

SUTIKA SWASTHAVRITTA: A REJUVENATION THERAPY**Dr. Yashwant Singh^{1*}, Dr. Sunayana² and Dr. Ritu Kumari³**

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda give importance to care of the mother at every stage of her life especially in antenatal and postnatal period. A postnatal period is the period beginning immediately after the separation of placenta and extending up to six weeks. Postnatal care is important to ensure a normal puerperium with delivery of a healthy baby. In *ayurvedic* classics postnatal period is named as *Sutika Paricharya*. The word *SUTIKA* signifies a woman has delivered a child along with the placenta. The scientific interpretation of *sutika* is puerperal woman, all the classics have advised proper adherence to *Sutika Swasthavritta* as advised in *Ayurveda* classics results in faster restoration of health of a mother and to attain proper health after puerperium and rejuvenates. *Aacharya kashyapa* has defined the birth of child as rebirth of mother.

The word rebirth signifies the pain and hardships she has to undergo while delivering a baby. The *sutika* recovers from her labour which often leaves her tired and exhausted. *Sutika* is prone to many diseases and hence, it is must to follow *sutika swasthavritta* including *yogas* which not only improves her physiological condition but also protects her from upcoming diseases. In general, all *aacharyas* have explained massage, oral administration of *Sneha*, decoctions, medicated rice gruel, medicated soups to overcome this problem and scientifically explained *Sutika Swasthavritta*. So, an attempt is made.

KEYWORDS: *Sutika Swasthavritta, Ayurveda, pathya-apathya, yoga.*

INTRODUCTION

Motherhood is all about loving, sharing, sacrificing & struggling. *Ayurveda* emphasizes much importance of the care of women especially in the prenatal & postnatal period. *Sutika* is the state of women immediately after delivery & extends till the time she continues breast feeding. *Sutika* refers to the woman after the expulsion of placenta. *Sutika avastha* is the important phase in women life. There are many changes occurring in *garbhavastha* and *sutikavastha*. After delivery due to exertion of labour pain and excretion of *kleda* and blood, *sutika's sharira* is thought to be *shoonya sharira*. During Puerperium the body tissues, especially the pelvic organs revert back approximately to pre-pregnant state both anatomically & physiologically. *Ayurveda* stated that about 74 types of diseases can occur during this period if not managed properly. 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 mother becomes weak and therefore for increasing body strength and achieving *vata* balance proper care and management in the *sutika* is needed.

Etymology of word Sutika

The word *Sutika* is derived from the Sanskrit root “*Su-presage*” The lady, who has undergone the phenomena of *prasava*, is termed as *sutika*. In *Ayurvedic* classics *sutika* means a woman after delivery (expulsion of placenta), that means the woman who expels out placenta with an infant, is called *sutika*.

Definition of Sutika

A woman is called *sutika* after the expulsion of placenta. Acharya Kashyapa has given an explicit description of *sutika* in *kashyap samihita*. Here Acharya clearly mentions that after delivery of an infant, till the placenta is not expelled, the woman cannot be called *sutika*. In other words, *sutika* term can be used only after expulsion of placenta.

Etymology and definition of Swasthavritta

The word ‘*Swasthavritta*’ is compounded by two words: ‘*Swastha*’ and ‘*Vritta*’. *Swastha*: *Swa* means – innate, natural, inherent, belonging to oneself; *Av* means – to protect, do good to; *Stha* means – to stand and live. In total it means one’s own stand to protect life/ one who stands without any diseases. *Vritta* means worshiping of preceptor/ controlling mind and sensory organs commencing good things. Thus, *Swasthavritta* helps one to attain the goal of perpetual normal health and happiness.

SUTIKA KALA

Sutika kala is the period of postnatal phase. According to classics there are different opinion regarding the duration of this period.

<i>Aacharya</i>	<i>Sutika kala</i>
<i>Aacharya Charaka</i>	Sutika kala is not exactly mentioned
<i>Aacharya Sushruta</i>	1 ^{1/2} month i.e. 45 days
<i>Ashtanga Sangraha</i>	1 ^{1/2} month i.e. 45 days or up to recurrence of menses
<i>Ashtang Hridaya</i>	1 ^{1/2} month i.e. 45 days or up to recurrence of menses
<i>Aacharya Kashyapa</i>	6 months
<i>Acharya Bhavprakasha</i>	1 ^{1/2} month i.e. 45 days or up to recurrence of menses
<i>Yogratnakara</i>	1 ^{1/2} month i.e. 45 days or up to recurrence of menses
Modern - Immediate	Within 24 hours
- Early	Up to 7 days
- Remote	Up to 6 weeks

SUTIKA PARICHARYA & SUTIKA SWASTHAVRITTA

Care of the woman during puerperium comes under the heading of *Sutika Paricharya* and improve her physiological condition as well as protection from upcoming diseases come under *Sutika Swasthavritta*. These involve the following principles:

- 1 *Vatashamana*
- 2 *Agnideepana*
- 3 *Pachana*
- 4 *Raktavardhaka*
- 5 *Stanyavardhaka*
- 6 *Yonisanrakshaka*
- 7 *Garbhashayashodhaka, Kostashodaka*
- 8 *Dhatupusti, Balya*

After delivery there is vitiation of *vata*; immunity and strength of the mother will be weak. Expulsion of fetus, loss of fluid, and exhaustion during labour are responsible for *dhatukshaya* and during this period even a minor ailment can cause a lot of harm to the body. In purperium many complications can occur as described in *ayurveda* about 74 diseases can occur during this period if not managed properly. So *sutika* must be given more attention to prevent these complications to occur during this period. *Ayurveda* has suggested a very good protocol during *sutika kala* which includes a detailed description of *aahara* (nutrition), *vihara* (life style), and *aushadhi* (medicine) to maintain the health of the women. *Sutika paricharya* is divided into three major components as follows.

- A) *Aashwasana* (Psychological Reassurance)
- B) *Aahara* (Normal diet in puerperium)
- C) *Vihara* (Normal daily activities and therapeutic procedures)

***Aashwasana* (Psychological Reassurance)**

After expulsion of fetus, women should be immediately encouraged with sweet spoken words. It is a kind of *Satvavajaya Chikitsa*. It includes mental boosting which is required for the women to take care of herself and her baby.

***Aahara* (Normal diet in puerperium)**

According to modern science, dietary regimen during puerperal period includes-

- Puerperal women should take normal diet of her choice.
- As the patient is lactating additional protein, fat, minerals, vitamins, high caloric diet, plenty of fluids should be needed and all this is fulfilled by *ayurvedic* diet.

The motive of this dietary regimen is to improve the involution process, immunity, lactation, digestive power and ultimately restore her health.

-Acharya Charaka says that when sutika feels hungry she should be prescribed powdered Pippali (*Piper longum*), Pippalimula (*Piper longum*), Cavya (*Piper retrofractum vahl.*), Citraka (*Plumba gozeylanic*), and Srngabera (*Zingiber officinale*) with any one out of Ghrita, oil Vasa (animal fat) or Majja (marrow) considering her tolerability for these edibles and in the quantity which she can digest easily.

-Acharya Cakrapani says that the morning irrigation should be given before digestion of oleaginous substance afterward rice gruel should be given. After use of this regimen for five or seven days, gradual administration of vrnhana substances (anabolic or likely to increase flesh and energy) should be done. This regimen is not suitable for the women of Anupadesa (marshy land), because in the residents of this area, the kapha is dominant. This regimen is suitable for the women of jangala area.

-Acharya Sushruta says that If some blood is still left inside (Some blood clots are retained in uterus), powdered Pippali (*Piper longum*), pippalimula (*Piper longum*), hastipippali (*scindapsus officinalis*), citraka (*plumba gozeylanic*), and srngabera (*Zingiber officinale*) with warm jaggery-water should be given. This should be continued for two or three days till abnormal blood (Lochia rubra) is properly excreted. Afterwards rice gruel prepared with the

drugs of *vidarigandhadi* group and mixed with *ghrita* or milk should be given for three days. cooked *sali* rice with meat soup of wild animals prepared with *yavangu*, *kola* and *kulattha* should be prescribed considering her strength and digestive power.

-According to *Vagbhata*, after feeling of hunger she should be given congenial oleaginous substance mixed with either powdered *panchakola* or powder of *yawani*, *upakuncika*, *chavya*, *chitraka*, *vyosa* and rock salt, in the quantity which she can digest in whole day. The women unfit for use of oily substance should be given decoction of either *laghu pancamula* or drugs capable of suppressing *vata*.

-Acharya *Harita* has advised that after delivery, the decoction of available drugs out of the *Lodhra*, *Arjuna*, *Kadamba*, *Devadaru*, *Bijaka* and *karkandhu* should be given for purifying the blood and also *yoni*.

Vihara (Normal daily activities and therapeutic procedures)

1) Abhyanga (massage): *Abhyanga* (massage) with the help of *ghrita* and *taila* especially with *Bala taila* which is *vatshamaka*. *Rasayana* to *mansa dhatu* (muscle tissue). *Tila* (*Sesamum indicum* Linn.) *taila* provides nourishment prevents skin from excessively getting dry and thus prevents further dehydration in *sutika*. Massage tones up muscles of pelvic floor, abdominal and back tissue and relieves muscle spasm. *Abhyanga* soothes nervous and endocrine system, releases endorphin. It helps in improving both physical and mental wellbeing and ultimately helps in reducing the stress during puerperium. *Yoni abhyanga* (vaginal oiling) tones up vagina and perineum and prevent laxity and prolapsed, alleviate pain and swelling of vagina. It also heals vaginal and perineal wound.

2) Snehapana (Consumption of fat): It suppresses *vata dosha* in *sutika avastha* and increases appetite level. It also calms down mind, reduces mental stress and increases peristaltic movements of intestine. *Snehapana* is given with drugs like *Pippali*, *Pippali mula*, *Chavya*, *Chitraka* etc. they have properties like *katu*, *tikta rasa* (taste) and *ushna veerya* (hot in potency) which in turn helps to digest *sneha* and act as appetizer.

3) Udarveshtanam (Abdominal tightening): Wrapping of abdomen with a big cloth results in getting back the abdomen as in pre pregnant state and also subsides *vata dosha*. Due to abdominal tightening abdominal muscles becomes flattened, back support is also one of the

benefits of this procedure, as it helps to straighten back after pregnancy, improving posture and reducing discomfort.

4) Dushtashonitshuddhi (Purification of blood): If some *doshas* or blood is left inside, powdered *pippli*, *pippalimula*, *hastipippali*, *chitraka* and *shringabera* with warm jaggery water should be given. These drugs along with jaggery may cause uterine contraction and blood clots or abnormal blood which retained in the uterus can be excreted. *Kashyapa* advised *udarpeedana* for *shonit shuddhi*.

5) Parisheka (Hot water pouring): *Parisheka* is done by pouring water stream so that after the delivery of baby the blood clots accumulated in the uterine cavity can be excreted properly and *vata dosha* also subsides. *Aacharya Vagbhata* advised *taila*, *ghrita* or decoction of *jivniya*, *brihaniya* and *madhura varga* drugs for *parisheka* due to their *vatashamaka* property.

6) Yonidhoopana (Fumigaton of vagina): In purperial period vaginal defence is lowered due to hypoestrogenic state and the patient is prone to infection so aseptic precautions are necessary during this period. The drugs used for *dhoopana* are *kushtha*, *guggulu*, *aguru* etc. which are known for their antibacterial property.

7) Udvartana: In this procedure, massage is done with powdered drugs.

8) Snana (bathing): *Aacharya vagbhata* has described that on auspicious period of 10th or 12th day, according to customs of family, the bathing ceremony of puerperal woman should be performed.

-*Ashtanga sangraha* advised *sutikothhana* (coming out of the house) instead of bath.

9) Yoga: *Sutika avastha* is the crucial phase in women life women may suffer from various complications which are *kricchasadhya* or *asadhya* and it may hamper day to day activities. During pregnancy, the woman gains about 10 – 12 kg weight. In the today's modern era women are very much conscious about one's look. So, to reduce this weight gain strenuous exercise may be done which has deleterious health effect like backache, joint pain, herniation, prolapsed uterus etc. also resulting in high mortality rate in *sutika*. To overcome this, *yoga* plays an important role in maintaining physical and mental health of *sutika*. Various *yogasana* that can be performed by *sutika* in normal, forceps, ventose delivery and in LSCS are as follows.

Various *asanas* for *sutika*

Sr. No.	Name of <i>Asana</i>	When to Perform	
		In normal, forceps and ventose	In LSCS
1	<i>Suryanamaskara</i>	After 2 wks	After 6 months
2	<i>Siddhsana</i>	After healing episiotomy wound	After 2 wks
3	<i>Ardha padmasana</i>	After healing episiotomy wound	After 2 wks
4	<i>Padmasana</i>	After abhyaas of <i>Ardha padmasana</i>	After <i>Ardha padmasana</i>
5	<i>Pavanmuktasana</i>	After 2 wks	After 6 wks
6	<i>Sukhasana</i>	Soon after delivery	After 7-10 days (after removal of stitches)
7	<i>Vajrasana</i>	After healing episiotomy wound	After 7-10 days (after removal of stitches)
8	<i>Matsyendrasana</i>	After 2 wks	After 6 wks
9	<i>Janu shirsasana</i>	After 2 wks	After 6 wks
10	<i>Tadasana</i>	After 2 wks	After 6 wks
11	<i>Trikonasana</i>	After 2 wks	After 6 wks
12	<i>Halasana</i>	After 2 wks	After 6 months
13	<i>Utkatasana</i>	After healing episiotomy wound	After removal of stitches on the abdomen
14	<i>Passchimottanasana</i>	After 6 wks	After 6 months
15	<i>Bhujangasana</i>	After 2 wks	After 6 wks
16	<i>Ardha Shalabhasana and Shalabhasana</i>	After 2 wks	After 6 wks

PATHYA

- 1) *Sutika* should use *hitakarakaahara & vihara*
- 2) *Sutika* should have bath with warm water
- 3) Adequate sleep
- 4) For drinking, boiled water should be used
- 5) *Abhyanga* should be done with luke warm oils & *Parishek, Avagahana* etc with always luke warm water.
- 6) *Udaravesthana* should be done.
- 7) Diet must contain *Garbhashayashodaka, Sthanyavardhaka, Stanyajanana, Vataharadravya*
- 8) Use birth controls measures
- 9) Pelvic floor exercise (kegal's exercise)

APATHYA

- 1) Excess exercise
- 2) Sexual intercourse
- 3) Mental & Physical stress

- 4) Cold water, Cold wind & Cold things etc
- 5) Contraindication of *Panchakarma*
- 6) Anger, Fear, Depression
- 7) *Diwaswapan, Atapasevana*

CONCLUSION

The post-delivery period is a very crucial phase in a woman's life. Ignorance about proper care, excessive concern about the child and an inability to cope with motherhood may lead to postnatal disorders and even depression. The Ayurvedic system of medicine describes *Sutika Paricharya* - a complete health regimen for the postnatal woman. This regimen includes *aahara, vihara, aushadhi, yogasana, pathya, apthya* etc. which helps to regain her pre-pregnant state. Thus, all these principles of *Sutika Swasthavritta* help the body to combat the stress felt during pregnancy and labour and to regain and restore its physiological and anatomical state.

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