



## PHYSIOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF *GARBHA*, *BALA* & *KUMARAVASTHA*, AND THEIR SUSCEPTIBLE DISORDERS

Dr. Nilesh Dileep Rao Deshmukh<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Abhijit Ankush Nikam<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Mangesh Ganpat Dimbale<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, Kaumarbhitya Department, RIARCH MAYANI, Dist; Satara, Maharashtra, India.

<sup>2</sup>Assoc. Professor, Kriya Dept., RIARCH MAYANI, Dist; Satara, Maharashtra, India.

<sup>3</sup>Assoc. Professor, Sawakar Ayurved Medical College, Dist; Satara, Maharashtra, India.



\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Nilesh Dileep Rao Deshmukh

Associate Professor, Kaumarbhitya Department, RIARCH MAYANI, Dist; Satara, Maharashtra, India.

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### ABSTRACT

Ayurveda offers a holistic model of understanding the sublime stages of life for childhood age commencing with *Garbha Avastha* to *Balyavastha* and finally *Kumaravastha* before the adult age. Each stage is ascribed to different physiology and pathology, inducting importance for maternal health, nutrition and preventive health care. The underlying approach is that the suppression of the factors promoting disorders related to the *Garbha Avastha*, *Balyavastha* and *Kumaravastha*. *Balyavastha* is known as the golden age of growth and learning. In *Balyavastha* there is a concerted holism for physical, mental, emotional and social development but with notable proclivity to a multitude of factors which influenced the developmental attainment. *Kumaravastha* is early growth stage related to early childhood age which witnessed many physiological changes inside the body. These different stages of early human life considered susceptible for many pathological conditions due to the diminished state of immunity. *Phakka Roga*, *Balshosha* and *Karshya*, etc. are major illnesses associated with *Balyavastha* and *Kumaravastha*.

**KEYWORDS:** *Ayurveda*, *Garbha Avastha*, *Balyavastha*, *Kumaravastha*, *Kaumarbhitya*.

### INTRODUCTION

Human development is a lifelong, open-ended ongoing process from the moment of conception to death that happens through various stages of development, each with its own physiological, psychological, and social factors influencing each stage of life. Developmentally, the *Garbha Avastha*, or gestational phase, is considered "fundamental" to life, as maternal nourishment, lifestyle and mental state are critical determinants of the fetus's health, constitution, and longevity, and moreover, the complexity of machine-human relationships.<sup>[1-3]</sup> This stage also has disorders, termed *Garbhini Vyapada*, including complications with the pregnancy itself including gestational diabetes, edema and *Garbha Srava*. The *Balyavastha* or childhood stage is another stage of early development phase. This stage witnesses rapid growth and learning phase of emotional development and social learning. However, during this developmental stage, children are often burdened with nutrition problems like Vitamin D deficiency, recurrent infections, dental issues and behavior problems, etc.<sup>[4-6]</sup>

#### *Garbha Avastha*

*Garbha Avastha* is the stage of life in the uterus, in time that the embryo/fetus exists and develops until birth at delivery. The time when the embryo/fetus develops it

builds both physical as well as mental qualities. The mother's *Ahara* and *Vihara* will determine and impact fetal growth, strength, complexion and longevity. Ayurveda explains fetal creation and development in terms of two concepts, *Panchamahabhuta Samyoga* and *Shad Bhavas*. The first *Panchamahabhuta Samyoga* begins with the five elements *Prithvi*, *Ap*, *Tejas*, *Vayu* and *Akasha* coming together to create the tissues and organs for the growing fetus.<sup>[5-7]</sup> The second, *Shad Bhavas*, explains the main contributors to the fetus development and growth. Miscarriage and preterm issues are explained as *Garbha Srava*, indicating spontaneous abortion or miscarriage. Fetal growth abnormalities are expressed through *Garbha Sankocha* or *Garbha Sosha*, which align with intrauterine growth restriction or fetal resorption. *Aparanambu Vyapada* refers to retained placenta, indicating improper expulsion after delivery. Lastly, other complications such as *Mutra-Kychhra* describe painful urination or urinary tract infections during pregnancy.<sup>[6-8]</sup>

#### *Balyavastha*

*Balyavastha* usually begins when infancy is complete until the commencement of adolescence. In this stage children will start the formal education process, establish social skills by establishing groups or friendships, and

learn how to combine a playful attitude with an understanding of the real world. It usually begins an ending time line after the end of infancy and includes all children between the ages of approximately 6 to 12 years of age. As the second stage of child development, it is very important for laying grounds for children for their development in future life stages. Children in childhood will establish significant social bonds with friends and camaraderie with their peers which could lead to connection groups. Childhood marks the beginning of formal education and is often considered the “golden period” of life, as it lays the foundation for personality, education, values, and social behavior.

Distinctive features of this stage include physical changes such as height, weight, and bone development as well as mental, emotional, social, and personality

development, where curiosity, problem-solving, emotional regulation, cooperation, and social values become prominent. This is also the stage where children begin to establish gender roles, social identity, and aspirations for the future. From an Ayurvedic perspective, *Bala Avastha* is recognized as a delicate phase of growth and vulnerability. Children are considered prone to *Bala Rogas*, which often manifest as infections, nutritional deficiencies and developmental disorders.<sup>[5-7]</sup>

Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of *Agni* and *Ojas* in safeguarding health, since children of this age group are particularly susceptible to nutritional deficiencies, worm infestations, fevers, respiratory illnesses, dental problems and behavioral disturbances (**Table 1**).

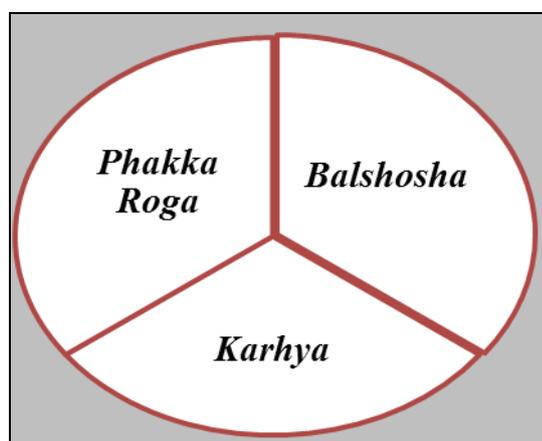
**Table 1: Diseases related to the *Bala Avastha*.**

Category	Specific Diseases/Disorders
Nutritional & Growth	<i>Kṣhaya / Balakṣhaya</i>
Infectious Diseases	<i>Jvara, Kasa &amp; Shvasai</i> and <i>Krimi Roga</i>
Dental Problems	<i>Dant Harṣa</i>
Developmental & Behavioral	<i>Manasika Vyadhi</i>
Respiratory & Allergic	<i>Tamaka Shvasa</i>
Gastrointestinal	<i>Atisara, Grahani</i> and <i>Krimi</i>

### ***Kumaravastha***

*Kumaravastha* is children phase of great growth and development with some vulnerability. *Kumaravastha* is associated with many diseases such as *Phakka Roga*, when a child has been unable to stand or walk following the first year. Predominance of *Kapha Dosha* has led to problems such as *Balshosha* and *Karshya*. *Kaumarabhritya* is the branch of Ayurveda that deals

with pediatrics nutrition, growth, and development for children in *Kumaravastha*. *Kumaravastha* shows noteworthy development of physical strength and cognitive skills. The major diseases of *Kumaravastha* are depicted in **Figure 1**. *Phakka Roga* is a nutritional disorder, very similar to rickets; *Balshosha* persistent wasting of the body and *Karshya* is excessive thinness or emaciation in the child.<sup>[7-9]</sup>



**Figure 1: Disease of *Kumaravastha*.**

Ayurveda recognizes a balanced diet and appropriate lifestyle practices as a means of supporting, maintaining, and optimizing all possible aspects of health during the *Kumaravastha* stage, and through the early stages of a child's life.

### **Ayurvedic Drugs for *Bala Roga***

*Bala Roga* management in Ayurveda is non-invasive, developmentally appropriate, and emphasizes nourishment of *Agni* and *Ojas*. For growth and immunity, *Swarna Prashana*, *Chyavanaprasha Avaleha* and *Bala Ghrta* are recommended traditionally. For any issues related to digestion and/or anything with worms, *Vidanga Churna*, *Pippalyadi Ghrta* and *Krmighna Vati*,

etc. suggested. For cough, cold or respiratory disease, *Sitopaladi Churna*, *Vasa Avaleha* and *Kantakari Ghrta* are common. In the case of fever, *Sudarshana Churna*, *Guduchi Satva* and *Parpatadi Kwatha* are advised, whereas diarrhea and digestive weakness is handled with *Kutajarishṭa* and *Musta Churna*. For growth impairment *Ashvagandhadi Leha*, *Bala Churna* and *Kalyanaka Ghrta* are prescribed.<sup>[3, 5, 8-10]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Ayurveda's understanding of *Garbha Avastha*, *Balyavastha* and *Kumaravastha* reflects the wholeness of human life from fetal development to years of childhood growth. The prenatal phase of life emphasizes maternal health as the basis for fetal health. In a child's growth phase of life, the nutritional and immune aspects of development and a healthy lifestyle can enable the maturation of life to its full potential. While the diseases described in the Ayurvedic texts, such as *Phakka Roga* and *Balshosha*, etc. are common health issues of this stage. Ayurveda advocates preventive medicine, while assisting and guiding mothers and developing pediatric protocols to their children. In this context Ayurveda described many traditional formulations for the management of *Bala Roga*. These formulations nourish *Agni*, boost immunity and balances *Dosha* thus provide therapeutic advantages in the management of *Bala Roga*.

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