Different research papers, journals, ancient ayurvedic texts, modern literature texts, and online portals are analyzed to study the conceptual part of *Garbhadhan sanskar*. The *Garbhadhan sanskar* in different texts are - Factors required for a healthy Progeny according to *Acharya Shusruta* are mentioned as *Garbhadhan samagri*<sup>3</sup>. Shusruta equating germination of seed with the achievement of conception says that if *Ritu* (season or period near ovulation i.e., *Ritukaal*), *Beej* (Ovum and Sperm), *Kshetra* (field i.e., Female reproductive system) and *Ambu* (water i.e., nourishing substances) assemble together, the conception will definitely occur. *Acharya Vagbhata* emphasized that besides all these factors, properly functioning *Vayu* and normal psychological status (happy mood) are also essential.

### 1. Vivah Yogya Aayu – (Appropriate age of marriage): -

As per *Acharya Vagbhatt*, the appropriate age is 21 & 12 years for males & females respectively<sup>4</sup> & according to *Acharya Shusruta*, it is 25- & 16-year respectively<sup>5</sup>. They also said a big no to consanguineous marriage by mentioning that the female should be of *Atulya Gotra* i.e the different Gotra. *Acharya Bhela* has also mentioned that a man should marry a female with a different *gotra*<sup>6</sup>. Because gotra denotes chromosomes and modern science has also proved that there will be more genetic disorders in the same chromosomal patterns. In our country, the age declared by our government is 18 and 21 for females and males respectively. In my opinion, it is the appropriate age as all the endocrinal changes needed for conception already occurred and both partners are psychologically ready for marriage.

### 2. Garbhadhan Yogya Aayu (Appropriate age for conception): -

*Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned that 25 years for males & 16 years for females is the right age for conception<sup>7</sup>, and for *acharya Vagbhatt* it is 20 and 16 respectively<sup>8</sup>. Both the partners are full of Valour

and Vigour at this age and fully mature so they can attempt to achievement of conception. Acharya Charaka and Kashyap opine that the man is not fit for coitus before the age of 16, after this he is capable of ejaculating semen<sup>9-10</sup>.

### 3. Beej Suddhi (Improving Quality of Sperm & Ova) by Panchakarma: -

As per Acharya Charaka and Sushruta, both males & females are advised to undergo *shodhan* by *panchakarma* with various majors like oleation, sudation, emesis, purgation, enema etc<sup>11</sup>, so that ovum (*Matra beej*) of sperm (*pitru beej*) is in its best & purest form & devoid of any abnormalities or genetic disorder.

### 4. Specific Aahar and Vihaar: -

Sushruta opines that after purification, the man should use *ghrita* and milk medicated with the drugs of *madhur varga* (sweet and anabolic drugs) and the woman should consume oil and *masha* (a sort of kidney beans)<sup>11</sup>. Vagbhatt agreeing with the above view elaborates that a healthy man possessing healthy organs should be in high spirits, adorn himself with a garland of flowers, and psychologically think only about his wife, should have coitus at the appropriate time of night<sup>12</sup>. Women should use edibles capable of increasing pitta. Madhur drugs increase Shukra and Pittala drug increase Rakta.

### 5. Putrestya Yaga: -

Only mentioned by Acharya Charaka & Kashyap for the child to be *Gunvan*<sup>13-14</sup>. This activation release couple's stress & restores the peace of mind which stimulates the process of childbirth. It is actually a subject of sociology and religion. The lady anxious to have the desired child should sit along with her husband on the west side of the fire. The priest should place the *Caru* (oblation prepared with rice barley etc. mixed with milk and Ghrita etc) in a saucepan mixed with *Ghrita* already treated with *mantras* and put thrice in oblation fire by the method indicated in *Vedas*. After the *Yajya* the leftover *Ghrita* after sacrifice should be taken first by the husband and then the wife without leaving it and then they should have coitus for 8 nights.

### 6. Sehvaas Vidhi (postures for coitus and there affects): -

In Charaka Samhita male is advised to go to bed by keeping their right leg first while women with the left one. After Intercourse, they should irrigate with cold water. Coitus should not be done with a woman in her flexed (humpback) and lateral position. In flexed position, Vata gets aggravated and compresses the yoni, in the right lateral position the Kapha getting displaced obstructs the uterus, similarly in the left lateral position displaced pitta burns the Rakta (ovum) and Shukra (sperms). The female should be in the supine position, as all the doshas are balanced in this position<sup>15</sup>. With the coitus done on even days, the born child would be male, and on odd days it would be a female. On Chaturthi, Ash-tami, Dashami, and Dwadashi it would be a male, and on Panchami, Saptami, Navami, and Ekadashi it would be a female<sup>16</sup>. Tryodashi etc are contraindicated for coitus. The child conceived on Ekadashi and Tryodashi would be Naunshak (hermaphrodite) as per Vagbhatt<sup>17</sup>. The logic behind this is that on even days *Aartav* is less which increases on odd days. Thus, there is the birth of males and females respectively<sup>16</sup>. If on odd days *Shukra* is more and on even days it is less, then the born child will have feminine features and would be weak, with fewer body parts, and if it is a female, she will be of masculine features, weak and with fewer body parts<sup>17</sup>.

### 7. Rajswala Charya (Lifestyle during menstrual phase): -

Females Should sleep isolated on a darbha jute mat] on the ground during the first 3 days of menstruation. She should eat her food with clay utensils or banana leaves. Diet advised for her should be made of barley with milk or rice with ghee. She should do om chanting. Then on the 4<sup>th</sup> day, irrigate herself with water & wore a white dress with ornaments & see her husband first to get a child-like him<sup>18</sup>. Contraindications for a female during her Periods are day sleeping, running, sudation, nail cutting, combing and so on<sup>19</sup>. Both the Partners should remain brahmacharya for one month & ad-

vised to have intercourse during ritukal (12 days period of the stoppage of mensuration)<sup>20</sup>

### 8. Sehvaas Mantra (Chanting of Mantra before intercourse): -

The mantra mentioned in Charaka sarhita<sup>21</sup> for recitation before Intercourse is -O Garbha, you are like the sun, you are my longevity, you are my prestige, you are God of protection & the God of protection (Vidhata) should protect you. You are Brahma. Lord Brahma, Brihaspati, Vishnu, Surya, Ashwini kumara & Mitra Varuna having divine power bless me with the Valiant son.

This whole regimen of mantra control Aahar dosh, Vihar dosh, Atma dosh, Akala Dosh & Mansik abhitap.

### 9. Role of Mind & Lifestyle Modification

Psychological factors may also affect the reproductive capacity by altering the level of prolactin, disturbed HPO axis & thyroid dysfunction.

Depression can alter the regulation of LH hormone and Immune functions. Behavioral changing Strategies can be a part of preconception care for some time. Chanting of om Jaap induces Positive energy & provides spiritual belief. Meditation control mood swings and improves blood Circulation. Acharya Sushruta has described that Aahar Aachar and Chesta followed before intercourse are three factors that decide the fore coming progeny<sup>22</sup>. Reading books can also be helpful as it can boost self-confidence & influence state of mind.

## DISCUSSION

This conceptual study is a pre-pregnancy preparation that covers the diet, lifestyle, wellness therapies like aroma, yoga, breathing exercises, prayers, practices like reading positive books, listening to music, meditation, and other positive modalities necessary for both mother and child in the womb to be healthy. There is so much evidence that every element of preconception care work. To further improve perinatal outcomes, the government must commit to improving preconception health and to providing preconception care to all women of reproductive age. Even though sufficient knowledge and evidence are

present to act now, further efforts are needed to identify the most effective means of delivering integrated preconception services.

## CONCLUSION

Pre-conceptual care aims at conceiving a pregnancy without necessary risk factors. It establishes Lifestyle behavior to maintain Optimum health & prepare people psychologically for pregnancy & Responsibilities to become with parenthood. The diet as mentioned in the ancient text is providing all the essential micro & macro nutrients to the body required for a healthy Progeny.

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