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ABSTRACT

Siddha system of medicine is an ancient traditional medicine practiced in southern part of India. Siddha system is bestowed with various specialties, of few which are Varmam, Yogam, Kayakarpam. Varmam is the vital life energy force located in human body which was practiced by Siddhars, it is a therapeutic application technique of specific points in which prana energy is found to be concentrated, which is very effective in the management of degenerative diseases and neuromuscular diseases, Eventhough many screening techniques were used to detect and prevent early complication of pregnancy, on doing varmam in antenatal period also enhance vital life energy in fetus and it prevents hyper emesis gravidarum, oligohydraminos, placenta previa, intrauterine growth retardation etc, this review brings about the varmam in the management of antenatal care and points to be done in each trimester

KEYWORDS
Antenatal care, vital energy, varmam, Siddha.

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INTRODUCTION

Siddha system is a prehistoric long established health care system originated by Siddhars, practiced in southern part of India and also in countries such as Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Singapore. Siddha system is a logical based system which has lot of treasures in flora, fauna and mineral resources for healing. Siddhars developed methods and medication that strengthen the body, mind, soul. Siddha system has its own principles which are based on 96 thathuvas, [1] [2] [3]. Vital channels (naadis), three humours (vali, azhal, iyam), derangement of three humours leads to diseases[4]. Siddha system helps to revitalize and rejuvenate the deranged organ. Siddha system is an exclusive system compared to other systems as it is both medically, socially, intellectually and spiritually enriched. Siddha system of medicine includes various specialties such as yogam, varmam, rasavatham (alchemy), medical astrology, panjapachi sastram, Kanmaganadam etc.[5]

VARMAM:

Varmm is a metaphysical medical science which is a drugless, non invasive therapy practiced by Siddhars. It is a unique method of Siddha system of medicine [6] Varmam is based on the energy – which is the basis of the whole universe, the basis of the whole existence that is the life energy, the entire universe is made up of this energy. In varmam, this energy is called vaasi. This vaasi enters the embryo at the time of formation of zygote. This is derived from both the parents, vaasi is responsible for cell multiplication later tissue formation, organ formation and system formation. [6]

udalayir naadie thamil unthidum vaasiyathaam
oomadal maruviyae oodaadum nilayae varmam (varma saranool 7/16) [6]

In the human body this energy flows is particular pathways called as naadis, [6] which are subtle in nature and also invisible to our eyes. As the life energy flows along these channels, it is concentrated in certain points and these points known as varmam points.

kaanukindra kaesaathi paathamengum
kathithodum vaasi nilai varmam maachae (vaagada nithanam) [6]

Varmam points can be used as a martial art and for treatment varmam points stimulate the life energy varmam points restores the subtle energy and distributes through the body by dasa naadis, when flow of pranic energy is affected by injury, stress, strain, abnormal food habits, it alters metabolic and physiological activity leads to diseases, by correct manipulation of varmam points restores the altered pranic energy [7] therapeutically varmam points is done by applying pressure gently by using fingers, pressure varies from ¼,1/2, 1 unit (mathirai), this mathirai depends upon the severity of illness and body constitution of patient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>From top to head till neck</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>From neck to nasal point</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>From naval point till anus</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Both hands</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Both legs</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

varmam points located in bones, muscles, nerves, blood vessels, joints [8]

seppuru thasaikalenu siru peru naramanampu
thappuru naadiyaarum thangumidam varma-maamae (varma vithi) [8].

HISTORY OF VARMAM; [9]

Varmakalai is to be very auspicious it is believed that lord Siva taught this art to his wife parvathi, parvathi taught varmam to lord murugan, lord murugan then taught to Siddhar Agasthiyar, Agasthiyar later gives the written form that reached the masses, but the original text directly written by Siddhars are not available now. It is assumed that evidence of varmam is in a palm leaf manuscripts [9]

Varmam techniques should have been in practice since at least for the past 5000 years. Various Siddhars used different terms to denote varmam, Thirumoolar, termed as “vaasi”, this is from fifth century, term marmam is used in 12 th century. And the word varmam is used only from 17th century. [9]

CLASSIFICATON OF VARMAM:[7] [9] [10]

Varmam points are primarily classified as padu varmam and thodu varmam, padu varmam are connected with central nervous system. Injury to padu varmam is the most dangerous. padu varmam connects with eight thodu varmam points, totally 96 in number.

Human body is divided into five areas, points are described as below [10]

Properties of varmam are mentioned as [10]

urinjal (receiving), oodhal (sending), Iyakkal (activating), Iraiththal (pumping), urithiyakadal (strengthening), Pirithal (separation), thotruvithal (creating), valarththal (increasing), Maatrudhal (modifying), Thaaval (leaping).
Based on Indian astrology [10]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Varmam based on</th>
<th>Number of points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu astrology stars</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunar</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paduvarmam</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANTENATAL CARE:**
Child birth is the enjoyable moment for mother as she takes care of it since 9 months, systemic supervision (examination and advice) of a women during pregnancy is called antenatal care. In Siddha system of medicine Siddhars mentioned monthly dietary regimen and living style for whole pregnancy [11]. All these where done to ensure normal pregnancy. Siddhars have mentioned the responsibility of Siddha physician in pregnancy before consumption till upto postnatal care. Good antenatal care results in proper development of fetus, its delivery, to maintain health of the mother and enhance to perform easiest labor without strain and have an eventless post natal phase. [12]

**EFFECTS ON MOTHERS:**[13]
It has been estimated that 25 percent of maternal death occur during pregnancy, between a third and a half of maternal death is due to hypertension, ante partum hemorrhage which are directly related to inadequate care during pregnancy.

**EFFECT ON FOETUS:**[13]
Antepartum still births have a number of causes, including maternal infections notably syphilis and pregnancy complication, but systematic global estimates for causes of antepartum still births are not available, new borns are affected by problems during pregnancy including preterm birth and restricted fetal growth, as well as other factors affecting the baby’s development such as congenital infections and fetal alcohol syndrome.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**
Classical text books, various published scholarly articles on varmam and antenatal care were studied and used as a material to highlight the subject

**VARMAM IN ANTENATAL CARE:**
Although symptoms like nausea, anaemia, pedal edema, constipation are physiological condition in pregnancy, care should be given to prevent complication. varmam can be done in these conditions if oral treatment fails.

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1. **THUMMIKALAM:**[14]
   - **Location:** Suprasternal notch.
   - **Technique:** Place the middle three fingers over the point and give the ¼ mathirai pressure only on middle finger and pull towards the sternum gently 3 times.
   - **INDICATION:** hyperemesis, indigestion, poor appetite.

2. **VAYUKAALAM:**[15]
   - **Location:** 12 fingers below the cervical protrubrance at the starting point of 12th rib over the spine.
   - **Technique:** Place the tip of middle three fingers just below 2 fingers from the point and give ½ mathirai pressure, pull fingers upwards and rest on the vayukalam 3 times.
   - **Indication:** Nausea, vomiting

3. **SAKTHI VARMAM:**[16]
   - **Location:** 1 finger below the thummikaalam laterally one  finger right and left
   - **Technique:** Place the centre part of thumb finger over the point in flat position. give ¼ mathirai pressure and move right and left three times.
   - **Indication:** Increase the blood hemoglobin level.

4. **KIRAYEL VARMAM:**[17]
   - **Location:** centre and medial part of the upper arm.
   - **Technique:** Place the middle part of middle three fingers over the point and 3 times upward rotation,3 times downward rotation.
   - **Indication:** Increase the blood hemoglobin level, Giddiness, Hyperemesis, malaise.

**Medicine:**[18]
Karuveppilai eerku
Murungai eerku
Thol neekia chukku - take equal quantity of the above medicines and add 200 ml of water then boiled and reduce to 50 ml, then filter the kasayam along with panamkarkanndu .This kasayam should be given once a day after food.

5. **BAALA VARMAM:**[16]
   - **Location:** 2 fingers below the glabellum (in between two eyebrows) above the nasal bone
   - **Technique:** Place the tip of the middle three fingers give ¼ mathirai pressure and gently rotate from upward to downward direction three times.
   - **Indication:** Relieves the constipation during pregnancy.

Suppose if the physician has advised for MTP (Medical Termination of Pregnancy) by anomaly scan and if the patient is not willing to do it, varmam can be done with the consent of the patient.
6. KILAPPU VARMAM:[19]  
**Location:** 4 fingers above from the medial malleolus.  
**Technique:** place the tips of middle three fingers over the point, press and release three times towards medial medial border of tibia.  
6th month - 1 time  
7th month - 2 times  
8th month - weekly once  
9th month - weekly twice, then daily one time.  
**Indication** To prevent Intra Uterine Growth Retardation (IUGR), Genetic disorder, it relieves pedal edema IF THE PATIENT HAVE HISTORY OF RECURRENT ABORTIONS / PREMATURE LABOUR / OLIGOXYDROAMINOSIS/ PLACENTA BREVIA THE BELOW VARMAM POINTS CAN BE DONE  
  1. NEERPI SINARAMB IN VARMAM: [19]  
**Location:** 5 fingers from the nipple (doosumuga varmam) towards the lateral side of the body only on left side.  
**Technique:** place the tips of middle three fingers from the point press and pull towards the chest for 3 times  
**Indication:** To prevent premature labour, oligohydraminos.  
  2. KUTHIKAL VARMAM: [20]  
Inai varmam for neerpisinarambin varmam.  
**Location:** 7 fingers above from calcaneus, over the achiles tendon.  
**Technique:** place the tips of middle three fingers over the point press and release three times.  
**Indication:** To prevent placenta previa,. Low back pain  
  3. NAAGA KAALAM: [19]  
**Location:** 3 fingers below the cervical protrubrance  
**Technique:** place the tip of middle three fingers on the point and clock wise rotate 3 times, anticlockwise rotate 3 times.  
**Indication:** It gives vital prana energy for foetal growth. It enhance the blood circulation to foetus.  
**Internal medicine for Oligohydromnios [Tradtional preparation from kanyakumari dt]:**  
Mudakaruthan(Cardiospermam halicacabam) – 50 gm  
Small onion(Allium cepa) - 10 gm  
Cumin seed(cuminum cyaminum) – 5gm  
Coconut thuruval(Cocos nucifera) – 10 gm  
ALL THE ABOVE INGREDIENTS TOGETHER AND MAKE PITTAVIYAL FOR 3 DAYS ORAL ADMINISTRATION TO CORRECT THE OLIGOXYDROMNIOIS .  
  1. KOMBERI KALAM:[21]  
**Location:** 8fingers above from medial malleolus.  
**Technique:** place the tips of middle three fingers over the point, press and release (Like pumping action) three times towards medial border of tibia.  
  2. ULLANGAL VELLAI: [22]  
**Location:** V shaped between the 1st and 2nd metatarsal in sole of the foot.  
**Technique:** Place the tip of middle three fingers, at ½ mathirai pressure press and release three times  
**Indication:** It helps in pedal edema Strengthn the lower limb Regulates the breathing in pregnancy  
  3. ANNA KAALAM: [23]  
**Location:** 1 finger above from the umbilicus.  
**Technique:** place the left middle finger over the umbilicus and ring finger above and index finger below. Place the right middle three fingers over the above fingers. Then give pressure from right hand fingers for 3 times.  
**Indication:** retained placenta If the duration of labour,varmam can be done supportively for normal delivery.  
  4. MELKARANDAI VARMAM:[24]  
**Location:** 3 inches above from the Medial aspect of the ankle joint , behind the tibia bone  
**Technique:** locate the point and press release with the tip of middle three fingers (Naga mudra)  
**Indication:** To promote normal delivery.  
  5. ANDA KAALAM[25]  
**Location:** Centre part of perineum (Between the anus and genitalia)  
**Technique:** Place the cotton seed(round and blend) over this point and give gentle pressure with thumb finger .Give clockwise rotation 30 times and anti clock wise rotation 30 times for every 1 hr.  
**Indication:** To promote normal delivery  
  6. PATCHI NEMA VARMAM (NETRICHUTTI VARMAM) :[17]  
**Location:** 5 fingers above from Thilartha varmam  
**Technique:** Place the tips of middle three fingers over the point (Naga mudra) press move the fingers right and left 3 times.
8th month - 15 days once
9th month - weekly once
10th month - daily.

**Indication:** This varmam stimulates the abana vayu and enhance the normal delivery. Relieves the constipation.

7. **KAL SIRUVIRAL KAVULI VARMAM:**[26]

**Location:** V shaped Between the 4th and 5th metatarsal dorsum of the foot.

**Technique:** Place the lateral part of thumb finger over the web and press 3 times and internally rotate.

**Indication:** To induce the uterine contraction during labour.

**Kasayam for Labour pain induction(Traditional process):**

- Moringa leaves (Moringa oleifera) – 50 gms
- Fennel seed (Foeniculam vulgare) - 20 gms
- Cumin seed (Cuminum cyminum) – 1 spoon
- Black Pepper (Piper nigrum) – ¼ spoon
- Clove (Syzygium aromaticum) – 1-2 no.’s.

Add 10 ml of castor oil in a pan and gently fry the above items in a low flame. Then add 800 ml of water, boiled and concise it into 100 ml. Take the kasayam with palm jaggery for every 3 hrs which helps to induce labour pain.

**DISCUSSION**

Pregnancy is a beautiful period of women’s life. Antenatal care indirectly saves lives of mother babies by promoting and establishing good Health care before childbirth [27]. Varmam a part in Siddha is a non invasive and comfortable siddha treatment which provides sufficient health care. Neerpisinarambin varmam and kuthikal varmam promotes healthy uterus and cervix tissue thereby preventing placental abruption, incompetent cervix and miscarriages. Komberi kaalam decreases the increased venous congestion in legs caused by pressure exerted mechanically by uterus on to the inferior venacava and iliac veins. Generally nausea and vomiting are physiological process occurs during first trimester of pregnancy but Hyperemesis gravidorum refers to severe end of spectrum regarding nausea and vomiting in pregnancy. So it is necessary to treat it as it may lead to consequences like weight loss and volume depletion resulting in ketonuria and/or ketonemia. Unfortunately it may be difficult to treat. Thumikaalam and vanyukaalam helps to prevent risk factors of hyperemesis gravidorum thus decreasing the frequency of vomiting.

According to siddha concept abanan is one of the component of 10 vaayu which exerts downward force (Keelnokunkaal) in the body. Abanan is necessary for reflex mechanisms related to excretory and reproductive system, pitham (fire) one of the three humour is necessary to stimulates abanan [4] (If the stimulation is decreased, abanan gets increased in the body which leads to slowdown in reflex mechanism, body pain, poor appetite, constipation)[4]. By manipulating the varmam abanavaayu gets corrected, in case of constipation balavarmam acts equal to laxative. At the second stage of labor abana vaayu helps for the expulsion of fetus and helps to increase the flexible nature of uterus helps for the expulsion of fetus, if the duration of labor is increased Melkarandai varmam, Anda kaalam, Patchinema varmam, Kalsiruviral kavuli varmam stimulates the abanavaayu thereby promoting normal delivery.

From the day when ovum gets fertilized vaatham separates thathu and thodam. Pitham helps to grow the embryo, kabam gives nourishment to the growing embryo [4], if there is any derangement in these three humors (vatham, pitham,kabam), there is increased chance of IUGR, miscarriages. Hence varmam’s therapeutic intervention helps in providing good antenatal care.

**CONCLUSION**

Siddhars gave very much importance to the need of antenatal care, it saves the mother and fetus, it also helps in postnatal period. It is reasonable and understandable that nowadays people all over the world are interested in drugless therapy, And best to my knowledge Varmam has the potential to answer for their entire search for an optimal drugless therapy.

“Do no harm”- is the first rule of Hippocrates and varmam therapy perfectly fits into that rule, finally, it provides quality care to mothers and babies during the critical time of pregnancy.

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**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

No conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

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