

## **RATIONALITY BEHIND GHARBHOPAGHATAKARA BHAVA A CONCEPTUAL STUDY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda - A holistic health science not only deals with preventive and curative aspects of health but also has strong footings in the field of healthy progeny. Pregnancy is a delicate condition, which is most vulnerable and affected by enormous factors such as Environmental, Psychological or Food habits etc. such factors have been explained in Ayurveda as *Garbhopaghatakara bhava`s*. Medical world is concerned about increasing rate of congenital imperfections in the new born which is posing confront to the aim of healthy humanity. Data reveals that 3–5% of all births result in congenital malformations, 20–30% of all infant deaths are due to genetic disorders, and 30–50% of post– natal deaths are due to congenital malformations, and causes for 50% of habitual abortions is unknown. But to some extent the environmental factors are held responsible for the mutations that cause genetic disorders. Multifactorial diseases are due to weak inheritance and the assistance of multiple environmental factors. These all statistics indicates that there are some factors which are affecting fetus during pregnancy and which is neglected by people in large extent, and those factors can be correlated with *Grbhopaghatakara bhava`s* and the effect of these *Grbhopaghatakara bhava`s* on fetuses told in Ayurvedic classics simulates with the congenital malformations, habitual abortions etc.

Hence considering all these factors an attempt is made to critically study the impact of *Garbhopaghatakara bhavas* on progeny.

**Keywords:** *Gharbhopaghatakara bhava*, congenital malformations, habitual abortion

### **INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda ancient system of medicine explains some simple regimen that should be followed by pregnant women throughout her pregnancy for normal and easy process of labour and for getting healthy child under the heading of *Garbhini paricharya*. *Acharya Shushruta* has given a simile and told that *Garbhini* should be taken care like an earthen pot filled with Ghee, this states that pregnancy is an important event in women's

life, and *Gharbhini* should be treated with at most care. *Upaghata* means which harms, *Garbhaupaghatakara bhava* are those things which harms the pregnancy. Under the heading of *Gharbhopaghatakara bhava`s* acharyas have explained certain things which should not be done during pregnancy. In today's fast moving life, all the women unknowingly follow certain things which are told as contraindications during pregnancy

by Ayurveda, which will carry its own bad effect over pregnancy, those are either neglected or which is not considered as relevant by many people, so it is necessary to analyze these *Gharbhopaghatakara bhava's*, and prove them as scientific.

Whatever is told in Ayurveda is having scientific base. So here an attempt has been made to explain the rationality behind *Gharbhopaghatakara bhava's*.

**Gharbhopaghatakara bhava's:**

1. *Garbhini* should avoid *ushna, teekshana ahara, aushadha, vyavaya, and vyayama*<sup>1</sup>.

2. *Vyavaya, vyayama, atitarpana, atikarshana, divaswapna, ratrijagarana, shoka, yana, avarohana, bhaya, utkatasana, ekanta, snehana, swedana* etc. *kriya (panchakarma), raktamokshana, vegadharana*, these all should not be done by *Garbhni stree*<sup>2</sup>.

These all are considered as *Gharbhopaghatakara bhavas*, as per different *achayas*.

**Rationality behind Gharbhopaghatakara bhava:**

These *Gharbhopaghatakara bhava's* can be divided as *Aharaja bhava's, Viharaja bhava's* and *Manasika bhava's*. Here each *Gharbhopaghatakara bhava* is explained by giving probable reasoning, so these factors are harmful either to fetus or baby under the scientific circumstances.

**Teekshna ushna padartha sevana-** causes *garbha-srava, garbha-marana, akaala-prasava, garbha-shushka*.

**Probable reason-** Contains chemical and nitrates which works adversely with RBC and there by reducing its oxygen carrying role leading to reduce utero-placental flow. Vitiating of *vatadi dosha's* causes

constriction of blood vessels, this hampers the proper supply of nutrients to the fetus and hence *Garbhashosha* or *Akalaprasava* occurs.

Eg. (Cocaine) It is a topical anesthetic & local vaso-constrictor. It is also a CNS stimulant. Adverse outcomes are due to its vaso-constrictive effects leading to placental abruption and risk of vascular disruption in the fetus leading to abortion or still births.<sup>3</sup>

**Shushka, ruksha, paryushitaannasevana-** causes *Garbhashushka, garbhamarana, akalaprasava*.

**Probable reason-** Inadequate calorie intake before pregnancy appears to magnify the effect of malnutrition during pregnancy and is also associated with lower birth weight in infants' leads to an impaired fetal growth.<sup>4</sup>

After attainment of *sara* by the fetus if *Garbhini* uses this type of food materials due to improper nutrients there will be inadequate flow of *rasa* to the fetus. Due to this the fetus does not grow properly and there will be delayed labour. Same way as the paddy does not grow properly if the water does not reach the field due to obstruction with leaves and grass etc. to its flow in the supplying channels.

**Vidahi anna sevana - Garbhashosha, akalaprasava.**

eg. Caffeine found in the beverages such as tea, coffee and Chocolates acts as stimulants and should be avoided in pregnancy. Caffeine crosses the placenta and enters the fetal circulation and there by leads to adverse effect.<sup>5</sup> Tannin present in the tea interferes with the iron absorption.

**Guru padartha sevana & atitarpana**

Over eating is one of the causes for pregnancy toxemia. Use of over satiation

may excessively increase the body weight of the mother and fetus. Over weight of the fetus may cause difficulty in labour.<sup>6</sup>

**Madyanityata(use of wine daily)- Trishnalu** (thirsty), *Alpa-smriti* (short memory), *anavasthita-chittata* (fickling mind)

Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause abnormal fetal development & FAS (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome).<sup>7</sup>

Alcohol is especially toxic during the first trimester because this is when organ development occurs.

**Mamsa sevana Eg.- often using pork meat (varaha mamsa)** - Red eye (*raktaksha*), rough body hair, (*ati-parusharoma*) and obstructed breathing, snoring.

Even though use of mamsa has been advised by *Acharya Sushrutha* in fourth and fifth month of pregnancy under *Garbhini paricharya* but here one can consider excessive use of aquatic animal's meat.

Pig can harbor a range of parasites for eg. *Toxoplasma gondii*<sup>8</sup>, an intracellular protozoan parasite. If mother is having this type of meat during pregnancy there will be higher risk to get this type of infection. Maternal-to-fetal-transmission-occurs almost when the primary infection is acquired during pregnancy.

The fetal consequences are more severe if infection takes place within the first ten weeks of conception. It may cause miscarriage or fetal abnormalities neonatal features of infection vary and include, Hydrocephalus.

Microcephaly.

Intracranial calcification.

Developmental delay.

The classical triad of congenital infection comprises chorio-retinitis and

hydrocephalus, pneumonitis, respiratory problems.

**Eating fish daily** - Fixed eyes (*stabdhaksha*), (*chiranimasha*) delayed blinking of eye.

Eating fish is the main source of mercury exposures in humans and some fish may contain enough mercury to harm the developing nervous system of an embryo or fetus, sometimes leading to learning disabilities.

The mercury in fish can lead to raised mercury levels in the mother<sup>9</sup>. This mercury can be passed on through the placenta to her developing baby. The fetus appears to be most sensitive to the effects of mercury during the third and fourth month of the pregnancy. The effects on the brain & nervous system may not be noticed until developmental milestone-such as walking talking are delayed.

Memory language and attention span may also be affected. The joint food and agriculture Organization - (FAO) and world health organization (WHO) expert committee on FOOD ADDITIVES reviewed these studies in JUNE 2003.

These researchers recommended reducing the amount of fish known to contain mercury in the diet, particularly to pregnant women.

**Nitya Ati Madhura ahara sevana-** causes *prameha* and *sthoulya* in fetus.

There is direct relationship between the level of maternal glucose and macrosomia<sup>10</sup>. The carbohydrate surplus available to the fetus leads to increased insulin secretion and fetal hyperinsulinemia.

**Nitya lavana rasa atisevana** - Sheeghravali, Palita-khalitya. Early wrinkling, graying of hair and baldness.

Sodium chloride is one of the main ingredient of salt. Chlorine, sodium, potassium are the main components of the body electrolytes sodium exists outside the cell while potassium inside of cells.

Both of them protect the balance of osmotic pressure, moisture and acid-base balance value, once the balance is broken, sodium content will increase and cause harm. It will not only cause nutritional metabolism of hair loss, but also cause earlier greying of hairs by leading protein metabolism disorder & influence the formation of protein in hair to make brown. It will increase the sodium content in body and cause water loss in facial cells and skin aging so causing earlier wrinkles on face.<sup>11</sup>

**Nitya katu rasa atisevana** - causes (*Shosha, alpashukra, anapatya*). Weak, possess less quantity of *shukra* and infertile

Contains irritants, chemical and nitrates which works adversely with RBC, thereby reducing its Oxygen, carrying role leading reduced utero-placental flow.

**Nitya tikta rasa atisevana** - (*shosha, balahena*) suffers from emaciation.

**Nitya Kashaya rasa atisevana**- suffers from *anaha* (flatulence) and *udavarta* (eructation)

**Viharaja bhava's:**

*Abhigatha, prapadana*, (trauma and pressure on abdomen). *Yana avarohana* (travelling on jerking vehicles) *kupaavalokna* (peeping into well).

Premature delivery (*akala Prasava*) or abortion (*garbhasrava*).

Trauma may lead to - Traumatic placental abruption leading to placental separation, fetal maternal hemorrhage.

Vehicle riding may precipitate abortion due to sudden increase in intra-abdominal pressure.

During pregnancy the gravity will be altered because of the gravid uterus and this might be a reason for restriction not to peep into well.

**Uttana shayana:** Umbilical cord encircles the neck of fetus and troubles it.

Low back pain, swelling of feet and Supine position can cause pressure on intestine and large veins (*inferior venacava*)<sup>12</sup>, which can disrupt the fetal circulation and even mother, can affect the blood pressure and increase blood pressure can cause pre-eclampsia and fetal distress and hence may lead to abortion or death.

**Utkatasana: Garbhasrava, akalaprasava**

Prolonged squatting and abnormal postures may influence placental and uterine blood flow and even though the uterine muscles are largely under hormonal control, sympathetic innervations may cause uterine contraction and vasoconstriction.

Increase intrauterine pressure causing miscarriage or premature labour.

**Ativyayama and ativyavaya: Alasyasantan (lazy)**

Factors those which produce physical strain such as exercise etc. even though normal coitus and exercise are beneficial, however their excessive use or physiological strain may precipitate abortion especially in ladies prone for the same.

Intercourse is not advisable during first trimester of pregnancy, if she is having bleeding or spotting per vaginally.

Later in pregnancy, it may provoke contractions known as (Braxton-Hicks contractions)<sup>13</sup>. They can be uncomfortable but are quite normal usually pass after a few minutes.

There may be chances of early rupture of membranes so this may increase the risk of infection because there won't be any protective barrier.

**Manasika bhava's-** (*Bhaya, krodha, shoka, kalaha Sheela, Irsha*) causes *garbhasrava and marana*

When indriyas of fetus are established, then the manas starts getting perception of vedana that is sukha (anukula vedana) and dukkha (pratikula vedana).

Due to which the fetus start quivering and expresses its desires based on experiences of previous birth.

As the fetal heart is attached with maternal heart by rasavahini dhamanis derived from the origin of matrijarasa, the fetus expresses its desires through the mother.

The desires expressed by mother are not hers but are of fetus.

This period of (dauhrida) occurs by formation and establishment of hrudaya and indriyas in fetus which occurs in third and fourth month.<sup>14</sup>

At this stage all manasika bhavas of mother will influence their character and effect on manas of the fetus.

For eg.- krodha and shoka (during pregnancy) gives birth to short lived child.

## DISCUSSION

With available references it is clear that Acharya's were having in depth knowledge about the embryogenesis. By the way they have explained the *Gharbhopaghatakara bhava's* it can be predicted that they were

aware of teratogens and congenital malformations also.

The development of the fetus mainly depends upon the inflation done by *vayu* and nourishment supplied by *rasa*. Acharya Charaka also opines same that *vayu* gives specific shape to the fetus. So most of the factors described earlier are *vata* aggravating factors, indulgence of *Garbhini* in these factors can affect the normal growth and development of fetus. Ayurveda explains *Tridosha sidhanta* and the *Gharbhopaghatakara bhava's* which are told either alleviates or aggravates one or the other *Dosha* and hence cause hindrance in the growth of the fetus.

The word *beeja* in *garbhasambhava samagri* refers to male and female gametes. If *beeja bhagavayava* is vitiated, it leads to the vitiation of that specific organ being generated from that part. *Vayas* of *Garbhini* also plays an important role to get good progeny. If a woman below 16 is impregnated by a man below 25, either she will not conceive, or if she conceives she will have intra uterine death of fetus; if child is born, it will have ill health, deformed body parts.

Now a days many patients with habitual abortions were seen, IUGR, increased incidence of LSCS because of cord around neck or fetal distress, these may be because of indulgence in one or the other *Gharbhopaghatakara bhava's*, Ayurvedic vaidyas should analyse these things and advise to the patients to avoid them during pregnancy. Acharya's have explained each and every concept on scientific bases after observing clinically, now it's our duty to explore these concepts.

## CONCLUSION

The ultimate aim of Ayurveda is to attain moksha and Arogya is most essential for this<sup>15</sup>, hence all the measures should be adopted told by Acharyas to have *Swasthya shareera*, right from the time of garbha kala. So to get a healthy progeny (*shreyasipraja*) a baby meant for social and self (spiritual) welfare, the mother's mode of life and thoughts plays an important role. Even though some concepts remain unclear, but it does not prove their irrationality. By compiling the opinions of various acharya's *Garbhopaghatakara bhavas* can be understood. These certain factors are mentioned to create a new life, a healthy generation to have a good society in future.

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