



“Review on *Navjat Shishu Paricharya* in *Ayurveda*.”

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**Abstract:**

‘*Navajata shishu*’ is term as a newborn baby and ‘*paricharya*’ indicates the care and necessary management of newborn baby. The care of a newborn is termed as “*Navajata shishu paricharya*” in *ayurveda*. In the womb baby is completely dependent on the mother but after the birth new born baby is not dependent on mother so baby has to adapt to the new changes quickly. It is essential to take care of newborns until the body systems are well adopted and developed to survive in the new world. Various procedures were advised in the management of newborn baby by *Acharyas* with few differences in sequences of these procedures. Similarly the various steps of resuscitation are adopted in modern science. Though the principles of care are same, the contemporary practices have changed significantly with advances in medical technology. This article deals with the analysis of these practices along with their contemporary views.

**Key words-** *navjat, paricharya, ayurveda*

**Introduction:**

Newborn period encompasses the first four weeks of extra-uterine life. The physical and mental well being of an individual depends on the correct management of the events in the perinatal period. In *Ayurveda* texts *Acharyas* stated full description to care of new born from birth to full stability of new born. Various steps described by different *Acharyas* which are to be followed from birth to full stability of the newborn are described below in detail.

N o.	Charak	Sushrut	Vagabhat
	Pranapratyag amana	Mukhavisho dana	Ulbaparimarja na
	Snana	Pichudhara n	Abhyanga
	Mukhvishodha na	Nalachhedana	Pranapratyag amana
	Pichudharana	Jatakarma	Nalachedana
	Garbhodhaka vamana	Suvarnapras hana	Snana
	Nalachedana	Abhyang	Mukhavishoda na
	Jatakarma	Snana	Pichudharana
	Raksha Karma	Jatakarma	Suvarnaprash ana
		Rakshakarm a	Garbhodhaka vamana
			Jatakarma
			Rakshakarma

### ***Ulba-parimarjana* (cleaning of vernix caseosa)**

The *garbha* is covered with a fine paste like substance called *ulba* (vernix caseosa). At birth, skin is covered by a white coloured paste *vernix caseosa* formed by secretions from sebaceous glands and degenerated epidermal cells and hairs. It protects the skin from macerating action of amniotic fluid. The procedure of removal of *ulba* from the body of *navjat shishu* is known as *Ulbashodhan*. *Acharya Vagbhata* has advised application of a mixture of *saindhava* and *ghrita* for *ulba parimarjana*. *Ghrita* being a bad conductor of heat may give sufficient protection from hypothermia. *Saindhav* with *sarvasanghatvidhamanpankar* and *sukshma* properties removes the *ulba* which is sticky and slimy. Further to massage the baby with *bala* oil which provide relief from stress under taken by the baby during the birth process. The drug *bala* (*sida cordifolia*) has properties like *balakaraka* (provide strength), *grahi* and cure (*nashnaum*) *vata*, *Raktapitta* (hemorrhagic bleeding disorders) *Raktavikara* and *vrana*. Massage with oil provides insulation against heat and insensible water loss. Some oil may get absorbed through the skin of baby to provide some nutrition.. *bala* oil massage helps in promotion of strength, supports neurological development and provide warmth to newborn besides stimulating the nervous system into action soon after birth.

### ***Mukha vishodhana* ( oropharyngeal cleaning)**

*Mukha vishodhana* aims at the removal of fetal membranes from the air passage and mucous from the nasal or oral cavity of the

baby. In *ayurveda* manual removal of mucous plug and fetal membranes with sterilized cotton swabs is advised. His palate, lips, throat and tongue should be wiped with attendants finger from which nails are properly trimmed off, well cleaned and covered with cotton swabs. This provides extra stimulus to baby's central nervous system for initiation of respiration. *Acharya Sushruta* has promoted the use of *Ghrita* and *saindhava* to clear the secretions of the oral cavity. The proper order for cleaning an infant's oral cavity is first cleaning the mouth then the oropharynx and nasopharynx and finally nasal cavity with gentle intermittent suction. This technique is used to avoid aspiration of secretions.

### ***Pichudharana* (Tampon application)**

*Acharya Sushruta* recommends that put the *murdha* of the newborn ( anterior fontanel or forehead) with tampon soaked in *ghrita*. *Acharya Vagbhata* has also told the use of *Sneha pichhu* on *Talupradesha*. As far as a neonate is concerned, this procedure is helpful in reducing the *prasutiklesha*, especially that related to *siras*. It also facilitates the cure of some injuries like Erb's palsy, brachial palsy.

### ***Nabhinala Chhedan vidhi* (cutting of umbilical cord)**

The procedure of cutting the umbilical cord and taking necessary precautions to prevent its secondary infection is known as *Nabhinala chhedan vidhi* or *nadee kalpna vidhi*. According to *Acharya Charak*, the umbilical cord should be tied with *karpas sutra* at a distance of 8 *angula* from baby's *nabhi* then it is cut just above the knot with

clean and sharp instruments made from metals like *Swarna*(gold), *Rajat*(silver), *Ayasa*(iron). The other end of *sutra* is loosely tied around the neck of the baby to prevent further contamination and chances of bleeding. *Ashtang Hridaya* has a difference in opinion about the distance at which it is to be cut that is 4 *angula* from *nabhi*. After cutting and knotting of the umbilical cord, the cord should be twined to the neck of the baby. this procedure is to prevent further leakage of the blood from the cord. After the procedure the stump has to be smeared with *kushta taila* to prevent secondary infections and for easy healing.

### ***Pranpratyagaman* (Resuscitation process)**

The term *prana* is none other than life or cardio-respiratory function. The whole of the efforts to establish a normal respiratory and cardiovascular functioning from a compromised life threatening status is to be considered as *pranapratyagamana vidhi*. The activity of *prana vayu* in fetus shows a marked contrast to that in a neonate. during fetal stage, the functions of *pranavayu* are entirely dependent on the mother. After birth it has to work independently and has to perform its motor functions at the earliest. *Ayurvedic* techniques of *Pranapratyagamana* go hand in hand with the modern resuscitatory methods.

Clearing the airways- the throat, lips, pharynx and tongue should be cleared by fingers of the attender. The nails of fingers should be trimmed off properly and should be covered by a clean cotton swabs prior to this. By this methods we can remove the mucous present in the oral cavity so as to facilitate the smooth entry of air though it.

This is also a source of stimulation to the baby because it produces gag reflex and irritation.

Stimulus to baby- According to *Acharya Charak* striking of two stones just near the ears of baby and sprinkling warm or cold water on baby's face. These two steps helpful for the baby to initiate act of breathing helpful in respiration and heart functioning. If baby does not stabilize or show any activity even after these steps then measures to increase air availability to the baby as in by fanning with *Krishnakapalikasoorpa* near it until the baby is fully revived.

*Acharya Vagbhata* also advocated the striking of two stones near baby's ear lobe and chanting certain *Mantras* near his right ear for stabilizing the newborn. *Acharya Vagbhata* first gave the signs and symptoms of an asphyxiated newborn as (a) child suffering from deep unconsciousness (*pralambmoha*) and fever (*jwara*) (b) unable/weak cry according to severity of pain (c) unsteady state of all the tissues of the body (d) attainment of youth is doubtful (e) suspicious about forthcoming youth (f) abnormal and excessive involuntary movements (g) newborn repeatedly shows distress as in apparent death for proper revival of newborn from above measures. It is clear that Acharyas were aware of birth asphyxia and other related complications of birth process at that point in time for which they have advocated means to guard against. It seems that sensory, tactile and auditory stimulation are produced by measures as striking of two stones, sprinkling water over face and *Krishnakapalikasoorpa* which may be by reflex stimulation of cardiorespiratory

systems and thus improving the respiratory and heart rate respectively.

### **Garbhodaka Vamana (stomach wash)**

It is a practice by which drugs are administered to the baby so as to make him vomit the aspirated fluid if any. *Acharya Charak* advised use of *Saindhava* and *ghrita* for inducing *vamana* to wash out the gastric contents right after carrying out the *Pichhudharana*. For enabling this process, *Acharya Vagbhata* has even advised use of specific drugs i.e. *Vacha* (*acorus calamus*). According to *Acharya Bhavaprakash*, *Saindhava lavana* has following properties- *swadu, dipanum, pachanum, sheeta, sukshma, netrya, tridoshhara*. *Vacha –katu* and *tikta* in *rasa, ushna virya, vamankaraka, dipanum, mala mutra shodhak* and cures constipation, *adhyamana*. thus the above stated medications are use for clearing stomach of any mucus or secretions.

### **Snana (bath)**

*Acharya Charaka* recommended that after proper stabilization of newborn, *snana* of newborn is to be undertaken. *Acharya Vagbhata* describe *snana*, the first bathing of the newborn in detail and advised *snana* to be done only after proper evaluation of the *doshas, kala* (seasons/periods) and strength of baby. *Vagbhata* also mentioned different *dravyas* for *Snana* as lukewarm *Ksheerivriksha kwatha, Sarvagandha dravyas* medicated water, water in which heated *Rajat, Swarna* have been quenched or in *Kapithapatra kwatha. Ksheerivriksha kashaya* has been proved to be highly antiseptic protecting the baby from infections. The *kwath* is subjected to gentle

heating so as to prevent hypothermia and also to make it aseptic. Despite these benefits, *Snana* immediately after birth is not mandatory. It does not cause any concern even if avoided.

### **Jatakarma (feeding schedule of Neonate)**

*Acharya Charaka* has said that on the first day feed the neonate with *madhu* and *ghrita* which has been sanctified with *Mantras* and thereafter the mother should offer her right breast for feeding to the baby after placing by the side of babys head, an earthen pot filled with water rendered sacred by chanting of *Mantras*. *Acharya Charaka* has advised breast feeding immediately after the birth right from the first day of life which in principle is advocated now a days as well.

*Acharya Sushruta* advised a mixture of *Madhu, Grita* and *Ananta* consecrated with *Mantras* to be administered three times a day on the first day of childbirth. On second and third day *Lakshmana* medicated *Ghrita*, while on fourth day *madhu* and *ghrita* is to be offered to the newborn is to be offered to the newborn in amount which is *Shavapanitalasamitta* (amount which fills the neonate palm). The baby can be exclusively breast fed.

*Acharya Vagbhata* follows *Sushruta's* feeding regimen with a slight variation, where on the fourth day, he has advocated offering *Ghrita* and *Navnita* (butter) to the newborn and thereafter initiating breast feeding.

### **Rakshakarma (protective measures)**

There are various methods that were practiced in ancient times to protect the

neonate from surrounding morbidity-causing factors that included under the term rakshghna karma. All around the *Sutikagara* the twigs of *Adani*, *khadira*, *karakndu*, *pilu*, *parushaka* should be hung and *sarshapa*, *atasi*, *Tandula*, *kan-kanika* should be scattered on its floor. A packet containing *vacha*, *kushta*, *kshom ka*, *hingu*, *sarsapa*, *atasi*, *lasuna*, *guggula* etc. *Rakshoghna dravyas* should be tied around the neck of mother and the child. Well wishing care taking women should be remain vigilant and attentive in the *sutikagara* for the initial 10-12 days.

*Acharya Sushruta* directed the newborn to be wrapped in *kshauma* cloth and made to sleep on a bed covered with soft linen. Twigs of *Pilu-badar-nimba parushaka* are to be used to gently fan the baby. a tampon impregnated with oil should be applied over the baby's forehead daily. Fumigation with *Rakshoghana dravyas* should be done in the *sutikagara*.

*Vagbhatta* has prescribed use of herbs as *Brahmi*, *Indrayana*, *Jivaka* and *Rishbhaka* to be tied around hands or neck of the newborn. Use of *Balvacha*, for it promotes *medha*, *smriti*, health and longevity of the baby. The fumigation of the *sutikagara* by various drugs is mentioned to protect the baby from various infections. The various drus mentioned in *Dhupana karma* have antiseptic and antimicrobial properties. Beds, seats, sheets, and clothes used for the child should be soft, light, clean and pleasant-smelling. Once contaminated with sweat, excreta, germs, urine and feces, these must be discarded or cleaned, dried and fumigated and then reused. The drugs usable

for fumigation for cloths of newborn include *Hordeum vulgare* (*yava*), *Brassica juncea* (*sarshapa*), *Linum usitatissimum* (*atasi*), *Ferula asafetida* (*hingu*), *Commiphora mukul* (*guggulu*), *Acorus calamus* (*vacha*), *Angelica glauca* (*choraka*), *Bacopa monnieri* (*brahmi*), *Nardostachos jatamamsi* (*Jatamamsi*), *Saraca asoca* (*ashoka*), *Picrorhiza kurroa* (*rohini*) etc.

## Conclusion

The various steps described by *Acharya* are close to modern science of principles of neonate care. It means basic principle of neonate care is not changed but various steps of resuscitation are adopted in modern science. *Navjata shishu paricharya* is crucial time as there is shift from highly protected intrauterine environment to extra uterine environment. During this period due to insufficient respiratory adaption there is increase number of neonatal death. In this article *navjata shishu paricharya* (neonatal care) is described by different *Acharyas* which are to be followed from birth to full stability of the newborn.

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