

Dedicated to Lord Dhanvantari and all practitioners of Ayurveda
especially to the living Teacher, beloved Vaidya Vasant D. Lad

National Ayurvedic Medical Association

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Ayurveda for Pre-Conception

“Ayurveda suggests Panchakarma for all expectant parents, but if only one parent can receive the individualized classical purification protocols, it is better the mother benefits. Today’s mother-to-be may be in her forties, have a history of birth control pill use, worked during her menstrual flow or otherwise compromised her hormonal balance.”

Join us to experience how more expectant mothers can prepare a healthier body to help welcome a spiritual soul.

Case History

Amita (a pseudonym) was 44 when she first made an appointment for panchakarma in preparation for her second conception. Her healthy daughter was 2 1/2 years old, had a normal delivery and was nursed until recently. Amita was in a stable marriage with good communication. Both parents were longtime meditators, vegetarians, maintained a healthy daily routine and loving family life.. Amita’s menstrual history was pretty normal: first menstrual period at age 12, regular 28 day cycles, no clotting, no use of tampons, five days flow, some weepiness on her first day, especially alternate months.. Her constitution was pitta dominant and vata secondary; she had a history of minor skin eruptions on the mid-cheek area, especially of the right side. Her ‘artava’ pulses were showing elevation of

hot quality of pitta (the month was September), but no quantitative doshic elevation. She had previous positive experience with panchakarma and was familiar with the preparation and follow-up requirements.

Amita prepared for her panchakarma according to the suggestions given in consideration of her particular case. For example, her internal oleation with homemade organic ghee increased daily until 5T were taken in the morning on first hunger. When she arrived for her first day's treatment she was already glowing and serene. Her conception date had been suggested by the astrologer for the following month. Both parents had been practicing celibacy, understanding its benefits for developing spiritual strength. Her eliminations were normal, tongue was mostly clean with a light coating at the back of translucent white.

Her treatments were gentle, nourishing and meditative giving emphasis to longer and longer shirodhara exposures each day. Each day she returned home to her family home less than an hour away and reported normal basti and sleep. After some weeks she called me with the happy news that she had conceived. Her pregnancy was 40 weeks of normal gestation followed by a normal labor of about eight hours. Her son was born vaginally and the parents observed family religious rituals to welcome the healthy new member. He nursed normally for over a year. He is now in elementary school and much loved by his teachers because of his sweet, loving nature. His constitution is pitta dominant and vata secondary, like his mother.

This best case scenario shows many noteworthy earmarks to consider. One is the hormonal and reproductive history. If there is a history of therapeutic abortion, miscarriage or other trauma, the quality of the menstrual fluid, cyclical timing and endometrial lining may be affected. Also, the 'pralabda' (destiny) karmas are said to influence conception as a whole, while the 'kriyaman' (current) karmas can modify conditions significantly. The sexual history and current degree of happiness enjoyed by the patient in her primary relationship can influence choices for her conception and panchakarma. When considering the artava pulse, one must also consider the 'majja' or nervous system pulse to evaluate the connective tissue

characteristics. This connective tissue or fascia is said to be the storehouse of 'chitta' or our unresolved mental patterns, here involving desire and duty for children.

The importance of observing celibacy during pregnancy and until the child is weaned is one of the most helpful insights from Ayurveda for western mothers and families. This prepares a balance of prana, tejas and ojas at the cellular level of the developing fetus, which in turn prepares a balance of vata, pitta and kapha throughout life. This balance again forms the foundation of confidence, nobility and spiritual service, which all parents wish to endow to their progeny.

A child being born into a spiritually mature extended family has a different experience of emotional unfolding than does a child born into a web of unresolved hurts and traumas.

Case History

Zoe (a pseudonym), age 34, was from a health-oriented family background; her mother had raised three daughters favoring organically grown natural foods. Zoe herself had practiced yoga since her teens and learned of Ayurveda as a means of prevention and cure of disease. When at age 29 she developed leg tremors, she sought the advice of an Ayurvedic practitioner who treated her for vata at each of the three important levels of physical, mental and spiritual. Zoe was considering marrying her longtime boyfriend who had recently proposed. Her tremors increased in anticipation of possibly making a wrong decision. Panchakarma was very effective in eliminating the tremors and helping her gently let go of deep-seated fear simply by becoming aware of its depth.

When Zoe and her husband of then two years wanted to conceive a child, she again sought panchakarma treatment, knowing that her optimum health would strengthen the probabilities of having a healthy child. She was concerned that her tremor tendency may be passed on to her child. The herbs she had been taking for about three years were adjusted to continue

to protect her neuro-muscular system and now to generate a rich endometrium. Her panchakarma dates were carefully chosen in consideration of her menstrual cycle and her conception date. Zoe had used the birth control pills for a few years with a previous fiancé and ceased their use when learning more Ayurveda.

Zoe's treatments utilized rich, nourishing oils, herbs and medicated milk to absorb into her bloodstream. She rested adequately during her treatment days, whereas her daily routine was previously characterized by overwork. Her transformation from one driven by professional attainment to one motivated by offering her life force to another human being was remarkable.

Zoe became pregnant within three months of her panchakarma program and followed her Ayurvedic pre-natal management program along with seeing her OB/GYN. She gave birth vaginally to a lovely full-term daughter, Amelia, now aged 2 yrs, and developing splendidly with her stay-at-home mom. The child takes after the father physically and is unlikely to develop tremors.

This example also brings some important earmarks worth considering. One is the importance of the transformational process that one undergoes while receiving panchakarma. The detoxification and purification process must begin with the current conditions, so if a woman has more unresolved doubts, conflicts or attachments, these must first undergo purification, then her mind and body can become more capable of offering a stabilizing influence to a new soul coming to her family. Another consideration is the relationship between genetic influences and panchakarma. Some deep-seated tendencies may undergo evolutionary change in the spiritual internalization process of self-realization, which can bring a radical light of understanding where unawareness had been.

Respectfully submitted by Jaisri M. Lambert, Ayurvedic Consultant.
604-290-8201 (c); 408-378-2880 (vm) www.ayurveda-seminars.com