



Review Article

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SUTIKA PARICHARYA AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN MODERN ERA IN SAFE MOTHERHOOD

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ABSTRACT

Mortality and morbidity of mother are most challenging problems of our country. In our day to day life, we see many mothers complaining of increase in their physical problems like back-ache, anemia, joint pains and many other infections after puerperium. Frequent post-partum morbidity and its association with adverse perinatal outcome suggest the need for post-partum care in developing countries for both mother and baby. Lady after delivery of placenta is called as *Sutika* (puerperal woman). *Sutikakala* (duration of puerperium) is the period following childbirth during which all body tissues revert back approximately to a pre-pregnant state. Duration of this period varies according to different Ayurvedic classics. It is well known that certain psycho-somatic changes take place during *Sutikakala* such as loss of weight, loss of body fluid, lacerated genital tract, constipation, mental stress etc. Most of these changes lead to *ati-aptarparpana* (emaciation) of mother during *Sutikakala*. This status causes *Vata-vridhhi* which is responsible for different types of health problems such as puerperal sepsis, *Stanyadushti* (vitiated breast milk), anaemia, prolapse of uterus etc. According to Kashyapa Samhita, treatment of *Sutika* is as difficult as cleaning of unclean, tattered and old cloth. In olden days, ladies used to follow strict guidelines during early postpartum days i.e. in *Sutikakala*, which helped them for early recovery from stress and strain caused during delivery. It also improves the quality and quantity of breast milk and it also avoids various neonatal infections. Mothers who breast feed their babies are at low risk for breast cancer. In modern era due to changing lifestyle and *Mithya aahaar-vihaar* (abnormal dietetics and mode of Life), pregnant lady is usually prone to *Vataprakopa*. Many modern *Sutika* feel ancient guidelines during early puerperal days as age old and time consuming to follow. Hence, guided *Sutika paricharya* with logical use of classical referenced medicine would be the proper solution to avoid psycho-somatic disorders in order to promote early recovery of mother.

KEYWORDS: *Sutika Paricharya, puerperium, post partum care, Sutika, Sutikakala.*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the only science which teaches us equal knowledge of medicines to cure disease and rules & regulations to maintain health in whole life span. Obviously it is designed to strengthen generation providing good health and we all know that health is the only need in achieving *Dharma, Artha, Kaama & Moksha* in life. *Roga* (disease) is the enemy to a person which depletes the lifespan along with his prosperity^[1]. The health of nation mainly depends upon the health of woman because, *Stree* (woman) is that creature of the nature in which the fetus develops. Motherhood is a unique and exciting moment in every woman's life. Lady after delivery of baby followed by expulsion of placenta is termed as *Sutika*^[2]. *Sutika* suffers from physical and mental fatigue, and becomes weak or emaciated after loss of

blood and body fluid during delivery. In *Sutika kala*^[3] certain psycho-somatic changes take place which lead to *Ati-aptarparpana* (emaciated) of mother. This status causes *Vata-vridhhi* which is responsible for different types of health problems. According to Kashyapa samhita, treatment of *Sutika* is as difficult as cleaning of unclean, tattered and old cloth^[4]. In modern era due to changing lifestyle and *Mithya Aahaar-vihar, sutika* is prone for *Vata prakopa*. So lady after a difficult process of *Prasava* (labour) must be advised certain mode of life called *Sutika paricharya*.

Sutika needs relaxation and rejuvenation to the normal. By *Sutika paricharya* a stage of physical, mental and physiological wellbeing is re-stabilized. The basic aim of *Sutika paricharya* is *Garbhashaya shuddhi, Dhatu-paripurnata, Stanyavridhhi,*

Punarnaveekarana. In almost all *Samhitas*, the *Acharyas* have mentioned the specific management of *Sutika* only after the expulsion of placenta.

Definition of *Sutika*^[2] -The woman who has just delivered baby followed by expulsion of placenta is called as *Sutika* (puerperal woman).

Sutika Kala^[3] (**puerperal period**)- According to Ayurvedic classics, duration of *Sutika Kala* is one and half month after delivery of baby followed by expulsion of placenta.

Acharya Charaka has not given any specific duration as well as specific regimen for the management of *Sutika*^[5]. Sushruta and Vagbhata, explained the time period for *Sutika kala* as 1 ½ month or until she gets her first menstrual cycle after labour and in case of *Mudha-garbha* (obstructed *Sutika kala* according to *Acharyas*

labour), four months time period can be considered as *Sutika kala* ^[6,7]. Kashyapa has mentioned the *Sutika kala* as six months as all the *Dhatus* will resume to their original (i.e. pre-pregnant) state by this time and after considering these factors the treatment plan should be applied^[8]. Bhavaprakasha and Yogaratnakara have mentioned *Sutika kala* either after 1 ½ months or after restoration of menstrual cycle and after that she can be free from diet regimen. In case of complicated labour only after subsidence of complications and aggravated *Doshas* she should be free from regimen ^[9,10]. During this period she should start her normal diet slowly in 10-12 days, the diet and drugs mentioned by Ayurvedic *Acharyas* help the women to restore her vitality and vigor that was lost during the process of delivery.

Authors	Name of Samhitas	Reference	Sutika Kala (Time period)
Charaka ^[5]	Charaka Samhita	Cha.S.Sha. 8/48	No specific duration and regimen
Sushruta ^[6]	Sushruta Samhita	Su.S. Sha.10/16	One and half month i.e. 45 days
Vagbhata-1 ^[7]	Ashtanga Sangraha	A.S.Sha.3/40,43 A.S.Sha.4/50	One and half month i.e. 45 days or until she gets her first menstrual cycle after labour and in case of <i>Mudha-garbha</i> , four months time
Vagbhata-2 ^[7]	Ashtanga Hridaya	A.Hr.Sha. 1/100, 101	Same as above (following Sushruta and Vagbhata-1)
Kashyapa ^[8]	Kashyapa Samhita	Ka. S. Khila. 11/52, 53	six months as all the <i>Dhatus</i> will resume to their original (i.e. pre-pregnant) state by this time
BhavaMisra	Bhava Prakash ^[9]	B.P.I. 4/5,6; B.P.Chi. 70/166	One and half month i.e. 45 days or until she gets her first menstrual cycle
Brahma Shankar Shashtri	Yogaratanakara ^[10]	Yog. R.Stree Roga Chikitsa.	either after 1 ½ months or after restoration of menstrual cycle

Brief Review of Puerperium

Definition: The Puerperium is the period of time encompassing the few weeks following birth. The duration of this "Period" is understandably inexact, and is considered by most to be between 4 and 6 weeks ^[11].

Puerperium or the postpartum period lasts from delivery of the placenta until six weeks after delivery. During this period genital organs regain their preconception position anatomically as well as physiologically^[12]. This period can be divided, for the purpose of proper management, into an - Immediate puerperium (includes the first 24 hours after delivery), Early Puerperium (includes first week after delivery), Remote Puerperium (from second week to six weeks post-delivery)

Implications of *Sutika Kala*: ^[13]

- 45 Days is a well accepted period of *Sutikavastha* in normal uncomplicated delivery.

- One of the criteria being *Artava darshana* (reappearance of menstrual cycle after delivery of baby).
- *Pathya* based on *Ahara* and *Vihara*.
- Four months duration is necessary for in cases of *Prasuti vyapad* and for *Dohsas* to return to normal state.
- Four months of *Sutikavastha* is also considered after delivery of *Mudha garbha*.

Factors Responsible for Re-appearance of Menstruation after Delivery

The woman become emaciated and have *Shunyata* of *Shareera* ^[14]

- *Garbha vridhhi* i.e., Development of fetus,
- *Shithila sarva sharira dhatu* i.e., body becomes empty and all the *Dhatus* decrease hence *Sutika* becomes weak,

- *Pravahana vedana* i.e. due to labour pains,
- *Kledan-rakta-nisruti* i.e. due to excretion of moisture and blood at the time of delivery.

By following *Sutika paricharya* she regains her lost things and reaches her pre-pregnant^[15] state. *Sutika paricharya* is quite beneficial to regain her strength as she experiences tiredness and *Shunyata* of *Shareera* (emptiness in body) following delivery.

Changes in Genital Organs are-(1) Involution of Uterus; (2) Involution of cervix, vagina, and ligaments; and (3) *Lochia* (discharge from uterus after childbirth). Involution is a process by which the genital organs revert back approximately to the state as before pregnancy.

Management-Ahara, Vihara (diet and life style)

Samanya Sutika Paricharya:- (Mode of Diet & Life)
[16]

- **Abhyanga** - Massage with *Ksheera bala taila* and *Swedana* (cloth dipped in hot water and wrapped on the abdomen) this wrapping procedure helps in compression of abdomen & to reduce the extra space in the stomach. Hence *Abhyanga* is *Vatashamaka chikitsa*.
- **Prasuta snana**- Hot water bath in morning & evening (hot water shower bath is very helpful according to Dalhana). After bath only, she should take meals i.e. *Ghritha* or milk with rice.
- **Sudation of Yoni**- According to *Kashyapa* puerperal woman should always sit in small chair covered with leather-bag filled with hot *Bala taila*. With this her *yonis* (uterus, vagina, vulva) becomes healthy. Sudation in the *yonis* should be given. After proper sudation, hot water bath followed by rest should be given thus becoming free from tiredness.
- **Udara abhyanga** -Up to one month *Udara abhyanga* with *Ghritha* or *Bala taila*, cloth *Sweda*, hot water bath is necessary.
- She should avoid exercise, anger and coitus.

Regimen Of Sutika

- **According to Charaka** (in Cha. S. Sha.8/48) [5] - *Snehapaana* (i.e., oral intake of oil or fat); *Abhyanga* (i.e. massage with *Taila* or *ghRita*); *UdaraVeshthana* (i.e. tightening of abdomen); *Parishechana* (i.e. pouring Warm water).
- **According to Sushruta** (in Su. S. Sha.10/18-22) - *Abhyanga* with *Bala taila*; *Paana/ Parishechana* with *Vatahara aushadhisiddha kwatha*; *Dushta Shonita Shuddhi* (Purification of blood) by *Pippali*, *Pippalimoola*, *Hastipippali*, *Chitraka*, *Shringavera churna* with *Ushna gudodak*; *Sutika* should avoid *Krodha* (anger), *Aayaasa* (labour), and *Maituna* (Coitus).

➤ **According to Vagbhata-1** (in A.S.Sha.3/38) - *Abhyanga* with *Bala taila*; *Snehapaana*; *UdaraVeshthana* after *Abhyanga* with *Taila / ghritha*; *Parishechana* with *Ushnodaka* (warm water) before *Snehapaana* and *Yavaagupaana* in morning and evening. Thus *Sutika* is treated by *Abhyanga*, *Uddhvartana* (dry powder massage on body), *Parisheka*, *Avagahana* (Sudation therapy) by *Madhura*, *Jeevaneeya*, *Brimhaniya*, *Vatahara dravyas*.

➤ **According to Vagbhata-2** (in A.Hr.Sha.1/91) - *Mardana* (massage) of *Yoni* (Vagina) and *Anga* (body) with *Taila* (oil); *Snehapaana*; *DushtaShonita Shuddhi*; *UdaraVeshthana*; *Abhyanga*, *Uddhvartana* (dry powder massage on body), *Parisheka*, *Avagahana* (Sudation therapy) by *Madhura*, *Jeevaneeya*, *Brimhaniya*, *Vatahara dravyas*.

➤ **According to Kashyapa Samhita (in Ka. S. Khila. 10,11)**-*Ashwashana* (i.e., Psychological Reassurance); *Samvaahana* (i.e., gentle massage); *Udaramardana* (i.e., abdominal massage); *UdaraVeshthana*; *Yoni snehana* (i.e., oiling of vagina); *Yoni swedana* (i.e., vaginal sudation); *Snana* (i.e., bath); *Dhoopana* (i.e., Fumigation of *yonis*) with *Kushtha* (*Saussurea lappa*), *Agaru* (*Aquilaria agallocha*), and *Guggulu* (*Commiphora mukul*) mixed with *Ghritha*. Vaginal sudation can be done by allowing *Sutika* to sit over a small chair covered with a bag of leather filled with hot *Bala taila*. Tying an amulet of *Trivrit* (*Operculina turpetham*) over the head of *Sutika*.

➤ **According to Harita Samhita** (in H.S.III. 53:1, 5) - *Rakta & Yoni shodhana*, *DushtaShonita Shuddhi*; *Yoni abhyanga*; *Yoni swedana*.

➤ **According to Bhava Prakasha Samhita in B.P.I. 4:2,4** - *Nitya swedana* i.e. sudation done daily; *Abhyanga*; Use of congenial unctuous, light diet; Avoid exercise, coitus anger, cold air up to one month.

➤ **According to Yoga Ratnakara** (in Y.R. *Sutikaroga*.)- *Yoni-pindana* is advised. *Yoni-pindana* is the pressure application on vagina to avoid the entry of air. *Nitya swedana*, *Abhyanga* also beneficial.

Diet of Sutika

Considering the strength of digestive fire of *Sutika*, scum of boiled rice should be given for 3 or 5 days¹⁷ then 6th or 7th day salt free gruel mixed with little quantity of oil and *Ghritha*, *Sneha dravya* with *Pippali* (*Piper longum*) and *Nagara* (*Cyperu rotundus*) should be given. Then on 9th day use of rice gruel mixed with sufficient quantity of salt, *Sneha dravya* (oil and *Ghritha*), the meat soup of wild animals, should be taken, then soup of *Kulattha* (*Dolichos*

biflorus Linn.) mixed with *Sneha dravya* salt and sour substances, also *Kushmanda* (*Benincasa hispida*), radish, cucumber etc. vegetable fried in *Ghrita* should be used.

According to Kashyapa, Oil should be given to drink if woman delivers a male child and if she delivers a female child then, *ghrita* should be given to her orally^[18]. After digestion of this fat, rice gruel prepared with appetiser should be given for 5 or 7 days then scum of boiled rice etc should be given to her in gradual manner.

General Principles of Treatment for Puerperal disorders^[19]

- Avoidance of aetiological factors is the best medicine.
- *Sutika* should be treated with massage, anointment, irrigation, & *Ghrita*, oil, decoction, prepared with *Bhuthika*, *Jivaniya*, *Brumhniya*, *Madhura*, *Vatahara* drugs along with specific dietetics.
- Woman who is diseased due to difficult labour should be given *Snehana* & *Swedana* which suppresses the *Vayu*. The *Sutika* should take rice-gruel treated with appetizing drug. With this she becomes healthy and sleeps well.

Sutika Paricharya- Do's and Don'ts:

- The puerperal woman should tie amulet of *Trivrit* over the head^[20].
- General care i.e. by proper mode of life and diet^[21].
- Effect of *Asthapanabasti* on puerperal woman is increase of *Ama dosha*^[22].
- Effect of *Nasya* or Sternutatory drugs is Emaciation, Anorexia, Bodyache etc^[23].
- Benefits of *Sutika Paricharya* are she attains all the lost things and reaches her Pre-Pregnancy stage^[24].

Benefits of steps followed in *Sutika Paricharya*

Abhayanga- It includes pressure points, they correspond remarkably with the anatomical position of lymph nodes. This technique is pointed towards increasing lymph flow in the skin as well as lymph movement in the larger lymphatic vessels and lymph nodes in the body. Lymph contains great number of lymphocytes which are responsible for maintaining the body's circulatory immunological resistance.

- Massage reduces edema and swelling.
- Lymphatic massage relieves sore muscles.
- Strengthens lungs, intestine and vital organs for proper functioning.
- Aids body in using fat deposition.

- Improve skin, soothes nerves and pulse to function properly.

Thus by *Sutika Paricharya* Concept of *Dhatu paripurnata* (regaining her strength), *Stanya utpatti* (production of breast milk), *Stanya sampat* (fullness of breast), *Garbhashaya shuddhi*, prevention of complications, and *Punarnaveekaran* (rejuvenation) is attained.

DISCUSSION

Mode of Action of Drugs and Steps in *Sutika paricharya*

1. Hot fomentation of *yonis* relieves pain and inflammation of vaginal tear during labour or due to episiotomy and is useful in rapid healing.
2. *Abhyanga* increases blood flow of local area through vasodilation. By this leucocytes and macrophages reach the damaged tissue in more quantity and enhances the wound healing.
3. Inflammation is reduced by vasodilation pressure of intravascular compartment decreases and fluid from extra vascular compartment moves by pressure gradient to intravascular compartment and it flows out of the area by blood stream.
4. By reducing inflammation, tension on the nerve endings diminishes and pain subsides.
5. By hot water bath, hygiene is maintained. It is necessary during *Sutika kala* to prevent infection of trauma of female genital organs and infection to newborn child.
6. Fumigation with the drugs like *Kustha*, *Guggulu* and *Aguru* mixed with *Ghrita* produces strong antiseptic and disinfectant properties.
7. Decoctions of *Laghupanchamoola* drugs have digestive, diuretic, anti inflammatory and antiseptic properties. It helps in toning of bladder during puerperal period and also for diuresis of accumulated fluid in the body during pregnancy.
8. *Panchakola churna* (*Pippali*, *Pippalimoola*, *Chavya*, *Chitraka*, *Shunthi*) with *Ghrita* or jaggary have antipyretic, appetizer, uterotonic, antibacterial, antifungal, and act as analgesic effect. *Ghrita* being *Yogvahi* enhances the properties of *Panchakola* by balancing its *Ruksha* and *Tikshana* and milk acts properties.
9. Rice gruel prepared with *Vidaryadi gana* as *Rasayana*, and helps to recover from *Sutika kala*.
10. Liquid diet like *yavagu* is easy for digestion and assimilation, quenches thirst, diuretic helpful in puerperium.
11. Meat soup of wild animals besides decoction of *Jivaniya*, *Brimhaniya* and *Madhura* drugs is an excellent source of iron, vitamins, essential amino acids and trace elements. *Madhura*, *Brimhaniya* drugs are anabolic and helpful to recover maternal system from stress and strain of labour

and help in galactogenesis and enhance the property of *Stanya*.

Changes occurring in *Garbhavastha*, *Prasavavastha*, the moving *Doshas*, *Kleda*, *Rakta nisruti*, *Dhatu kshyata* and *shunyata* of body after *Sukha prasava*, makes *sutika* weak and prone to *Vata* vitiated diseases. The delicateness of her body makes the necessity of particular mode of life in order to attain her health and rejuvenate her body. The *Sutika kala* or duration mentioned for the entire above said dietetic regimen is *Adhyardha-masa* (i.e. one and half month or 45days), it is minimum needed period where the lady must follow particular mode of life. By *Sutika paricharya*, *Sutika* becomes *Swastha* by attaining *Samadosha*, *Samaagni*, *Samadhatu malakriya*. Thus, it helps in the proper formation of the tissues, increasing digestive power, proper excretion of waste materials like *Mala*, *Mutra*, *Dushta rakta* (stool, urine, and vitiated blood).

CONCLUSION

Sutika paricharya restores the overall health of the *Sutika* and improves the quality of the progeny too. Nowadays, many complications arise in the condition of puerperal and are due to the imbalance in the mental status and improper knowledge regarding nutrition. These conditions effect on the overall health of lady. Most of the medicines preferred for *Sutika paricharya* have anti-oxidant property, prevent many diseases like hypertension, CNS (Central Nervous System) disorders, cancers, menstrual abnormalities, gastric disorders, etc. Management if implemented with all procedures as explained in Samhitas yield 100% success and if administered as individual therapy ignoring all other procedures is unscientific, as it is *Viruddha* (against) to the *Shastras*. Effective *Sutika paricharya* can conquer the misfortune or evil deeds of preceding life. *Sadvritta* and *Achara rasayana* are the two important pillars of the therapy and if used appropriately along with the main therapy, it will enhance the potency of chief drug, ultimately restore the health along with eradication of the present illness (Cha.Chi.1-4th Pada/35). *Nastika bhava* (having negative thoughts) and other causes should be avoided and this procedure if followed according to the classics will be successful. Thus different procedures are followed including *Ahara* and *Achara* for the purpose of *Punarnaveekarana* of the *Sutika* is *Sutika paricharya*. It is the process of rejuvenation for the purpose of protection of *Sutika* and her child.

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