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The Conceptual Study of Postpartum Depression According to Modern and Ayurvedic Point of View

Nitin Chandurkar^{1*} and Shweta Mali²

^{1,2}Department of Rachana Sharir, D.Y. Patil College of Ayurved and Research Centre, Pune, India

ABSTRACT

The experience of motherhood is most unique as well as challenging phase in life of every woman. For a woman, the birth of baby can boost a jumble of powerful emotions from happiness, excitement and exhilarating to sadness, fear and exhausting. During this phase of her journey, she is in need of proper care, support and guidance in order to cope-up with her new identity of motherhood. But due to fast changing life style of modern era and increase in isolated families, she is deprived of this necessary attention during her crucial postpartum time. So, in the absence of adequate rest, balanced nutrition and moral support sometimes, a mother can be harsh in a way that she has never dreamed off by developing signs and symptoms of postpartum depression. It can shatter her body, mind and spirit. In today's date, one out of every eight woman is prone to postpartum depression. The Ayurvedic science is holistic approach to physical and mental health care of mother and baby. The principles stated in the classics not only manage postpartum depression but also it does not allow a woman to land-up in this phase.

KEYWORDS

Postpartum depression, Garbhini parichary, Sutika paricharya (Antenatal- postnatal care)



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INTRODUCTION

According to National Institute of Health Science¹, postpartum syndrome tends to occur after the baby is delivered. Many of the postnatal mothers experience 'baby blues' also known as 'postnatal baby blues' which are often normal for first couple of weeks after the childbirth. It is at peak around first week and tapper off by the end of second week postpartum. The postpartum baby blues is not an illness but if, it does not disappear she may suffer from postpartum depression. In the present era, nearly 15% of women are suffering from postpartum depression. It can have serious health consequences for both mother and her child.

CAUSES

- Women with family history of depression.
- Research states that, drastic drop down in the progesterone, estrogen and thyroid hormonal levels after delivery.
- Withdrawal of antidepressant medications during pregnancy period.
- Stressful life events like still birth, miscarriage, difficult labour, neonatal complications, death in family.
- Biological and demographic factors.
- Researcher analyzed blood samples from 100 pregnant women and found that

those who had higher levels of placental corticotrophin releasing hormone midway through pregnancy are more likely to develop postpartum depression.

- Social issues.

SOCIAL ISSUES

LOW STANDARD	HIGH STANDARD
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Dowry	Concern regarding external appearance
Poverty	Career issues
Low education	Life styles
Sex conception (desire for male child)	Late marriage and
Early marriage and conception	

SYMPTOMS

1. Crying
2. Confused
3. Guilty
4. Emptiness
5. Irritability
6. Hopelessness
7. Overwhelmed
8. Numbness
9. Low self esteem
10. Lack of concentration
11. Social withdrawal
12. Isolated



13. Frustration
14. Appetite problems
15. Sleep deprivation
16. Don't feel bounded to baby

According to American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders divides psychiatric postpartum experiences into 3 categories¹:

1. Postnatal baby blues
2. Postpartum depression
3. Postpartum psychosis

According to Ayurvedic point of view^{2,3}

- रस क्षय

रसे रौक्ष्यं श्रमः शोषो ग्लानि शब्द असहिष्णुता ॥ वा. सू.

११/१६

- रक्त क्षय

रक्ते अम्ल शिशिरः प्रीतिः सिरा शैथिल्य रूक्षता ॥ वा. सू.

११/१७

- रसवह स्रोतस दुष्टी

गुरूशीतमतिस्निग्धमतिमात्रं समश्नताम् ।

रसहिनि दुष्यन्ति चिन्त्यानां चातिचिन्तनात् ॥ च.वि.

५/१३

- वातवृद्धी

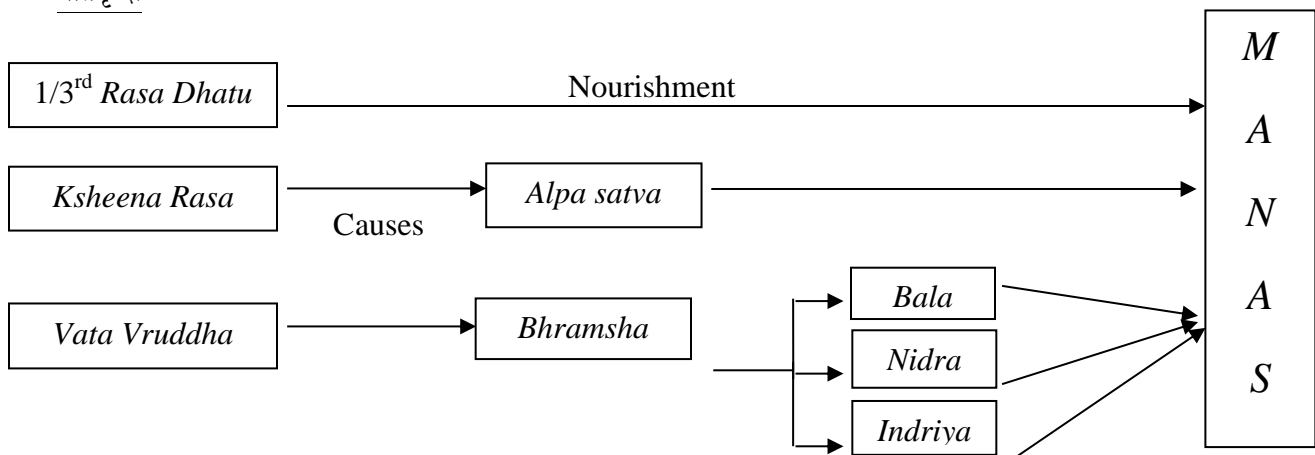
काश्यं काण्यं उष्ण कामित्वं कंप आनाह शकृद् ग्रहान्।

बलनिद्रेन्द्रियभ्रंश प्रलाप भ्रम दीनताः ॥ वा. सू.

११/६

As per *Chandogyopanishad*, one third of *rasa dhatu* nourishes the *Manas*. There is *rasa kshaya* in *sootika* due to nine months *garbhiniavastha*. *Ksheena rasa* can't nourish *mana* properly which leads to *alpasatvata* thus increase of *rajasikata* and *tamasikatas* in *Manas*. The *vrudha vata* disturbs *manasikadoshas* and produces symptoms like *bhramsha* of *Bala* (*shareerik and manasik*), *bhramsha* of *indriyas*, *pralap*, *bhrama* and *deenata*.

Thus, signs and symptoms present in postpartum depression can be entirely co-related with *rasa* and *rakta kysa* and *vata vrudhi* mentioned by *Ayurveda* which are predominantly seen in *sutika avastha*. In order to avoid these complications, the *Acharyas* have already mentioned about the precautions (*garbhini* and *sutika paricharya*) to be taken by women in details.





गर्भिणी परिचर्या^{१४} :

प्रथम मास -	
क्षीरमनुपसंस्कृतं ।	
सात्म्यमेव च भोजनं सायं प्रातश्च भुञ्जीत ।	
द्वितीय मास -	क्षीरमेव
मधुरौषधसिद्धम् ।	
तृतीय मास -	क्षीरं
मधुसर्पि ।	
चतुर्थ मास -	क्षीरं
नवनीतम् ।	
पंचम मास -	
क्षीरसर्पिः ।	
षष्ठ मास -	
क्षीरसर्पिः मधुरौषधसिद्धम् ।	
सप्तम मास -	
क्षीरसर्पिः मधुरौषधसिद्धम् ।	
अष्टम मास -	
क्षीरयवागूवागू सर्पि ।	
नवम मास -	क्षीर
यवागूवागू सर्पि ।	

सूतिका परिचर्या^{१४} :

	आश्वासन
	↓
	सर्वांग स्नेहन व
	↓
स्वेदन	
	↓
	पट्टबंध
	↓
(पीडयेदघट्टमुदरं गर्भदोष प्रवृत्तये)	का. सूति ११/१९
	↓
	रक्षोघ्न द्रव्याने
	↓
योनीधूपन	
	↓
	उष्ण जलाने
	↓
स्नान	
	↓
	अग्निवर्धक, धातु
	↓
वर्धक, वातघ्न युक्त आहार विहार	
	↓
	औषध
	↓
(गर्भाशय शोधक - दशमुळ, पंचकोलचूर्ण	
	↓
कोष्ठशोधक - एरण्डस्नेह, शुष्ठी क्वाथ	

COMPLICATIONS

Untreated postpartum depression can interfere with mother child bonding and cause family problems. Children of mothers who have untreated postpartum depression are more likely to have behavioral problems



such as sleeping and eating difficulties, temper tantrums, hyperactivity, and delay in language development.

CONCLUSION

If the women follow the principles that are stated in our *samhitas* right from planned *garbhadharana*, *garbhini* and *sutika paricharya* then she will not experience the above mentioned symptoms on a severe level. This is achieved by regulating diet, mode of life style and undergoing special procedures along with medications mentioned under concept of *garbhadharna*, *garbhini* and *sutika paricharya*.

Thus, this conceptual study is to understand how holistic approach of *Ayurveda* helps in prevention and management of postpartum depression.



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