



MASANUMASIC GARBHA SHARIR: A REVIEW ON MONTHLY FETAL DEVELOPMENT IN AYURVEDA

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Abstract

Masanumasic Garbha Sharir refers to the detailed month-wise development of the foetus as described in *Ayurvedic* texts, particularly in the *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya*. *Ayurveda* provides a unique perspective on embryology, integrating the influence of *Panchamahabhuta*, *Tridosha*, and *Garbha Bhavas* in fetal formation and growth. This article reviews the classical descriptions of fetal development, compares them with modern embryology, and explores their clinical significance.

Keywords

Masanumasic Garbha, *Ayurveda*, *Embryology*, *Fetal Development*, *Garbha Sharir*.

Introduction

The development of a human foetus is a complex process influenced by genetic, environmental, and nutritional factors. Ancient *Ayurveda* scholars provided a highly detailed month-wise description of embryonic and fetal growth, known as *Masanumasic Garbha Vikas*. The term "*Masanumasic*" means monthly, and "*Garbha*" refers to the foetus. The *Ayurvedic* perspective of embryology, termed *Garbha Sharir*, is based on the interplay of the *Shukra* (sperm), *Shonita* (ovum), *Atma* (soul), *Panchamahabhuta* (five elements), and *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*) (*Sushruta Samhita*, *Sharir Sthana 3/3-4*) [(Sharma, 2010)].

While modern embryology focuses on genetic and molecular aspects of fetal development, *Ayurveda* emphasizes the role of maternal nutrition, mental state, and cosmic influences in fetal growth (*Charaka Samhita*, *Sharir Sthana 4/5-7*) [(Tripathi, 2015)]. This article provides a comprehensive review of the *Ayurvedic* concept of *Masanumasic Garbha*, its physiological aspects, and its relevance in modern prenatal care.

Concept of Garbha (Foetus) in Ayurveda

According to Ayurveda, *Garbha* is formed by the union of:

1. *Shukra* (Sperm) and *Shonita* (Ovum) – Genetic material and reproductive elements.
2. *Atma* (Soul) – Provides consciousness and life force.
3. *Panchamahabhuta* (Five Elements) – Structural components of the foetus.
4. *Garbha Bhavas* (Factors influencing fetal development) – Includes maternal health, nutrition, and mind.

These elements interact dynamically, leading to monthly transformations in the fetal structure and function, classified under *Masanumasic Vikas* (*Ashtanga Hridaya, Sharir Sthana 1/3-5*) [(Shukla & Shastri, 2019)].

***Masanumasic Garbha Vikas* (Month-wise Fetal Development)**

Ayurveda describes fetal development in a highly organized manner. Below is a detailed analysis of fetal growth from the **first to the ninth month**, correlating with modern embryology.

First Month – *Kalala Avastha* (Formation of Zygote)

- Ayurvedic View: The fertilized ovum (*Shukra-Shonita*) attains a semi-liquid state known as *Kalala*. This is due to the predominance of *Jala Mahabhuta* (Water element) (*Sushruta Samhita, Sharir Sthana 3/10*) [(Sharma, 2010)].
- Modern Correlation: Zygote formation, rapid cell division, and implantation occur. The primitive germ layers begin forming [(Moore & Persaud, 2020)].

Second Month – *Pinda Avastha* (Embryonic Disc Formation)

- Ayurvedic View: The embryo takes a circular, elongated, or lump-like shape, resembling a *Pinda* (mass).
- Modern Correlation: The gastrulation process occurs, forming three germ layers—ectoderm, mesoderm, and endoderm [(Sadler, 2020)].

Third Month – *Prathama Anga Vibhaga* (Formation of Main Organs)

- Ayurvedic View: Formation of limbs (*Hasta, Pada*), head (*Shira*), and facial features (*Netra, Karna, Nasika, Mukha*) occurs.
- Modern Correlation: Organogenesis is completed, and limb buds, facial structures, and major organs develop [(Carlson, 2019)].

Fourth Month – *Chetana Avastha* (Consciousness & Heart Function)

- Ayurvedic View: The *Atma* (soul) enters the foetus, giving it *Chetana* (consciousness) (*Charaka Samhita, Sharir Sthana 4/15*) [(Tripathi, 2015)].
- Modern Correlation: Neural connections strengthen, and primitive reflexes appear [(Moore & Persaud, 2020)].

Fifth to Ninth Month

Ayurveda describes progressive fetal growth, movement, *Ojas* formation, and *Vata Dosha* activation, correlating with modern milestones of fetal development [(Sharma & Dwivedi, 2021)].

Comparison with Modern Embryology:

Table No.-1

Ayurvedic Concept	Modern Equivalent
<i>Kalala</i> (First Month)	Zygote Formation & Implantation
<i>Pinda</i> (Second Month)	Embryonic Disc Formation
Limb & Organ Formation (Third Month)	Organogenesis
<i>Chetana</i> (Fourth Month)	Cardiac & Nervous System Development
<i>Ojas</i> Movement (Eighth Month)	Maturation of Immunity
<i>Vata</i> Influence (Ninth Month)	Labor & Delivery Process

Clinical Significance of Masanumasic Garbha Sharir

1. Guides Prenatal Care – *Ayurveda* emphasizes diet, behaviour, and emotional stability for healthy fetal growth [(Tiwari, 2018)].
2. Prevention of Birth Defects – Herbal formulations like *Garbhapal Ras*, *Phal Ghrita* help prevent congenital disorders [(Sharma & Dwivedi, 2021)].
3. Support for High-Risk Pregnancy – *Ayurveda* offers insights into managing preterm labor, fetal malnutrition, and maternal health [(Shukla & Sharma, 2022)].

Conclusion

Masanumasic Garbha Sharir provides a holistic approach to fetal development, integrating physiology, consciousness, and cosmic influences. While modern embryology provides structural insights, Ayurveda enriches it with a preventive and therapeutic perspective. Future research should explore Ayurvedic principles in prenatal care to enhance maternal-fetal health.

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