

Reflect on the Ancients' Fertility Cares in the Medical-related Murals

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Abstract: The medical-related murals show a lot of aspects of traditional medicine concerning pregnancy cares and taboos activities, which including women's preparation for pregnancy, psychological regulation during pregnancy, diet regulation and many other contents are worthy of reference for couples of the right age who advocate eugenics. Chinese medicine, which focuses on harmonious coexistence between human being and nature, is also reflected in the all process of giving birth to new life.

This is the best wish which is to breed a healthy baby for every couple of the right age. Medical-related murals refer to frescos that painted on immovable cultural relics, such as Mogao Grottoes of Dunhuang in Gansu Province and other cave temples, which showing ancient medical related content. These pictures are a treasure trove of materials for studying the living conditions of ancient society.

The murals depict a large number of real-life precautions such as reproductive health theories and contraindications during pregnancy in traditional medicine. For example, the Buddhist story painting painted in Cave 290 of the Northern Zhou of the Mogao Grottoes, that vividly shows the whole process of ancient couples of childbearing ages from preparation for pregnancy, health-care during pregnancy to delivery. As the witness of recording ancient historical life, the conditioning methods and behavior taboos that used by the ancients displayed in the murals may provide reference for the theory of eugenics in modern society [1].

1. Physical Conditioning before Pregnancy

The quality and character of offspring determined by the constitution of both spouses. Constitution is determined by both congenital inheritance and acquired nutrition, and is also affected by long-term living conditions and working environment. Therefore, only when both husband and wife participate in physical adjustment, can they have a healthy foundation for pregnancy. The idea of physique originated from the Neijing. The theory of physique in traditional Chinese medicine has gradually developed and improved, identifying different constitutions, and

carrying out individual conditioning and improvement of physical bias, which has achieved the role of preventing diseases and strengthening physical fitness.

The good psychological state of women during pregnancy preparation can promote the healthy uterine environment and endocrine conditions, which create a healthy growth environment for the fetus. At the same time, combined with traditional Chinese medicine conditioning, five-element music therapy, and appropriate aerobic exercise, etc., all good results could be achieved. Liver is congenital foundation for woman. Menstruation is mainly related to women's liver and kidney functions and Chong Ren meridians, therefore, in the late period of menstruation, it should nourish kidney yin, nourish blood and soften liver; During menstruation, warming the kidney and activating blood circulation can promote ovulation, replenishing kidney and filling sperm in the early menstrual period, and regulating qi and blood circulation during the menstrual period, so as to achieve the purpose of tonifying the kidney and regulating liver and menstruation. Traditional Chinese medicine believes that "movement gives birth to yang", women who are trying to get pregnant should appropriately strengthen physical exercise, which can strengthen their physique, gentle activities such as jogging, yoga, walking, etc., and try to choose a moderate time of sunshine, such as getting up in the morning to noon[2].

Huatuo's Zhongzang classic said: "Liver deficiency and cold will lead to hard and painful in the below costal region, and eye blindness and nose pain, the symptoms of aversion to cold similar as malaria, and no appetite for food, Woman with menstrual disorders." Women who are trying to get pregnant should also keep their bodies to avoid cold and cold-evil injuries and pay attention to keeping warm. Men also need to maintain a good psychological state and living habits during this period. First of all, men should pay attention to physical conditioning. They should not only take proper exercise, maintain sufficient energy and improve their physical quality, but also change their bad living habits and try to avoid physical harm caused by changes in the external environment, such as environmental pollution, toxicity, radiation and other hazards, so as to improve sperm quality.

Secondly, men should adjust their emotions and mentality, be able to correctly perceive the anxiety and worry caused by women in the process of preparing for pregnancy for the long pregnancy period they are about to face, and should to understand the psychological changes of their wives in a timely manner, positive enlightenment and emotional counseling, assume the responsibility of the husband, and give her a sense of security, this transmission of positive energy will benefit the healthy growth of the fetus in the mother's body.

Both sides of pregnancy preparation should, on the premise of understanding their own physique, conduct targeted diet conditioning and protect their bodies from diseases or injuries, which are conducive to pregnancy[3].

2. Timing of Pregnancy Preparation

Chinese medicine believes that eugenics and fertility are related to the age of childbearing, that early or late childbearing is not conducive to the health of offspring, so the timing of pregnancy is very important. In Chinese medicine theory that combination of the parental essence is the primary substance for the formation of fetus, just as the interaction between the celestial qi and terrestrial qi. Therefore, the conception of the fetus should follow the seasons pathogens too[4].

Summer is the hottest season of the year, that it is also the time when the human body's qi and blood both are most vigorous, so it is also the right time when it is easier to get pregnant. The month recorded in the Book of the Later Han Dynasty. Law and Calendar Annals corresponds to the solar term. The "April" in the calendar used in the Han Dynasty is "Beginning of Summer" and "Grain Buds" calendar. Carry out the overall conditioning of the whole body from the aspects of

spirit, qi and blood, yin and yang, so that the body can achieve the best pregnancy state of yin and yang balance[5].

At this time, women preparing for pregnancy should pay attention to regulating the spleen and stomach, avoid eating too many cold, spicy, hot and other biased foods, of course avoid greasy and excessive nourishing. It is advisable to use medicated diet to slowly regulate and supplement, so as to avoid damaging the balance of yin and yang in the body and missing the best time for pregnancy.

3. Pregnancy Health

3.1. Psychological Adjustment

In the diagnosis of traditional Chinese medicine theory has “A fair face cannot have a crabbed heart” means that internal organs and emotional lesions must be reflected on the appearance, and a series of symptoms will appear; There are similar theories in the treatment and prevention of diseases, and the most typical application is the regulation of mental health of pregnant women. Fetal education is not idealism. Modern medicine has also proved that the fetal nervous system and brain development are closely related to the maternal mood, mood, personality, etc.

Pregnant women should be open-minded and optimistic. The emotions of anger, sorrow and joy should be controlled to maintain the normal growth environment of the fetus. The fetus can feel the words and deeds of the pregnant woman in the mother. It is suggested that the pregnant woman should pay attention to etiquette and give the fetus good "fetal education".In the Records of the Grand Historian [6]has a documentation that during Tairen's pregnancy whom the King Wen of Zhou's mother paid attention to etiquette, dignified and elegant manners, and had a gentle and generous temperament, and gave birth to a son King Wen who was intelligent and strong and had high morals.

The medicine classic Qianjin Fang [7] of the Tang Dynasty's further improved the theory of fetal education, pointing out that pregnant women must adjust their mind and emotions, introvert and calm, etc., all emphasizing the influence of pregnant women's temperament on the fetus. Traditional Chinese medicine theory emphasizes respecting and adapting to the laws of nature, only in this way can people's spirit and body remain normal. The fetus and the mother are closely connected, and only when the mother is active and healthy, the fetus in the abdomen can be affected by positive energy and grow healthily.

In Figure 1, the mural depicts the Mahamaya whom is the mother of Shakyamuni during pregnant is enjoying lotus garden, walking in the forest, which could be cultivating her sentiments. It can be seen that the ancients attached great importance to the application of fetal education theory. Essentially, traditional Chinese medicine 's view on nature is humanistic view, which reflects the respect for life and nature, and advocates the harmonious coexistence of man and nature, further is reflected in many details of Chinese's daily life, including the impact of environmental on the developing fetus. The Chinese view on nature is humanistic view.

The accompaniment and care of family members at different stages of pregnancy is also very important, which can provide psychological comfort while ensuring the safety of pregnant women. The husband's participation in family affairs during pregnancy can alleviate women's psychological anxiety caused by physical changes, and the happy family atmosphere can make pregnant women psychologically stable and conducive to fetal development (Figure 2 and Figure 3).



Figure 1: Cave 290 of the Mogao Grottoes (Northern Zhou)- enjoying lotus.



Figure 2: Cave 290 of the Mogao Grottoes (Northern Zhou)-The husband is involved in caregiving.



Figure 3: Cave 296 of the Mogao Grottoes (Northern Zhou)-Weimiao Bhiksuni jataka story(Weimiao went back to her mother's house with her husband before giving birth for relax).

3.2. Regulation of Diet

Diet and nutrition are the material conditions to ensure the health of the mother and the growth and development of the fetus. Pregnant women should pay attention to their physical condition, choose diet reasonably, and appropriately supplement nutrients and trace elements according to the needs of the fetal development process to ensure the safety of mother and child. The ancients were meticulous about women's health care and diet, which can be used for reference according to the modern lifestyle.

Xu Zhicai of the Northern Qi Dynasty pointed out in the *Yangtai Fang* that was pointed out that in the early pregnancy, "the diet should be exquisite, sour and sweet, easy to eat, barley can be eaten, and less hearty and pungent", and in the middle pregnancy, "rice and wheat, beef and mutton soup, harmonize the five tastes, and the food is sweet"(Figure 4). In the Qing Dynasty obstetrics

monograph *Da Sheng*, the author summarized the diet of pregnant women that should be three suitable and three not appropriate, the food's taste should be flat and not of the strong, should be light and not turbid, and should be warm-natured and not pungent heat.



Figure 4: Cave 474 of the Mogao Grottoes (Middle Tang period)-diversify their diet.

Chinese medicine believes that greasy foods such as sweet and spicy are easy to produce dampness-evil and heat-evil, which make the fetus hypertrophy and difficult to deliver. Therefore, eat more fresh fruits and vegetables to increase the supply of natural vitamins to ensure a balance of energy and nutrients to meet the needs of the mother and fetus. In addition, the ancients also said that "alcohol can harm the fetus", so alcohol should be avoided during pregnancy. Yan Chunxi of Qing Dynasty physician in his medicine book *Tai Chan Xin Fa* recorded that believes that people's spiritual emotions can affect the function of Qi and blood in the viscera, and pregnant women's emotions and states can also affect the fetus. Advocate pregnant women to take care of their temperament, calm mind, mind at ease, optimistic.

Secondly, medication should be used cautiously during pregnancy. If the drug must be used during pregnancy, it must also be determined whether the prescription is appropriate after the doctor examines the severity of the disease and measures the drug, the amount of medicine needs to be moderate and mildly medicinal effect, and also should determine whether the drug is symptomatic according to the patient's condition. Must be stop the drug once the patient recovers, so as not to harm the fetus.

3.3. External Environment

Women are pregnant for a long time, they should have regular life, moderate work and rest, pay attention to climate and environmental changes during pregnancy, and reduce the chance of feeling external pathogens. Be careful to avoid potential physical harm and emotional fluctuations caused by external stimuli.

The living environment needs to be kept relatively clean, and the outdoor environment activities with fresh air are selected to keep the body functioning well, which is not only conducive to the growth of the fetus in the abdomen, but also conducive to the late production. Pregnant women must be accompanied at night. They can take a comfortable rest position to reduce the discomfort during pregnancy, keep the living room quiet and warm, and avoid disturbance and noise. In terms of daily life, people should adapt to the changes of the four seasons climate, add clothing in time, and reduce the environment and weather mutations and other four seasons evil invasion of the

human body, and also advocates rest, cautious living, that moderate activities to promote the development of the fetus and enhance the flexibility of the baby's body, actually also reduce the pain during delivery [8].

As can be seen from Figure 5, that a pregnant woman walked to the living room of the courtyard with the help of her maid, then covered with a quilt and lay down on her right side, accompanied by a maid, and there are other maids outside to follow orders at any time. The ancients believed that excessive sexual activity was easy to damage the kidney and lose essence, that is why the original of fetus was unstable and easy to miscarriage. In view of this, pregnant women should have a separate bedroom to sleep, and elderly women can accompany them at night to ensure living safety, and appropriate kidney tonifying and abortion.



Figure 5: Cave 290 of the Mogao Grottoes of Dunhuang (Northern Zhou)-Resting in night.

Chinese medical classics Chanyun Ji [9] by Zhang Yaosun of Qing Dynasty physician recorded that “The fetus is closely connected with the mother. When the mother is happy or angry, the fetus can feel it, and it will also have an impact on the development of the fetus. That is to say, the quality of the mother's womb environment is directly related to the development of the fetus's intelligence.” The gestation period is about 280 days, which is called "be ten months' pregnant" in Chinese medicine, as the fetus grows in the womb, it can clearly hear and respond to the mother's heart sounds, intestinal peristalsis, external music, noise and other sounds, all this showed that the fetus and mother share joy and suffering.

Fetal development causes obvious physiological changes in the mother's body, and pregnant women choose a comfortable external environment, which is conducive to eliminating anxiety caused by physiological changes, so as to maintain a peaceful mood. Therefore, a comfortable external environment is necessary for health care during pregnancy. Due to the gradual weight of the body during pregnancy, the choice of loose clothes will help the development of the fetus, and the body metabolism to speed up that should also take a shower and change clothes frequently to keep the body clean, which avoid urinary tract infection. Mothers-to-be should moderate exercise, participate in physical labor within their capacity, but should not lift heavy objects and climb, should also avoid heavy labor and strenuous activities, in order to prevent accidental injury to the fetus. Pregnancy is one of the most special times in a woman's life. Throughout the pregnancy, in addition to keep your peace of mind is stable, also should choose to stable and peaceful living environment, to create a good environment for the growth of the fetus.

Childbirth is the most anticipated and difficult process for pregnant women. When waiting for delivery, the family members should also strengthen the nursing of pregnant women, and attention to the layout of the delivery place, to ensure that the clean and tight, complete goods, midwifery personnel in place[10]. Even so that must be should also do a good job of coping with the emergency situation and treatment, until the delivery woman safe delivery. From pregnancy to delivery, it is necessary to keep in close contact with the doctor throughout the whole process, so as to understand the health status of the pregnancy in time and ensure a safe delivery.

4. Summary

It is the bounden duty of ancient women to have healthy offspring, and it is also the most basic wish of most modern women. The birth of a newborn is not only a proof of the crystallization of love between husband and wife, but also a reflection of the prosperity of the country. Maternal and child health care services under the modern medical system have covered every corner of society, which is a policy to benefit the people to ensure the birth of a healthy population, and it is also an important measure of the national population strategy.

In the long-time historical development of China, TCM has accumulated a wealth of experience and theories in ensuring population growth, which has made great contributions to solving the population decline and labor force reduction caused by long-term chaos, and is one of the driving forces for the Chinese nation to maintain prosperity and development for thousands of years. Since ancient times, the Chinese nation has had a desire for "life", which is reflected in the importance attached to have a growing family and reflecting the importance of fertility through various forms. Once a woman is pregnant, whom will be very careful from words and behaviors to the details of diet, not only for her own health, but also for the birth of a healthy babies. The social and humanistic environment thinks highly of fertility, in addition, the ancient wars and the division of the country led to a sharp decline in the population. The promotion of these internal factors and the need for national development have stimulated the development of medicine in gynecology.

During the Southern and Northern Dynasties, gynecology of traditional Chinese medicine became an independent discipline, which made important developments in pulse science, herbal medicine, acupuncture and other aspects, and made great contributions to ensuring safe childbirth for women. Later doctors gradually enriched and deepened the medical research in this field, but some physicians have prejudices and should be viewed with caution[11]. For example, some ancient physicians of the Northern Dynasty period have recognized that "husband's disease and women's disease" may lead to the inability to get pregnant, but they believe that whether it is the cause, pathogenesis or treatment, women should be the mainstay. Similar to this kind of theoretical cognition, we should identify it scientifically.

In any case, human development has promoted the advancement of medicine, and medicine has ensured the steady growth of the population. After a long history of development, Chinese medicine has accumulated rich theories and experiences on reproductive health care. If we deeply explore the literature and medical relics in this field, it will bring a new perspective to the development of modern eugenics.

At the same time, the ancient Chinese people, relying on the laws of nature, summarized a set of behaviors and customs that they followed in their daily health care during pregnancy. These guidelines are medical and health care guidelines formed by long-term experience and suitable for the physical development of oriental women. In the process of reference and reference, modern pregnant women should make appropriate trade-offs according to the changes in the current living environment, and make reference and study according to different people.

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