



Concept Note

Sutki Masala – A Nepali traditional recipe and effective puerperal health tonic

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ABSTRACT

Health promotion in developing countries like Nepal is almost impossible without developing Ayurveda and incorporating it into the national health care system. Reproduction, child health, maternal nutrition and diet are mentioned in Ayurveda classics. Normal puerperium is six weeks post-delivery period when the maternal system returns to a pre-gravid state. In traditional Nepali culture use of Ayurveda based recipe is popular in different ethnic societies for healthy puerperium & postnatal period. *Methika, Yavani, Nepali Soop, Maricha, Chokada, Madhise Badam, Kaju, Mishri, Jaiphal, Gond, Dalchini, Ghrita, Narikel, Battisa and Khuwa* are the ingredients of Sutkeri Masala. The preparation of the same resembles *Abaleha Kalpana*. Regular use of Sutkeri Masala in the dose of 10 to 20 grams twice daily during the puerperal period helps in the healthy restoration of physiological changes in pregnancy. Sutkeri Masala is safe and time tested traditional Nepali recipe. It is helpful in restoration of changes in pregnancy, prevention of complications in puerperium, lactation promotion and healthy newborn.

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INTRODUCTION

Health promotion in developing countries like Nepal is almost impossible without developing existing traditional medical systems (TRM) and incorporating them into the national health care system. Every traditional medical system has its own concept, quality, principle and philosophy. Nepal is rich in both traditional medical knowledge as well as natural resources. In spite of many developments mainly in the field of healthcare, the traditional medical system is lagging behind because we are losing our century's old cultural-based indigenous knowledge and practices including herbal resources in many ways.

Traditional medical knowledge holders and practitioners, codified literature/ prior arts, non-codified knowledge or practices or technologies, organizations or individuals preserving classical manuscripts and working in the sectors of Ayurveda and Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) are not in the national resource list and they are in a state of erosions/ extinction/ serious threat. Nowadays, MAPs sector is one of the highest revenue-generating sectors due to the high demand for herbal products in the market.

Government organizations, academic institutions, legal institutions/ individuals, research institutions - medical and bio-prospecting research, floral research,

genetic research - individuals from different fields, IT specialists, language specialists are the national stakeholders and also responsible for the work. Significant numbers of traditional healers and their indigenous medical knowledge, recipes, technologies, herbal resources, minerals, animal parts etc. are important components and resources of traditional medicines. Piracy or loss of non-codified knowledge, practices, recipes and other resources is one of the major problems of traditional medicine (Koirala and Khaniya, 2009).

Reproduction, child health, maternal nutrition and diet is mentioned in Ayurveda classics (Sharma, 1994). Normal puerperium is post-delivery six weeks period when the maternal system returns to a pre-gravid state. Management of normal puerperium is the prevention of PPH, Care of bowel and bladder habit, use of iron-folic acid, care of perineum, care of breast, breastfeeding, postpartum exercises, food advice, infant feeding, infant immunization, use of contraception.

INGREDIENTS OF SUTKERI MASALA

The major ingredients of Sutkeri Masala are *Methika, Yavani, Nepali Soop, Maricha, Chokada, Madhise Badam, Kaju, Mishri, Jaiphal, Gond, Dalchini, Ghrita, Narikel, Battisa and Khuwa*. The details of all the ingredients are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Key ingredients of Sutkeri masala with their Latin names

S.No.	Nepali name	English name	Latin name
1.	<i>Methi</i>	Fenugreek	<i>Trigonella foenum-graecum</i> L.
2.	<i>Jvano</i>	Carom/ thyme seed	<i>Thymus vulgaris</i> L.
3.	<i>Nepali Soop</i>	Dill	<i>Anethum graveolens</i> L.
4.	<i>Maricha</i>	Black piper	<i>Piper nigrum</i> L.
5.	<i>Chokada</i>	Date palm/ yellow date	<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i> L.
6.	<i>Madhise Badam</i>	Almond	<i>Prunus dulcis</i> (Mill.) D.A.Webb
7.	<i>Kaju</i>	Cashew nut	<i>Anacardium occidentale</i> L.
8.	<i>Mishri</i>	Rock sugar/Sugar candy	<i>Saccharum officinarum</i> L.
9.	<i>Jaiphala</i>	Nutmeg	<i>Myristica fragrans</i> Houtt.
10.	<i>Gond</i>	Tragacanth/ gum herb	<i>Astragalus adscendens</i> Boiss. & Hausskn
11.	<i>Dalchini</i>	Cinnamon	<i>Cinnamomum verum</i> J. S. Presl
12.	<i>Narival</i>	Coconut	<i>Cocos nucifera</i> L.
13.	<i>Ghiu</i>	Ghee	-
14.	<i>Battisa</i>	Battisa	-
15.	<i>Khuwa</i>	Concentrated milk	-

METHOD OF PREPARATION

First of all, the ingredients are cleaned with water to remove impurities. Thereafter, *Methika*, *Yavani* and *Nepali Soop* are soaked separately for 24 hours and ground separately using a mixer grinder. In addition, *Chokada*, *Narikel*, *Kaju*, *Badam*, *Maricha* and *Dalchini* are also powdered separately. *Gond* is separately fried with *Ghee* (obtained from the churning of butter in a traditional wooden pot) and kept in a pot. The paste of *Methika*, *Soop* and *Yavani* is fried in *Ghee* till it becomes brown red and *Gandha*, *Varna* and *Rasa Utpatti* are also important. During the frying process, *Agni* (fire) should be *Manda* (slow). After frying the above paste, *Kaju*, *Badam*, *Narikel*, *Battisa*, *Khuwa*, *Dalchini* and *Gond* are mixed in it with continuous stirring to make the mixture homogenous. The recipe thus obtained should have a blackish-brown colour with a specific characteristic smell. Once it cools down, store it in an airtight stainless steel container. This recipe should be consumed within 2 months from the date of manufacturing.

CLINICAL USE

Regular use of Sutkeri Masala at the dose of 10 to 20 grams twice daily with milk during the puerperal period helps in the healthy restoration of physiological changes in pregnancy.

DISCUSSION

In traditional Nepali culture use of Ayurveda based recipe is popular in different ethnic societies for healthy puerperium and postnatal period. This practice is useful in the prevention of puerperal complications like puerperal pyrexia, puerperal sepsis, venous thrombosis & breast complications like engorged breast, cracked nipple, retracted nipple, acute mastitis and breast abscess, failing lactation and suppression of lactation. The use of Sutkeri Masala helps to restore the physiological change in pregnancy. During pregnancy valve becomes vascular and hypertrophied; vagina becomes vascular and soft; gravid uterus enlarges (10 ml non-pregnant increases to 3 litres),

undergoes hyperplasia and hypertrophy up to 12 weeks; cervix vascular, edematous and soft; breast increase throughout pregnancy; linea nigra, striae gravidarum and striae albae appear. Pregnant women gain 10 kg weight till term. Cardiac output increases, pulse rate increase by 10/m, femoral venous pressure raises, blood volume increases, red cells increase, ESR increases, tidal volume rises, extracellular water retention; metabolic changes in protein, carbohydrate, lipid, calcium and Iron; nausea, vomiting and loss of appetite in early pregnancy; constipation and GERD in late pregnancy; local immunological suppression specific to fetoplacental tract; lordosis and relaxation of joints by relaxin; maternal hormonal changes in the pituitary and parathyroid; placental hormone- hCG and HPL; steroid hormone- progesterone and estrogen (Down, 2007). Fenugreek (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*) seeds contain mucilage, trigonelline, 4-hydroxyisoleucine, sotonol, diosgenin, luteolin, phenolic acids and protodioscin. Fenugreek has been used in a number of geographical regions worldwide as a galactagogue to increase milk supply and is included in numerous proprietary mixtures promoted to increase milk supply (Drugs and Lactation Database, 2006). Preliminary research in Nepalese kitchen spices for their antibacterial activities shows positive results (Khanal et al., 2013).

CONCLUSION

Sutkeri Masala is safe and time tested traditional Nepali recipe. It is helpful in restoration of changes in pregnancy, prevention of complications in puerperium, lactation promotion and healthy newborn.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author(s) declare(s) no conflicts of interest.

DECLARATION

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