

# Critical Review on Special Diet Regimen used in Postpartum Period (Sutikavastha) in Various Parts of India with Special Reference to Modern Dietetics

Dr Gouri G. Ganpatye<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Shivani Sanjeev Gavande<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Streerog Prasuti Tantra, Sant Gajanan Maharaj Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Mahagaon, India  
gurugouri[at]gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Professor Kayachikitsa, Bhaisaheb Sawant Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Sawantwadi, India  
drshivani@gavande[at]gmail.com

**Abstract:** *There are various cultures and traditions across India. Hundred years back there were highest mortality rate in infants as well as in women during post-partum period. Poor hygienic conditions, lack of awareness in society, unavailability of medical facilities in remote areas are some reasons for highest mortality and morbidity in those days. Still traditional culture and diet had played important role to survive mother and child. Some Ayurvedic herbs as well as foods were in practice to nourish the mother during postpartum period. Nutrition and dietetics is the new and now established and proved branch of medicine which treats the food as medicine. If we study the nutritive values of those food ingredients, we get astonished to know how they have maintained proper need of postpartum life of a woman. They fulfill the need of macronutrients as well as micronutrients through this traditional way of postpartum diet in breastfeed mother. Here in this article we have discussed the ancient thoughts and modern views about the postpartum diet. Postpartum period of 45 days is considered while advising dietary regimen.*

**Keywords:** Sutikavastha, Diet, Postpartum, Dravya, Macronutrients, Micronutrients

## 1. Introduction

The postpartum period of any woman is described by various Acharyas.

In some references, it should be of 40 days to six months. During this postpartum period, if lady consumes proper diet and practices then she is healthy and fit in her later life. Kashyap Samhita has mentioned specific puerperal management according to Desha i.e. places as Anupa, Sadharana and Jangal.

The ingested food should be composed of,  
Bhakshya (which needs to be chewed vigorously)  
Bhojya (which needs moderate chewing)  
Peya (Liquids to be drunk)  
Lehya (which is licked)

Each of above has specific affinity towards specific Dhatus. So Aahar should consist of Panchamahabhootas, having six tastes, two folded or eight folded potencies i.e. Veeryas, twenty properties i.e. Vinshati Shareer Gunas.

The first nutrient fluid (Ahaara Rasa) is very complex structure as it represents and truly reflects the ingested food.

Ahaara Rasa in pregnancy period plays vital role in construction of healthy progeny. It is very important for better production of Stanya during postpartum period of a lady.

Across India, If we see different types of food offered to lady during postpartum period, we get some common useful ingredients as follows,

*Aaliva (Chandrashoor), Betel leaves (Nagwelpatra), Balanta Shepa (Mishreya), Coconut, Cow's milk and ghee, Dry Ginger (Shunthi), Jaggery, Methi seeds and leaves, Ahiphena Poppy seeds, Dink Resins, Ova (Ajwayan)*

## 2. Material and Methods

The above mentioned dravyas were selected for study of nutritive value according to Ayurvedic and modern perspectives.

The food offered to lady is mostly in the form of semisolid consistency. *Vilepi* and *Yawagu Kalpana* are most commonly used during postpartum period of woman. Coconut, cow's milk, ghee, poppy seeds, Garden cress seeds, *Methi* leaves, resins, jaggery are in more quantity whereas dry ginger, ajwayan, jaggery, *Mishreya*, Betel leaves, *Methi* seeds are used in lesser quantity.

Ayurvedic qualitative analysis is as follows:

Dravya	Rasa	Guna	Veerya	Vipaka	Prabhava
Ahaliva (Lepidiumsativum)	Katu, Tikta	Snigdha, Pichchila	Ushna	Katu	Stanyajanana (Galactogogue), Artavajanana, Balya
Betal leaves (Nagwelpatra)	Katu	Teekshan	Ushna	Katu	Kledanashaka
BalantaShepa (Mishreya)	Katu Tikta	Laghu, Ruksha, Teekshna	Ushna	Katu	Artavajanana

Volume 10 Issue 3, March 2021

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					Stanyavardhana, Yonishoolanashaka
Coconut	Madhur	Guru, Snigdha	Sheeta	Madhur	Balya
Cow's milk and ghee	Madhur	Snigdha, Sheeta	Sheeta	Madhur	Balya, Shastrakshataanjayet..
Dry Ginger (Shunthi) Zinzibar Officianale					
Jaggery	Madhur	Laghu	Ushna	Madhur	Balya, Shramapaha
Methi seeds and leaves (Trogonellagrossum)	Katu	Laghu	Ushna	Katu	Artavashuddhikara Stanyajananaa
Poppy seeds (Ahiphena) Papavesomniferum	Tikta	Laghu, Ruksha, Teekshna	Ushna	Katu	Garbhashayasankochaka
Resin Babbul Gond (Acasiaarebika)	Madhur Kashaya	Guru, Ruksha, Sheeta	Sheeta	Madhur	PradaraNashana
Ova (Ajwayan) Carum Roxburgiana	Katu, Tikta	Laghu, Ruksha, Teekshna	Ushna	Katu	Vedanasthapana, Antihelminthic

According to modern dietetics, nutritive value of above mentioned drugs are as follows:

Dravya (Per 100 gm)	Protein gm	Fats gm	Carbs gm	Fibre gm	Energy Kcal.	Specific
Ahaliva (Lepidiumsativum)	25.3	24.5	33	7.3	454	Iron – 100 mg, Magnesium – 430 mg
Betalleaves (Nagwelpatra)	3.1	0.8	6.1	2.3	44	Magnesium- 447 mg, Zink – 3.44 mg.
BalantaShepa (Mishreya)	17	18.9	62	100	435	Leaves rich in carotene 7182ug
Coconut dry	6.8	62.3	18.4	6.6	662	Calcium – 400, Zink – 5 mg
Cow's milk	3.2	4.1	4.4	0	67	Sodium – 73 mg, Potassium – 140 mg
Cow's ghee	0	100	0	0	900	Carotene – 600ug, MUFA – 28.5 gm
Dry Ginger (Shunthi) Zinzibar Officianale dry	1.8	0.750	18	2	336	Potassium – 415 mg, Phosphorus – 34 mg
Jaggery	0.4	0.1	95	0	383	Iron – 2.64 mg
Methi seeds and leaves (Trogonellagrossum)	26.2	5.8	44.1	7.2	333	Choline 1161 mg
Poppy seeds (Ahiphena) Papavesomniferum	21.7	19.3	36	8	408	Calcium – 1584 mg, Phosphorus – 432 mg Iron – 15.9 mg
Resin Babbul Gond (Acasiaarebika)	4.6	1	77	77	271	Calcium – 294
Ova (Ajwayan) Carum Roxburgiana	17.1	21.8	24.4	21.2	363	Calcium – 1525 mg, Phosphorus – 443 mg Iron – 12.5 mg.

Dravyas having positive health benefits in postpartum ( Sutikavastha ) period.

Dravya	Health benefits
Ahaliva (Lepidiumsativum)	Very good functional food, Rich in oestrogen, iron, enhances milk production, relieves constipation,
Betalleaves (Nagwelpatra)	Helps in digestion, relieves constipation, increases metabolic rate, rich in calcium
Balanta Shepa (Mishreya) Anethum sowa Roxb.	Rich in antioxidants, antispasmodics, Vit C and A, magnesium, Controls flatulence, Aids digestion.
Coconut dry	Calcium, magnesium and restorative electrolytes, nutritious, healthy, treats abdominal fat
Cow's milk	Good source of calcium, magnesium, B12 and Iodine, low food allergies in baby, good nutrition
Cow's Ghee	Increases absorption ability of small intestine, Rich source of omega 3 fatty acids, improve bone density, provides increased calorie needs
Dry Ginger (Shunthi) Zinzibar Officianale	Maintains normal blood circulation, reduces pain and inflammation, boosts immunity, antispasmodic
Jaggery	rich in iron, respiratory tract cleanser, filled with minerals
Methi seeds and leaves (Trogonellagrossum)	Increases milk production, corrects anemia, blood sugar and cholesterol, promotes wound healing,
Poppy seeds (Ahiphena) Papavesomniferum	Rich in omega 3, anti inflammatory, relieves pain, improves bone density, prevents sleep disorders
Resin Babbul Gond	Natural laxative, antioxidants, excellent

(Acasiaarebika)	wound healer, cleans female reproductive system, helps in correction of hemorrhoids, loaded nutritionally.
Ova (Ajwayan) CarumRoxburgiana	Through breastfeed, it reduces colic and gastric problems in baby, respiratory protector, helps to lose weight in mother

RDA Recommended Dietary Allowance for lactating mother

Nutrient	Normal Adult woman	Lactating mother
Energy (Sedentary) Kcal	1875	+ 300
Protein (gm)	50	+ 15
Fats (gm)	20	30
Calcium (mg)	800	1000 - 1300
Iron (mg)	30	38
B Carotene (mg)	2400	2400
Vit C (mg)	60	95
Zinc (mg)	12	19

### 3. Discussions

The required macro and micronutrients are incorporated in food. While preparing any recipe of above said drugs, some drugs are used as Prakshepa and some of them are principal food. Boiling, Churning, desiccating, fire burning, boiling etc processes are done while preparing food. So the food becomes easily digestible. After delivering the child, women undergo Dhatukshayajanya Vaataprakopa, Rakta Ksheenata, So to overcome it, food like coconut, Jaggery having Madhur Bhava is given to mother that nourishes her and enhances milk production. After expulsion of placenta, she becomes Vrani, so the herbs having pain killer property and

wound healing property are administered through food only. If we see Ayurvedic properties of said drugs, most of them have Katu Tikta and Ushna Guna. Such Gunas take care of involution of uterus and Kledanashana.

To rejuvenate the body and mind, some of these Dravyas have potent antioxidant properties. Balantshepa have very rich in carotene content.

Many of these Dravyas, possess high protein, fat and fiber content. Dravyas like Aaliva, is very high in fiber, also rich in iron content.

#### 4. Conclusion

Traditional way of treating postpartum lady is equally effective in today's era. Such ingredients enhance production of breast milk in mother with proper involution of uterus in time. These traditional Dravyas through their nutritive properties are protein rich, high in calories, high in fiber and many of them are rich in micronutrients. New concept of functional food and nutraceutical is already been introduced in traditional way through these Dravyas. They have positive health benefits in postpartum period.

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#### Author Profile



**Dr. Gouri. G. Ganpatye**, M.S. (Ayu) Streerog Prasuti Tantra. Associate Professor –Streerog Prasuti Tantra, Sant Gajanan Maharaj Ayurvedic Medical College, Mahagaon-Gadhinglaj. 416503.

*gurugouri[at]gmail.com*



**Dr. Shivani Sanjeev Gavande**, M.D. Ph.D. Kayachikitsa, Professor Kayachikitsa, Bhaisaheb Sawant Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Sawantwadi. *drshivanigavande[at]gmail.com*