



IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH IN PREGNANCY-AN AYURVEDIC VIEW

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ABSTRACT

There are so many factors influence the mental state of the pregnant lady and that will in turn affect the foetus. A pleasant and happy mood is conducive to the health of the foetus whereas unhappiness, worry and other emotions like anger and anxiety of the pregnant lady will affect the foetus badly. It is said that depression and anxiety will be transferred to the foetus and will later hamper the mental health of the child. The maternal circumstances and a well planned regimen with dietetic follow ups along with developing a specific mental force i.e. Desire and temperamental disposition of mother gives desired effects on the coming child in respect of its constitution, colour, sex and to some extent its psychological trends. These all-physiological bases for prenatal child development should be studied in detail with its modern psychological views.

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INTRODUCTION

"A sound mind in a sound body" points out the importance of mental wellbeing in health. "*Manasareerayo: thapa: parasparamabhivrajat aadharaadheya bhavena taptajyo ghatayoriva*" (A.H). Definitely, Psychological factors have an inevitable role in the health of mother to deliver a healthy baby

Ayurvedic aspects of child development: For convenience, the development of a child can be studied under two broad headings.

Prenatal aspects of development 2. Postnatal aspects of development

Pre conceptional preparation: Anatomically, physiologically and psychologically, women are designed to conceive, develop and deliver a healthy child. For this marriage & conception should be at proper age. In our Classics, "*Poornashodasa varsha stree, poornavimsena sangatha...*" (A.H). *Garbha* is the union of *Shadbhavas*.

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Mental status during cohabitation: Relation should be harmonious, respectable & should love each other. "*Santhayitva tatanyonyam samvisetam mudanvitho..*"(A.H). Role of mantra recitation plays an important role.

Prenatal aspects of development: The factors which act as determinants of human organism and are related with the person before the birth of child can be categorised as prenatal determinants. It includes a) *Atmaja bhavas*, b) *Purva janma krita karmas*, c) *Satvaja bhavas*, d) *Pancha maha bhutatmaka bhavas*, e) hereditary factors, f) non-hereditary maternal factors, g) *Rasaja bhavas*

Atmaja bhavas: The process of transmigration of soul from one body to another or association of *Atma* at the time of conception of embryo have been clearly described in Ayurveda. This shows that Ayurvedists were very well convinced of the concept of *Atma* in embryological and anatomical viewpoints.

Purva janma krita karmas: The process of transmigration of soul from one body to another is regulated in accordance with the *Purva janma krita karmas*. While describing the causes of resemblance of child to the parents, Caraka mentions that the foetus is derived from four sources viz., *Mata*, *Pita*, *Ahara* of mother and one's own past actions and whichever source is more powerful is to be regarded as the determining factor of

resemblance while the past actions are alone responsible for the nature of *Satva* of the foetus.

Satva as the linking and integration force: *Satva* (psychic factor) has been regarded as one of the determinants of human personality and development. A great stress has been laid on this factor by Ayurveda. According to Caraka, *Satva* or the psyche factor is considered has a link between the integration and assemblage of various procreative factors. Mind is very important factor in the process of transmigration of soul from one body to another. It is an instrument for the fulfilment of all cognitive functions. According to Ayurveda, it is the main linking force in development of an organism or it is associated with human organism just from the very beginning of embryonic life.

According to Caraka, in the third month of foetal life, all the sense organs and all the limbs emerge together, then *only Satva* will begins to function. So, with the emergence of *Indriyas*, *Manas* of the foetus begins to feel the *Vedana* (sensation of *Sukha* and *Dukha*) and yearn for things experienced in previous life. This phenomenon is called *Dauhrda*. A great importance has been given to this phenomenon. These inclinations of the foetus are transferred to the *hrudaya* of mother and these appear in the form of cravings of mother during pregnancy. The physiological explanation of this phenomenon was given by Caraka. According to him, the *hrudaya* of the mother through nourishing channel and incidentally the inclinations are conveyed from the foetus to the mother during the period of pregnancy. A slight negligence on this part or non-fulfilment of mother's *douhrda* cravings may result in some of severe repercussions in the development of foetal life. It is therefore advised that the cravings of mother during *douhrda* period should be fulfilled at any cost to give birth to a child of strong constitution and long life.

Craving in mother	Effect on foetus
Seeing the king	Lucky and rich person
Wearing silk or woollen cloths or ornaments	Child develops a liking for ornaments or enjoyments
Seeing idols of Gods	Child with good character
Visiting hermitage of saints	Religious and having control on his sense organs (Dharmatma)
Seeing cruel animals like tigers	Indulging in violence

If these cravings remain unfulfilled, a woman will give birth to a child who would be possessed by so many physical deformities like lameness, defective vision, blindness or mental deficiency. Susruta gives an indication of some of the future traits of the personality of coming child. These *douhrda* cravings of mother have been linked by Susruta with the *Purvakarman*. It is very strange for modern embryologists and physiologists to think about a state of *Douhrda* as they have materialistic approach on facts. But it is a recognised thing that the whole organism remains in the stage of strain during pregnancy and even a slight cause is sufficient to move it in the direction of abnormality in psychic aspects. So, the mental condition and the surroundings of pregnant women are of great importance. The mental peace and pleasant diversion of pregnant woman may likewise act favourably on the child. In brief, it can be said that according to Ayurveda, the *Satva* is the linking for integration of all the determinants of human organism and it carries its influence from the pre-embryonic stage to the foetus and plays a definite role in the embryonic stage of life. All these together influence the behaviour of human organism to a great extent.

Satva Vaisesyakara Bhavas (Deterministic factors for the development of psyche of a child as an individual)

These are the factors or the determinants responsible for the variation in *Satva* or psyche. Hence are called as *Satva Vaiseshyakara Bhavas* by Caraka. *Satva* of the fetus is derived from, "*Satvavisesakarani bhavani matapitru satvani, antarvatnya: srutecha abheesnam sochitam karma:*" (Ch.S)

According to Caraka, the following factors determine the different psychological endowment of children and individuals.

- *Matru and Pitru satva*
- *Sravanadi* and *Patanadi* of mother (What the mother reads, thinks, hears etc., behaviour of the mother during the pregnancy period)
- *Purva janma krita karma*
- *Abhyasa* (Practice resulting into habits)
- *Matru and Pitru Satva*

It is generally recognised by genetics of today that mother and the father are the important factors in the determination of human personality by means of heredity. Ayurvedists have called this factor as *Garbhotpatti bhavas*. It is a very revolutionising concept of Ayurvedists that *Satva* (psyche) of mother plays a significant role in development of child as human organism. It means that according to Ayurveda, psychological traits of a person are to some extent the outline of mental dispositions of mother and father. As the exact nature of the mechanism is difficult to explain, it is answered by Cakrapani- 'this happens by the phenomenon of *Prabhava*'-that is beyond the compass of scientific explanation.

The untiring efforts of modern genetics have now proven that some of the psychological traits are also sealed in genes and hereditary factors are also responsible for the psychological development of the organism. It is in essence similar with Ayurvedic view. It remains even now as challenge to the modern scientists to find out how the temperamental traits of the parents are passed onto the offspring. Ayurvedists are convinced better that the *Satva* (psychic factor) of the mother and father exerts a positive influence on the psychological temperament of the child, which may be due to *Prabhava*.

Sravanadi and Patanadi of mother: Not only the *Satva* of the parents influences the temperamental course of the child, but also the behaviour of the mother at the times of pregnancy, has got its own deterministic influence on the psychological development of child. According to Caraka what a mother thinks, hears or reads, all the behaviour of her is going to make up the child psychology. There are so many references in Ayurveda which indicate that the behaviour of the mother and her state of mind during pregnancy period or at the time of conception play their effects on psychological constitution of the child. Susruta goes a step further when he says that foetus is affected with the inspiration and expiration of breath, emotional upsets and dreams of the mother. How these minute sensory experiences of the mother are conveyed to the foetus is a mystery which is still unexplainable. The mother being affected with hormonal variation might affect the psyche of the foetus or there may be some psychosomatic processes which have not yet been discovered by the scientists with their mechanical approach. But Ayurvedists have confidently told

that the behaviour does exist its influence on the makeup of child psychology.

Purva janma krita Karmas: In the developmental aspects of human organism and personality, *Purvajanma krita karmas* play a very good role. According to Caraka, *Satva* (psychic factor) is a linking factor and its departure from the organism along with the soul leaves it to be without life. The *Satva* is of three types-*Satvika, Rajasa and Thamasa* and whatever dominant type mind in this life, one gets linked to the same type in the next birth. It means that the dominant type of *Satva* of one life is going to affect the next life in respect of temperament of mind. For instance, when a person is possessed of *Suddha (Satvika) satva* in the previous existence, he can recall the past incarnation as well and it is in this context that a man is called to be *Jatismara*. Here also it is better to consider *Purvajanma krita karma* as pre-embryonic stage of life.

Abhyasa: This means the specific mental practices. The habit is an outcome of man's repeated practices which ultimately become a part of the human behaviour. Caraka calls it as the *Satva Vishesha Abhyasa*. Cakrapani interprets it as the practices followed by *Satva* (psyche factor) in its previous life. Susruta also has same view on this respect. It is a clear fact that the temperamental practices of present day today life play a very deterministic role in the making of the psychological emotional temperament of a human being. So, this is also important in the concept of Ayurveda on the subject of determinants of development of human psyche and psychological aspect of behaviour of child. Various factors derived from *Satva bhava* are *Soucham, Asthikyam, Bakthi, Seela* etc

Pancha mahabhutatmaka bhavas: Caraka admits that *Bhutas* exert their influence in the making of *Sukra, Raja and Rasa*. The *Mahabhutas* play basic role in the constitution of *Sukra* and *Sonita* of father and mother and are the basic constituents of nourishing material.

Hereditary factors: Heredity is the main deterministic factor in development and it can be considered in prenatal factors. It refers to the transmission of physical and mental characteristics from parents to offspring. *Matruja* and *Pitruja bhavas* are involved in this.

Non hereditary maternal factors: They are *Garbhasaya, Ritukala, Ahara-Vihara-Satva* of mother, other methods for the birth of the child according to one's own wishes like *Pumsavana, Putreshti yajna* etc.

Role in conception: "*Soumanasyam garbhakaranam*" (Ch.S), *soumanasya – sreshtabhava*
Essentials are *Sudha garbhasaya, margam, rakta, sukla, anila, hridi*

Postnatal aspects of development: Childhood is considered as the foundation period for all round growth and development of physical and psychic levels of the individual. Factors playing important role in the later physical, cognitive, motor, linguistic, perceptual and all the other factors influencing growth and development are included under post-natal determinants.

Some personal, environmental and socio-cultural factors in general play have great role in post-natal child development. These are postnatal determinants.

DISCUSSION

Diet, behaviour, mode of life of couple all these influences the character of born child. Antenatal care is preventive & promotive care. The patient needs more emotional support during these days. The ultimate aim of antenatal care is to ensure delivery of a healthy baby from a healthy mother. The physician should assess attitude of the patient towards pregnancy. He should give proper advices to the mother and family members. 3% of threatened abortions are due to psychological factors.

A pregnant lady should avoid emotions like *Soka, Krodha, Bhaya, Udvega* and whatever things she dislikes to prevent *Garbha srava, Garbha sosha and Mrta garbha*. "*Upachara: priyahitai bharta bharityicha garbhadrhrik*", "*Mano anukoolabhi: upasetha*" (A.H) Carakacharya also agrees with the same quoting *Anukoolopacharena yaati dvistarhaja shamam*. Everyone should have tender loving care to pregnant lady. Even if the pregnant lady wants a particular thing which is not suitable during her pregnancy time, that particular thing should be given to her in small quantity. "*Deyamapyahitam tasyi hitopahitamalpam*" (A.H). Symptoms like hyperemesis gravidarum reduces by changing the unfavourable atmosphere

Advice on visit

- Education about physiology of pregnancy and labour will result in increase in pain threshold, improves confidence, support at the time of labour
- Allow to mingle with relatives and familiar persons.
- Only on second stage, ½ hr needed for delivery then only Shift to labour coat. "*Harshayetham muhur putrajanmasabdajala anilai.*" (A.H)

Inspiration makes them strong & happy making the delivery smoother.

CONCLUSION

A child should be born and brought up in an unimpaired circumstance. The social, biological, economical, mental, physical and cultural factors should be made satisfactory by his care takers. Then only he will be competent enough to fit into family and society. A child after proper care will show all positive features of healthy kid. According to Acharya Kasyapa, properly cherished kid shows happiness, proper sleep, digestive power and stability. If brought up with considering all the aspects of development, in the future life also will show *Lakshanas* of *Sampoorna Arogya* by body and mind. i.e, procures *Roopavanta, Satvavanta, Chirayusha Satputra*. So an infant is advised the brought up from childhood to adolescence in accordance with the Ayurvedic principles so that he becomes capable of attaining *Purusharthas*. So complete and through knowledge on developmental psychology of child from its Ayurvedic view becomes important.

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