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SUTIKA PARICAHRYA- AN AYURVEDIC POSTNATAL CARE

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Abstract:

Since giving birth is stressful with an emotional touch of becoming new mother, dramatic changes in *doshas*, *dhatu*s which result in declination of her health. The added responsibilities taking care of the new baby along with recuperation of her own health, makes *sutika* for special attention. Ayurveda has given prime importance to *sutika* and explained mode of life style and diet under the heading *sutikaparicharya* which helps in reverting her to get the pre-pregnant state. All *acharyas* have explained *sutikaparicharya* in detail which includes *aahara*, *vihara*, *aushadhi*, *pathya*, *apathya* etc. *Vagbhata* has explained the main purpose of *sutikaparicharya* is *Punarnaveekarana* of *sutika* which means giving a new life to *sutika*. Maternal mortality ratios around 400 per 1,00,000 live births. This shows the importance of postnatal care to maintain the health of mother and to prevent further complications of this period.

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INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda an ancient science gives importance to *swasthyarakshana* and *vikaraprashamana*. Various procedures like *dinacharya*, *rutucharya*, *sadvrutta* are explained in Ayurveda for maintaining the physical and mental health and preventing the disease. Ayurveda regards women and her ability to reproduce. According to ayurvedic classics, woman life is divided into three phases and at-most importance has given to female health at every phase of her life in respect of *Rajaswalaparicharya*, *garbhiniparicharya* and *sutikaparicharya*.

Becoming a mother is a beautiful and gracious event of a woman's life. There are many changes which have happened to pregnant lady during her antenatal period and even more are happening in post-delivery period. Puerperium is the period of time encompassing the first few weeks following delivery during which all body tissues revert back approximately to pre-pregnant state. As explained by *Acharya kashyapa* about the stage of *prasava* that one foot of the lady is situated in this loka and other in *yamaloka*. The lady after such a difficult process of *prasava* must be advised certain mode of life called *sutikaparicharya*. After delivery due to exertion of labour pain and excretion of *kleda* and blood, *sutikasharira* is thought to be *shoonyasharira*.¹ 74 types of *sutikarogas* can occur during this period if not managed properly.²⁻³ First week soon after delivery is of immense importance for both *sutika* and newly born baby and hence during this period special attention and care is necessary for both. Due to vitiation of *vata* after delivery digestive power, immunity and strength of the lady becomes weak and therefore for increasing body strength and achieving *vata* balance, proper care and management in the *sutika* is needed.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

A detailed review of literature for description of *sootika*, *sootikakala*, *sutikasamanya* and *vishishtaparicharya*, *pathya* and *apathya*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sutikaparibhasha, *sutikakala* and *sutikaparicharya* have been explained in *bruhatrayee* as well as *laghutrayee*. *Vishishtasutikaparicharya* according to *desha* and *jaati* is explained in *kashyapasamhita* along with *sutikavyadhi* and their treatment.

SUTIKA

The word *sutika* is coined to women, who have just given birth to a baby and after *aparapatana*. *Acharyakashyapa* said that after delivery of the child the women cannot be called as *sutika* till the placenta is not expelled.⁴ The word puerperium is derived from latin- puer means child and parus means bringing forth. Currently it defines the time following delivery during which pregnancy induced maternal anatomical and physiological changes return to the non-pregnant state.⁵ Puerperium is the period following childbirth during which the body tissue, specially the pelvic organs revert back approximately to the pre-pregnant state both anatomically and physiologically.⁶

SUTIKA KALA

There is different opinion regarding the duration of this period.

Table 1: Sutikakala according to various acharyas

<i>Aacharya</i>	<i>Sutikakala</i>
<i>AacharyaCharaka</i>	Not exactly mentioned
<i>AacharyaSushruta</i> ⁷	1 ^{1/2} month i.e. 45 days
<i>AshtangSangraha</i> ⁸	1 ^{1/2} month i.e. 45 days or upto recurrence of menses
<i>AshtangHridya</i> ⁹	1 ^{1/2} month i.e. 45 days or upto recurrence of menses
<i>AacharyaKashyapa</i> ¹⁰	6 months
<i>AacharyaBhavprakasha</i> ¹¹	1 ^{1/2} month i.e. 45 days or upto recurrence of menses
<i>Yogaratnakara</i> ¹²	1 ^{1/2} month i.e. 45 days or upto recurrence of menses
Modern ¹³ -Immediate	Within 24 hours
Early	Upto 7 days
Remote	Upto 6 weeks

SUTIKA PARICHARYA

Ayurveda has suggested a very good protocol during *sutikakala* which includes a detailed description of *aahara*, *vihara* and *aushadhi* to maintain the health of the women. Mainly two types of *paricharya* are told by *acharyas*- *samanyasutikaparicharya* and *vishishtasutikaparicharya*.

[A] SAMANYA PARICHARYA**According to *AacharyaCharaka*¹⁴**

-*Pippali*, *pippalimula*, *chavya*, *chitraka*, *shringverchoornayuktaghrita*/*taila*/*vasa*/*majjapaan*.

-*Udarabhyanga* with *ghrit* or *taila*

-*Udarveshtana*

-*Pippalyadiaushadhisadhitaghritayuktayavagu* (after digestion of *sneha*)

-Everytime before *snehapana* and *yavagupana*, *parisechan* by *ushnodaka* should be done.

-This regimen should be followed upto 5-7 days.

-After 7 days- *bruhanachikitsa* or *mamsabalavardhakupaya*

ChakrapaniTeeka

-*Parisechana*-*Snehapana*-*Parisechana*-*Yavagupana*

-Due to *kapha* predominance in *anupdesa* this paricharya is not suitable for women of this *desa*. This regimen is suitable for the women of *jangaladesa*.

According to aacharyaSushruta¹⁵-

-*Balatailaabhayanga*

-*Parisechana* with *Vataharaaushadhikwath*

-*Ushnagudodakapana* mixed with *choorna* of *pippali*, *pippalimoola*, *hastipippali*, *chitraka* and *shringberachorna* should be given for 2-3 days till *dushtaraktas* properly excreted.

-From 3rd or 4th day to 6th or 7th day, *sneha* or *ksheerayuktayavagumedicated* with *vidarigandhadiaushadhishould* be given.

-From 7th or 8th day, cooked *Salirice* with *jangalamamsa rasa* prepared with *yava*, *kola*, *kulattha* should be given according to her *bala* and *agni*.

-*Parisechanawith* more quantity of *usnajala* is advised and *sutika* should avoid *krodh*, *vyayama*, *maithun*.

Dalhanateeka-

-*Parisechanashould* be done by *ushnajaladhara*. Its purpose is to excrete *dushtarakta* from *garbhashaya* and to suppress *vata*.

According to AacharyaKashyapa¹⁶-

-*Sutika* should use *rakshoghna*dravyas

-*Abhayanga* and *samvahana* over *kukshi*, *parshavaprustain nubjashayana*

-*Udara-vestana*

-*sutika* should sit over a chair covered with leather-bag filled with *usnabalataila*

-*Yoni-swedana* with *krushara* prepared with *priyangu* etc. drugs

-*Sutikasnana* is advised with *usnajala* and advised to take rest

-*Yoni-dhoopana* with *kusta*, *guggulu*, *agaru* mixed with *ghrit*

-For 3-5 days *mandapana* and *hitabhojana*

-*Snehapana*

-*Lavanarahitasnehayavagupana* medicated with *pippali*, *nagara* etc. drugs for 3 days

-After 6 or 7 days, *lavanayuktasneha* and *aushadhayuktayavagu-pana*

-*Sneha-lavanaamlayuktakulatthayusha*

-*Jangalamamsa rasa*

-*Ghritabharjitashakaofkushmanda, mulaka, ervaruka* etc.

-For 1 month *snehapana, swedana* and *usnaja lapariseka* is advised

[B] **VISHISHTA SUTIKA PARICHARYA**¹⁷

Kashyapa has explained specific regimen based on type of *desha* in which *sutika* is residing.

Anupadesha

Due to predominance of moisture in this area, *snehadravayas* should be avoided. *Manda* prepared with *agni-balavardhakadravyas* is advised. *Swedana, niwataashayana* and *ushnadravayas* are best for *sutika* of this *desha*.

Jangaladesha

Sneha is advised to *sutika* of this area along with *pippalyadikashaya*. *Snehapana* is advised to a strong woman while *yavagupana* is advised to a weak woman for 3-5 days. Afterwards *snigdhaannasamsarjana karma* is advised. *Pariseka* should be done with good quantity of *ushnodaka* and should avoid *krodha, vyayama, maithun* etc.

SadharanaDesha

For *sutika* of this *desha* use of neither too *sneha* nor too *rukshadravyas* is advised.

VideshaJati

Rakta, mamsa-niryuh, kanda, moola, phala etc. are advised to *sutika* of *mlecchajaati*.

Sutikaparicharya according to sex of child is also explained by *kashyapa*.^[18] *Taila* and *ghrita* should be given for drinking in case of delivery of male and female child respectively. After digestion of *sneha, deepniya aushadhisadhitayavagu* should be given for 5-7 days. Then *mandaadi* should be used in gradual manner.

Importance of sutikaparicharya¹⁹

Woman becomes weak or emaciated due to *garbhavidhi* and *shoonyashareera* due to *dhatushithilta, pravahanavedana* and excretion of *kleda* and *rakta*. With the help of *sutikaparicharya* explained by *acharyas, punarnaveekarana* of *sutika* happens and she attains her pre-pregnancy stage.

Effect of *sutikaparicharya* on *sutika*

Effect on Agnibala

Sutikaparicharya include *yavaguand snehapanawith panchkolachoorina* which does *agni-deepana* and *aam-pachana*. *Yavaguis pachaka* and *grahi, laghu* in nature, easily digestible and absorbable. *Panchkola-choorna* has *pippali, chavya, chitraka,* and *shunthi* which all are individually *agni-deepaka* so it also act as *agni-deepaka* and *aam-pachaka*. *Panchkola* removes the blocks created by *aam* and make *sroto-shudhi*. Piperine present in *Pippali* increases coenzyme Q₁₀ and beta-carotene which enhances digestion. *Snehpana* with *yavaguand panchkolachoorina* collectively suppress *vata* and increase peristalsis movements thereby increase *agni*. *Snehpana* and *yavagu* is a balanced diet for *sutika* which improves *rasadhatwagni* qualitatively and quantitatively which in-turn increases *uttarotaradhatwagni*.

Effect on different pain in *sutika-avastha*

Abhyang and *pariseka* improves circulation, release endorphins which are natural painkillers, cause vasodilatation and relieve muscle spasm. Increased circulation result in more oxygen supply thereby helps in reduction of local as well as generalized pain. *Sootika-avastha* is a *vata* predominant stage due to which there is *kati shola, udar shola, perineal pain* and generalised bodyache. *Balatailais* advised for *abhyangand dashmoola* for *pariseka* has properties like *vatahara, shothhara, shoolahara, balya, bruhana*. Along with these procedures *panchkola-choorna* is having *ushna, teekshana* properties. All these internal and external procedures increase basal metabolic rate by enhancing *agni*, have *rasayana* effect and nourish the *shithila* and *shoonya-shareera*. This may help in increasing the pain threshold of *sutika*. *Vataanuloman* takes place by these therapies which leads to pain relief.

Massage exerts soothing effect on body by improving circulation and release endorphins which cause relaxation of muscles. *Abhyanga* followed by *pariseka* has more effect as sudation relieves muscular pain. *Yoni dhoopana* drugs have *vedana-sthapana, shothhara, vranashodhana* and *ropana* properties so it enhances healing process as well as relieve perineal pain.

Effect on Involution of uterus & abdominal girth

Panchkola-choorna have the ingredients of *katu rasa, tikta rasa, usnaveerya, katuvipaka* increases the basal metabolic rate and may help in *karsana* of adipose tissue, along this abdomen is compressed by cloth to avoid the *vata* vitiation by this abdominal girth is reduced. *Panchkola-choorna*

does *udar-kukshir* has by doing *garbhashaya-shudhi* due to its *ushna, teekshna* properties. Due to *ushnaveerya Pradhan dravyas* present in *panchkola-choorna* along with *garbhashayasankochaka* property it removes *dushta-shonita* from *garbhashaya* so it does proper involution of uterus thereby minimize afterpains or *makkala shola*. There are chances of sub-involution due to infection caused by retained clots in *garbhashaya*. This can be prevented by *yoni dhoopan* with *kushtha, guggula* and *agaru* as these drugs possess *jantughna, kandughna* properties.

Effect on Sanyapravritti and chest circumference

Abhyang with *balataila* acts as *rasayana* to *mamsadhatu*. *Yavagu* with *ghrita* are fat rich diet and carbohydrate supplements. This balanced diet given to *sutika* increases *rasa-dhatwagni* which does *rasa dhatu-utpatti* along with its *updhatu* and also *uttarothara-dhatuposhana*. This results in adequate lactation. *Panchkola* has one ingredient *pippali* which is having piperine as its active chemical constituents. Piperine increases coenzyme Q₁₀ and beta-carotene which enhances digestion. Piperine produces thermogenic action which increases absorption of nutrients from gastrointestinal tract. Due to all these actions on *dhatu-utpatti* and digestive enzymes there is increased *sanyautpatti* in trial group. *Panchkoladoes srotoshudhi* by removing *aam* so all channels will be clear and *sanyapravritti* will be adequate.

Effect on lochia

Katu rasa of *panchkolachoorna* causes *shonit-sanghat-bhedan*, so it helps for normal *yonigata-srava*. *Panchkoladravyas* have *garbhashaya-shodhak* and *garbhashayasankochak* properties due to which it removes *dushta-shonita* from *garbhashaya* and normalizes lochial discharge.

Effect on episiotomy wound healing

Due to *shodhan* and *ropana* properties of *jatyaditaila* it promotes healing. *Yoni dhoopan* with *kushtha, guggulu* and *agaru* have antibacterial action so chances of infections are not there. Due to effect of all the therapies *abhyanga, pariseka* and *dhoopana* blood circulation is increased, muscle relaxation will be there, tenderness will be reduced and also healing is augmented. Essential oil and glycosides present in *kushtha* are strong disinfectants which prevents the bacteria to grow. *Agaru* relieves pain on fumigation while *guggulu* is anti-infective. So all these collectively enhance the healing process.

Effect on physical and mental well being

Sutikaparicharya helps in improvement of *Deha-bala*, *Satva-bala*, physical and mental well-being of *sutika*. Along with these factors *sutikaparicharya* helps *sutika* in returning to her daily activities. *Vatais* in *prokopavastha* in *sutika* which is mainly confined to an individual's health. *Vata-anuloman* is achieved by *vatahara*, *sroto-mardavkara*, *balya* properties of *bala-tailaabhyanga* as well as *dashmoolakwath pariseka*. As soon as *vata* get normalize there is improvement in condition of *sutika* and she became able to perform her daily activities.

Massage shows its effect by stimulating sensory receptors and this is the cause why after *abhyanga* and *parisekasutika* feels better. Massage acts by affecting the levels of different neuro-hormones like serotonin, dopamine, oxytocin, cortisol which all are responsible for mental health of an individual. Serotonin is a hormone which regulates our behavior, emotions. Massage increase the level of serotonin which makes *sutika* less irritating, regulates her sleep cycle. Massage increases dopamine which is responsible for feeling of happiness, enthusiasm and improve disturbed mental condition. Cortisol, a hormone which is stress related, its level decreased during massage so the stress of *sutika* is relieved.

Massage helps in regulating hormone levels by acting on sympathetic as well as parasympathetic nervous system. Normalcy of these hormones makes *sutikato* feel better, stress free, pain free as well as helps in regaining her pre pregnant state both physically or mentally.

CONCLUSION

Different procedures including *ahara* and *achara* for the purpose of *punarnaveekarana* of the *stree* itself is *suthikaparicharya*. It is re-tuning or process of rejuvenation done for the purpose of *swasthyarakshana*. It is the *paricharya* followed in order to protect herself and her infant too.

The very definition of *suthika* finds relevance with the definition of puerperium that after placental expulsion only the lady can be called as puerpura. Regarding the duration of *suthika* also there is similarity that both sciences accepted six weeks of stipulated regimen to be followed. Even the list of complications or diseases by not following proper *paricharya* is also almost the same.

Sutikaparicharya has fruitful results over *agni*, *balavidhi* and lochial discharges. Helps in proper involution of the uterus, reduces abdominal girth, and *udar-shoola*, *kati-shoola*, proper healing of episiotomy wound as well as complete physical and mental wellbeing was achieved by this *paricharya*. Main purpose of *sutikaparicharya* is to enhance the natural recovery process, prevention from various *sutikarogas* and *punarnaveekaran* of *sutika*.

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