

Review Article on Abhyanga

Dr. Madhukar¹ BAMS, Dr. V. G Hiremath² BAMS MD (Ayu), Dr. S. V Guddad³ BAMS MD (Ayu)

¹PG Scholar, Department of PG Studies in Panchakarma,

²Professor, Department of PG Studies in Panchakarma,

³Associate Professor, Department of PG Studies in Panchakarma,

^{1,2,3}Shri Vijaya Mahantesh Ayurvedic Medical College & PG Research Centre, Ilkal, Karnataka, India

ABSTRACT

Abhyanga is application of oil followed by massage. It is mentioned in the Ayurvedic texts like Brihatrayi and Laghutrayi. It is the oldest technique for healing, preventing diseases and promoting health. It has been included in the Dinacharya and also as the treatment measure for a variety of diseases. It is also a part of the pre-therapeutic procedures of Panchakarma. Abhyanga improves blood circulation (arterial as well as venous), lymphatic flow and thus offers nourishment to the body cells. It not only de-stresses the whole body but also strengthens the nervous system, improves blood circulation, removes toxins and improves the overall well-being of the person. Besides it also acts as immune-modulator action, it improves the quality of life thus benefitting the persons of all the ages. Modern studies have proven that, Abhyanga has potential psychogenic and physiologic benefits. It can certainly be said that Abhyanga, “Adds life to years” rather than “Years to life. Applied aspect of Abhyanga is widely accepted discussed and also practically evidenced in number of studies conducted from time to time. Abhyanga is widely perceived as a procedure which not only gives pleasantness, rejuvenation, and recreation but is also helpful in treating a number of chronic diseases.

KEYWORDS: *Abyanga, Massage, Clinical Application*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurvedic system of medicine hasholistic approaches in a particular way to prevent and promote a healthy life by following certain methods and therapies in day today activities to increase fitness and physical health. Ayurveda shastras have mentioned one of the oldest therapies is called Abyanga (oil massage). The word Abyanga is derived from Abhi+Anjana –abyanjana, Abhi means towards, in to, upon etc. Anjana means to smear, rubbing with unctuous substance, smearing the body with oil¹. It is one of the day today activity mentioned in Ayurveda as a part of dinacharya (dailyactivities). In Astanga Hrudaya Acharaya Vagbata has mentioned one of the dinacharya like brushing the tooth, bathing, abyanga is also one of the daily activities. An axis of wheel becomes strong and resistant to wear and tear by the application of oil in the same way by doing Abyanga daily, one becomes disease free. The body is compared to tree, if the roots are given water regularly the tree will live for long time, similarly if the body is done Abyanga daily then

it will be disease free. By doing Abyanga regularly it nourishes the dathu and increases strength and promotes the proper function of Vata

METERIALS AND METHODS

- This is conceptual type of study. All sorts of references has been collected and relevant materials is compiled from various available ayurvedic classical texts like Charaka Samhitha, Sushrutha Samhitha, Astanga Hridaya and Sharangadhara and available commentaries on it.
- Study materials available on internet.

CONCEPTUAL STUDY

Abyanga is defined as procedure of application of Snehadravya over the body and make to and fro movements. Abyanga means massaging the body with any Sneha in the same direction of hair follicle.²

➤ Indication

- *Adharaniya Vega (Mutra, Purisha, Retasa,*

How to cite this paper: Dr. Madhukar | Dr. V. G Hiremath | Dr. S. V Guddad "Review Article on Abhyanga" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-6 | Issue-3, April 2022, pp.1078-1083, URL: www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd49686.pdf



Copyright © 2022 by author (s) and International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development Journal. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>)



Nidra)³

- PittajaGulma⁴
- Apasmara⁵
- Vatodara⁶
- In Atiyoga of Vamana⁷
- Scorpionbite⁸
- Vataja Hrudroga⁹

➤ **Contraindications¹⁰ (According to Sushruta)**

- Dosa associated with Ama
- Taruna Jwara and Ajeerna (Indigestion)
- Those who have been given Vamana or Virecana or Niruha Basti
- If Abhyanga done in Taruna Jwara and Ajeerna it causes severity or incurability of disease
- In the diseases caused by Santarpana (over nutrition).

According to Astanga Hrudaya¹¹

Abhyanga should be avoided in persons,

- Suffering from aggravated Kapha.
- Undergone Panchakarma therapy.
- Ajeerna.

Types of Abyanaga:

1. Shiro Abyanga
2. Pada Abyanga
3. Sharira Abyanaga

Benefits of Abhyanga¹²

- Jara (retards ageing), Srama (exertion) and pacifies Vata.
- Drusti Prasada (Good for vision)
- Pusti Prasada (Nourishes the body)
- Ayu Prasada (Increases longevity)
- Swapna (induce good sleep)
- Good for skin (complexion and firmness)
- Provides good physique.

Importance of Shiro Abhyanga¹³ (According to Sushruta)

- Shiro Abhyangae eliminates diseases of head
- It makes keshha grows mardhava (soft), long, thick, snigdha, Krishnaksha (blackish hairs)

According to Charaka¹⁴

- By applying oil daily to head, does not get Shirashula (headache), Kalithya (baldness), Phalithya (greying of hair), NaKsha Prapatanti (nor there be hair fall).
- BalaShiraKapalanam (Bones of skull and forehead will become strong)
- Drudhamula (Roots of the hair become strong); Dhrihaka (hairs will be long) and KrushnaKsha (black coloured).
- Rejuvenates the Indriyas, increases the skin complexion of the face.

- NidraLabhaSukha (Gets good sleep easily and feels happy).

Importance of Padabhyanga

According to Sushruta Abhyanga of feet helps to,

- NidraSukha (get good sleep)
- DehaSukha (pleasure to body)
- Chaksusya (good for vision)
- Removes Srama (fatigue) and Supti (numbness of feet)
- Padamrudhukara (softness of feet)

Specific site of abyanaga

- According to Astanga Sangraha and Astanga Hrudaya

Abhyanga should be done specially to Shira, Karna and Pada

Basic Strokes of massage

- Friction (gharshana) this is also called as connective tissue massage this can be done by thumb, fingertips. In friction massage more pressure is applied on muscular parts while gentle pressure is given on the other body parts.

There are sub types of friction:

1. Pratiloma- Towards heart
2. Anuloma- Away from the heart.
3. Circular - Mainly for the big muscles on hands and legs.

- Kneading (peedana)- Superficial kneading also called pinching with thumb and index finger.

- Prapeedana (deep kneading)-petrissage-by using palms & giving parleele deep pressure on the part of the body.

- Rounding - This is very fast movement by using both hands. The objective is to move muscles in round direction.

- Wringing (or) udvartana- The muscles are twisting by using both hands.

- Chucking: Giving supports to the parts of muscles while they are lifted slightly upwards it is mainly for sprain and catching pain.

- Stroking (trasana) - Finger and palms are used for this method by giving more or less pressure.

- Percussion (prahara) - In this type, the muscles or the body parts is stroked by using the finger the palms of both hands it is useful for improving metabolism.

- Vibrations (kampa or harsha) - The vibrations produced by massage are useful for activating superficial and deep movements of the body parts.

- Joint movements (sandhichalana) - In this type,

joints are moved and massaged also.

- Touch (sparshana)- After completing all the above type patients needs gentle touch soothing effects.

Types of Abyanga According to Modern:

1. Techniques: Stroking, Pressure, Percussion, Vibration.
2. Depth of Tissue Approached: Light Massage and Deep Massage.
3. Mean of Application of Pressure: Manual and Mechanical Massage.
4. On the basis of nature of drug used: Dry massage, Powder massage, Oil massage

According To Movements

- * Touch – Sensation which is carried through brain.
- *Stroke - Touch with movements with one or both palms slowly.
- *Friction - Grasp the part and move with little amount of pressure.
- *Kneading- Alternative compression of the tissue by grasping them against the underlying body surfaces.
- *Vibration-Fine vibratory or shaking movement communicated to the body through hands.
- *Joint movements- Both assisted and resisted movements are given.

Clinical Application of Massage

1. Headache

- The most common cause of headache is tension. Which after originates in the shoulders leading to tight muscles in the neck and scalp. Sinus problem may cause head pain across the forehead may result from overheating.

Treatment 1:

For tension massage use strong scalp neck and shoulder massage the neck and all over the scalp using thumb rotations on head of hand, kneading pressure hair pulling.

Treatment 2:

For sinus headache massage either side of the nostrils with ur middle finger resting it under the check bones. apply firm pressure along the length of the finger for 5-10 sec.

2. Migraine

- Migraine results from tension and physical stress in the membrane around the brain and muscles of the scalp causes such tension may includes stress strain hormone imbalance Infection of neck and back

problems, allergy excess of food and alcohol& depression.

Treatment 1:

To balance endocrine system, massage the middle of the forehead, and base of the throat with two finger rotation for (10-30 sec)on each side.

Treatment 2:

To release tension in the scalp and membrane around the brains use stroking rotations and light pressure all over the head working in regular lines work horizontal lines on the neck shoulder and upper back with kneading and strong thumb rotations.

3. Sleep disturbance:

- Problems with sleeping have many causes, including emotional distributions digestive problems, allergies and over stimulation for example from watching television last night before bed.

Working through the complete massage plan twice a week calms and reduces stress, helping mind to organic information. use once a week when symptoms improve.

Treatment 1:

Strong thumb rotations up to the back of the neck will help to realx the mind to relax tension across the shoulders firmly kneed the upper back and shoulder follow with thumb rotations and pressure.

Treatment 2:

Calm the mind by massaging to slow down body mind and body coax your partner in to relaxed sleep use light rotations slowly and repetitively on the endocrine areas.

4. Depression and Anxiety:

Common problems including emotional problem, childbirth, reactions to childhood experiences and responsible to pain or stress that get out of control anxiety has a similar symptoms to depression along with elementary of fearfulness.

Step one:- Relax scalp using slow, gentle stroking, combining and light hairs pulling and over the head and over and over again. this will take us to deep level of relaxation

Step two:- Once your partner is deeply relaxed hold the head with one handon the back of the neck and the other forehead and guide through the visuavilazation.

Paschat Karma

Oil is wiped off with a soft towel. Patient is advised to take rest for at least fifteen minutes.

Patient is advised to take bath with warm water or RasanadiChurna is applied all over the body. The necessary/mandatory instructions are to be given to the patient to achieve the Maximum therapeutic benefits to avoid the complications.

DISCUSSION

Mode of Action of Abhyanga

AcharyaDalhana has indicated that Abhyanga should be done for specified times, also a description of the penetration of Sneha at various levels are given in the table below. Thus,

Abhyanga should be performed for at least 5 minutes in each position if the desired outcome is to effect deeper tissues like Majja. [10]

According to Ayurveda, oil etc. used for massage does not have their actions confined to skinalone. The drugs with which these are boiled permeate through the skin and reach different tissue elements of the body. The medicated oil used for massage remain in the skin for 300 seconds (matras) and gradually and consecutively permeates through different tissues elements like Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Asthi, Majja, the medicated oil takes about 100 Matraseach to persuade and permeate through these different categories of tissue elements.

Table 1: Reaching of Taila to different Dhatus or effect on Dhatus.

Body Parts	Penetrating Time Of Oil
Hair follicle	300 matrakala (approx 65 sec)
Skin	400 matrakala (approx 133 sec)
Blood tissue	500 matrakala (approx. 160 Sec)
Muscle tissue	600 matrakala (approx 190 Sec)
Fat tissue	700 matrakala (approx 228 sec)
Bone tissue	800 matrakala (approx 240 sec)
Bone marrow	900 matrakala (approx 285 sec)

Modern Aspect of Abhyanga

Abhyanga can be compared with modern science in many aspects.

There is different technique of massage according to their movements.

- Touch – Sensation which is carried through brain.
- Stroke-Touch with movement with one/both palms slowly.
- Friction-Grasp the part and move with little amount of pressure.
- Kneading-Alternative compression of the tissues by grasping them against the underlined body surfaces.
- Vibrations-Fine vibratory/shaking movements communicated to the body through the hands.

- Percussion- The movements/blows administered in various ways with varying degrees of force.
- Joint movements- both assisted and resisted movements are performed.

Physiological Effects

The therapeutic value of massage lies in its numerous and combined physiological effects and technique dependent. Massage, be it manual or mechanical, imparts pressure and stimulates mechanically the various tissue approached at the time of application of a particular technique. It is the magnitude, duration, and the direction of force applied during a particular technique that determines the effects, produced by that technique on that body.

Effects on the circulatory system

1. On the venous and the lymphatic flow
2. On the arterial flow
3. Effects on the mobility of the soft tissue.
4. Effects on the skin.

1. Effect on the Venous And The Lymphatic Flow

Massage facilitates the forward movement of the venous blood and the lymph. So reduces the chance of stagnation of the blood and the lymph in the tissue space. The mechanical action of massage resembles with that of normal muscular contraction. The different techniques of massage alternately compress and release the soft tissue. This facilitates the venous and lymphatic flow. Massage facilitates the drainage and reduces the stagnation of fluids and speeds up the massage facilitates the drainage and reduces the stagnation of fluids and speed up the removal of waste products.

2. Effect On The Arterial Flow

Massage improves the blood supply of the area being massaged. A definite vasodilatation along with an increase in the peripheral blood flow is usually observed after massage. This moderate consistent and definite increase in the arterial flow may be attributed to the following events happening during massage.

1. Release of vasodilators
2. Activation of axon reflex
3. Decrease of venous congestion

3. Effects on the Soft Tissue

Elasticity, Plasticity and Mobility of soft tissue enhanced. The tissues which can be affected by massage include muscles, sheath, ligaments, tendons, and joint capsule superficially as well as deep fascia.

4. Effects on the Skin

It improves the nutritive status of skin and rises the temperature of skin. Massage facilitates the movement of skin over the subcutaneous structure. As a result, skin becomes soften and finer. After

prolonged massage the skin also becomes tough, more flexible, elastic and its sensitivity is reduced. It has a soothing effect. The dead cells are removed by the constant contact of the hand over the skin. The sweat glands, hair follicles and the sebaceous glands, thus, become free from obstruction and can function more effectively. Massage by activating the sweat glands, increases perspiration, so that the heat production is increased. It also facilitates the sebaceous secretions from exocrine glands of skin and thus improves the lubrication and appearance of skin.

By performing Abhyanga daily, it makes the individual healthy and strong. The medicated oils utilized during the process, nourishes the tissue, gives strength and stimulates the Agni. The tissues are nourished when the oil penetrates the seven layers of the skin and the time duration has been mentioned in the table before. Abhyanga reduces pain and takes away stress, it stimulates the nervous system which in turn effects the muscular system, glands and vessels. Usually lukewarm medicated oils are used, which stimulates the swedavahasrotasthus causing dilation of the blood vessels, thereby increasing the blood circulation, reducing pain, stiffness and contraction of vessels. The human body has 107 Marma points. At these points, the Prana (energy) resides and by doing Abhyanga of these points, positive energy is generated. Hence protecting, rejuvenating and increasing the immunity toward external environmental changes which makes Abhyanga very important part of daily activities.

CONCLUSION

Abhyanga is a *Bahir-parimarjana Chikitsa*. *Abhyanga* improves blood circulation (arterial as well as venous), lymphatic flow and thus offers nourishment to the body cells. It not only de-stresses the whole body but also strengthens the nervous system, improves blood circulation, removes toxins, and improves the overall well-being of the person. Therefore, regular application of *Abhyanga* is said to have systemic effects. Adopting *Abhyanga* as a part of *Dina-charya* renders positive effects on *Shareera* and improves one's lifespan.

REFERENCE

- [1] Sir. M. Monierwilliam, a Sanskrit English dictionary, 1st edition 1899 delhi, MotilalBanarasidas publisher pvt. Ltd: Page – 75.
- [2] venumadhavashastrijoshinaryanaharijoshiayurvedayasabdhakosha 1sted. mumbai:nirnayasagara press:1968. p. 42.

- [3] Agnivesha. CharakaSamhita. Revised by Charaka and Dridhabala with the Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Chakrapanidatta. Edited by YadavjiTrikamjiAcharya. Reprint ed. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan. Varanasi. 2004; 49.
- [4] Agnivesha. CharakaSamhita. Revised by Charaka and Dridhabala with the Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Chakrapanidatta. Edited by YadavjiTrikamjiAcharya. Reprint ed. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan. Varanasi. 2004; 442.
- [5] Agnivesha. CharakaSamhita. Revised by Charaka and Dridhabala with the Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Chakrapanidatta. Edited by YadavjiTrikamjiAcharya. Reprint ed. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan. Varanasi. 2004; 476.
- [6] Agnivesha. CharakaSamhita. Revised by Charaka and Dridhabala with the Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Chakrapanidatta. Edited by YadavjiTrikamjiAcharya. Reprint ed. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan. Varanasi. 2004; 498.
- [7] Agnivesha. CharakaSamhita. Revised by Charaka and Dridhabala with the Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Chakrapanidatta. Edited by YadavjiTrikamjiAcharya. Reprint ed. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan. Varanasi. 2004; 537.
- [8] Agnivesha. CharakaSamhita. Revised by Charaka and Dridhabala with the Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Chakrapanidatta. Edited by YadavjiTrikamjiAcharya. Reprint ed. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan. Varanasi. 2004; 579.
- [9] Agnivesha. CharakaSamhita. Revised by Charaka and Dridhabala with the Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Chakrapanidatta. Edited by YadavjiTrikamjiAcharya. Reprint ed. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan. Varanasi. 2004; 602.
- [10] Sushruta. SushrutaSamhita with NibandhaSangrahaCommentaryofDalhanaandNayachandrikaofGayadasa on Nidanasthana. Edited by AcharyaYadhavjiTrikamaji. 8th ed. ChaukhambhaOrientalia, Varanasi. 2005;488.
- [11] Edited by HarishastriParadkar, AshtangaHridaya commentary by Arunadatta and Hemadri, Sutra Sthana: Chapter 2 Verse 9: ChaukhambhaKrishnadas academy, 2009; 26.

- [12] Edited by HarishastriParadkar, AshtangaHridaya commentary by Arunadatta and Hemadri, Sutra Sthana: Chapter 2 Verse 8: ChaukambhaKrishnadas academy, 2009; 26.
- [13] Sushruthasamhitha with nibandhasangraha commentary of Dalhana and nyaayachandrika of gayadas on nidanasthana edited by acharyayadavjitrikamji 8th ed. Chaukambaorientalia Varanasi 2005. p. 488
- [14] Agnivesha. CharakaSamhita. Revised by Charaka and Dridhabala with the Ayurveda Dipika commentary of Chakrapanidatta. Edited by YadavjiTrikamjiAcharya. Reprint ed. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan. Varanasi. 2004; 42.
- [15] Healing touch ayurvedic massage by Dr. subashran ade, Dr. rajanravat page no. 40
- [16] step-by-step head massage Eilean Bentley P. no 114

