

Application of Panchakarma in Shalya Tantra a Review

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ABSTRACT

Panchakarma is a unique and versatile therapy of Ayurveda useful to remove the morbid *Doshas* of the body. And hence, plays an important role to cleans the various systems of body. Broad spectrum of its applicability extends to the field of *Shalya Tantra* as well. Many acute and chronic surgical conditions like *Vrana* (wound), *Bhagna* (musculo-skeletal injuries), *Arsha* (hemorrhoids), *Bhagandara* (fistula in ano), *Arbuda* (tumours), *Shlipada* (filariasis), *Shopha* (swellings), and *Vidradhi* (abscess) etc. get managed by the five purificatory therapies of *Panchakarma*, which contains *Vamanai.e* therapeutic vomiting or emesis, *Virechanai.e* therapeutic purgation, *Bastii.e* therapeutic enema, *Nasyai.e* elimination of toxins through the nose / errhine therapy and *Raktamokshana karmai.e* therapeutic bloodletting. In the classical texts of Ayurveda, a very detailed description of *Panchakarma* is available, with special relevance in the management of various surgical pathologies. In this article, an effort has been made to explore the applied concepts of *Panchakarma* in the field of *Shalya Tantra* in various ways.

KEYWORDS: *Panchakarma, Shalya Tantra, Doshas, Ayurveda*

INTRODUCTION

Panchakarma is an integral part of Ayurveda. It is chiefly constituted of specially designed five procedures for detoxification of body. These includes a) *Vamana* (emesis therapy), b) *Virechana* (purgation therapy), c) *Basti* (therapeutic enema), d) *Nasya* (errhine therapy) and e) *Raktamokshana karma* (bloodletting therapy)^[1]. *Raktamokshana* procedure is directly related to the practice of *Shalya Tantra*. It is carried out with the help of different surgical instruments like *Yantra, Shastra and Anushastra*. *Panchakarma* is not only a bio-purificatory process, but involves a wide range of therapeutics such as replenishing, depleting and rejuvenating therapies. It has broad spectrum of applications in the practice of *Shalya Tantra*. *Ayurvedic* discipline of surgery. Numerous textual references are available where the procedures of *Panchakarma* have been adopted as an important measure along with institution of surgical intervention.

Effect of Panchakarma Therapy

Panchakarma has an indispensable contribution in all eight branches of ayurveda. Many pathologies related to *Shalya Tantra* requires *Panchakarma* procedures to get rid from them. In *Shalya Tantra*, *Panchakarma* has a very primerole to play. The principle objective of treatment as expounded by *Acharya Sushruta* is replenishing the deficiency, reducing the exaggerated levels, and preservation of equilibrium of *doshas*^[2] It becomes difficult to manage chronic pathologies

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conservatively. Advanced states of many pathologies usually require surgical intervention. In chronic diseases it results in gross vitiation of channels i.e *Strotodushti*, weakness of digestive power i.e *Agnimandya*, improper nourishment of tissues and decreased immunity i.e *Ojokshaya*. Later for wellbeing, body needs to get purified.

Panchakarma therapy application has not only the purificative aim, but the facilitation of desired pharmacokinetic effect of therapeutic remedies administered is also achieved. It eliminates toxins, stagnated excreta and metabolites from the body, cleanses the macro and micro channels, maximizes the absorption and metabolism of nutrients and drugs, and helps in minimizing their dose and toxicity^[3]

Role of Panchakarma in the field of Shalya tantra

Acharya Dalhan has predominantly explained that *Langhana* (desaturation) to *Virechana karma* (purgation) are the main pre-operative measures that include important *Panchakarma* procedures like *Snehana* (unction), *Svedana* (fomentation), *Vistravana* (bloodletting), *Vamana* (therapeutic emesis) and *Virechana* (therapeutic purgation)^[4] The chief objective of *Shalya Tantra* is meant for extraction of various foreign substances out of the body. Not only the foreign bodies, but all those which cause painful disorders have been termed as '*Shalya*'^[5] such as excessive

accumulation of *mala* (excreta/toxins) and *dosha* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*). *Acharya Sushruta* has elaborated the procedures of *Panchakarma* in *Chikitsa Sthana* along with pre-procedure preparations, complications and management. Major surgical conditions requiring *Panchakarma* procedures are described as under:

Vrana (Wounds): Wound management is the most vital part of practice of *Shalya Tantra*. Etiological classification of *vrana* (wounds) constitutes *Nija/Shareeravrana* (intrinsic wounds-caused by vitiation of *dosha*) or *Agantujavrana* (exogenous wounds or traumatic wounds)^[6] *Panchakarma* procedures have a significant place in the management of both these types of wounds. In case of many casualties due to severe haemorrhage in case of *Chhinna* (excised), *Bhinna* (ruptured), *Vidhha* (punctured) and *Kshata* (lacerated) wounds, *vata dosha* gets aggravated resulting in severe pain. For this vitiated *vata dosha*, *Sneha-pana* (unction therapy), *Snigdhaupanahana* (local application of unctuous poultices), *Snehabasti* (medicated unctuous enemas) are specifically indicated^[7] All the *Panchakarma* procedures have been included under '*Shashti Upkrama*' (sixty modalities) of wound management as described by *Sushruta*. More specifically the indications for individual procedures includes as,

Snehana Karma (Uction Therapy): Consumption of *Sneha* processed with specified drugs has been indicated in patients who have complications due to wound^[8] In all such conditions, there is gross aggravation of *Vata dosha*, that gets cured easily by *Snehana karma*.

Svedana Karma (Sudation Therapy): Different types of fomentations has been indicated in inflammatory swellings for local application which are painful, hard.^[9]

Vaman Karma (Therapeutic Emesis): It is an excellent therapy for minimisation of vitiated *Kapha dosha*. In case of wounds having inflammation along with granulation tissue and vitiated darkish blood, *vamana karma* is useful particularly in that caused by vitiated *Kapha dosha*^[10]

Virechana Karma (Therapeutic Purgation): *Virechana karma* is choice of treatment in wounds vitiated with *pitta* associated with *vata* and which are chronic in duration^[11]

Basti Karma (Medicated Enema): The wounds which are rough, severely vitiated by *vata* and is particularly situated in the lower part of the body, *basti* is indicated in such cases^[12]

Uttar Basti Karma (Douche): This is particularly applied through urinary path mostly in retention of urine, disorders of urine and semen, wounds caused by calculus and in menstrual disorders; administration of *Uttarbasti* is helpful^[13]

Shiro-virechana Karma (Errhine Therapy): The wounds and swellings which are located in supraclavicular region i.e. *urdhva-jatrugatavrana* requires special management with *Shiro-virechana karma*^[14]

Raktamokshana Karma (Therapeutic Bloodletting): In acute inflammatory swellings, *Raktamokshana karma* is certainly effective in reducing pain and to prevent

suppuration. It is particularly indicated in the wounds with inflammation, hardness, dark-red discoloration, pain i.e. in *Dushta Vrana*. In poisoned wounds as well, bloodletting has been prescribed with leeches^[15] While describing the management of wounds, *Acharya Charaka* has explained that evacuation with *Vamana*, *Virechana*, *Shastra karma* and *Basti karma* are the main treatment modalities that should be adopted; because the wounds get pacified quickly^[16]

Component of Infection: In Surgical practice, the infection is of vital importance. Prevention of wound from infection and management of infected wounds is a potential challenge to the surgeons of modern times as well. Ayurveda has special way of management of *Dushtavrana* (infected wound) that chiefly incorporates the procedures of *Panchakarma*.

Arsha Chikitsa (Haemorrhoids): *Arsha* is one of the main and common pathologies related to the field of *Shalya Tantra*. The *Nidan samprapti* (aetio-pathogenesis) of *Arsha* includes *Manda-agnii*. e suppression of digestive fire and *Malavash tambhai*. e excessive accumulation of excrements^[17] *Panchakarma* is absolute indication for its effective management. In the context of *Vataj Arsha*, *snehan*, *swedana*, *virechana*, *anuvasana* and *asthapanabasti* have been indicated. Also in *Pittaj Arsha*, *virechana karma* has been mentioned as one of the main treatments^[18].

Parikartika (Anal Fissures): *Pichhabasti* and *snehabasti* i.e. *Anuvasnabasti* have been indicated in *Parikartika*. e anal fissures^[19]. Local soothing and wound healing is certainly achieved by medicated enemas. And ultimately by its beauty of action, it is effective in relieving the condition as well.

Bhagandara (Fistula in Ano): Various *Svedana karma* and *Virechana* have been indicated in *Bhagandara* (fistula in ano). The glory of *panchakarma* reflects here by helping in *Sampraptibhanga* (breaking the chain of pathogenesis at its root) and helps to remove the vitiated *doshas*. Specifically, in *Kaphaj type* (*Paristravi Bhagandara*), mild *virechana* followed by *Tikshna Virechana* have been advised to be administered^[20]

Gud-Bhransha (Prolapse of Rectum): Administration of *Pichhabasti* (slimy enema) has the indication in rectal prolapse and bleeding per anum^[21] In *Charak* and *Sushrut Samhita*, the varieties of *Pichha Basti* have been mentioned.

Ashmari Chikitsa (Urinary Calculus) : Post-operative *Svedana Karma* (sudation), *Uttar Basti* (urethral douche), *Asthapana* (medicated enema) and *Anuvasna Basti* (unctuous enemas) are the main *Panchakarma* procedures indicated in management of this illness^[22] These procedures help in preventing and relieving the post-operative pain and complications.

Shopha (Oedema): By monitoring the level of vitiation of *Doshas*, and mode of *Samprapti* (pathogenesis) *Snehana*, *Svedana*, *Upnahana* along with frequent *Sira-vedha* definitely give the good results^[23]

Bhagna (Musculo-Skeletal Injuries): As mentioned in *Samhitas*, *Asthi* (bones and cartilages) are one of the main seats of *Vata dosha*. Aaghat (Trauma) at these sites result in

aggravation of local *vata*. The *Panchkarma* procedures have a good role to play here. Dhara (allowing oil to flow in to and fro manner from certain distance with certain velocity), *Abhyang* (gently application of oil) and *Basti karma* in the management of *bhagna* (fractures). *AnuvasnaBasti* gives fascinating results in *prashakhabhagna* (fractures of extremities), Application of *Nasya karma* in fractures and dislocations involving the parts above neck helps fast recovery, *Svedana and Nasya karma* in dislocation of *Hanu* (mandible) is also helpful.^[24]

PramehaPidika (Diabetic Boils): Management of this by the treatment with *Vamana, Virechana and Siravedha* has been prescribed along with surgical intervention. In the patients suffering from *Madhumeha* (Diabetes mellitus), for easy excretion of vitiated doshas, the administration of drastic purgatives has been advised.^[25]

Apachi (Scrofula), Granthi, Arbuda (Tumours): *Ghratapana, Tailapanai*. oral administration of medicated ghee and oil, *svedana karma* along with main *Panchakarma* procedures constitute the general management of all these conditions.^[26] In advanced scrofula, medicated ghee should be administered to the patient to eliminate vitiated *Doshas* from both ways (emesis and purgation). *Shirovirechana karma* has also been included.^[27]

GranthiRoga (Cystic Lesions): In *vatajgranthi*, different types of poultices are useful to minimise the local symptoms. In *Pittajgranthi*, bloodletting with leeches plays a vital role.^[28]

ShlipadaRoga (Elephantiasis) *Raktamokshana* by *Siravyadha* has been indicated to get rid of impurities in the blood and in the management of all the three types of *Shlipada*.^[29]

PranashtaShalya (Retained Foreign Bodies): Out of total 15 methods of extraction of retained foreign bodies, *vaman, virechana, dhmapana* are the procedures are helpful.^[30]

Vidradhi (Abscess): In addition to the surgical interventions like incision and drainage, *Panchakarma* procedures are also beneficial.^[31] *Acharya Sushruta* has prescribed *Panchakarma* therapies according to stage and involvement of *Dosha*.

UdaraRoga (Abdominal Enlargements): For the management of aggravated *Vata* and accumulated *Mala* (excrements) in all types of *Udararoga* frequent purgation is very useful.^[32] The administration of medicated enemas is particularly helpful in getting rid of waste deposits in the body.

Yakridalyodara (Enlargement of Liver) and PleehodaraRoga (Spleenomegaly) *Siravedha* (venepuncture) has been indicated after *Snehana and Svedana*.^[33] Both *Yakrut* (liver) and *Pleeha* (spleen) are the seat of *Rakta-vahastrotasa*. Bloodletting directly corrects the vitiated *Rakta*.

Vridhhi/Bradhna (Hernias): *Acharya Sushruta* has indicated *Raktamokshana* by *Siravedha* (venepuncture), although its effects are still undetermined.^[34] Similarly, in the context of

Bradhna (inguinal hernia), *Virechana and NiruhaBasti* have been mentioned as the main treatment.^[35]

AtyayikaChikitsa (Emergency Management): Emergency management is an integral part of Surgery. *Acharya Sushruta* has indicated the procedure of *Siravyadha* (venepuncture) to relieve acute conditions by its fast action. *Raktamokshana* by *Siravyadha* has been said to contribute as half of the total surgical management.^[36] In the management of excessive blood loss, *Rakta-basti* (enema with blood) has been indicated as an effective major.^[37] In the management of *Dhoom-op-hata* (suffocation by smoke), *vaman and shirovirechana* help to evacuate the accumulated toxins.^[38] For managing the condition of '*Bahurajju-lata pasha kanthapeedana*' (throatling), there has been a prime indication for *Shirovirechana*.^[39] Intake of incompatible food has been described to be treated by *Panchkarma*, mainly by *vaman and virechana*. Similarly in poisoning cases, the unique management method is *Panchakarma*. In *Dushivisha* or poisons situated in blood, venepuncture along with all the five evacuative measures of *Panchakarma* have been advised by *Acharya Charaka*.^[40]

CONCLUSION:

Panchakarma has an international recognition as major and unique therapy in the preservation, maintenance and conservation of health, along with promotion of longevity. In the field of *Shalya Tantra*, the procedures of *Panchakarma* plays a very important role. Successful peri-operative management of numerous surgical conditions requires adjuvant therapies of *Panchakarma*. By adopting these procedures, the practice of *Shalya Tantra* is sure to be benefitted with improved outcomes.

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