

DESIGNING DESTINY THROUGH GARBHA SAMSKARA

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ABSTRACT

Garbha Samskara is an important concept described in Ayurveda that emphasizes conscious preparation for conception and healthy pregnancy. It includes physical, psychological, and spiritual measures aimed at creating a healthy intrauterine environment for the developing fetus. Ayurvedic classics explain that the fetus is influenced by maternal diet, behavior, emotions, and environment. Modern scientific research also supports that maternal stress, hormonal balance, and lifestyle during pregnancy significantly affect fetal growth, brain development, and long-term health.

KEYWORDS: Garbha Samskara, Ayurveda, Fetal development, Maternal health.

INTRODUCTION

Garbha: union of shukra artava, atma or jiva inside the kukshi.

Samakara: संस्कार हि गुणनतरधनम् | (Shu.su.26)

- ❖ **Ayurveda** Garbha samskara is to impart good values create healthy progeny, intelligent child and maintain proper health of garbhini.
- ❖ Create bond between mother and baby.
- ❖ Reduce stress, anxiety to mother.
- ❖ Improve brain development in the baby.

Garbha samkar: Educating in the womb sense, listen, dream, respond to outside stimuli.

PURPOSE OF GARBHA SAMSKARA

- ❖ Ayurveda Garbha samskara basically comprises of
 - a) Preconception (beeja Sanskar)

- b) During pregnancy (Garbha samskara)
- c) Post delivery (bala samskara)

- ❖ Babies can hear, imbibe and learn in some unusual ways in womb.
- ❖ They receive inputs as a powerful role in shaping their mind & temperaments.
- ❖ 60-70 % of brain development takes place in the womb- affects

Mythology: Garbha samskara

❖ Ramayana

1. Before birth of rama during Putrakameshti yagya.
2. Agnidewta gave king dashratha – payas can be considered as form of Garbha samskara.

❖ Mahabharatha

1. Arjunas wife Subhadra was pregnant with their son Abhimanyu.
2. He told her about how to penetrate the chakravyuh.
3. He could only learn to decode and trape because by that time her mother felt asleep.
4. This was reason why he was killed because he didn't know how to come out of the trap.

❖ Naradamuni

1. Narada muni Teaches Prahlad.
2. In the womb of his mother kayadhu.

Beeja samskara: pre conception

Pre marriage



Atulya gotra vivah- congenital anomalies, genetic diseases, mental retardation, dysmorphism.

Samatvagat virya- health of male and female.

Vaya(age)- male 25, female 16

Beeja Shuddhi

Internal purification (shodhana): snehana, swedana, vamana, virechana, basti, nasya, samsarjana karma. avoid kroda, shoka, balya, dwesha, adopting dev and brahmana pooja.

Snehana (Oleation Therapy — Taila & Ghrita)

Snehana provides deep internal and external oleation using medicated oils and ghee. It acts as a powerful preparatory and nourishing therapy.

- Enhances **Shukra dhatu** and promotes fertility, acts as **Ojakara** (improves vitality and immunity), provides **Bala** and **Pushti** (strength and nourishment), improves **Agni** (digestive and metabolic fire), supports proper functioning of **Indriyas**, moistens and lubricates **Srotas** for better transport and tissue nutrition

Swedana (Sudation Therapy)

Swedana induces therapeutic sweating and follows Snehana to mobilize toxins.

- Pacifies **Vata dosha**, kindles **Agni**, clears and opens obstructed **Srotas**, balances doshas in **Artavaha Srotas**, supports purification of **Garbhashaya** and **Koshta**

Vamana (Therapeutic Emesis)

Vamana eliminates aggravated Kapha and excess Soumya elements from the system.

- Clears **Kapha dushti** in Artavaha Srotas
- Expels accumulated Soumya substances
- Purifies bodily channels
- Helps regulate menstrual function

Virechana (Therapeutic Purgation)

Virechana is a prime purification therapy targeting Pitta and associated toxins.

- Performs **Shodhana**, **Shamana**, and **Lekhana** actions
- Eliminates vitiated mala
- Corrects disturbed **Vata** and **Mutra** pathways
- Reduces **Tridosha dushti**
- Supports metabolic and reproductive balance

Basti (Anuvasana & Asthapana)

Basti is considered the most important therapy for Vata regulation and reproductive wellness.

- Purifies **Mala** and **Mutra**
- Balances **Tridosha**, especially Vata
- Improves sperm quality and reproductive strength
- Stabilizes Vata in **Pakvashaya**
- Supports healthy conception environment

➤ Uttar Basti

Uttar Basti specifically targets the reproductive tract.

- Provides **Yoni Shodhana**
- Best administered during the **proliferative phase** of menstruation
- Supports regeneration of endometrial vessels and glands

- Enhances local drug absorption for targeted action
- Strengthens uterine and reproductive health

➤ **Nasya**

Nasya has a special role in reproductive and prenatal care.

- Described in context of **Punsavana karma**
- Supports healthy continuation of pregnancy
- Helps prevent complications
- Regulates hormonal and neuroendocrine balance

Garbhadhana: Ayurvedic Pre-Conception Care (Concise & Attractive Version)

Garbhadhana focuses on preparing both partners physically and mentally for healthy conception through proper diet, herbs, and reproductive cleansing.

Male Preparation

- **Ghee & Milk** – Promote strength, nourishment, and improve sperm quality
- **Madhura Rasa Herbs** – Support Shukra dhatu and reproductive vitality

Female Preparation

- **Taila (medicated oils)** – Yoni & Garbhashaya shodhana, Tridosha balancing
- **Masha (black gram)** – Brimhana, Balya, Vrishya
- Enhances quality and quantity of Artava, rich in calcium, iron, folic acid, B-vitamins, magnesium

➤ **Recommended Pre-Conception Diet**

- Rasayana foods and formulations, garbhashthapaka drugs, folic acid supplementation

➤ **Four Essential Factors for Conception**

1. **Ritu** – Proper menstrual timing and fertile period
2. **Kshetra** – Healthy uterus
3. **Ambu** – Adequate nourishment (Rasa dhatu)
4. **Beeja** – Healthy sperm and ovum

Putreyashti Yajna — A Sacred Ritual for Positive Conception

❖ **Putreyashti Yajna**

It is a traditional Vedic ritual performed as part of Garbha preparation to create a spiritually and emotionally supportive environment for conception.



- Promotes **physical and physiological calmness** in both partners
- Reduces stress and mental disturbance
- Generates a field of **positive energy and intention**
- Enhances emotional harmony within the surroundings
- Supports mindful and conscious conception practices

In Garbha Sanskara, Putreyashti Yajna is viewed not only as a ritual, but as a method to cultivate **peaceful mind, balanced physiology, and positive vibrations** for welcoming healthy progeny.

Position During Coitus in Garbha Sanskara — Ayurvedic View

Ayurveda describes that the **posture during coitus** influences dosha balance, sperm deposition, and the chances of healthy conception. Proper positioning helps maintain physiological harmony and supports effective fertilization.

Supine Position (Preferred)

The **supine position** (female lying on her back) is considered most favourable for conception.

- Helps keep **all doshas in their normal locations**
- Allows **deeper penetration** and proper deposition of semen
- Supports easier movement of Shukra toward Garbhashaya
- Enhances the probability of conception
- Maintains natural alignment of the reproductive tract

Hence the supine posture is recommended for Garbhadhana.

Other Positions & Dosha Effects

➤ **Flexed Position**

- May aggravate **Vata (Vayu)**
- Can cause compression in Yoni
- Not ideal for conception support

➤ **Left Lateral Position**

- May increase **Pitta influence**
- Described as potentially reducing quality interaction of Rakta & Shukra

➤ **Right Lateral Position**

- May displace **Kapha**
- Can create relative obstruction toward Garbhashaya

Role of Panchamahabhutas in Organogenesis (Ayurvedic Concept)

During fetal development, the five great elements contribute specific roles:

- **Vayu** — division and movement of cells
- **Prithvi** — solidity and structural formation
- **Jala** — moisture and nourishment
- **Akasha** — space and growth in size

Pregnancy — First Trimester Care in Ayurveda (Attractive Summary)

The **first trimester** is a delicate and foundational phase of pregnancy. Ayurveda describes the embryo at this stage as “**Kalala**” — a soft, developing form that requires maximum stability, nourishment, and gentle care.

Common Features of First Trimester

- Nausea and vomiting are common
- Appetite may be reduced
- Regular diet intake becomes difficult
- Extra care is needed to maintain hydration and strength

Ayurvedic Paricharya (Regimen for Care)

Ayurveda advises a **gentle, cooling, sweet, and liquid diet** during this phase.

- Prefer **cold, sweet liquids and milk preparations**
- Help prevent dehydration from vomiting
- Provide easy nourishment to mother and embryo
- Support early fetal stability

Madhura (sweet) dravyas are recommended because they:

- Act as anabolic and tissue-building
- Promote growth and nourishment
- Support maternal and fetal health

Dosha Perspective

- First trimester care focuses on **Kapha-supportive (Kaphavardhaka) dravyas**
- Kapha provides **stability, structure, and cohesion** — essential for early embryo support
- Mild **Upasnehana (gentle oleation/nourishment)** helps in Garbha poshana (fetal nourishment)

Core Principle

Stability + Sweet nourishment + Hydration = Healthy first-trimester support

Fourth Month of Pregnancy — Second Trimester Care

The **fourth month** marks an important transition in pregnancy. According to Ayurveda, this is the stage when the fetus develops clearer body parts (**Anga-Pratyanga formation**) and the need for nourishment increases significantly.

Changes in the Mother (Garbhinī)

- Nausea and vomiting usually **reduce**
- Sense of **stability increases**
- A feeling of **heaviness** may be experienced due to fetal growth
- Appetite gradually improves

Changes in the Fetus (Garbha)

- **Formation of organs and limbs** becomes more defined

- Rapid tissue development begins
- Demand for **nutritive and building foods** increases

Recommended Paricharya (Diet & Care)

Ayurveda advises **Brimhana (nourishing and tissue-building)** foods from this month onward:

- **Milk** — promotes strength, growth, and fetal nourishment
- **Navaneeta (fresh butter)** — supports lubrication and tissue building
- **Meat soup (where culturally acceptable)** — rich protein source
- Supports **muscle tissue development**
- Meets increased nutritional demand of the growing fetus

Principle of 4th Month Care

From stability to structured growth — increase nourishment and tissue-building support.

Fifth & Sixth Month of Pregnancy — Second Trimester Care (Ayurvedic Perspective)

The **5th and 6th months** represent a phase of rapid fetal growth and functional development. Ayurveda describes this period as one of increasing tissue formation and mental evolution, requiring enhanced nourishment and supportive care for both mother and fetus.

Changes in the Mother (Garbhini)

- Mother may appear **relatively lean (krusha)** due to diversion of nutrients to the fetus
- **Edema of feet** and mild water retention may occur
- Increased nutritional demand and fatigue can be seen

Changes in the Fetus (Garbha)

- Increase in **Rakta (blood)** and **Mamsa (muscle tissue)**
- Development of eyes and nose, Snayu (ligaments) and Sira (vessels), Skin, hair, and nails, beginning of **Buddhi (intellect) development**.

Recommended Paricharya (Diet & Regimen)

Focus is on **Balya (strength-promoting)** and nourishing substances:

- **Milk and Ghrita (ghee)** — primary supportive foods

Ghee acts as agni-deepaka (improves digestion), enhances appetite (kshudha vriddhi), increases overall intake and nourishment

Medicated preparations

- Gokshura siddha ghrita or yavagu
- Madhura dravya-siddha ghrita

Therapeutic Benefits Mentioned

- **Gokshura** — supports urinary function, helps reduce water retention, useful in edema tendency
- **Ghrita** — supports:

- Intelligence and memory
- Digestion and metabolism
- Longevity and vitality
- Eyesight and neural nourishment

Core Principle of 5th–6th Month Care

Strengthen the mother, build fetal tissues, support brain and organ development through nourishing and balya therapies.

Seventh to Ninth Month of Pregnancy — Ayurvedic Month-wise Care

The last trimester is considered the **maturation and preparation phase** — for both the fully developed fetus and the mother's body getting ready for labour. Ayurveda gives specific month-wise guidance to support strength, fluid balance, bowel function, and smooth delivery.

Seventh Month

Mother (Garbhiṇī)

- Signs of **fatigue and tiredness (klanta lakshana)** appear
- Possible **kikisa** (stretch marks / skin changes) due to abdominal expansion

Fetus (Garbha)

- **Near-complete structural development**
- Growth and weight increase continue

Recommended Care (Paricharya)

- **Medicated ghee** processed with *Prithakparnyadi varga* herbs
- These herbs are described as:
 - Mild diuretic, Anabolic and strengthening, Pitta–Kapha balancing, Helpful against maternal emaciation, Supportive for both mother and fetus.

Eighth–Ninth Month

Mother (Garbhiṇī)

- **Constipation** is common due to pressure of the enlarged uterus on intestines
- Heaviness and discomfort may increase

Fetus (Garbha)

- **Complete development and weight gain**
- Ojas is described as **unstable/moving** at this stage — hence extra care is advised

Recommended Care (Paricharya)

Diet

- Milk-based yavagu (thin gruel) , easy to digest, nourishing, and hydrating

Therapies

- **Anuvasana Basti** with oil prepared from Madhura (sweet) group herbs

- Helps relieve constipation, supports vata balance, positively influences uterine muscle function for labour
- **Yoni Pichu (oil tampon therapy)**
- Softens vaginal passage, maintains local lubrication, helps reduce infection risk, supports smoother and easier labour

Core Principle of 7th–9th Month Care

Lubricate, nourish, regulate bowels, and prepare the birth passage for safe and smooth delivery.

Garbha samskara activities

Talking to the Baby

- Gentle communication with the baby creates an **emotional and vibrational connection**.
- The fetus begins to respond to sound during mid-pregnancy.
- Soft, positive words and affirmations are believed to support **mental calmness and bonding**.
- Encourages maternal emotional stability and attachment.

Example: Speaking loving sentences, chanting, or positive affirmations daily.

Reading & Listening to Scriptures or Stories

- Listening to meaningful stories, spiritual texts, or moral literature promotes a **sattvic mental state** in the mother.
- Calm and uplifting content helps reduce stress hormones.
- Traditionally believed to influence the **psychological and intellectual qualities** of the child.

Example: Reading inspirational stories, spiritual literature, or value-based narratives.

Listening to Calming Music

- Soft music helps regulate the mother's **heart rate and stress levels**.
- Creates a soothing intrauterine environment.
- Classical, instrumental, mantra chanting, or nature sounds are commonly recommended.
- Supports relaxation and emotional balance.

Example: 15–20 minutes of calming music daily.

Yoga & Meditation

- Prenatal yoga improves **circulation, flexibility, and breathing capacity**.
- Meditation promotes **mental peace and hormonal balance**.
- Helps reduce anxiety, improves sleep, and prepares the mother for labor.
- Supports prana flow and emotional harmony.

Example: Gentle pregnancy-safe yoga and guided meditation under supervision.

Stress During Pregnancy — Why it Matters

Stress during pregnancy is not just an emotional state — it creates real physical and hormonal changes in the mother that can influence both **maternal health** and **fetal development**.

What Happens During Stress?

- When a pregnant woman is under stress, the body releases **stress hormones** — mainly **cortisol**
- Cortisol travels through the bloodstream
- A portion of it can cross the **placenta**
- This may influence **fetal brain development** and growth

Long-term stress = prolonged high cortisol exposure

Effects on the Baby

Excess maternal stress is associated with:

- Disturbed fetal brain development
- Low birth weight
- Increased risk of pre-term delivery
- Higher chances of behavioral and emotional issues later
- Altered stress response in the child

Effects on the Mother

Stressed mothers are more prone to:

- Frequent infections
- Reduced immunity
- Pregnancy-induced hypertension
- Pre-eclampsia
- Gestational diabetes
- Sleep disturbance & fatigue

Mechanism (Simple Flow for Slide)

Stress → Cortisol ↑ → Crosses Placenta → Affects Fetal Brain & Growth → Pregnancy Complications

Preventive Approach (Garbha Sanskara View)

To reduce stress during pregnancy:

- Yoga & meditation
- Calming music & mantra chanting
- Positive reading & thoughts
- Emotional support from family
- Relaxation practices
- Adequate rest & sleep

Mantra Chikitsa**Meaning of Mantra Chikitsa**

- **MAN** = Mind
- **TRA** = To protect / release Mantra = sound vibration that protects and liberates the mind.

Mantra chanting is considered a **sound-based therapy** that influences mental, neurological, and physiological functions.

Effect of Mantra Chanting on Brain & Body

According to the slide:

- Synchronizes **left and right hemispheres of the brain**
- Increases **oxygenation in brain**

- **Reduces**
 - Heart rate, Blood pressure
- Helps generate **stable brain wave patterns**
- Creates a **state of resonance** — rhythmic vibration in body and mind that promotes calmness

Result: Relaxation response + reduced stress hormones.

Importance in Pregnancy

Regular mantra chanting during pregnancy may:

- Reduce maternal stress & anxiety, Improve autonomic balance, Support better uteroplacental circulation (indirectly via relaxation), Promote emotional stability of mother → healthy fetal environment

Role of Nitric Oxide (NO) — As Mentioned in Slide

The slide links mantra chanting with **nitric oxide physiology**

- Nitric oxide is produced in **vascular endothelium**

- **Functions**
 - Relaxes vascular smooth muscle (vasodilation), Improves blood flow, Inhibits platelet aggregation, Prevents intervillous thrombosis in placenta

Clinical Relevance

- **Low nitric oxide levels** are associated with:
 - Pregnancy-induced hypertension, gestational diabetes

Impact of Garbha Samskara

“Everything the mother thinks and feels is communicated to the fetus.”

- A mother’s emotional and mental state causes release of:
 - Neurohormones
 - Neuropeptides
- These biochemical messengers circulate in maternal blood and influence the **intrauterine environment** and fetal brain development.

What are Neuropeptides?

- Small protein-like chemical messengers
- Released by brain and nervous system

- Carry signals related to:
 - Emotions, stress, pleasure, calmness

They act as **mind–body communication molecules**.

Happy Emotional State of Mother

When the mother is calm and happy:

- Releases “happy” neurochemicals such as:
 - Serotonin
 - Endorphins
 - Enkephalins
- Effects:
 - Reduce depression
 - Create happiness & emotional stability
 - Produce sense of satisfaction
 - Support positive fetal neurodevelopment

Happy neuropeptides reach fetal brain and create joy-supportive environment.

Stressed Emotional State of Mother

When the mother is stressed or anxious:

- **Releases stress hormones**
 - Adrenaline
 - Cortisol
- **Effects**
 - Increase stress response
 - Disturb hormonal balance
 - May negatively influence fetal neurobehavioral environment (if stress is chronic)

Stressed mother secretes cortisol & adrenaline → stress-type neuropeptides influence fetus.

Chemicals Mentioned in Slide

- **Serotonin** → reduces depression, promotes happiness
- **Enkephalins** → give feeling of satisfaction & comfort
- Stress peptides → associated with anxiety & low mood

Garbha Samskara Teaching Message

Because maternal emotions influence fetal biochemical environment:

Practices recommended in Garbha Samskara

- Positive thinking, Mantra chanting, Meditation, Prayer / scripture listening, Calm music, Supportive environment

Fetal Mind

- As described in **Ayurvedic classics (Charaka)**, the fetal mind is compared to a **blank canvas**.
- It is believed that the fetus is influenced by Mother's thoughts, Emotions , Stories and scriptures, Music and chanting
- Whatever the mother repeatedly experiences mentally and emotionally creates subtle impressions on the fetus.
Maternal environment = early mental conditioning of the baby.

Scientific Correlation

- Modern research suggests that:
 - Maternal stress, mood, and hormonal state affect fetal development.
 - Positive emotional state supports better **neurodevelopment and cognition**.
- A calm, positive womb environment may help improve:
 - Cognitive potential, Emotional stability, Behavioral patterns

Effect on Dhatu and Ojas (Ayurvedic View)

- Promotes formation of **high-quality dhatus**
- Enhances **Ojas** (vital essence)
- Ojas is linked with:
 - Immunity, Strength, Vitality, Disease resistance

Role of Satvik Guna

- Positive thinking, Spiritual practices, Peaceful environment, Pure diet and conduct

RESULT

Increase in Satva guna, Emotional balance, Inner peace and spiritual wellbeing of mother, Favourable samskara formation in fetus.

DISCUSSION

- The concept of Garbha Samskara reflects the holistic understanding of fetal development described in Ayurveda. It integrates physical health, psychological wellbeing, and spiritual practices to promote healthy progeny.
- Modern research on prenatal programming supports the Ayurvedic view that maternal environment and emotional state significantly influence fetal development.

CONCLUSION

Garbha Samskara provides a comprehensive approach for improving maternal and fetal health. By combining Ayurvedic principles with modern medical understanding, it is possible to promote optimal physical, mental, and emotional development of the child.

Adopting Garbha Samskara practices may contribute to the birth of healthier and more balanced individuals.

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