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(Special Issue)

“Impact and approach to pandemic covid-19 on various sectors”

Preventive aspect of Garbhini Paricharya in COVID

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Abstract

“purnamiv tailpatra samkshobhayad garbhinim upachared iti”

The famous verse of our Ayurveda science that depicts a pregnant woman like a pot filled with oil where slight oscillation may cause spillage likewise even a slight carelessness results in adverse outcome” and especially in this COVID era where it is causing great harm to human population, it becomes very important to safeguard pregnant ladies so that true healthy babies can be delivered. It has been proven that vaccination and treatment protocols are safe for pregnant ones but the psychological effect is also one of the important factors to be considered which is generally absent in contemporary medicine. So heading towards Ayurveda science can definitely lead us to better motherhood and their healthy child's.

Keywords: Ayurveda science, pregnant woman, human population, COVID era

Introduction

Pregnancy is the beautiful phase of every women's life and it needs some special care to prevent complications and for the proper growth and development of foetus. Almost since a year globally we are facing the challenge of this COVID-19 pandemic. Pregnant women are at greater risk of severe morbidity and mortality with infection such as SARS and influenza because of their decreased lung capacity and poor immune response. Accordingly, pregnancy should be considered a vulnerable time period with COVID-19 also. Though the aetiology, pathogenesis, sign and symptoms are the same, the treatment varies. the same routine treatment as in any person or non-pregnant woman is not applicable for pregnant women.

Prevalence of COVID-19 in pregnancy

Pregnant women with covid-19 are less likely than non-pregnant woman to have symptoms but more likely to need Intensive Care if severely ill. According to the latest findings of pregnant woman with covid-19 that have existing medical conditions such as diabetes or chronic raised blood pressure or those who are older or overweight are also more likely to suffer from severe health complications due to covid-19.

Presentation of symptoms of COVID-19 in pregnancy

The common symptom of covid-19 in pregnant and Postpartum were cough (40%) and fever (40%), breathlessness and muscle ache were reported in 20% of women with suspected or confirmed covid-19. The common laboratory findings were lymphopenia (33%), raised white cell count (26%), and raised CRP levels (49%) study shows the clinical manifestation of covid-19 in pregnancy and Postpartum appears to be broadly similar to the general population.

Outcome of pregnancy during COVID-19

4% of pregnant and recently pregnant women diagnosed with covid-19 were admitted to the Intensive Care Unit and 3% needed invasive ventilation. 17% delivered preterm before 37 weeks. 6% had spontaneous preterm birth. Pregnant women with covid-19 are also at increased risk of needing admission to an intensive preterm and their babies being admitted

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to the neonatal unit compared to pregnant women without covid-19 infection. The estimates for preterm birth are likely to be influenced by iatrogenic indications.

Preventive measures in pregnant women

- Washing hands frequently with an alcohol based hand rub or soap & water.
- Keeping space between yourself and other and avoiding crowded space. Wear a non-medical, fabric mask where it is not possible to keep sufficient physical distance between yourself and others. Avoiding touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Practicing respiratory hygiene, this means covering mouth and nose with bent elbow or tissue when cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.
- You have fever, cough, or difficulty in breathing, seek medical care early. Call before going to a health faculty, and follow the direction of your local health authority.
- Pregnant women and women who have recently delivered should attend their routine care appointments, according to local policies and following adapted measures to reduce possible transmission of the virus.

Ayurvedic aspect of prevention

Garbhini should be treated carefully as it involves protection and development of both mother and foetus. The gross and subtle details should be considered and very strong teekshna dravya should not be used.

In pregnancy disorders soft, sweet, cold potency, pleasing and gentle drugs should be chosen. Shodhan therapy like vamana, virechana, nasya, raktamokshan are contraindicated likewise it should not be used but in case of emergency it can be used in mild form.

Overall a pregnant woman is treated like a pot filled with oil where slight oscillation may cause spillage likewise even a slight carelessness in treatment may lead to abortion or miscarriage.

In ayurveda special care during pregnancy named as garbhini paricharya has been mentioned to prevent the complications during pregnancy. So here along with WHO guidelines one can advise this special care in pregnancy as preventive measures during covid-19 pandemic.

Garbhini paricharya (antenatal care) is broadly discussed under these two headings-

1. Masanumasika garbhini paricharya (monthwise dietary regimen)
2. To avoid garbhopaghatakare bhava (pregnancy harming factors)

Masanumasik Garbhini Paricharya (Monthwise Regimen)

1st month- daily intake of cow milk in desired quantity and yashtimadhu churna (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) 1 gm with water can be used.

The root of yashtimadhu relieves thirst, cough, asthma, bronchitis, abdominal colic, eye troubles and cures ulcers. It also responsible for its various activities like wound healing activity, antiulcer activity, memory enhancing activity, antithrombotic effect, hepatoprotective effect, antioxidant activity etc.

2nd month- powder of yashtimadhu (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*), shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*) each 1 gm should be taken with milk.

Ashwagandha improves the body's defence by improving the cell mediated immunity. It also possessed potent antioxidant properties that help protect against cellular damage caused by free radicals.

Shatavari is a well-known ayurvedic rasayan which prevent ageing, increase longevity, impart immunity, improve mental function, vigor and add vitality to the body and it is also used in nervous disorders, dyspepsia, inflammation, neuropathy, hepatopathy.

3rd month- Milk with ghee and honey. Krishara (rice prepared with pulses and beans) will be beneficial. Green gram soup should be taken once daily.

4th month- Cooked rice with curd or pleasant food mixed with milk should be given. Meat of animals can be given. Especially naturally extracted or prepared navneeta (butter) with milk should be given. Hridya fruits like mango, berry, pomegranate, oranges etc. can be given.

5th month- Use of milk and ghee, rakta vardhaka food like pomegranate, spinach, amalaki etc. should be given. Aamalaki (*Embllica officinalis*) have various medicinal properties such as antioxidant, antipyretic, analgesic, cytoprotective, anti-ulcer, immune modulator, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, etc.

6th month- Ghrita or rice gruel medicated with gokshura churna (*Tribulus terrestris linn.*) should be given to prevent UTI, pedal edema, hypertension, preeclampsia and eclampsia.

Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*) can be given to relieve stress, it also known for enhancing memory cognition, mood and other mental disorders. Saponin are the major compound in brahmi which is responsible to enhance the nerve impulse transmission.

7th month- Ghrita prepared from milk medicated with madhura (sweet) drugs and drugs of prithakparnyadi group which helps in growth and development of fetus.

8th month- Kshira yavagu (rice gruel) mixed with ghrita.

9th month- Use of mamsa rasa with sneha, rice gruel with fat.

Yoni pichu (vaginal tampon) with bala taila once at bed time daily till onset of labor which helps for normal labor, prevents cervical dystocia, perineal tear and for the early healing of vaginal scar.

To avoid garbhopaghatakara bhava (Pregnancy harming factors)

Along with the diet, Ayurveda lists out certain factors, which can cause disturbances or harm to the pregnant women and foetus. These are as follows:-

- Use of teekshna, ruksha, ushna dravyas, foul smelling articles, dried up, putrefied or wet food.
- Intercourse, smoking, use of narcotic drugs, wine or sedatives; holding of natural urges; excessive exercise; prolonged stay near fire or hot sun; fasting, grief, anger and stress.

Physical or psychological stress during pregnancy i.e. depression, anxiety, sleep disturbances can cause premature

birth of the baby, low birth weight, cognitive impairment, behavioral issue and lowered immunity.

COVID-19 in Ayurveda

Ayurveda considers COVID-19 pandemic as a janapadoddhwamsa roga (charak samhita) means death of many people occurs at the same time though they have different prakriti (constitute), bala (strength), satva and vaya (age). Ayurveda revealed that it is not always possible to name a disease in a definite term. Hence, this disease has to be analysed according to the Nidana panchaka theory of Ayurveda based on the concepts of Dosha, Dushya, Srotas, Samprapti, and its management. At present circumstances of crucial COVID-19 pandemic, although any direct similitude is complicated, it can be correlated to garbhini jwara.

Garbhini jwara & its management

Among all the rogas jwara is considered the most difficult whether it occurs in pregnant or puerperal women, garbhini jwara is difficult for both mother and foetus, as the heat is transferred to foetus, hence both suffer. When the treatment portion comes Acharya kashyap describes it in two parts-

Treatment before 4th month- fasting for 1 day, salt and fat free peya, avoids tiksna food, and swedana. She is given rice gruel until the dosas subside, later yusa (cereals soup) is given to reduce or subside dosa further. After that milk and mamsa rasa is given. Medications are not advisable.

Treatment after 4th month- one should consider duration of pregnancy, severity of vitiation and associated dosas before prescribing moderate treatment according to type of fever i.e. vataja pittaja, or kaphaja jwara. After evaluating the severity or intensity of complications, tolerance and stamina of patient, duration of pregnancy lekhanadi karma should be done.

General treatment of fever in pregnancy

- Decoction of Madhuka, chandana, usira, sariva, yashtimadhu, padmaka with honey and sugar.
- Decoction of chandana, sariva, lodhra, mrudvika with sugar.
- Decoction of erandamula, amrita, manjistha, raktachandana, devadaru and Padma.
- Simhasyadi kwatha
- Guduchyadi kwatha with honey.
- Laghu panchamula kwatha or kshirapaka cures fever in pregnancy.

Concept of vishama jwara in pregnancy

Fever which is irregular/relapses/recurs again and again or fever caused by affliction of bhutas (pathogens) called as vishama jwara. Shunthi (*Zinziber officinale*) mixed with goats milk is mentioned in classics to treat Vishama jwara in pregnancy.

Conclusion

“Prevention is better than cure”

Ayurveda provides a holistic approach towards human health & deals with both preventive and curative aspect of life. It gives great importance to the physical, psychological and social wellbeing of pregnant women. Ayurveda considered pregnancy as crucial stage of female life, the

special regimen termed as Garbhini paricharya is indicated to prevent complications during pregnancy and delivery. Classical preventive measures in form of Garbhini paricharya along with WHO preventive guidelines may prevent the transmission of COVID-19 during pregnancy.

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