

Ayurvedic principles in the postpartum period: a comprehensive review

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Abstract:

Introduction: The postpartum period (Sutika Kala), lasting six to eight weeks after childbirth, is a critical phase for a mother's physical recovery, emotional stability, and spiritual renewal. Ayurveda, through texts like Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita, prescribes Vata-balancing diets, therapeutic rituals, and lifestyle modifications to restore health. These traditional practices align well with modern obstetric care, offering a holistic framework for healing. **Methodology:** This review draws from classical Ayurvedic literature and contemporary medical references, comparing traditional regimens—such as Abhyanga, mantra chanting, yoga, and herbal formulations—with modern interventions like physiotherapy, nutritional supplementation, and mental health support. **Results and Conclusion:** Integrating Ayurveda with modern medicine enhances uterine recovery, boosts immunity, improves digestion, and supports emotional resilience. Such a combined approach ensures comprehensive postpartum well-being, empowering new mothers with strength, balance, and confidence.

Keywords: Postpartum care, Ayurveda, Sutika Kala, Mantra chanting, Maternal health.

Introduction

The postpartum period, referred to as Sutika Kala in Ayurveda, is a transformative and sacred phase in a woman's life. It starts immediately after childbirth and typically lasts six to eight weeks. At some point of this time, the new mom undergoes considerable physical, emotional, and nonsecular adjustments as her body heals from pregnancy and delivery. Ayurveda emphasizes a complete method to care, that specializes in eating regimen, lifestyle, and therapeutic rituals to restore stability and vitality.

Aim

To study and understand the Ayurvedic principles, practices, and dietary/lifestyle guidelines for the care of women in the postpartum (Sutika) period, with emphasis on promoting recovery, restoring health, and ensuring well-being of both mother and child.

Objectives

1. To explore classical Ayurvedic concepts of Sutika Paricharya (postpartum regimen) as described in ancient texts.
2. To identify the physiological changes occurring in the postpartum period according to Ayurveda.

3. To evaluate dietary recommendations (Ahara) for nourishment and rejuvenation of the mother.
4. To understand lifestyle and therapeutic practices (Vihara and Chikitsa) for restoring balance of Doshas.
5. To highlight the preventive aspects of Ayurveda in avoiding postpartum complications.
6. To correlate Ayurvedic postpartum care with modern maternal health practices.

Methodology

This study adopts a narrative review approach, synthesizing information from classical Ayurvedic scriptures and modern obstetric literature to explore integrated postpartum care strategies. Primary Ayurvedic sources focusing on guidelines for diet, lifestyle, and therapeutic rituals during Sutika Kala. Contemporary references such as D.C. Dutta's Textbook of Obstetrics and Williams Obstetrics provide insights into physiological, nutritional, and psychological aspects of postpartum recovery. Data were compiled, compared, and thematically analyzed to identify overlapping principles and complementary practices. Key Ayurvedic interventions examined include Abhyanga (oil massage), mantra chanting, Vata-balancing diets, yoga, pranayama, and herbal formulations like Dashamoola and Shatavari. Modern approaches assessed include physiotherapy, micronutrient supplementation, counseling, and telehealth support. The analysis emphasizes integration potential, aiming to formulate a holistic, evidence-aligned postpartum care framework.

Observation and Result

The postpartum length is a profound journey of physical restoration, emotional transformation, and spiritual increase. Ayurveda, with its timeless awareness, gives a holistic framework for postpartum care, emphasizing the importance of nourishment, healing rituals, and mantras to heal and rejuvenate both frame and thoughts. Present day approaches, such as clinical advancements, mental assist, and technological gear, complement these traditional practices, creating a complete care plan that addresses every issue of a mother's properly-being with the aid of harmonizing ancient Ayurvedic principles with current practices, new mothers can attain greatest healing and rediscover stability all through this vital phase. This integrative technique now not best restores physical health however additionally nurtures emotional resilience and spiritual connection, ensuring a smoother transition into motherhood. In the long run, the combination of Ayurveda and present day medicinal drug exemplifies the essence of holistic care, allowing mothers to embrace postpartum life with strength, peace, and power.

Postpartum

"The period following childbirth during which the body tissues, specially the pelvic organs, revert back approximately to the pre-pregnant state both anatomically and physiologically. In Ayurveda, the postpartum section is visible as a time to fill up ojas (important essence), restore tissues, and repair balance within the body's three doshas (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha). physically, the frame undergoes uterine involution, hormonal regulation, and the initiation of lactation. Emotionally, the brand new responsibilities of caregiving, combined with hormonal modifications, can result in postpartum blues or melancholy. Ayurveda views this phase as a unique opportunity for renewal and shows a

structured regimen to support healing and rejuvenation. The postpartum section is often referred to as the "fourth trimester" due to the fact it's miles a continuation of the physical and emotional journey of pregnancy. it's miles a section of both vulnerability and transformation. bodily, the frame is convalescing from childbirth, which may contain recovery from tears, surgical wounds, or the pressure of hard work. Hormonal shifts can result in mood swings, irritability, or maybe postpartum melancholy. The dominance of Vata dosha creates an imbalance characterised through dryness, instability, and experience of emptiness. these modifications make the mom extra prone to fatigue, digestive troubles, and emotional fluctuations. [1]

Ayurvedic care protocols for nurturing mothers postpartum

Ayurveda gives a holistic framework for postpartum healing, that specialize in nourishing the body, calming the mind, and restoring stability. This method consists of diet regimen, way of life practices, and healing interventions. In terms of diet, the Charak Samhita offers precise tips for a postpartum weight loss plan. The guiding standards emphasize heat, easily digestible and nourishing foods that stabilize Vata dosha and support Agni (digestive fireplace), rebuild energy and improve lactation.

Nourishing Ayurvedic weight loss program

In the first few postpartum days, the point of interest is on light and hot meals like rice gruel or herbal teas to enhance digestion progressively. The weight-reduction plan transitions to greater substantial meals like khichdi, lentil soups and steamed greens. Ghee, a cornerstone of Ayurvedic cooking, is included for its capability to lubricate tissues and promote recovery. Spices like turmeric, ginger, and fennel are introduced to improve digestion and enhance lactation. Sweet and nourishing ingredients which include dates, almonds, and jaggery provide strength and assist recuperation. [2]

Postnatal Recovery: Ayurvedic Perspective on Dashmool and Shatavari

Dashmoola in Postpartum Period

□ Composition

Dashmoola = 10 roots (5 Brihat Panchamoola + 5 Laghu Panchamoola) Brihat Panchamoola

Bilva (Aegle marmelos)

Agnimantha (Clerodendrum phlomidis) Shyonaka (Oroxylum indicum) Gambhari (Gmelina arborea)

Patala (Stereospermum suaveolens) Laghu Panchamoola Shalaparni (Desmodium gangeticum)

Prishniparni (Uraria picta)

Brihati (Solanum indicum) Kantakari (Solanum xanthocarpum) Gokshura (Tribulus terrestris)

□ Benefits in Sutika Kāla (Postpartum Period) From Ayurvedic Perspective

After delivery, there is predominance of Vata Dosha due to blood loss, depletion of dhatus, and emptying of the uterus. Dashmoola is Vata-shamaka, Snigdha, Balya, and Srotoshodhaka—ideal for Sutika care.

Key Actions:

Vata-shamana – reduces pain in the pelvic region, backache, joint stiffness. Shotha-hara – reduces post-delivery swelling.

Agnideepana – improves digestion, prevents ama formation.

Sanyajanana (Indirectly) – by improving maternal health, promotes lactation. Rasayana effect – helps tissue repair & recovery.

Forms used in postpartum:

Dashmoola Kashaya (decoction) – orally for 5–10 days after delivery. Dashmoola Taila / Ghrita – for Abhyanga (oil massage) to reduce vata. Dashmoola Kwatha Nadi Sweda – for lower back & pelvic region steaming. [3]

1. Shatavari in Postpartum Period Botanical name: Asparagus racemosus Rasa: Madhura, Tikta

Guna: Guru, Snigdha Virya: Sheeta Vipaka: Madhura Karma: Balya, Rasayana, Sanyajanana, Pittashamaka[4]

□ Benefits in Sutika Kāla

Sanyajanana – Increases breast milk production (galactagogue). Balya & Rasayana

– Helps restore strength after delivery.[5]

Pittashamana – Prevents postpartum hot flushes, burning sensations. Garbhashaya poshana – Nourishes uterus & supports involution.

Manasika bala vardhaka – Calms the mind, reduces postpartum anxiety. [6]

Forms used:

Shatavari Kalka – mixed with milk & ghee. Shatavari Ghrita – for strength & lactation.

Life-style Practices for Postpartum restoration

Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of rest, massage, and right hydration for the duration of this vital segment. Abhyanga (Oil rubdown) every day warm oil massages the use of sesame or medicated oils are especially encouraged.

Abhyanga facilitates alleviate frame aches, enhance blood circulate, and calm Vata dosha. It additionally promotes relaxation and enhances tissue restoration. relaxation and recovery. New mothers are cautioned to prioritize rest and keep away from overexertion. adequate sleep and durations of rest are vital to top off electricity and promote healing. Hydration and natural teas consuming heat water infused with spices like ajwain, cumin, or fennel aids digestion, helps detoxing, and balances Vata dosha. [7]

Yoga and Asanas for Postpartum fitness

गात्रप्रसारण (Gātra-prasāraṇa)

- गात्र = body parts, limbs
- प्रसारण = stretching, extension, expansion

Gentle stretching or extension of the body parts (limbs), performed slowly and gradually.

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In the postpartum (sūtikā) period, Suśruta advises:

- After bathing (snāna), fomentation (swedana), and oil massage (abhyanga),
- The woman should gradually stretch and mobilize her limbs (gātra-prasāraṇa).

This indicates mild physical movements or gentle stretching exercises to restore flexibility, improve blood circulation, reduce stiffness, and regain normal physical strength after delivery. [8]

Integrating Ayurveda with present day Practices

A holistic postpartum care plan can seamlessly combo Ayurvedic rituals with contemporary practices. as an example, the use of Abhyanga (oil rub down) may be paired with current physiotherapy strategies to enhance muscle healing and enhance circulation. similarly, Ayurvedic dietary hints, which includes the use of ghee and digestive spices, may be enriched with current dietary supplements to meet specific dietary deficiencies.

Mantra chanting a critical part of Ayurveda, can be integrated with mindfulness- based stress reduction (MBSR) strategies to beautify its calming outcomes. Modern- day moms can use guided meditation apps to mix traditional mantras just like the Mahamrityunjaya Mantra with current mindfulness practices, creating a comprehensive intellectual wellness . [9]

A complete course to well-being

By way of combining the timeless wisdom of Ayurveda with the improvements of current remedy, postpartum care can be transformed into a multidimensional technique to restoration. Whilst Ayurveda presents the foundation for restoring stability and energy, cutting-edge practices offer customized hospital therapy, advanced dietary aid, and available mental fitness sources. Collectively, those techniques ensure that new moms can navigate the postpartum section with self assurance, power, and a renewed feel of nicely-being. This integration of historical and cutting- edge practices virtually exemplifies a journey from the womb to wellbeing, providing holistic help to every thing of a mom's recuperation.

Conclusion

The review found that Ayurvedic interventions—such as Abhyanga, Vata-balancing diets, herbal formulations, yoga, and mantra chanting—support faster uterine involution, improved digestion, enhanced lactation, reduced fatigue, and better emotional stability. Modern medical measures, including physiotherapy, targeted nutrition, counseling, and telehealth, address specific physical and psychological needs. Integrating both systems creates a comprehensive postpartum care model that restores physical health, strengthens immunity, and nurtures emotional resilience. This blended approach empowers new mothers to transition smoothly into motherhood with vitality, balance, and confidence, reflecting the strengths of ancient wisdom enhanced by contemporary scientific advancements.

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