

## CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF SANSKAR IN ASSESSMENT OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

<sup>1</sup>Ingle Nilesh M<sup>2</sup> Fulzele (Ingle) Ashwini

1Asst. Prof. & HOD, Department of Kaumarbhritya, Vidarbha Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Amravati. Email- drimnilesh@gmail.com., 2Asso. Prof., Department of Kayachikitsa, Institute of Ayush Medical Sciences and Hospital, Lucknow.

**Abstract:** Background: *Ayurveda* defines *sanskar* as change in qualities of an individual<sup>1</sup>. These were the rituals performed time to time from ante-natal period, birth till phase of life. Each *sanskar* has its clinical as well as social importance. Out of so many *sanskaras* only eight *sanskar* are important in pediatric practice. Aim: To understand the rationality behind the various *sanskar*. Materials and Methods: All the online and offline literature is screened to understand the concept. Observation and results: From the study of literature it is observed that *Sanskaras* in children provides opportunity to assess their development and is a very useful tool for screening of developmental delay. It is evident from the critical analysis that these *sanskar* along with growth and development parameters forms the collaborative tool for examination of children.

**Keywords :** *Sanskaras*, Growth, Development, Clinical importance etc.

### INTRODUCTION

*Sanskar* (ceremony)are the rituals performed during ante-natal, natal and post natal period as described in *Samhitas*. By virtue of religious importance sixteen to forty *sanskaras*<sup>1</sup> are described in classical texts. But out of them only sixteen *sanskaras* have special importance in the life of an individual and out of sixteen three *sanskaras* are performed in antenatal period, eight *sanskaras* have clinical importance in pediatric age group and remaining five *sanskaras* are described for adult age group.

Present paper is focused only on the eight *sanskaras* of pediatric age group. These *sanskar* are described right from the birth till five years of age. *Sanskaras* represent

periodical assessment of growth and development of child from birth. As the *sanskaras* are performed at specific time or age of child, it gives clear idea regarding growth and development of child. Hence it is important to know and understand the concept behind timing, procedure and their importance shown in particular phase. These rituals events not only hold the socio-cultural importance but also have great medical importance. Hence it is need of the hour to understand their importance and make people aware regarding their positive effect on health of their progeny.

**Aim :** To understand the rationality behind various *sanskaras* from birth to childhood .

**METHODOLOGY**

This is a study based on information from classical texts, various books, research papers, articles obtained online and offline. The whole paper is critical analysis of *sanskaras* to assess their vitality in growth and development of child.

Table 1 : Showing *Sanskaras* their timing and procedure<sup>2,3,4,5,6</sup>.

**OBSERVATIONS**

On the basis of descriptions from *samhita* following observations are drawn in tabulated manner :

| S.N. | <i>Sanskar</i>                             | Timing  | Procedure   |
|------|--|---|---|
| 1.   | <i>Jatkarma Sanskar</i>                    | After birth on First Day  | Honey & Ghee with mantra or Gold as a first feed.   |
| 2.   | <i>Namakaran Sanskar</i>                   | 10 <sup>th</sup> / 12 <sup>th</sup> / 100 <sup>th</sup> day/ 1 year | <i>Nakshatrika</i> (Based on birth planet) and <i>Abhiprayik</i> (desired) name relating to father and grandfather. |
| 3.   | <i>Suryodaya &amp; Chandrodaya Darshan</i> | 1 <sup>st</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> month                            | Child is allowed to see and worship rising sun and moon.  |
| 4.   | <i>Nishkraman Sanskar</i>                  | 4 <sup>th</sup> month   | Child is taken out of <i>Kumaragara</i> for the first time.   |
| 5.   | <i>Upaveshan Sanskar</i>                   | 5 <sup>th</sup> or 6 <sup>th</sup> month                            | Child is allowed to sit in proper manner.   |
| 6.   | <i>Karnavedhan Sanskar</i>                 | 6 <sup>th</sup> /7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup> month             | Piercing of ear to wear ornament and protection.  |
| 7.   | <i>Phalaprasnan/Annaprashan Sanskar</i>    | 6 <sup>th</sup> or 10 <sup>th</sup> month                           | Child is given fruit juices or soft diet in required quantity.  |
| 8.   | <i>Chudakarma Sanskar</i>                  | 1 <sup>st</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> year                             | Child's head is shaved showing value of hygiene.  |
| 9.   | <i>Upanayan sanskar</i>                    | 5 <sup>th</sup> year  | Child is introduced for education officially.   |

## DISCUSSION

### Jatkarma Sanskar

- This *sanskar* can be considered as the birth right of baby as it involves transition from intrauterine life to extra uterine life.
- First feed with ghee and honey given in this ceremony provides the assessment of rooting, sucking and swallowing reflex.
- First feed also promotes the gastrointestinal movements and thereby activates the gut.
- Congenital conditions like cleft palate, esophageal atresia, TOF etc can be screened.
- After assessment of functional maturity of gut, breastfeeding can be initiated which is beneficial for baby and mother too.
- Anti-microbial & immune-modulator properties of honey serves as a gut boon to baby<sup>7</sup>.
- Moreover honey and ghee provides energy to baby even in minute quantity.
- Ghee contains Omega-3 fatty acid and DHA contents of ghee helps in better brain growth and development<sup>8</sup>.
- Use of gold also serves as a booster for immunity, brain power, metabolic power, complexion and strength<sup>9</sup>.

### Naamkaran Sanskar

- This *sanskar* is performed when child surpasses the vulnerable neonatal period (7days after birth) of infections, sepsis, neonatal jaundice etc.
- Thus naming ceremony provides opportunity for examination of neonate with regards to birth trauma, dislocations, facial palsy etc.

- As the baby regains birth weight on tenth day, it provides assessment of growth parameter at early stage.
- Umbilical cord falls off on fifth to tenth day; which bears clinical importance.
- Naming of child is first and foremost step towards identification in family and society.

### Suryodaya & Chandrodaya Darshan

- After one month macular fixation occurs in child and this allows us chance for eye examination.
- The child is exposed to sunlight provides vitamin D<sub>3</sub> and thereby prevents rickets.

### Nishkraman Sanskar

- By the end of 4<sup>th</sup> month child develops neck holding, social smile, recognition of mother, hand eye coordination which can be assessed accordingly.
- Most of the primitive reflexes like Moros, sucking, rooting, tonic neck etc disappear at this age and hence child can be noticed for their persistence if any.
- Child is exposed to external environment especially visual and auditory stimuli and the response to these stimuli can be examined.

### Upaveshan Sanskar

- Assessment of gross motor milestone like sitting with or without support is assessed during this *sanskar*.
- There is development of unidextrous grasp by this age.
- As the toys are introduced during this ceremony, provides visual, auditory and sensory stimulation to child and thereby helps in growth and development of child.

### Karnavedhan Sanskar

- Piercing of ear helps to activate the immune system of child so as to bring the secondary immunity against the several infections<sup>10</sup>.
- The purpose behind this ceremony is to wear ornament in the ear as well for protection against the infections.

### Phalaprashan/Annaprashan Sanskar

- As the breast milk is deficient of vitamin C and iron, introduction of fruit juices and soft helps to provide their adequate amount in children.
- In accordance with modern science weaning of breast milk along with gradual introduction of extra lacteal feeds is described here.
- By this time teeth eruption is started and so this is the best time to introduce light and digestible supplementary feeds.
- This ceremony also helps to develop taste to nutrient feeds and thereby parent should avoid giving junk foods to children.
- This ceremony also offers the assessment of developmental milestones like standing with support, waves byebye, pincer grasp, bisyllabus speech etc.

### Chudakarma Sanskar

- This ceremony gives chance to examine skull for dermatitis, hair growth, microcephaley, wide suture, craniotabes and anterior fontanel.
- This ceremony also establishes the concept of physical hygiene in child.

### REFERENCES

1. Prof. D.N. Mishra, Kaumarbhritya, Chapter six, Kumaro Me Sanskar, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan, Delhi, Revised Edition 2010, P.N. 123.

### Upanayan sanskar

- *Upanayan* or *vedarambha sanskar* is the facility to assess intellectual power of child whether he or she is able to start the education.
- This is the best time to start the child's carrier to develop the intellectual, psychological and personality.
- By this time child learns to walk, run, climb stairs, knows gender, holds pencil, tells story, learns to wear shoes and shocks and toilet training is initiated which can be noted accordingly.
- Thread tied around the waist allows to assess the nutrition of child.

### CONCLUSIONS

From the above discussion we can conclude following conclusions:

- *Sanskaras* or ceremony forms the series of vital events after birth which have social as well as medical importance.
- Their chronological arrangement right from birth forms the systematic examination tool for the growing child.
- Transition of child from intrauterine life to extra uterine life can be successfully completed with these ceremonies.
- The assessment from time to time helps to note the growth and developmental of child and also prevent the developmental disorders or diagnose them at the earliest.
- Thus, along with celebrating these ceremonies at various growth and developmental stages forms the rational guideline to assess child from birth to childhood period.

2. Charaka Samhita with "Charaka-Chandrika" Hindi commentary by Dr. Brahmanand Tripathi, Part 1 and 2, Chaukhambha Surbharati Prakashan, 2000 C.S.Sha8/46,50.

3. Sushruta Samhita with “ Nibandha samgraha”, commentary of Shri Dalhanacharya and “Nyayachandrika Panjika” of Shri Gayadasacharya on Nidanasthana, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Varanasi, 2005 Su.Sha.10/13,49; Su.Su.16/3.
4. Ashtanga Hridaya with commentaries “Sarwanga Sundara” of Arunadutta and “Ayurveda Rasayana” of Hemadri, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Varanasi 2002 A.H.U.1/11,22-23,27, 28-32.
5. Ashtanga Samgraha of Shri Vagbhatt, Hindi commentary by Ravi Dutt Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishathan, 1992 A.S.U.1/10, 27-30,40, 43,44-45, 48, 49.
6. Kashyapa Samhita with “ Vidyotini” Hindi commentary by Shri Satyapala Bhisgacharya, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi, 2004, K.Khi.12/4-5, 15-18, 19-23, K.Su.21.
7. Kalpana S. Joshi, Docosaheaxenoic acid content is significantly higher in Ghrita prepared by traditional Ayurvedic method, J.A.I.M., 2014 Apr-Jun; 5(2): 85-88.
8. Mandal MD, Mandal S. Honey: its medicinal property and antibacterial activity. *Asian Pac J Trop Biomed.* 2011;1(2):154-60.
9. Kashyapa Samhita with “ Vidyotini” Hindi commentary by Shri Satyapala Bhisgacharya, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi, 2004, K.Su.Lehaadhaya.
10. Devendra Prasad Mishra, A study on therapeutic role of karnavedhan (ear piercing) sanskar, IAMJ, Vol-3, Issue-5, may 2015, P.N.-1581-1584.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. P V TEWARI, Kashyap Samhita, English Commentary, Chaukhambha Vishvabharati Varanasi (India), Reprint 2008.
2. Ghai OP, Gupta P and Shah D (2005) Micronutrients in Health and Disease. In: Ghai OP, Gupta P and Pual VK (eds.) Essential Pediatrics, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. CBS Publishers and distributors, New Delhi Bangalore: 119-135
3. Prof. D.N. Mishra, Kaumarbhritya, Chapter six, Kumaro Me Sanskar, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan, Delhi, Revised Edition 2010.