

AYURVEDIC STANDPOINT TO INTERPRET THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SUKHAPRASAVAKAR LEPA, BASTI AND PICHU ON LABOUR

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ABSTRACT

Background: Pregnancy and childbirth are one of the most paramount events in the life of every woman. There is always fear about mode and complications of delivery. Ancient *Acharyas* have described so many drugs for the sake of natural vaginal delivery. The use of *Anuvasana Basti* and *Yoni Pichu* and *lepa*, prepared with drugs of *madhuravarga* during the 9th month and *Sukhaprasavakar Lepa* on *nabhi* are also described for *Sukhprasava*. **Objective:** An attempt was made to analyze the role of *Sukhaprasavakar Lepa*, *Basti*, *Pichu* on labour along in an Ayurvedic standpoint to interpret their contemporary

significance. **Methodology:** A multidisciplinary investigation that included benefits, mode of action of these therapies and ayurvedic intervention in the *Prakrit Prasav* was pivotal in this study. The work is mainly based on theoretical research using classical texts of Ayurveda related to *Stri Rog* and *Prasuti Tantra*. **Discussion:** Use of *Sukhaprasavakar Lepa*, *Anuvasana (Matra) Basti* and *Pichu* are helpful in normal vaginal delivery and prevent the further complications which may occur during normal vaginal delivery and also reduce the rate of caesarean section. **Conclusion:** These therapies are helpful in normal vaginal delivery and prevent the further complications and also reduce the rate of caesarean section.

KEY WORDS: *Ayurved*, Normal Labour, *Sukhaprasava*, *Anuvasana (matra) Basti*, *Yoni Pichu*, *Sukhaprasavakar Lepa*.

INTRODUCTION

A woman is a special creature of God who is blessed with the power of giving birth to child. Childbirth is the most special moment in the life of women where she experiences many physical and psychological hurdles. Delivering a baby in the Natural manner is the utmost desire of women as it reset the strength of her body.

Ayurveda suggests woman to be treated with utmost care to deliver a good and healthy progeny. Acharya Charaka says the pregnant woman has to manage very cautiously like one carrying a vessel full of oil without agitating it.

There are various drugs prescribed in Ayurveda either internally or externally and *Mantra Chikitsa* for *Sukha Prasava*. During *Garbhini Paricharya*, *Asthapana Basti* with decoction of bala, atibala, badar, satpushpa, honey, milk, tila taila, *Anuvasana Basti* and *Yoni Pichu* with *taila* prepared with the drugs of *madhura* group during 8th and 9th of pregnancy for *Sukhaprasava* is described by various authors in *Ayurvedic* texts. The body of the *garbhini* thus treated becomes *snigdha*, she gains strength and the movement of *vayu* in right direction, the result being *Sukha* and *Nirupadrava Prasava*.^[1]

Acharya Bhavprakash and *Yogratnakar* has mentioned the *Sukhaprasavakar Lepa on Nabhi*. *Apana Vayu* plays an important role in progression of normal labour. *Apana Vayu* gets vitiated mainly due to the obstruction of *malavaha srotas* by the gravid uterus. The functional aspect of labour can be influenced by the vitiated *Apana Vayu*. For normalization of *Apana Vayu*, *Basti* is indicated which helps to reduce the obstruction of *Srotas*. Due to *Snehana* property of *Anuvasana Basti*, the *kukshi*, *kati*, *parshva* and all *garbha sthanamarga* become *Snigdha*. This *Snigdha* property removes the *rukshata* of *vayu* and thus it helps in the proper stretching of ligaments and in *garbha nishkramana*.

NEED OF STUDY

The incidence of cesarean section is rising which ultimately increases risk of maternal and fetal complications. To minimize these complications, to ensure maternal and fetal wellbeing and to bring about normal vaginal delivery *anuvasan basti*, *Sukhprasavkar lepa* and *yonipichu* can play a important role in normalizing the vitiated *Doshas* at the time of child birth and provide a passage to the passenger. The principles and formulations regarding *striroga* and *prasuti tantra* mentioned in *Ayurvedic* texts stand invulnerable in this present era and their importance cannot be neglected.

Labour- Labour is the series of events that take place in the genital organs in an effort to expel the viable products of conception out of the womb through the vagina into the outer world. For normal labour (Eutocia) the following criteria should be present:^[2]

- Spontaneous expulsion, of a single, mature foetus
- Vertex Presentation
- Through the birth canal
- Within a reasonable time (not less than 3 hours or more than 18 hours)
- Natural termination with minimal aids
- Without complication to the mother or the foetus

Labour is customarily divided into three stages. The first stage which is known as the stage of cervical effacement and dilatation, begins when spaced uterine contractions of sufficient frequency, intensity and duration are attained to bring about cervical thinning or effacement and it ends when cervix is fully dilated - about 10 cm to allow passage of the term- sized foetus. The next second stage, known as the stage of foetal expulsion begins when cervical dilatation is complete and ends with delivery. Last the third stage, known as the stage of placental separation and expulsion begins immediately after delivery of foetus and ends with delivery of placenta.

Prakrita Prasava

'*Prakrita Prasava*' is at the onset of labour, the head of the foetus gets turned and comes forward due to the action of *Prasuti maruta* and then it is expelled through *Apatyapatha*.¹ Labour seems to be parallel as *Prakrita Prasava* in Ayurveda.

Causes of onset of Prasava

Kala Prakarsh, *Nadi Vibandha Mukti*, *Garbhavasa Vairagya* and *Sampurna Gatrata* are the causes mentioned for the onset of labour.^[1]

Factor responsible for Sukha Prasava of normally developed full term foetus

In Ayurveda, The healthy, well-grown fetus, deliver easily at the proper time, when *shukra*, *artava*, *atma*, *ashaya*, *kala* are perfect and congenial diet and mode of life is followed properly.^[1]

Role of Apana Vayu on labour

Apanavayu plays an important role along with vyanavayu in act of contraction and relaxation of the uterus, and in the expulsion of the foetus. Vyanavayu is situated in the whole body, said to cause gati (motion), akshepa (contraction), prasarana (relaxation) etc. When the proper time of prasava comes, the vyanavayu stimulates the act of contraction and relaxation in the uterine muscles and due to it, Apana Vayu becomes active to expel the Garbha outside the garbhasya. AcharyaCharaka has used a term Prasutimaruta. This is nothing but it can be considered as a subtype of Apanavayu, having a special function of Garbha Niskramana.

Due to mainly the obstruction to *Srotas* of *Pakwashaya* by the gravid uterus the *Apana Vayu* gets vitiated. The functional aspect of labour can be influenced by vitiated *Apana Vayu*. For normalization of *Apana Vayu*, *Basti* is indicated which helps to relieve the obstruction of *Srotas*. Normal *Apana Vayu* having a special function of *Garbha Nishkramana*.^[1]

SPECIFIC THERAPIES

1. *Anuvasana (Matra) Basti*
2. *Yoni Pichu*
3. *Sukhprasavakar Lepa*

Due to distension of uterus it causes obstruction to pathway of *Apanavayu*, resulting in constipation, backache and other symptoms. To manage *Apanavayu*, *Asthapana Basti*¹ and *Anuvasana Basti* with decoction of drugs of *madhura varga*, milk etc. and oil prepared with above mentioned drugs should be given by which *Vata* acts in its right pathway and woman can have a natural and uncomplicated delivery. Use of *Yoni Pichu*^[2] with the same oil of *Basti* in 8th and 9th month of pregnancy enhances the lubrication of *garbhashaya* and *garbhasayamarga* (Vaginal canal and perineum). *Sukhprasavakar Lepa*^[3] is helpful to produce rhythmic uterine contraction and shorten the duration of labour, prevent tetanic uterine contraction.

Since the present work is aimed on evaluating the effect of *Anuvasana (Matra) Basti*, *Yoni Pichu* and *Sukhprasavakar Lepa*, have short review of *basti karma* and *Pichu karma* is described here.

1. BASTI KARMA

In case of a pregnant woman, *basti* is indicated to prevent the pathogenicity of *vayu*.

The word consists of two words i.e. *Basti* and *karma*.

The word *Basti* is derived from root 'Bas' with 'Teh' prataya i.e. *basteh Avrooti, Mootram Bastich* that which covers or encircles the *mootram* (urine) or place where urine is collected in the body is known as *Basti* and *Karma* means process of action.

The process of introducing medicated oils meat soup, milk etc. internally into rectum, bladder, made of *Basti* (urinary bladder) of animals sheep cow, ox etc. is known as *Basti karma*.^[4]

It is mainly used to normalize vitiated *Vata*, the controller of whole body mechanisms. Vitiating of *Vata* is the main pathological factor in abnormal^[5] uterine contractions. There is no other method of treatment to suppress this *Vata* as effective as *Basti Karma*, which is designated as wholesome or semi treatment for all body ailments.^[1]

Effect of *Basti* on *Prasava*

- Most of women experience constipation in late pregnancy due to pressure of gravid uterus over bowels and effect of progesterone. Use of *Asthapana and Anuvasana Basti* in eight month will relieve this constipation, besides this may also affect the autonomous nervous system governing myometrium and help in regulating their function during labour.
- Due to *Snehana* property of *Anuvasana Basti*, the *kukshi, kati, parshva and all garbha sthanamarga* become *Snigdha*. This *Snigdha* property removes the *rukshata of vayu* and thus it helps in the proper stretching of ligaments and in *garbha nishkramana*.

2. YONI PICHU

It is a process by which a piece of either cloth or cotton dipped in medicated oil is kept on the part which is to be anointed or otherwise is a local application of oil. It is of several types as *Yoni Pichu, Nasa Pichu, Guda Pichu* etc. *Yoni Pichu* is used in pregnant women by dipping a tampon (*Pichu*) made of cotton covered by sterile gauze dipped in oil and applying it on vagina, vulva and perineum. After application of oil, for some time it is removed.

Benefits of *Yoni Pichu*

- Daily use of *Yoni Pichu* of *madhura varga siddha Taila* lubricates the *garbhasthana* (cervix) and *garbhamarga* (vaginal canal and perineum) by *Snehana, Vishyandana, Mardavata* and *Kledana* properties of *Taila* and helps in *Sukhaprasava*.^[3]
- *Yoni Pichu* helps to improve and strengthen the musculature of the vaginal canal.

- Every day use of *Yoni Pichu* increases the elasticity of Perineal Muscle.
- Regular use of *Pichu* inhibits PROM and softens the perineum and help in its relaxation during labour.^[6]
- *Yoni Pichu* may soften the *garbhasthana* and *garbhamarga* thus help in Sukha Prasava. It is just possible that the regular use of *Pichu* might influence autonomic fibres governing myometrium and help in regulating their function and helps in its relaxation during labour.

3. LEPA KALPANA

Wet and fresh medicinal drugs should be taken and made into Kalka (paste) form. If the drugs are dry, they are converted into fine powder and mixed with small amount of *drava* (liquid) like water, milk etc. and formed as Kalka. This Kalka is applied externally and is called *Lepa Kalpana*. *Sukhaprasavakar Lepa* is a type of *Pralepa Kalpana*. *Pralepa* is that which is applied cold, thin and dries quickly.

Synonym of Lepa^[7] - Lipta, Lepana and Alepa.

Thickness of Lepa - The thickness of the *Lepa* should equal to 1/3rd of the thumb. The *Lepa* should be not too *snigdha* nor too *ruksha*. It should be not too *pinda* nor too *drava*, but of average consistency.^[8] The thickness of *Alepa* should be equal '*aadramahishacharmotsedha*'.

Types of Lepa

1. Based upon the quality and nature of medicine used in Lepa preparation^[9]

- **Pralepa**- *Sheeta, Tanu Virya Drugs used and Pitta Shamaka*
- **Pradeha**- *Ushna Virya Drugs used and Kapha and Vata Shamaka*
- **Alepa**- *Sheeta, Tanu, Ushna Virya Drugs used and Pitta and Rakta Shamaka*

2. Based upon the action of the Lepa^[10]

1. *Doshagna Lepa*, 2. *Vishagna Lepa*, 3. *Varnya Lepa*

Precaution to be taken when Lepa is applied^[11]

- All the *Lepa* prepared are for instant and single use because they are effective so long as they are moist.
- It is applied against the direction of the hair follicles for better absorption.
- It is removed soon after drying from the skin.

- Fresh *Lepa* is applied only after removing the previous layer of lepa from the skin.
- It should not be applied during night time except in conditions like poisonous bites, pus filled wounds.

Benefits of *Sukhaprasavakar Lepa*

Lepa was formulated with the intention of localized action of the herb. The thickness of *Sukhaprasavakar Lepa* is helpful to produce rhythmic uterine contraction and shorten the duration of labour, prevent tetanic uterine contraction and reduce the operative procedure (Caesarean Section).

CONCLUSION

In pregnant women, due to distension of uterus it causes obstruction to pathway of *Apanavayu*, resulting in constipation, backache and other symptoms. To manage *Apanavayu*, *Asthapana Basti*^[12] and *Anuvasana Basti* with decoction of drugs of *madhura varga*, milk etc. and oil prepared with above mentioned drugs should be given by which *Vata* acts in its right pathway and woman can have a natural and uncomplicated delivery. Use of *Yoni Pichu*^[13] with the same oil of Basti in 8th and 9th month of pregnancy enhances the lubrication of *garbhashaya* and *garbhasayamarga* (Vaginal canal and perineum). *Sukhaprasavakar Lepa*^[14] is helpful to produce rhythmic uterine contraction and shorten the duration of labour, prevent tetanic uterine contraction.

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