



# A Review On Striae Rubrae: A Management Of Stretch Marks In Pregnancy

Shraddha Sopan Bhagwat

Pravara Rural Education Society's College of Pharmacy (For Women) Chincholi Sinnar, Nashik [422103]  
Maharashtra India.

## INTRODUCTION:

About 50 to 90 percent of pregnant women experience stretch marks, also known as Striae Rubrae, which are common cutaneous adverse reactions that can occur during pregnancy. They can also occur as a result of rapid weight gain (obesity), muscle hypertrophy (bodybuilders), endocrinopathies (like Cushing syndrome), breast augmentation, or as a side effect of topical corticosteroid use and abuse. Stretch marks are a rare complication when using tissue expanders, and they are most frequently seen on the thighs, abdomen, female breasts, and upper arms in men. [1,2,3,4,5,6]

Younger age, a mother's and family history of stretch marks, higher pre-pregnancy and pre-delivery weight, higher birth weight, and the lack of chronic illness are all independent predictors of stretch marks in pregnant women. [7,8,9]

Your skin has discolored, scar-like lines called stretch marks (striae), which are slightly sunken (depressed). They show up when your skin stretches or contracts quickly.

Typically, stretch marks show up on your:

1. stomach, or abdominal region.
2. thighs.
3. hips.
4. The breasts.
5. upper arms.
6. lower back.
7. The buttocks. [10,11,12]

## Treatment:

Stretch marks are a common skin concern, and several treatments available to help reduce their appearance. Here some of the most effective treatments.

1. topical creams and oils: Moisturizing creams and oils rich in vitamins A, C, and E, as well as cocoa butter and coconut oil, can help hydrate and nourish the skin.[13]

2. microdermabrasion: A non-invasive technique called microdermabrasion removes dead skin cells and exfoliates the skin. In order to revitalize the skin, the dead layer is removed using an applicator with an abrasive surface.[13]

3. chemicalpeels: Using chemical peels that contain lactic or glycolic acid while pregnant is probably safe. However, because to their higher rate of absorption, salicylic acid peels should be used with caution. Additionally, because trichloroacetic acid (TCA) peels have been linked to low birth weight, they should be used carefully.[14]

4. laser therapy: Clinically, Asian women's stretch marks improved after being treated with a 1550 nm fractional laser. It was discovered that skin elasticity has partially returned to normal. Following fractional laser therapy, skin biopsies demonstrated a substantial increase in collagen, elastic fiber deposition, and epidermal thickness. Hyperpigmentation and minor, temporary discomfort were among the side effects.[15]

5. Microneedling: Stretch marks can be made to look better with microneedling, a minimally invasive collagen induction treatment that involves pricking the skin with small needles to promote collagen development and allow the targeted area to heal naturally. In contrast to most other treatments, microneedling works well for late stretch marks. Compared to microdermabrasion with phonophoresis, microneedling has been found to be a more successful and palatable treatment option for stretch marks. [13]

6. Platelet Rich Plasma: In treating Striae gravidarum, platelet-rich plasma therapy proved more successful than topical 0.1% Tretinoin gel. PRP improved patient satisfaction and treatment results.[16]

7. Radio frequency: Deep stretch marks may seem less noticeable with RF treatments. The patient's skin color, striae depth, clinical response, and tolerance level should all be taken into account in the customized treatment plan.[17]

8. Carboxy therapy: Pregnancy stretch marks can be effectively managed using carboxytherapy, a minimally invasive procedure. wherein a tiny needle is used to inject carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) into the skin in order to promote oxygen release and enhance blood circulation. By producing new collagen, this procedure can thicken the skin and lessen the visibility of stretch marks.[18]

9. Surgical option: Stretch marks can be permanently removed with cosmetic surgery, which is a costly but efficient procedure. Before deciding to have cosmetic surgery, speak with a doctor.

Although home remedies are the best kind of treatment, you should be persistent and patient to observe benefits. In most cases, stretch marks are not dangerous and should not be taken seriously. It might appear to be a self-esteem issue, but as I stated at the start of the piece, you have the freedom to choose whether to be proud of your scars or ashamed of them. [19,20.21.22]

### **Ayurvedic Treatments:**

**1. Abhyanga massage:** Abhyanga, or warm oil massage, is one of the simplest and most effective traditional Ayurvedic techniques we may perform on our own. Applying oil makes the body more pliable, enabling it to adapt to life's obstacles. We experience suppleness, grounding, and nourishment. Women can benefit greatly from this practice before becoming pregnant, during pregnancy with adjustments, and—most importantly—after giving birth! Pregnancy-related stretch marks, itchiness, and dark skin discoloration can be avoided by starting a daily massage early on. According to certain research, self-massage during pregnancy can improve labor outcomes and the health of the unborn child while also lowering anxiety, reducing depressive symptoms, and relieving joint and muscle discomfort. Additionally, it treats a number of typical bone discomforts.[23]

### **Benefits:**

Abhyanga is an Ayurvedic healing technique that goes beyond simple massage. One typical advantage of abhyanga, which nourishes your complexion with oil, is healthy skin. Reduced visibility of wrinkles, cellulite, and scars are among the advantages in skin health. Reduced hyperpigmentation and the avoidance or lessening of stretch marks are also benefits. Applying oil to your skin on a daily basis will improve its suppleness and smoothness and increase blood flow. After giving birth, your skin may become more elastic, which might lessen drooping breasts. Many practitioners and users agree that oil massages with gentle strokes have further advantages, such as reducing anxiety, soothing nerves, and promoting deeper, better sleep.[23]

### **Technique:**

Understanding the distinction between a traditional abhyanga self-massage and the suggested adjustments to employ during pregnancy is crucial. The traditional abhyanga oil massage is not advised during pregnancy. Abhyanga is generally performed as a powerful, vigorous, and flowing massage method. The oil can permeate the body's seven layers of tissues thanks to its recurring activity. Prior to becoming pregnant and during the postpartum period, use the conventional method. Pregnancy benefits greatly from a regular, mild, and calming oil application to the skin, especially your lovely expanding belly. Consider applying the oil sparingly to your skin and give it at least five to ten minutes to absorb. After that, take a warm shower or bath to get rid of extra oil. Applying the oil while the skin is still somewhat damp after a shower and letting it soak in while lounging in a towel or robe is another option.[23]

## 2. Udvartana:

Udvartana, a traditional Ayurvedic massage technique, can help minimize the appearance of stretch marks. This ancient practice offers numerous benefits:

Benefits:

1. Exfoliation: Udvartana removes dead skin cells, promoting cell regeneration and improving skin texture (24).
2. Improved circulation: The massage technique enhances blood flow, nourishing the skin and reducing stretch mark visibility (25).
3. Lymphatic drainage: Udvartana stimulates lymphatic drainage, removing toxins and excess fluids that can contribute to stretch marks (26).
4. Skin tone improvement: Regular Udvartana massage can help even out skin tone and reduce the appearance of stretch marks (27).
5. Collagen production: The massage stimulates collagen production, improving skin elasticity and reducing stretch mark visibility (28).

Technique:

1. Herbal powder: Use a gentle herbal powder like gram flour, chickpea flour, or herbal blends specifically designed for Udvartana (29).
2. Massage strokes: Use gentle, upward strokes to massage the affected area, focusing on the direction of skin elasticity (30).
3. Pressure: Apply gentle to moderate pressure, depending on individual comfort (31).
4. Focus areas: Concentrate on areas prone to stretch marks, such as the abdomen, hips, thighs, and arms (32).
5. Regularity: Practice Udvartana massage regularly, ideally 1-2 times a week, for optimal results (33).

## 3. Lepa:

Lepa is a traditional Ayurvedic treatment that involves the application of a herbal paste to nourish and moisturize the skin.

## Benefits:

1. Nourishes skin: Lepa deeply nourishes and moisturizes the skin, improving skin elasticity and reducing stretch mark visibility (24).
2. Improves skin texture: Lepa helps to improve skin texture, making it softer and more even-toned (25).
3. Stimulates collagen production: The treatment stimulates collagen production, which can help to reduce the appearance of stretch marks (28).
4. Reduces inflammation: Lepa has anti-inflammatory properties, which can help to reduce redness and inflammation associated with stretch marks (27).
5. Enhances skin tone: Lepa can help to even out skin tone and improve skin radiance (30).

## Technique:

1. Herbal paste: A paste is made from a combination of Ayurvedic herbs like turmeric, sandalwood, and licorice (29).
2. Application: The paste is applied to the affected area and left on for 30 minutes to an hour.
3. Massage: Gentle massage strokes are used to work the paste into the skin.
4. Relaxation: The treatment is followed by relaxation and rest.

## 4. Panchakarma:

Panchakarma is a comprehensive Ayurvedic program that aims to detoxify and rejuvenate the body.

## Benefits:

1. Detoxification: Panchakarma removes toxins from the body, which can contribute to skin issues like stretch marks (24).
2. Improved circulation: The program enhances blood flow, nourishing the skin and reducing stretch mark visibility (25).

3. Skin rejuvenation: Panchakarma stimulates collagen production, improving skin elasticity and texture (28).
4. Hormonal balance: The program helps balance hormones, which can contribute to stretch marks (27).
5. Stress relief: Panchakarma reduces stress, which can exacerbate stretch marks (30).

Techniques used in Panchakarma for stretch marks:

1. Abhyanga (massage): Enhances circulation and relaxation (29).
2. Udvartana (herbal powder massage): Exfoliates and nourishes the skin (26).
3. Lepa (herbal paste application): Stimulates collagen production and improves skin texture (31).
4. Vamana (emesis therapy): Removes toxins from the digestive system (32).
5. Virechana (purgation therapy): Purifies the liver and intestines (28).
6. Basti (enema therapy): Cleanses the colon and rectum (25).
7. Nasya (nasal cleansing): Purifies the respiratory system (27).
8. Raktamokshana (blood purification): Removes toxins from the blood (30).

Panchakarma program for stretch marks:

1. Pre-treatment: Consultation, diagnosis, and preparation (24).
2. Purva karma: Pre-detoxification procedures like Abhyanga and Udvartana (25).
3. Pradhana karma: Main detoxification procedures like Vamana, Virechana, and Basti (28).
4. Paschat karma: Postdetoxification procedures like Lepa and Nasya (27).
5. Post-treatment: Follow-up, diet, and lifestyle advice (30)

## 5. Ayurvedic Oils:

Ayurvedic oils are an essential part of traditional Indian medicine, offering various benefits for skin health.

Benefits of Ayurvedic Oils:

1. Coconut oil: Moisturizes and nourishes the skin, improving skin elasticity.
2. Sesame oil: Stimulates collagen production and improves skin elasticity.
3. Sweet almond oil: Hydrates and softens the skin, reducing stretch mark visibility.
4. Rosehip oil: Regenerates skin cells and improves skin texture.
5. Pomegranate oil: Rich in antioxidants, improves skin health.
6. Fenugreek oil: Stimulates collagen production and improves skin elasticity.
7. Neem oil: Improves skin elasticity and reduces inflammation.
8. Turmeric oil: Reduces inflammation and improves skin tone.
9. Sandalwood oil: Nourishes and moisturizes the skin.
10. Gotu kola oil: Improves skin elasticity and reduces stretch mark visibility. [24,35,28]

## 6. Diet and lifestyle:

Here are some dietary and lifestyle tips to help prevent and reduce stretch marks:

Diet:

1. Hydrate: Drink plenty of water to keep skin hydrated and elastic.
2. Omega-3 rich foods: Include foods like salmon, walnuts, and flaxseeds to nourish skin.
3. Vitamin C rich foods: Consume foods like citrus fruits, berries, and leafy greens to boost collagen production.
4. Zinc rich foods: Include foods like oysters, nuts, and seeds to support skin health.
5. Healthy fats: Eat foods like avocados, nuts, and seeds to nourish skin.

## Lifestyle:

1. Exercise regularly: Maintain a healthy weight and improve circulation through exercise.
2. Manage stress: High stress levels can lead to skin issues like stretch marks.
3. Get enough sleep: Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep to help skin regenerate.
4. Avoid smoking: Smoking damages skin and reduces collagen production.
5. Limit sun exposure: Protect skin from UV rays to prevent damage and stretch marks.

[34,35,36,37,38]

## 7. Ayurvedic supplements:

Here are some Ayurvedic supplements that can help reduce the appearance of stretch marks:

1. Turmeric (Curcuma longa): Reduces inflammation and improves skin tone.
2. Neem (Azadirachta indica): Improves skin elasticity and reduces inflammation.
3. Fenugreek (Trigonella foenum-graecum): Stimulates collagen production and improves skin texture.
4. Gotu kola (Centella asiatica): Improves skin elasticity and reduces stretch mark visibility.
5. Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera): Reduces stress and promotes skin health.
6. Amla (Emblica officinalis): Rich in vitamin C, boosts collagen production and improves skin texture.
7. Triphala: A blend of three herbs, improves skin health and reduces inflammation.
8. Manjistha (Rubia cordifolia): Improves skin tone and reduces inflammation.
9. Haritaki (Terminalia chebula): Improves skin health and reduces inflammation.
10. Shatavari (Asparagus racemosus): Nourishes and moisturizes the skin.

## Natural treatment for stretch marks

### 1. Coconut oil

Coconut oil is an excellent natural remedy for stretch marks.

Benefits:

Moisturizes, Nourishes, Antioxidant, Improves skin tone, Soothes: Calms and soothes irritated skin, reducing redness and inflammation.

#### Usage:

1. Warm coconut oil: Massage warm coconut oil into affected areas.
2. Leave on: Allow the oil to absorb fully before dressing or bathing.
3. Consistency: Apply coconut oil regularly, ideally 2-3 times a day.
4. Combination: Mix coconut oil with other natural remedies like cocoa butter, shea butter, or essential oils for enhanced benefits. [42,43,44].

#### 2. Aloe Vera:

##### Benefits:

Aloe vera gel reduces inflammation and redness, Hydrates, improving elasticity and reducing stretch mark, improving skin texture and elasticity, Fades scars, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, Skin regeneration: Aloe vera accelerates skin cell regeneration, improving skin tone and texture.

#### Usage:

1. Aloe vera gel: Apply pure aloe vera gel directly to stretch marks.
2. Massage: Gently massage the gel into the skin.
3. Leave on: Allow the gel to absorb fully before dressing or bathing.
4. Consistency: Apply aloe vera gel regularly, ideally 2-3 times a day.
5. Combination: Mix aloe vera with other natural remedies like coconut oil, cocoa butter, or vitamin E oil for enhanced benefits. [45,46,47].

### 3. Vitamin E Oil:

#### Benefits:

Antioxidant properties, Moisturizes, Stimulates collagen production, improving skin texture and elasticity, Vitamin E oil's antioxidant properties help fade stretch marks, Accelerates skin cell regeneration, improving skin tone and texture.

#### Usage:

1. Apply topically: Massage vitamin E oil directly into stretch marks.
2. Leave on: Allow the oil to absorb fully before dressing or bathing.
3. Consistency: Apply vitamin E oil regularly, ideally 2-3 times a day.
4. Combination: Mix vitamin E oil with other natural remedies like coconut oil, aloe vera, or cocoa butter for enhanced benefits. [ ]

### 4. Sugar scrub:

Exfoliating: Removing dead skin cells, promoting cell regeneration.

2. Improving circulation: Massaging the scrub into skin enhances blood flow.
3. Hydrating: Sugar is a natural humectant, retaining moisture in the skin.
4. Nourishing: Sugar contains glycolic acid, which stimulates collagen production.

#### How to use a sugar scrub for stretch marks:

Mix 1 tablespoon of sugar with a carrier oil (coconut or olive oil) Add a few drops of essential oils, Massage onto affected areas for 5-7 minutes, Rinse with warm water. Repeat 1-2 times a week.

#### Some popular sugar scrub recipes for stretch marks:

1. Sugar and coconut oil scrub
2. Sugar and olive oil scrub

3. Sugar and shea butter scrub
4. Sugar and essential oil scrub (with lavender or peppermint oil). [48,49,50].

## 5. Castor oil

Castor oil is a natural remedy that can help reduce the appearance of stretch marks. Here's how:

Benefits:

1. Moisturizes: Hydrates the skin, improving elasticity and reducing stretch mark visibility.
2. Stimulates collagen: Castor oil promotes collagen production, improving skin texture and elasticity.
3. Reduces inflammation: Castor oil's anti-inflammatory properties reduce redness and inflammation.
4. Fades scars: Castor oil's antioxidant properties help fade stretch marks.
5. Skin regeneration: Castor oil accelerates skin cell regeneration, improving skin tone and texture.

Usage:

1. Apply topically: Massage castor oil directly into stretch marks.
2. Leave on: Allow the oil to absorb fully before dressing or bathing.
3. Consistency: Apply castor oil regularly, ideally 2-3 times a day.
4. Combination: Mix castor oil with other natural remedies like coconut oil, aloe vera, or vitamin E oil for enhanced benefits.

## 6. Rosehip oil:

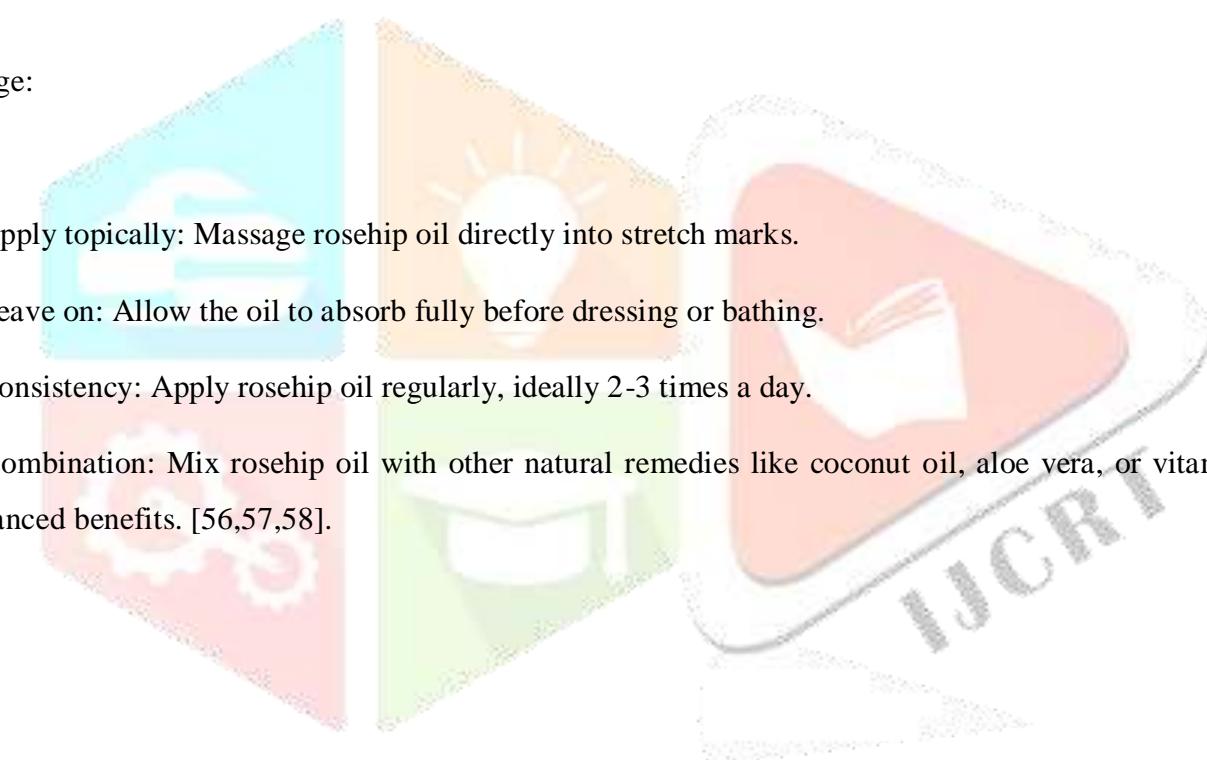
Rosehip oil is a natural remedy that can help reduce the appearance of stretch marks. Here's how:

## Benefits:

1. Regenerates skin cells: Rosehip oil promotes skin cell regeneration, improving skin tone and texture.
2. Boosts collagen: Rosehip oil stimulates collagen production, improving skin elasticity and reducing stretch mark visibility.
3. Fades scars: Rosehip oil's antioxidant properties help fade stretch marks.
4. Hydrates: Rosehip oil moisturizes the skin, improving elasticity and reducing stretch mark visibility.
5. Anti-inflammatory: Rosehip oil reduces redness and inflammation.

## Usage:

1. Apply topically: Massage rosehip oil directly into stretch marks.
2. Leave on: Allow the oil to absorb fully before dressing or bathing.
3. Consistency: Apply rosehip oil regularly, ideally 2-3 times a day.
4. Combination: Mix rosehip oil with other natural remedies like coconut oil, aloe vera, or vitamin E oil for enhanced benefits. [56,57,58].



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