



## Importance of Panchkarma in Preconception Care in Ayurveda

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### Abstract

Preconception refers to the period before a woman becomes pregnant. It encompasses the time when couple is planning to conceive, or when a woman is considering pregnancy. Focusing on Preconception care is important because it allows for interventions to improve both material and fetal outcome. According to Ayurveda, the Garbhadhana Vidhi, use of Garbha Sthapana Aushadhas and Pumsavana Karma are some of the procedures which could be categorized under the topic of pre-conceptual care. The traditions of supporting and promoting pregnancy as well as the procedures which could be followed during pre-conceptual care have been clearly mentioned in Ayurvedic texts. Panchkarma procedures in pre-conception care are very widely and commonly practiced by Ayurvedic physicians that additionally provides benefit to the woman seeking to identify the risk factors, stabilizing the previous disease, to discontinue the teratogenic medications and to prevent repetitive reproductive disease and to ensure that women enter pregnancy with optimal state of health which would be safe for both foetus and herself. This article aims to importance of Panchkarma procedures in preconception care to achieve healthy pregnancy throughout and healthy outcome of baby.

**Keywords:** Pre-conception Care, Panchkarma, Beej Shuddhi, Garbha Sambhav Samugri, Garbhadhana Vidhi, Pregnancy.

### Introduction

Ayurveda has rightly emphasized that health is not only the state of not having disease but, it is the state of normalcy of Dosha, Dhātu, Agni and Malakriya. It also includes the Prasanna Atma (soul), Indriya (sense organs) and Manas (mind) [1]. Panchakarma is a method of cleansing the body of all the unwanted waste after lubricating it. Panchakarma are 5 (five) in number; hence the term PANCH (five)–KARMA (procedures). Panchakarma treatment is unique in the sense that it includes preventive, curative and promotive actions for various diseases. According to Acharya Charak, Panchakarma is a process that involves 5 methods [2]:

- Vamana (Therapeutic emesis)
- Virechana (Therapeutic purgation)
- Nasya (Medication through nasal route)
- Anuvasan basti (therapeutic enema with medicated oil enema)
- Niruha basti (enema with herbal decoction)

Preconception care is a period before conception where both of the couples (Healthy as well as suffers from infertility due to underlined disease) should follow certain procedures which will help in correction of the Dosha's and maintain the equilibrium of the body. In order to achieve this, Panchkarma

proves to be one of the effective methods. In India, the overall prevalence of primary infertility lies in between 3.9% and 16.8% as per WHO estimates [3] so it is time to aware regarding upcoming health issues due to our diet and life style habits.

### Benefits of Panchakarma in Preconceptional Care

**Helps Restore Metabolic Fire (AGNI):** Assists balance all three doshas and improves Genetic health and lowers possibility of congenital disorders in healthy and infertility couples also

### Physical Wellbeing:

- Boosts the bodies immunity levels.
- Enhancing fertility by improving quality of sperm and ovum.
- Helps implement a healthy diet and lifestyle.

### Mental Wellbeing

- Reduces stress, improves relaxation & tolerance
- Supports Assisted Reproduction Techniques like IUI, IVF.
- Promotes long term Wellness.

## Aim

To study importance of Panchkarma and its effects in preconception care.

## Objective

To identify the risk factors, stabilizing the previous disease, to discontinue the teratogenic medications and to prevent repetitive reproductive disease and to ensure that women enters pregnancy with optimal state of health which would be safe for both foetus and herself.

## Material and Methods

Various Ayurved Samhita and literature are reviewed for reference, related modern text and research articles are referred for utility of preconceptional care in present era's obstetric care.

## Description

Ayurvedic texts have mentioned about Shodasha Samskaras out of this Vivaha and Garbhadhan are the two Samskaras concerned with Preconception care<sup>[4]</sup>. According to Ayurveda text following factors should be considered for healthy pregnancy and outcome of better progeny.

- a) **Marriage:** Marriage should be Atulyagotriya<sup>[5]</sup> it means marriage shouldn't be consanguineous. There may be chances of various hereditary diseases like diabetes etc. if marriages are consanguineous
- b) **Age for Conception:** For healthy conception both couple should be physical and mentally fit in all purpose and suitable age for conception for man is after 25 years and women should be above 16 years of age<sup>[6]</sup>.

## c) For Conception of Pregnancy Following Factors are Responsible (Garbha Sambhav Samugri)<sup>[7]</sup>

Ayurveda mentioned four factors required for conception they are as follows-

- i). **Ritu:** Ritu is considered as a time of ovulation, where ovulation takes place and the chances of conception is maximum.
- ii). **Kshetra:** Kshetra means place where fertilization or implantation takes place, we can considered it as are productive tract which includes uterus, fallopian tubes, ovaries etc.
- iii). **Ambu:** Nourishment of women plays important role for the outcome healthy progeny.
- iv). **Beej:** Healthy sperm and ovum

## d) Regimen Followed to be Prior Conception

Both the partners firstly undergo Panchkarma therapy with Purvakarma Snehana Swedan then Vaman Virechan Asthapana and Anuvasan basti and rule out all risk factors.

Couple should observe celibacy (Brahmacharya) before attempting coitus

The position of couple during coitus also has a good role to play in attaining conception. The women should lie in supine position, so that all the Doshas remain in their normal locations and is also aids in proper conception of the Beeja.

## e) Role of Panchkarma in Preconception

A woman suffering from any of the Yoni Vyapad describe in Ayurvedic text should be used in proper sequence i.e., First Snehana, Swedana followed by Shodhana like Vamana, Virechana, UttaraBasti and adopting procedures like Aasthapana and Anuvasana Basti

- i). **Vaman Karma:** It involves inducing vomiting to expel

toxins (ama) and vitiated doshas (primarily Kapha and Pitta) from body through the upper channels. Imbalance in Kapha and Pitta can negatively affect hormonal levels and ovulation leading to Atarvakshay (e.g. PCOD) in females and Gati of Shukra dhatu (Asthenozoospermia-reduced sperm motility) which are important for healthy conception.

Thus, Vamana helps in Nirharna of Soumya substances and clears up the Srotas and further helps in regulation of menstruation, thereby, the goal of conception achieved<sup>[8]</sup>.

- ii). **Virechan Karma:** It involves inducing purgation to expel toxins and vitiated doshas acts mainly on impaired pitta dosha. Agni has its relationship with the pitta dosha, hence, once it is in its normal state then the ama dosh gets cleared from body this collectively leads to formation of prakruthi aahar rasa which is responsible for the formation of saptadhatu. (Rasa, Shukra). Mainly used in cases of like recurrent abortion in female and also Ksheen shukra (Oligozoospermia) in males.

According to Sushrutacharya, as in cases of Putraghni<sup>[9]</sup> where woman suffers from repeated abortion caused due to vitiated Pitta. Thus, Virechana will be helpful and the woman can conceive and continue her pregnancy without complications.

According to Charakacharya's reference, in cases of Yoni affected by vitiated Pitta should be treated with Pittahara Kriyas. Thus, Virechana done in vitiated Pitta Dushti affecting the Yoni helps in conception soon after the Shodhana<sup>[10]</sup>.

- iii). **Basti Karma:** Basti chikitsa is said as ardha chikitsa by charaka acharya<sup>[11]</sup>. As basti acts on vata dosha & vata dosha is responsible for every movement in the body. In relation to conception, there is huge role of aapan vayu for causing fertilization. As aapan vayu in prakruti state only can lead to menstruation in female and semen ejaculation in male, conception and childbirth.

The principle line of treatment in such cases are such which help in stabilizing Vata and one such best procedure used is Basti including Anuvasana and Asthapana Basti and as daily practice Matra Basti also proves to be beneficial. Basti completely removes the Vikriti Vata from Pakvashaya and followed by Shamana of other Vata Vikara<sup>[12]</sup>.

Examples of Basti used in pre-conceptional care-

- a) Musta Yapana Basti<sup>[13]</sup>.
- b) Madhutailika Basti (Shukrakrit Basti)<sup>[14]</sup>.
- c) Bala guduchyadi Taila Basti<sup>[15]</sup>.
- d) Shukra and Mamsapradha Basti<sup>[16]</sup>.
- e) Rasayan and Vajikarana Basti<sup>[17-18]</sup>.

- iv). **Uttarbasti:** Is an Ayurvedic procedure includes under Sthanik Chikitsa where medicated oil or decoction are administered into uterus through vagina in females and through penis in males, It is a cleansing and rejuvenating therapy aimed to restoring natural function of the reproductive system. Uttarbasti is given in woman who is having Basti rogas and Yoni Garbhashaya Gata Rogas<sup>[19]</sup>, in males suffering from infertility and erectile dysfunction.

In Ayurvedic practice, administration of medicines like- Phala Ghrita<sup>[20]</sup>, Shatavaryadi Ghrita<sup>[21]</sup>, Kalyanaka Ghrita<sup>[22]</sup> etc. Uttarbasti used as a Dravyas pre-conception helps in improving the quality of endometrial thickness and also facilitates implantation.

- v). **Nasya Karma:** The administration of certain drugs

through nostrils has been mentioned by Acharya Sushruta soon after the lady becomes pregnant for the purpose of Pumsavana Karma <sup>[23]</sup>. It is believed to play a role in addressing infertility by influencing the neuroendocrine system (hypothalamus-pituitary-ovarian axis), hormonal balance (anovulatory cycles) and stress reduction.

Examples of the Dravyas to be instilled nasally before conception are:

Lakshmana Moola, Vata Shruna, Sahadeva, Vishwadeva <sup>[24]</sup>.

Shweta Brihati, leaves of Utpala and Kumuda <sup>[25]</sup>.

Narayana Taila Nasya <sup>[26]</sup>.

Shatapushpa Taila Nasya <sup>[27]</sup>.

## Discussion

In Preconception care Panchkarma is not just a treatment or therapy, it is an investment in the future well-being of the child and the parents. It promotes healthy pregnancy and progeny by cleansing, balancing and rejuvenation. Panchakarma represents a unique approach of Ayurveda with specially designed five procedures of internal purification of the body through the nearest possible route, Vaman karma pacifies Kapha dosha and its Vikar, Virechan karma pacifies Pitta dosha and its Vikar and Basti karma pacifies Vat dosha and its vikar but according to Prakruti or couple suffering from complaints regarding infertility, Ayurveda physician takes decision to perform Panchkarma procedures for better result hence Panchakarma plays vital role in achieving healthy pregnancy and progeny.

## Conclusion

Ayurveda has rightly emphasized that health is not only the state of not having disease but, it is the state of normalcy of Dosha, Dhātu, Agni and Malakriya. It also includes the Prasanna Atma (soul), Indriya (sense organs) and Manas (mind) called as Swastha purush. Ayurveda provides principles and guidelines or diagnosis and treating the various women's as well as men's health conditions and diseases with the help of diet, life style modifications and mainly detoxification therapies like Panchkarma considering Dosha, Dhātu and Agni.

In conclusion, it can be said that each of the panchkarma therapies done prior to conception plays important role for getting healthy progeny.

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