



Review Article

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AYURVEDA REVIEW ON *SNEHANA KARMA* W.S.R. TO *BAHYA SNEHANA*

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Abstract

The *Snehana* means internal oleation which is performed before *Sodhana* therapy. The *Snehana* recommended before *Panchkarama* but also advises for general health benefits in routine daily life. The success of purification depends upon the proper mobilization of *Doshas* from the periphery and this is achieved with the help of *Snehana* and *Swedana* therapy. The *Snehana* therapy helps to loosens morbid *Doshas* and liquefies toxins thus they get eliminated easily from the body after *Sodhana* therapy. *Snehana* (oleation) prepares the body to receive main *Sodhana* treatment (*Panchakarma*). *Snehana* mainly performed by using medicated oils and *ghee* along with herbs. *Snehana* helps to loosens *Amam* thereby facilitates their expulsion during *Sodhana* treatment. *Snehana* are two types internal and external *Snehana*, both types of oleation play important role towards the success of *Sodhana Karma*. External oleation (*Bahya Snehana*) involves body massage using medicated oil especially on the affected areas of the body. This therapy channelizes and collects toxins within the body and directs them towards the exit point for elimination purpose.

Key-Words: *Ayurveda, Panchkarama, Sodhana, Snehana, Bahya Snehana, Oleation.*

Introduction

The Ayurveda employed *Sodhana Karma* mainly to eliminate vitiated *Doṣhas* and toxins from the body. These *Doṣhas* are located deep inside the body and to bring them into the *Koṣṭha* or alimentary canal the specific measures like *Snehana* and *Svedana* are suggested before *Panchakarma*. The *Snehana* means oleation therapy and *Svedana* referred to sweating therapy. These approaches brings morbid *Doshas* towards the alimentary canal from there they get eliminated due to the biological response of main *Sodhana Karma* (*Panchakarma*). *Snehana* and *Swedana* play important role in the therapeutic success of *Panchakarma* and helps to channelizes the morbid *Doshas* towards the *Koṣṭha* and ease their elimination [1-4].

***Snehana* (Oleation Therapy):**

The administration of fats can be done *via* diet, drinks, *Basti* and massage. The internal administration comes under the heading of internal *Snehana* and massage or external oleation comes under the heading of *Bahya Snehana*. *Snehana* can be indicated for those who are being treated with *Sodhana* therapy, *Rukṣa* persons, person suffering from *Vatavyadhi*, person involve in physical exercise and to improves physical built up, etc.

Snehana is contraindicated for *Kapha* person, not suggested for weak persons, condition of profuse mucus discharge also contradicted for *Snehana*. Person suffering from thirst, fainting and diseases of stomach, etc. should avoid *Snehana*.

The administration of *Snehana* is done in three doses (*Matra*) i.e.; *Pradhana*, *Madhya* and *Hrasva* depending upon the condition and need of therapy. The *Sneha* should be done minimum for 3 days and maximum for 7 days, however the consideration of *Koṣṭha* of patient is important. The liquid and warm diet advocated after *Snehana* and rest also advises [4-6].

Assessment of *Snehana*

The effect of *Snehana* assessed in terms of *Ayoga*, *Samyak Yoga* and *Atiyoga Snehana*. The *Ayoga Snehana* characterizes by dry stool, abnormal digestion, roughness and dryness, etc. The *Samyak Yoga* is condition of appropriate *Snehana* which includes normal

state of *Vata*, balanced digestive power, soft stool and softness in body. The *Atiyoga* of *Snehana* characterizes with heaviness, dullness, pallor, anorexia and nausea, etc. The condition of *Atiyoga* requires immediate stop in therapy. Improper *Snehana* may causes nausea, constipation, stiffness, unconsciousness, skin allergy, pallor, anorexia, oedema, thirst and *Amadoṣa*.

Warm water advocate after *Snehana*, one should not avoid natural urges of faeces, urine after the therapy. It is advises to avoid physical exercise, anger, loud speaking and exposure to diversified climatic condition during *Snehana* therapy.

***Bahya Snehana* (External Oleation):**

It is therapeutic oil massage performed over the body with synchronized strokes in the same direction. This therapy governs flow of *Doshas* inside the body, *Snehana* pacify *Doshas*, liquefy them and direct them toward their exit points. *Snehana* relieves health ailments, offers soothing effects and imparts mental peace.

External administration (*Bahya Snehana*) involves application of fat on the skin in the form of massage. *Bahya Snehana* is healing massage used for the removal of toxins from the body. It provides relief from pain and relaxes whole body. *Bahya Snehana* performed using herbalized or medicated oil and significantly differs from typical massage techniques. In *Bahya snehana* Ayurvedic technicians performed massage on both sides of body simultaneously, with synchronized strokes directed uniformly towards the front and back of the body to pacify *Doshas* and toxins [4-6].

Ayurveda described different types of external *Snehana* including *Abhyanga*, *Gandusa*, *Udvartana*, *MurdhaTaila*, *Lepa*, *AksiTarpana*, *Mardana*, *NasaTarpana*, *Padaghata*, *Karna Purana*, *Pariseka*, *Mastiskya*, *Samvahana* and *Snehavagahana*. These therapies provides following effects on body:

- Gives lustrous appearance of body and improves physical built up.
- *Snehana* liquefy and loosens *Doshas* and toxins so that they get eliminated easily.
- It increases wetness in the body thus prevent dryness and gives soothing effects.

- Provides physical strength and regulates circulatory process by opening channels of body.

The various approaches of *Snehana* performed in different manner including utilization of medicated oil for body massage, *Lepa* (medicinal wrap), *Udvardhana* (massage towards the heart), *Mardana* (pressure massage), *Padanghata* (massage with the feet), *Parisheka* (Affusion), *Sanvahana* (stroking), *Murdataila* (treatment of head) and *Masthicaya* (head paste), etc.

Mechanism of *Bahya Snehana*:

Bahya snehana is massage which performed in ordered sequence of strokes starting from the umbilicus to the feet and from the feet to the umbilicus on both the sides of body. The pressure of strokes on connecting points of body stimulates harmonious coordination at the cellular level. The pressure of massage helps to push herbal oil into the pores of the skin which further acts on deeply located *Doshas*. The herbal oils possessing *Vata shamak* action pacify *Vata*, *Mahanarayana* oil pacifies *Kapha* and *Chandan bala* pacify *Pitta*. The warm action of oil and friction of massage improves circulation of body fluid and govern movement of *Doshas* towards the central position. The *Snehana* provides uniform massage in synchronized mode which helps to liquefies hard *Doshas* and loosens toxins so that they moves towards the *Kostha* and easily eliminated by main purification therapy.

Bahya snehana govern movement of *Vayu* and regularizes functions of different types of *Vata's* as follows:

- *Prana vayu* moves from the head and nostrils to naval, takes life force from the environment into the body, it controls the sensory functioning.
- *Udana vayu* flows in the opposite direction to that of *Prana vayu*, moves from the naval to mouth and head. It eliminates carbon dioxide and *Mala* like saliva.
- *Samana vayu* moves in clockwise direction and strengthening the digestive *Agni* and govern movement of metabolic processes in the liver and small intestine.
- *Vyana vayu* moves from heart to the periphery and back to the heart, it supports circulation of blood and lymph.

- *Apana vayu* moves from naval to the anus region and eliminate urine and menstrual fluid from the body.

Pichu and Abhyanga

Bahya snehana can be performed in the form of *Pichu* and *Abhyanga*. *Pichu* is palliative treatment used for the problems of cranial region. The folded piece of cloth (*Pichu*) dipped in medicated oil and used over particular area after being soaked by medicaments, this offers advantages of slow and delayed release of medicaments thus imparts prolong action.

Abhyanga is process of rubbing oil over the body as massage and can be practice in daily routine. This type of oleation offers prophylactic prevention against *Vata Dosha* and pacifies *Doshas* accumulated superficially. *Abhyanga* (oil massage) mainly involves warm herbs infused oils thus improves joint health, nourishes *Dhatus*, prevent dryness, pacify *Doshas*, relieves *Ama*, cure skin dryness and maintain wetness in body, etc. *Abhyanga* as *Bahya Snehan* can be performed as early stage of *Panchkarma*. This therapy open up minor *Srotas*, melt *Sleshma* and moisturize skin thus helps to maintain general health as well as appearance. It greatly offers advantages in *Vata* disorders and provides relief from mental problems like anxiety and anger, etc. *Abhyanga* as *Bahya Snehan* relaxes body physically, cure pain, improves flexibility, maintain muscles tone, control circulatory functions and contributed towards the mental peace. *Abhyanga* removes dirt from skin, cleans pores of skin and maintain elasticity of skin [6-8]. The various types of medicated oils recommended for *Abhyanga* as depicted in **Figure 1**. There are various types of oils recommended for *Abhyanga* depending upon the *Doshas* and skin qualities:

- ✚ Almond and sesame oil advises for *Vata* skin (dry skin).
- ✚ Neutral oil, sunflower oil and *Ghee* advocates for *Pitta* skin (sensitive skin).
- ✚ Sweet almond and flaxseed oil, etc. can be used for *Kapha* skin (oily skin).



Figure 1: Common herbal oils recommended for *Abhyanga*

Conclusion

The *Snehana* is internal oleation which performed along with *Sodhana* therapy especially before *Panchkarama* to liquefy and mobilizes *Doshas*. The *Snehana* therapy loosens morbid *Doshas* and helps in their expulsion. *Snehana* mainly performed using medicated oils and *Ghee*. *Snehana* play important role towards the success of *Panchkarama* therapy. *Bahya Snehana* means external oleation which involves massaging of body using medicated oils. This therapy channelizes toxins and facilitates their elimination. *Bahya Snehana* pacifies *Doshas*, relieves fatigue, and nourishes skin and control circulation inside the body. *Bahya Snehana* is considered as vital approach of *Sodhana* therapy which helps greatly towards the pacification and elimination of vitiated *Doshas* and toxins.

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