



Review Article

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## TAKRADHARA: A CRITICAL REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

Panchakarma is an ultimate method of Ayurvedic detoxification for body and mind. Panchakarmas are applicable in preventive, curative, promotive aspects. Takradhara is a shamana procedure which done after shodanachikitsa. It is commonly practiced in Kerala. Takradhara is highly effective in prevention of premature greying of hairs, minimizing Klama, and pacifying Doshakopa. In Dharakalpa Takradhara is indicated in various diseases like Siroruja, Ojokshaya, Karacharanaparisthodana, Mutradosha, Sandi visladhatvam, Hridroga, Aruchi, Jadaragnimandya, Shiroroga, Karna roga, Netra roga and is effective in the shamanatva of such conditions.

**Key words:** Takradhara, Sirodhara, Butter Milk, Amalaki Kwatha

### INTRODUCTION

Panchakarma is an ultimate method of Ayurvedic detoxification for body and mind. Panchakarmas are applicable in preventive, curative, promotive aspects. Dhara is a procedure in which medicated oil or Kashaya is poured in a continuous stream through thumb at a height of 12 Angula over the body parts. It is also called Sarvangadhara. The Dhara which is done over Shiras (frontal area) with medicated oil, or Kashaya or

medicated buttermilk with the help of Dharapatra at a height of 4 Angula above forehead is called Shirodhara. It comes under Murdhinitaila and is indicated in Arumshika, Sirasthoda, Daha, Paka and Vrana.

In Takradhara, buttermilk processed with medicated herbs and is used as external procedure. Ayurveda practitioners in South India have modified certain procedures based on Ayurveda principles and own experience and found them quite effective, Takradharais one among them. The medicated Takra is poured in a continuous stream over the forehead from a height of 4 angulas. It is useful in treating Psoriasis, Anxiety Disorders, lack of sleep, Pituitary microadenoma etc.

Takradhara can be practiced in different ways like Ekanga Takradhra where Dhara is done over a part of body, Sarvanga Takradharawhere Dhara is done on the whole body or as Shirodhara where Dhara is done over the forehead and scalp.

### **Indication**

Takradharais highly effective in prevention of premature greying of hair, minimizing Klama(fatigue), pacifying Doshakopa, Siroruja(head ache), Ojokshaya (reduced body immunity), Karacharanaparisthodana (pricking pain over palms and feet), Mutradosha (disorders related with urinary system), Sandi visladhatvam (laxity of joints), Hridroga (cardiac disorders), Aruchi (reluctance), Jadaragnimandya (decreased appetite), Shiroroga ( disorders of head), Karna roga (disorders of ear), Netra roga ( disorders of eye)<sup>2</sup>.

### **Preparation of Takra**

Takra:

The method generally practised in Kerala is 1.5 litres of milk is added with four times of water and boiled with 100 gm of cleaned and crushed Mustha (Cyperus rotundus) suspended into the liquid in a bag of thin cloth. It is reduced to the quantity of milk. The bag of medicaments is squeezed well. After cooling, this processed milk is fermented overnight.

Depending upon the condition of dosha, the milk can be processed with Musta in Kaphapredominant condition, in Pitta predominant conditions with Yashtimadhu, also Balaka, Ushira, Vilvamoola, Chandana can be utilised<sup>3</sup>.

Kwatha:

Generally, Kwatha is prepared by boiling 200gm of dried Amalaki with 8 litres of water and reducing to 2 litres. Out of the 2 litres, 1.5 litres of Kwathais used to mix with Takra and 500 ml is used to wash the head after procedure. The decoction can also be prepared in the form of Ksheera Kashaya, which is transformed to Takra and used. In this method milk is mixed with two, three, four or equal parts of water and 1/8<sup>th</sup> part of drug, and is then boiled and reduced to the quantity of milk<sup>4</sup>. But in common practice, equal quantity of milk and water are boiled with the drug. Depending on the condition of the disease, different Kwathas can be used.

**Figure 1: Drugs for preparing Takra**



**Figure 2: Preparation of Kashaya and Takra**



## **PROCEDURE**

### **Preoperative procedure**

The patient is anointed with suitable oil according to Roga. A strap of cloth is tied across the forehead, in order to prevent the flow of butter milk into the eyes and ear should be plugged with cotton.

### **Operative procedure**

The patient should lie down in supine position with head slightly bent backwards in the Droni. The Dhara pot having an aperture corresponding to the circumference of little finger of patient, is suspended in the Dhara stand placed at the head end of the Droni. A wick of nine Angulas of length pointing towards the centre of the forehead, is suspended through this aperture which is hanging above the head of the patient. The distance between the end of wick and forehead should be four Angulas. Then the medicated Takra is poured over the forehead in a stipulated continuous stream through the hole of the Dhara pot. Takra is to be recollected from the Droni and poured again into vessel. The vessel should always be kept oscillating so that Takra will fall into the entire forehead without interruption. Simultaneously the head is massaged with free palm of the therapist for better effect. Takra should not be heated or reused for next sitting. Care should be taken not to move head while doing the Dhara. Maximum duration of the procedure is half Yama i.e 1 1/2 hours. It should not be advocated beyond 21 days.

### **Post operative procedure**

Patient is advised to take rest for about 15 minutes and then to take head bath with Amalaki Kwatha. The head should be wiped with towel and Rasnadichoorna is applied on Murdha.

## **COMPLICATION AND MANAGEMENT**

Shivering is observed in some cases due to Sheetadhikya. In such condition procedure should be stopped immediately and is given Ushnopachara like warm water intake, hot water bath, wrapping the body with thick cloth etc.

## MODE OF ACTION

In Psoriasis – Takra contains large amount of lactic acid. Lactic acid is a good vehicle for transdermal absorption of drugs. Lactic acid, Amalaki and Musta have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant property<sup>5,6</sup>. So it is helpful in Psoriasis treatment and control scaling. Also Musta act as Kushtagna<sup>7</sup>.

In Hypertension – Takradhararelieves Insomnia, Shiroruk, Bhrama, Klamaand Breathlessness. Acharya Susruta has mentioned Sthapanimarma between two eyebrows. Takradharaseems to be mediated through this Sthapani being a Sira marma. It might have some reflex action on baroreceptor. Vitiated Vayu that enters the Raktadhatu is the cause of Hypertension. The Rakta and Pitta have an inseparable relationship as Pitta resides in the Rakta. When the Pitta gets vitiated, it can vitiate the Raktaand pacify Pitta dosha's Usna and Tikshnaguna with its coolant property.

Improving quality of the Sleep – During the procedure prolonged Dharaof Takramixed with drugs over forehead generate a conduction which not only act as tranquilizer but also induce the sleep. The Seetaguna of Takra may helps to induce the sleep.

In Psychosomatic disorders – Takradharais the unique procedure for all types of Manasa doshas. When Takra is poured in a continuous stream over the forehead it might stimulate the Marmas; Marmas are the Pranas and it may be correlated with vital energy of body. Marmas located in the heads are the Apanga, Avarta, Shankha, Utkshepa, Seemanta and Sthapani. Takradharaimproves Marmas circulation which in turn improves the blood circulation of the brain. This improves the intellectual function also. So improvement in the psychic symptoms is achieved.

## DISCUSSION

Takradharais a Shamanakarma , in which Dosha kopa and Dhatu shaidilya is pacified. Detailed description of Takradharais explained in Dhara kalpa (a traditional Malayalam text book), and in Sirassekadividhi( byPuthiyedath Rama Varrier ). Both of these books are considered as a treatise among Kerala Panchakarma Vaidyas . Explanation of materials

used for Dhroni ,Dhara Patra, Dharastand, its measurement, duration of procedure, dos and don'ts during the procedure and Guna of the procedure are seen.

Sareerashodhana should be done before the procedure of takradhara. At least Mridushodhana is given for the patients who is planning to undergo Takradhara. Generally Takradharais considered under Shirodhara which is one among Murdhnitaila. The term Murdhnitaila means procedures used for Murdha or Shiras. Thus Takaradhara is for Shiras. But it is also done as Ekangadhara or Sarvangadhara. Indications of Shirodhara are Arumshika Shirashoola, Daha ,Pakaand Vrana of Kapala. But practically it is also used in psychological problems like Strain, Psychosomatic Disorders, Anxiety Neurosis and Tension Headache.

While assessing the Dosha wise classification of Rogas – then it is seen that Takradharais administered in Kapha Pitta jadosharogas where as in Vatajaroga , it is contra indicated. It might be because of Seeta Rukshaguna of medicated Takra. Still based on Dosha kopa of rogas, particular Dosha shamana drugs can be added while preparing Takra. For example, in Vata prakopa condition, Varanadigana drugs can be adopted. In Pitta prakopa conditions Yashtimadhu, Chandana, Padmaka etc can be used. Similarly, involvement of Vata dosha is less and other remaining doshas are more then, Bilwa moola, Satavari etc are used. While preparing Takra, sourness is also taken into account. In Sahasra yoga, we can find that Amla rahita Takra has to be taken. But in conditions like Apachi or Kapha jarogas Amla Takra is advised.

The procedure is done at a height of four Angulas above the forehead. The stream of Takra should be uninterrupted. the way of oscillation of Dharapatra from one end to other end of forehead is like writing Malayalam letter 'KA' or 'RA' , which was followed by Ancient Kerala Vaidyas. Duration of Takradhara is one and half hours. But it is always better to start with minimum time for the first sitting and slowly increases on daily basis. While doing Takradhara Pathya Apathya should be followed like keep the mind in happy and pleased state, abstain from all actions that give pain and distress to body, limit of speech, inclination to delights of taste and one have control over the sense like Brahma jnani.

Takradharaprevents premature greying of hair, minimise Klama, pacifies headache, pacifies the pricking pain over palms and feet, reduced mutra dosha, disease of heart, aversion to food and decreased appetite, pacifies disease affecting head, eyes and ears.

In practical experience patient feels calm, stress free, and improve quality of sleep, increases concentration power of patient, lightness of body and mind, Agni vridhi, thus Takradhara helps to attain a healthy peaceful life.

## CONCLUSION

Takradhara is very safe and efficacious treatment modality and can be used effectively for the management for various disorders.

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