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A Review On Foods Avoid During Pregnancy

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Abstract

Pregnant women carry the prospect of losing their child when poisoned by various foods in their minds which does prevent their future children from being born on an unfortunate start. Varieties of foods such as papaya, pineapple, fenugreek, sesame seeds, and even fishes are marketed as risky during pregnancy months. However, such a perception is dangerous as avoiding such foods might leave one deficient in nutrients like iron, calcium, folic acid, and protein. This can lead to a chain of events that result in a person suffering from anemia, underweight or even being born before the due time. The review underlines the significant responsibility of health professionals in combatting harmful food assumptions. By using culturally accentuated methods of teaching, they can encourage pregnant women to optimum for a healthier option without shying away. The paper recommends that cultural factors related to health should be integrated into policies in order to promote the well-being of mothers as well as the fetus.

KEYWORDS

Foods, pregnancy, miscarriage, fetus, nutrients, health benefits.

INTRODUCTION

Antenatal nutrition is a very important for the health of both the mother and the fetus, in a pregnancy increases the need for nutrients. However, cultural and language differences in the region influence food habits. Many peoples avoid eating foods like papayas, pineapple, fenugreek, sesame seeds, certain spices, and chicken because they believe these can cause miscarriage or harm the fetus. Avoiding these foods can lead to poor nutrition, which may cause problems like anemia, low birth weight, and preterm births.

Factors like income, education, and health knowledge also play a big role in what pregnant women eat. This review aims to explore why certain foods are avoided during pregnancy, focusing on cultural, social, and psychological reasons. It also looks at how health professionals can help manage these practices and develop culturally appropriate strategies to improve nutrition for mothers and fetus. Understanding these factors is important for creating better policies to improve maternal and fetus health

PAPAYA

Introduction

How Unripe Papaya Affects Pregnancy

Papaya is a tropical fruit that is native to Mexico and South America, it is among the most consumed fruit in India and there are a range of health benefits to this tropical fruit. It is cheap, easily available, and used in a raw form as a vegetable. But according to scientific studies, raw papaya particularly has the ability to induce miscarriage hence this affects the pregnant women and hence there is an impact on the pregnancy hormones.[1]

Why Raw Papaya May Induce a Miscarriage

Papaya contains the enzyme “papain” which is an active drug and can adversely impact an ongoing pregnancy by lowering progesterone levels. Furthermore, papain is also known to dissolve the cervical plug and stimulates the uterine contractions, this may increase the chances of miscarriage[2]

Scientific Research:

Most of the research conducted on animals such as mice and rats provides evidence that the extract of papaya when ingested has the potency to increase uterine contractions and constrict or completely absorb an embryo through the walls of the embryo. Raw papaya has also shown to advance estrogen levels while inhibiting progesterone, due to this the chances of disruption of the pregnancy hormones are relatively high.[3]

For Cultures: In some regions of Asian countries, the use of raw papaya has been known to serve the purpose of contraception.[4]

Ripe Papaya:

Pregnant women should exercise caution this should avoid unripe or raw papaya. On a bright side when the papaya is ripe and well cooked it is free from the compounds that disturb pregnancy.[5]

Conclusion In a nutshell, there are many health benefits to consuming ripe papaya but care should be taken during pregnancy by consuming unripe or raw papaya as it has risks assigned to consuming it and that can disturbance the pregnancy.



Fig no : 1

PINEAPPLE

Nutritional Content of Pineapple

Pineapple (*Ananas comosus*) is a richer in several vitamins such as vitamin C and includes additional trace elements like dietary fibers and manganese among other micronutrients. Because vitamin C is critical for collagen formation and iron metabolism, it is beneficial for immune function. Additionally antioxidants from pineapple may decrease the extent of oxidative stress and inflammation [6][7]

Bromelain in Pineapple

Bromelain is a complex of proteolytic enzymes that are obtained primarily from the stem and fruit of the pineapple plant. It is thought to control anti-inflammatory and digestive effects. In therapeutically, bromelain has been employed for various conditions such as inflammation, sinusitis, and gastrointestinal problems. However, pregnancy has raised alarm about the possibility that bromelain may induce contraction of the uterus.[8][9]

Potential Risks of Bromelain During Pregnancy

Bromelain naturally occurs in pineapples, and it is thought that Fig no in high amounts it could act on the smooth muscle of the uterus to trigger early contractions. Studies in animals have indicated that bromelain may have some effect on uterine contraction. It was also shown that this enzyme was proteolytic, meaning it has the property of degrading protein. Effects of bromelain on uterine contractions are hypothesized to be related to the proteolytic ability of bromelain. More studies are required to fully understand the percentages, risks, effects of bromelain on the uterine smooth muscle. As extant there about, extremely well care should eat taken toward the use of bromelain supplements because of their possible impairment of uterine functions, especially while in pregnancy. Although, while bromelain concentrations within fresh pineapple can be low, oral uptake is highly minor.[10][11]



Fig no 2 : Pineapple

FENUGREEK

Although methi is one of the oldest known medical herbs, acceptable research in India and abroad is currently unmasking new facets of its possible biomedical merit in terms of diabetes and high cholesterol commonly involved in coronary heart disease diseases that plague most industrial societies. Methi has been used as a food and a medicine in many different cultures, especially in Asia and the Mediterranean. Ayurvedic texts and Greek and Latin pharmacopoeia speak of medicinal value in its seeds. While Ayurvedic texts praise this herb for its aphrodisiac properties, the present Vaidya's seem to use it in cases of digestive and respiratory distress due to excessive kaph (phlegm) and vat (wind). It was used in ancient Egypt for the relief of childbirth pains and of promoting milk flow modern Egyptian women still employ it for relief from menstrual cramps, also brewing it as hilba tea for other kinds of abdominal pain. The Chinese call it hu lu ba, and, just like everyone else, use it for the treatment of abdominal pain.[12]



Fig no 3 : Fenugreek

Fenugreek avoid during pregnancy

Methi, or fenugreek, is a powerful herb used in traditional medicine practices for many years. According to some western herbalists, methi is used in cases of prolonged labour since it is a uterine stimulant. But again, there's always the caution to consider while using methi for pregnant women because of possible risks. Ayurvedic texts also advise against the use of methi during pregnancy but emphasize its positive effects on the

uterus, making it useful in the treatment of various menstrual disorders. These disorders include absence of blood, irregular menstrual cycles, and painful menstruation. Methi's regulation of the menstrual cycle and relief from discomfort have made it a favorite in natural remedies. However, the best thing to do before taking methi or any herbal supplement is to seek consultation from a healthcare provider in case one is pregnant or breastfeeding to ensure both mother and baby are safe and healthy.[13]

Menstruation

Ayurvedic texts also avoid the use of methi during pregnancy, but describe that effect of the herb on uterus makes it useful in a vast range of menstrual. Ayurvedic texts are ancient Indian medical texts. Not only do they advise against the consumption of methi during pregnancy but also show its potential benefits in handling different menstrual disorders. Methi is believed to affect the uterus, making it an invaluable herb in the cases of absent menstrual blood, irregular menstruation, and painful periods. These texts stress therapeutic applications of the herb about the regulation and balancing of a woman's menstrual cycle, although caution is taken due to its adverse effects on women when used during pregnancy and usually not recommended because it impacts the reproductive system of the female. Always seek a well-trained health care practitioner or qualified Ayurvedic expert, if any herb or dietary supplement is considered to take. Especially, it holds during pregnancy.[14]

Lactation

Methi, also known as fenugreek, has been researched to have a positive impact on nursing mothers by stimulating an increase in their milk supply. This natural remedy has been traditionally used to support lactating women in enhancing the flow of breast milk. With the inclusion of methi seeds in their diet, mothers can experience the benefits of this herbal solution. Bakhru, an expert in global medicine, recommends new mothers take small, regular doses of methi after delivery to help ease the recovery process. According to Bakhru, one popular method is to roast the methi seeds in ghee and then grind them into a fine paste. This paste can be mixed with flour and sugar to make a nourishing halwa. By following these simple steps, a mother can help her body to recover in the proper way after delivery, improving the well-being of both of them. This natural process provides a simple and traditional methodology for women to help their body in postpartum conditions and breastfeeding.[15]

SESAME SEEDS

Introduction:

Sesame seeds, also called *Sesamum indicum*, are the oldest oilseed crops. These seeds have other names like gingelly, til, benne, or bene. Sesame seeds are available in different colors such as white, yellow, black, and red.

Nutrients :

Sesame seeds are nutrient-rich foods that carry essential nutrients, such as calcium, iron, folic acid, and magnesium. You will benefit from consuming sesame seeds during pregnancy as part of a healthy, well-balanced diet both for you and your unborn baby. Sesame seeds can be added to salads, homemade energy bars, or curries to add

nutritional value to the meal. However, the overall intake of it should be kept to the limit so that their over-intake does not pose adverse effects. Cold-press sesame seeds oil is another addition in pregnancy diet through sesame seeds.^[16]



Fig no 4 : sesame seed

Sesame seeds avoid during pregnancy:

The seeds are known to create a common misconception that they can cause miscarriage. According to Tara Gidus, a nutrition advisor for American baby magazine in her book, “Pregnancy Cooking and Nutrition for Dummies,” certain foods bring reduced heat that could harm the baby. Gidus added that there is no science that proves this and that sesame should not be avoided; therefore, it should be taken in moderation during pregnancy.

Overconsumption of sesame seeds may overwork the uterus, which in turn leads to increased risk of abortion. Also, because the first trimester is **the** most precarious period of pregnancy, it is recommended not to ingest them during this period. Various pregnant women in the world consume til and til products without adverse reactions and there is no scientific evidence suggesting that the pregnancy miscarriage.

Various Side effects cause to consuming sesame seeds during pregnancy:

In First trimester Pregnancy should be delicate to consuming excessive amount of sesame seed during pregnancy.[16]

BRINJAL (EGG PLANT)

Introduction

Brinjal is common and inexpensive among all vegetables. The taste of this vegetable is loved by many and is integral to making several delectable dishes. This versatile vegetable is an excellent choice for cooking in several ways to prepare some delicious dishes. This vegetable also incorporates several good phytonutrients such as antioxidant agents, vitamins, flavonoids, and minerals, thus feeding healthy into our diet. This vegetable has certain capabilities of health benefits, from helping treat insomnia, stomach gas, congestion, and malaria to

aiding digestion. However, brinjal has mostly been avoided in the diets of pregnant women. Ayurvedic texts themselves seem to suggest limiting its intake in this regard[17]



Fig no 5 : Brinjal (egg plant)

Brinjal avoid during pregnancy

The Ayurvedic texts recommend limiting the consumption of brinjal. Brinjal (egg plants) have a rich content of phytohormones, which can help treat premenstrual syndrome and amenorrhea. Brinjal acts as a diuretic. If taken excessively on a regular basis, it can stimulate menstruation, which is the other reason pregnant women should avoid them. This is one of the primary reasons behind the avoidance of brinjal during pregnancy.[18]

The brinjals are said to be harmful to pregnant women because they are rich in nitrates. Nitrate is a chemically occurring ion (NO_3^-) in the environment. In food, it is normally found in its nitrated form. The ingested nitrate ion may cause several health issues. Such is the case for infants, pregnant women, and those with low stomach acid levels. Eggplants (brinjals) are loaded with properties that induce menstruation. These properties that come with brinjals may also induce abortion. Even those are also not good which makes acidity problems that is why it is said that the women should avoid eating the brinjal in the pregnancy.[19]

Some Others Foods Avoid During Pregnancy

Pregnant women should avoid certain types of fish and shellfish to reduce the risk of mercury exposure and harmful bacteria and viruses. Large, predatory fish like swordfish, shark, king mackerel, and tilefish are high in mercury. Raw fish and shellfish, including oysters, sushi, sashimi, and uncooked seafood, should also be avoided. Cold-smoked or cured fish should be cooked until steaming hot. Local fish should be consumed according to local advisories, and if advice isn't available, a weekly limit of 6 sprinkling should be maintained.[20]

Pregnant women should avoid taking aloe vera orally because it can increase the risk of miscarriage, early labor, and other complications:

Latex: The latex in aloe vera contains anthraquinones, which can stimulate the uterus and cause premature labor or miscarriage. Aloe latex can also cause kidney damage, bloody diarrhea, and electrolyte imbalance.

Juice: Aloe vera juice can lower blood glucose levels, which can be dangerous for people with gestational diabetes.[21]

Table 1 : list of foods ,that can affect on pregnancy.

Sr. No	Foods	Chemical constituents	Effect
1	Papaya	Papain	These are reduce the progesterone level and endometrial thickening.
2	Pineapple	Bromelain	Soft endometrial tissue and cervix induces early labour leading to miscarriage.
3	Fenugreek	Saponin	Oxytocin mimics the action and preterm labour induces
4	Sesame seed	Estrogen like substance	Substance that competes with estrogens at trophoblastic binding sites, leading to reduced trophoblastic growth and decreased production of human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG).
5	Brinjal	Phytohormones	It induces early menstruation and poses a risk during early pregnancy.
6	Aloe Vera	Aloe Vera latex or anthraquinones	Latex is also believed to potentially cause birth defects in the fetus. It may lead to miscarriage or induce menstruation.

CONCLUSION

Pregnant women are missing out on food for reasons other than keeping their pregnancy safe. Such a plight will, however, deny them many important nutrients like iron, calcium, protein, and folic acid. The mothers and babies will both suffer from its health effects like anemia, low birth weight during delivery, and premature births. Many women would also avoid papaya, pineapple, fenugreek, sesame seeds, and brinjal under the pretext that they cause uterine contractions or find their mention in a good myth about miscarriage. However, there is no evidence on their part as well. The more evidence-based condition would have reduced the nutrient intake unnecessarily. The other bracket of role models is formed out of the health care providers in the dispelling of the wrong impressions and proper understanding for pregnant mothers on nutrition in a culturally acceptable

manner. Traditional beliefs, when combined with the evidence-based practices, can paint a nice picture of good maternal and child health.

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