

A Detailed Review of Panchkarma- An Ayurvedic System of Medicine

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ABSTRACT

Panchakarma (meaning five actions) is the classical method of medicine in Ayurveda. Panchakarma is a specific medical system of Ayurveda. In this method, various types of procedures are used to remove the diseases and causes of disease in the body and to restore the three doshas (ie Tridoshas) Vata, Pitta, Kapha in asymmetrical form. But in many of these processes, five karmas are the main ones, that is why it is called "Panchkarma". The processes of these five karmas are as follows:

1. vomit
2. purging
3. settlement
4. settlement - establishment
5. Nasya

The above five are called main or principal actions.

Ayurveda Panchakarma system of medicine is one of the oldest medical systems of the country. It is very popular in the southern part of the country and is generally accepted in folk life. This method is being used recently in North India. In this method the toxins of the body are taken out and purified. In this way disease is also cured. Panchakarma is a special system of medicine described in Ayurveda, which eliminates diseases from the root by removing the doshas from the body. This is a process of purification of the body, which is also beneficial for a healthy human being. It consists of five main karmas and two purva karmas to be performed before them.

KEYWORDS: *panchkarma, ayurveda, doshas, purification, medicine, health, human, diseases, cure*

INTRODUCTION

Ostensibly the most eminent branch of Ayurveda is Panchakarma. The name Panchakarma literally means "Five Actions" which is well-suited given the fact that this technique relies upon five distinctive basic activities that control the body namely Vomiting, Purgation, Niruham, Anuvaasan, and Nasyam. In other words, Panchakarma healing technique is a pillar on which majority of Ayurvedic techniques stand.[1,2]

Panchakarma works best with the utilization of medicated oils that helps in eliminating the impurities

from the human body. Panchakarma is the true manifestation of the Ayurvedic values and it lives up to its reputation.

Principal Karma (as per medical treatment)

1. Vamana, 2. Virechana, 3. Aasthana Vasti, 4. Anuvasana Basti, 5. Nasya

According to surgery, taking the Asthana and Anusana Vasti under the heading Vasti, the third main action is considered and the fifth main action is 'Rakta Moksha'.

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Past deeds

1. Snehana- The word affection means to aliment the body. This affectionate action is also done externally on the body by doing abhyanga (massage) of aliphatic substances like oil and also by using these substances through the mouth. In the treatment of some diseases, lubrication is also done as the main action.

Four main affections

(1) Ghee, (2) Marrow, (3) Fat, (4) Oil

Among them, Ghrita (Goghrita) is considered to be the best affection. These four affections are mainly bile sedative.

2. Swedana- Swedana refers to the process by which sweda means sweating. The process of producing sweat in the body by artificial means is called Swedana.[3,4]

Distinctions of sweating

- (1) Ekanga Swed - Sweding of a particular organ
- (2) Sarvanga sveda - Swedana of the whole body
- (a) Agni Swed - Swedana by direct contact with fire
- (b) Niragni sveda - Swedana without contact with fire.

Vomit- Removal of defects through the upward path is called vamana. That is, the removal of defects through the mouth by vomiting is called Vamana. Vamana is said to be the main therapy for Kapha dosha.

Vomitable diseases- Breathing, Kasa, Prameha, Pandu disease (anemia), Oral disease, Tumor etc.

Unable to vomit - pregnant woman, soft natured person, suffering from excessive hunger etc.

Dissection - Removal of defects from the anus and excreta is called virechana. Virechana is said to be the main therapy for pitta dosha.

Virilable diseases- Head colic, Agnidagdha, Arsh, Fissure, Gulm, Blood Pitta etc.

Patients unfit for purgation- new fever, night awakening, Rajayakshma etc.[5,6]

Property- installation material, accommodation

Vasti is that action in which various liquid substances containing medicine are entered into the body from the urinary tract, urinary tract, apatyamarga, ulcer mouth, etc.

The thing given through urinary tract and apatya route is called Uttar Vasti and the one given through Vran Mukha (the mouth of the wound) is called Vran Vasti. Vasti is said to be the main medicine for Vata diseases. Kwatha (decoction) of various medicinal substances is used in Aasthana vasti. Siddha affection from various medicinal substances is used in Anuvasana.

Diseases worthy of possession- organ sluggishness, joint diseases, erectile dysfunction, vaginal colic, etc.

Patients who are unfit for the vasti- Without taking food, the use of avasana vasti and aasthana vasti after food is prohibited. At the same time, those who are vomiting (vomiting) should not be given vasti.



Nasya -The medicine which is used through the nostrils is called Nasya. Nasya is said to be the best medicine for all diseases of the throat and head.

There are two types of Nasya according to quantity-

1. Marsha Nasya - 6, 8 or 10 drops of nasal fluid are injected into the nostrils.
2. Pratimarsha Nasya - 1 drop or 2 drops of the drug is put in the nostril. The amount of this nasya is less. Hence it can be taken daily also.

Nasya worthy diseases- Pratishyaya, eructation of the mouth, vocal discrepancy, heaviness of the head, dental colic, ear colic, ear sound etc.

Patients who are incapable of nasya - very grumpy person, delicate patient, psychosis, excessive sleepiness, snakebite etc.

According to surgery, the fifth karma is considered to be 'Rakta Moksha'. Rakta Moksha means the removal of contaminated blood from the body.

The action of **Rakta Moksha** is also done by piercing the tip with the help of a weapon and is also done without the use of a weapon. The most popular method for liberation of blood without the use of weapons is 'Jaluka' i.e. salvation of blood by leeches. The leech is applied at a particular place and after the suction of the contaminated blood, it is removed. For various diseases, the instructions for liberation of blood from different veins have been given in Ayurveda.[7,8]



Rakta Moksha

Nowadays human life is becoming more and more mechanical. In a very dynamic life, irregularities have come in the diet of human beings. Just as servicing is required from time to time for proper functioning of machines like cars or cycles, in the same way, purification of the body through Panchakarma is also necessary to keep our body healthy.

Discussion

Panchakarma Treatment

Oleation:

Oleation includes use of oil or oily substance on the body. Ayurveda offers different oils made from various home grown and mineral ingredients mostly for external use. Aside from oils and ghee utilized especially for internal application. The fatty substance goes about as a viable medium, figures out how to achieve the more profound tissues, helps in carrying the medicinal ingredients every cell of the body and loosen up toxins stuck in the cells.



Oleation

Fomentation

The treatments that produce sweat are called fomentation treatments. Oleation treatments are followed by the fomentation treatments. The tissues made delicate by oleation treatments become more flexible by fomentation therapies. Profound established toxins relaxed by oleation melt because of fomentation therapy and help it to flush out of the body.



Benefits of Panchakarma

1. Completely purifies the body
2. Riddance of toxins
3. Speeding up the metabolism
4. Reducing weight
5. Enhancing the strength of digestive fire
6. Opening up of blocked channels
7. Relaxing the mind and body
8. Rejuvenation of tissues
9. Boosts Immunity
10. Relieves stress

Stress, natural pollutants and poor lifestyle decisions make a lethal load on the body that—if left in the tissues and circulation system results in poor health. [9,10]

Panchakarma turns around this degenerative procedure rapidly and its impact is quite significant and long lasting. Panchakarma utilizes a combination of massage, home grown saunas, special foods and nutritional directives, mellow fasting and colon treatments to free the body from accumulated toxins.

Your own Panchakarma program starts with an intensive exam by an Ayurvedic Physician, which empowers the specialist to prescribe a therapy according to an individual's wellbeing. As your Panchakarma medicines advances, you will be given a special ayurvedic diet routine mixed with specific medicinal plants and basic oils to use at home. These will help animate your liver and stomach related organs, helping them to cleanse toxins.

The Panchakarma purifying procedure affects an individual in many ways. Accordingly, amid the program, you may see changes on mental, physical and emotional levels. A large number of patients encounter a "recuperating emergency." This is a very natural part of the healing procedure, and might be viewed as a beneficial step towards the ideal wellbeing.

According to Ayurveda, great wellbeing relies on our ability to completely process all parts of life, absorbing what supports and disposing of the rest. When we can't properly digest our food, experiences, and feelings, toxins aggregate in our bodily tissues, causing imbalance and eventually making you sick. Panchakarma is an exquisite purging procedure that discharges stored toxins and reestablishes the body's natural healing ability.

At the point when our digestion power or energies, known as Agni (fire), are strong, we make strong and healthy tissues, wipe out waste items effectively, and deliver an inconspicuous embodiment called Ojas. Ojas, which might be imagined as the deepest sap of our psychophysiology, is the reason for clarity of perception, physical strength and immunity. On the other side, if our Agni is debilitated, digestion is deficient and makes toxins that get sorted in the body. This toxic deposit is known as Ama.

At the point when ama accumulates in the body, it hinders the flow of vitality, information, and nourishment throughout the framework. Ayurveda considers this accumulation of toxins as the basic cause for all diseases. A typical case of this is the collection of saturated fat and cholesterol that is past the body's ability to process. After some time, this prompts the blockage of the blood vessels and arteries and, also leads to cardiac arrest. [11,12]

While it's easy to understand agni and ama in terms of food, it's critical to recollect that your brain and heart are persistently digesting energy and information.



Agnikarma

At present your digestive powers are working to separate these thoughts into segments that your intellect can absorb. Likewise, your emotional agni is in charge of processing your feelings and emotions, including the grin of a loved one, startling feedback at work, or the excitement of a new relationship.

When your emotional agni is efficient, you can withdraw anything that is nourishing and eliminate the rest. The inability to metabolize feelings creates the same amount of toxic residue as undigested nourishment. Truth be told, repressed outrage, long-held misery, and lingering guilt are more disturbing for many people than issues with physical assimilation.

In order to experience optimal health, it is essential to maintain a strong digestive fire and dispose toxins from the body. Panchakarma is a natural treatment that detoxifies and reinstates the body's inner balance and energy.

Results

Panchakarma is more than a mere healing system. Before the actual operation of purification through Panchakarma steps begins, there is a need to prepare the body with prescribed methods to encourage it to let go of the toxins. Ayurvedic Panchakarma treatment involves elaborated methods of purification to release stress. Releasing stress from the muscles prepares the body tissues to accept the maximum benefits of food, nutrition and exercise. Panchakarma treatment is a three-stage process -

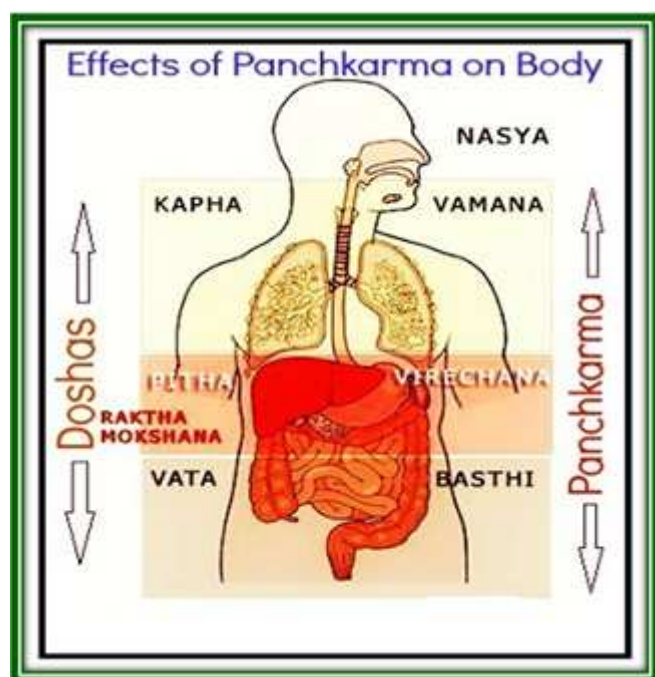
- **Purva (pre-operative)**
- **Pradhana (operative) and**
- **Paschat (post-operative) measures.**

Any kind of illness is said to occur due to imbalances of the mind, body, and spirit. Ayurveda advises practising Purvakarma to cure these deep-rooted imbalances in the body. It helps to flush out the toxins (ama) from the body.



Shirodhara

Accumulation of ama is the primary reason for almost all diseases. It is important to prepare the body for the rigorous process of Panchakarmam, the purification therapy. [13] It encourages the body to let go of the toxins. Treatments like Abhyangam, Shirodhara and Elakizhi are included in the Panchakarma steps to soften the tissues where the oil is applied to the entire body with a particular type of massage. All the toxins are massaged and moved towards the gastro-intestinal tract. Therapies like Vamana, Virechana, Basti, Nasya and Raktamokshan are further used as per the body constitution (Vata, Pitta and Kapha) to complete the detoxifying process.



Therefore, taking Panchakarma treatment becomes essential as it sets down the first step of your journey towards better health and a cleansed body that is free of toxins and imbalances. With Ayurveda and Panchakarma practices, most of the diseases can be prevented before they find a way into the body. When the detoxification and cleansing practices of Panchakarma are carried out at regular periods, accumulation of toxins at serious levels can be prevented. Ayurveda identifies any imbalances in the body and alleviates them through the procedures and therapies. [14]

In cases, where individuals are already suffering from a serious physical disorder or disease, Ayurvedic Panchakarma treatment can help them cope with it. Some of the medical issues for which Panchakarma has proven to be beneficial are:

- Respiratory problems - cold, cough, allergies, asthma
- Cardiac problems - hypertension and irregular blood circulation

- Joint diseases - gout, spondylitis, and arthritis
- Psychological disorders: addiction, depression, insomnia, anxiety
- Dermatological diseases - Psoriasis, eczema, hair loss, skin pustules
- Fertility problems - PCOS, infertility, irregular period, cysts and fibroma, sterility
- Gastrointestinal problems
- Slipped Discs
- Insomnia
- Movement Disorders - Paralysis or consequences from brain apoplexy

By eliminating the toxins from the body, Ayurveda and Panchakarma therapies cleanse the body and restore the natural healing system of the body while boosting the immunity as well. It may take some time to overcome the illness, but going through the natural process of allowing the body to heal itself will lead to better health with time.

Implications

In Ayurvedic Panchakarma, there are different forms and types of treatment that are targeted on different sections of the body. Mainly, the treatments are aimed at removing toxins from the head and gastrointestinal tracts. The elements that the Panchakarma detoxification treatment comprises are as follows.

1. Purva Karma (Digestion Therapy):

Purva Karma is a preliminary procedure that prepares the body for the cleansing and detoxifying Panchakarma treatment. It takes around three to seven days. At this stage, the body is prepared for treatment by loosening toxins and excess doshas. Purvakarma aims at softening the tissues so that the toxins deep-rooted in the tissues can be liquefied to be eliminated through the digestive system.



The Purva Karma treatment comprises of the following:

➤ **Pachan Karma:**

Here, the individual fasts followed by intaking herbs to facilitate the digestion of liquefied butter or ghee and to dissolve the fat-soluble toxins.

➤ **Snehan Karma (Oleation Therapy):**

Snehan (oleation) is a stage where medicated oils, either internally or externally, are administered to the individual to liquefy the toxins present in the tissues. Snehan Karma comprises the administration of medicated fats and the massage of oil over the skin for a specific period. The use of oleation results in unctuousness and softness of morbid doshas, which become easily extractable.[15]

Snehan is performed using substances of vegetable origin such as Til, Erand, Mahua, Sarson, Neem, Karanj, Shaijan, Priyal and Bahera, as well as substances of animal origin such as milk, curd, Ghee, meat, fat and bone tissue. The use of a specific snehan substance also depends upon the season of treatment. Therefore, while the use of Ghee is recommended during summer, oil is preferred during winters and the use of fat and bone marrow is recommended during the spring season.

➤ **Swedana Karma (Sudation Therapy):**

Swedana, or Sudation Therapy involves deep Ayurvedic massage and steam bathing to open up the bodily channels and stimulate the movement of the digestive tract. Inducing sweat in the patient, channels ama (the pent-up toxins) inside the body, to the digestive tract, from where the amas can be easily ejected by the system during Pradhanakarma. It is usually conducted as the last stage of Purvakarma after Pachana Karma and Snehana (Oleation Therapy) Karma.

Swedana Karma is a body cleansing and a stress-relieving therapy which is recommended for patients suffering from ailments such as asthma, weight and digestion issues, and body inflammation.

2. Pradhan Karma

This is the main five-step therapy of Panchakarma treatment. The therapy can be customized after evaluating the curative needs, age, digestive health, immunity and other health factors of the individual. Ayurvedic cleanses or Panchakarma types involve -

➤ Virechanam is extremely beneficial for the treatment of pitta dominant disorders. When excess bile (pitta) is secreted and accumulated in the gallbladder, liver and small intestine, it tends to result in rashes, skin inflammation, acne, chronic attacks of fever, biliary vomiting, nausea and jaundice. Virechanam is the use of

therapeutic purgation or a therapeutic laxative to relieve the excess pitta causing the bile disturbance in the body.

- Sansarjan Karma - post detox food therapy
- Rasayan Adi Prayogam - natural immunity booster therapy
- Shaman Chikitsa - herbal therapy including lifestyle changes and management[13]

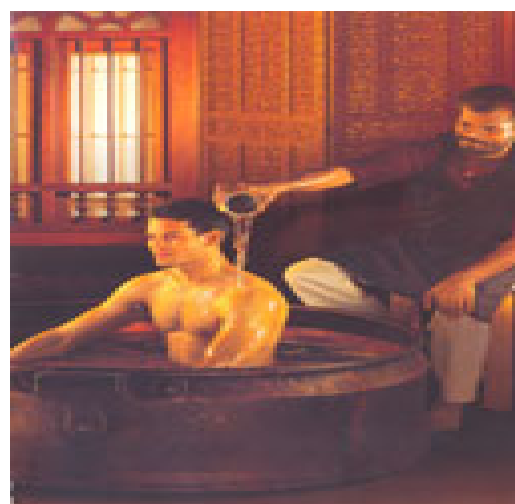
The Panchakarma treatment at Govardhan Ecovillage can be customized to suit the different requirements of individuals and may be done in as little as seven days or could last for 21 days. Lifestyle changes, healthy diet choices along with the rejuvenating treatments can bring massive changes in the health and life for the better.



If you are looking for more therapies, you can check out the ancient Kerala therapies at Govardhan Ecovillage, which are based on the Ayurvedic solutions established by the legendary Ashta vaidyas thousands of years ago.

Abhyangam Massage: It is a form of Ayurvedic Panchakarma massage which is performed with warm oil infused with a dosha-specific herb. Abhyangam massage is beneficial for skin health, reducing muscle stiffness and promoting lymphatic drainage.

Avagaha Swedam: Avagaha Swedam is an Ayurvedic method of sedation in which the individual is allowed to sit in a large tub filled with medicated oil. This therapy works best for diseases caused due to disturbed Vata dosha and can be beneficial in the treatment of dehydration, burns and insomnia.



Avagaha Swedam

Nasyam: As mentioned earlier, Nasyam is one of the five parts of Panchakarma treatment which is used to treat problems pertaining to the head, sinus and release tension from the shoulder and neck area.

Choornapindaswedam Podi Kizhi: It is a specialized therapy which uses boluses of medicated powder or churnas to treat diseases related to the joints, muscles, bones and nerves.[14]

Jambeera Pinda Swedam: In this therapy, the boluses used are made with lemon and other herbs.

Ayurveda massage or Ayurveda treatment at Govardhan Ecovillage is designed to help balance out the imbalances caused due to poor lifestyle and diet. The results are dependent on following the prescribed Panchakarma treatment plan with high adherence, hence residential treatment is highly recommended. This Panchakarma treatment follows a holistic model where the root cause of the illnesses is addressed rather than the symptoms. During this treatment, massages help eliminate the toxins of the body and rejuvenate the body providing healing and strengthening effect.

The oils, fruits, herbs, flowers, and other curative plants used for Kerala Ayurveda are extracted from nature which eliminates any chances of side effects. To help you deal with daily stressors Kerala ayurvedic treatment centre at GEV, have a residential program that will encourage healthy behaviours such as digital detox and healthy diet. A planned and systematic lifestyle helps you combat stress, fatigue, and various illnesses and encourage you to stay on course with your mental and physical health. Ayurveda remedies like Kerala Ayurveda and Panchakarma provides an effective and long-term cure for persistent and chronic illnesses.

Conclusions

The Panchakarma therapy is a holistic treatment approach that has profound impacts on the mind, emotional balance and the body. Right from the sessions, where one is prepared for the Panchakarma treatments, they can discover many distresses within themselves as their self-awareness increases. By the end of the treatment, they can be more in sync with their body and form a strong connection with the mind and spirit.

Some Panchakarma treatments may initially feel slightly uncomfortable, and you may come across hidden resentments or anxieties from the past leading to emotional upheaval. But that is completely normal. It is the body's response to being purged of all the negativities and bodily toxins that have been

accumulated over all the years. It is also recommended to talk about these emotions to your therapists so that they can suggest Ayurvedic methods of relief to help you with the ongoing therapy.

As example, Govardhan Ecovillage is one of the best Ayurveda panchakarma centres, where all the age-old therapies and bespoke treatments are administered by certified Ayurveda and Panchakarma practitioners. The beautiful mountain ranges of Sahyadris will bring you closer to nature that can heighten the healing and rejuvenation process. For the treatment of any health concerns, Govardhan Ecovillage offers a customized treatment plan based on the prakruti analysis of the individual to achieve a state of harmony and balance at all the levels of the mind, body and spirit.

Everything you need to respite from the stress and noise that burdens our daily lives, you can find it here at this beautiful Ayurvedic centre in India. Plan your journey to healing and rejuvenation with us to achieve a mind-body balance that will enable you to live a happy and fulfilling life.[15]

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