

A CRITICAL REVIEW ON LEPA KALPANA IN SKIN DISORDERS W.S.R TO SHARANGDHAR SAMHITA

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ABSTRACT

Skin is the largest organ of the body with its great cosmetic value. It has an ample of importance as it is one of the five *Jananendriyas* (sense organ); it is readily exposed to external environment. Skin care is very important aspect for beauty which indirectly affects owns personality. Cosmetology in *Ayurveda* has great demand to its uniqueness and long-lasting effect in beauty. Paste of herbal powders are mixed together and applied on face. Being one of the major texts in *Ayurveda* herbal pharmaceuticals, *Sharangdhara Samhita* contributes a very significant part in the world of *Ayurveda*. *Sharangdharsamhita* has a separate chapter on *lepa*, it defines importance of beauty and *lepa*. It can be taken as a reference by many cosmetic physicians as well as academicians. There are total 94 types of *Lepa* are mentioned in *Sharangdhar* and of which 26 *Lepas* are indicated in skin disorder and rest are indicated in different disorders like hair disorders, inflammation, wound etc. The present article is aimed to provide details about *Lepakalpana* from classics of *Ayurveda* i.e. *Sharangdhara Samhita*. *Sharngdhar* has mentioned medicament for local application in skin disorders and indicated the use of herbal and herbo-mineral compounds which signifies the uniqueness of *Sharangdhar Samhita*.

Keywords: *Lepa, Sharangdhar Samhita*

INTRODUCTION

Skin is a dynamic organ with many functions, and most importantly maintaining the haemodynamics of the body. It is the largest organ of the body provides a shielding barrier against harmful chemicals, microbes and ultraviolet radiations. Most of the skin diseases can be mentally agonizing and have a negative impact on quality of life. *Ayurveda* is the traditional system of medicine that gives emphasis to both healthy and diseased individual.

As it is mentioned in *Ayurveda*, there are two types of *Chikitsa*; *Antarparimarjana* and *Bahirparimarjana*^[1]. *Bahirparimarjana chikitsa* means the external application of medicated oils, herbal pastes etc. Different forms of external application like *Lepa*, *Malahra* and *Upnaha* are mentioned in *Ayurveda* texts for convenience of treatment. During early period, particularly during *Charakacharyas* era, pharmaceutical preparations were primarily in five simple forms collectively called as *Panchvidhakashaya kalpana* and several *Upkalpanas* are also described. *Lepakalpana* i.e., external application of herbal pastes, powder etc. is the *Upkalpana* of *Kalka Kalpana* (fine paste) which is one of the *Kalpanas* explained under *Panchavidhakashaya Kalpana*, which means making bolus of fresh and dry herbs by adding some water.

Bruhatrayi, *Laghutrayi* are the two major groups of *Ayurveda* ancient texts. *Charaka Samhita*, *Shushruta Samhita* and *Asthangasangraha* are the three major texts grouped in *Bruhatrayi* whereas *Sharangdhar-samhita*, *Bhavprakash* and *Madhav Nidan* are named under *Laghutrayi*. *Sharangdhar Samhita* is one of the ancient texts from *Laghutrayee* written by *Acharya Sharangdhar* in fourteenth century. It is divided into three parts, which are called *Khanda*. It has three *khanda*- *Pratham Khanda* (part 1-chapter 7), *Madhyam Khanda* (part 2-chapter 12), *Uttarkhanda* (Part 3-chapter 13). Here in this article an attempt has been

made to gather information regarding *Lepa* in skin disorders from *Sharangdhar Samhita*. As *lepakalpana* is major mode of drug application in skin diseases. Considering the increasing prevalence of skin disorders and need of discovery of new medicament, this work was planned as it will give information of externally used formulations and will highlight the neglected part from *Ayurveda* texts which is needed to be studied on scientific grounds.

❖ **Materials and Methods:**

- Concept of *Lepa kalpana* from *Ayurvedic* texts.
- *Lepa* used in skin disorders are collected from *Sharangdhar Samhita*.
- Mode of action of *lepa* (external application) in skin disorders.

Relevant literature of *Lepa Kalpana* is carried out from *Sharangdhara Samhita*. As *lepa kalpana* from *Sharangdhar Samhita* is classified into three categories under *Mukhalepa* heading as *Doshaghna*, *Vishaghna* and *Varnyalepa*^[2] The nomenclature of *Lepas* depend on either the prime ingredient or the total content in the *lepa* or disease it cures. *Sharangdhar* also mentioned various ingredients of plants, animals, mineral, marine origin such as *Dhattura*, *Shankha*, *Hingula* and *Parada* etc.

❖ **Definition of *lepa*:** The Freshly collected wet drugs are made into a fine paste form and used as an external application^[3]

The Freshly dried drugs are taken into *khalwayantra* and pounded to fine powder form and are filtered then these filtered drugs are triturated with a medium base which is used in *lepa* and fine paste is made which is used for external application.

❖ **Synonyms of *lepa*:**^[4] *Alepa*, *Lipta*, *Lepa* and *lepana* are all the synonymous word mentioned in different texts.

Table 1: Showing Types of Lepa^[2,6]

Sharangdhara (3 types)	Shusruta (3 types)
1) <i>Doshaghna</i>	1) <i>Pralepa</i>
2) <i>Vishaghna</i>	2) <i>Pradeha</i>
3) <i>Varnya</i>	3) <i>Alepa</i>

- 1) **Doshagna:** This kind of *Lepa* includes such drugs which directly acts their alleviatory action on *Doshas* e.g. *Pathyadi Lepa*
- 2) **Vishagnalepa:** This kind of *Lepa* includes the drugs which directly acts as nullifying poisonous action on skin through its application e.g. *Dashanaga Lepa*
- 3) This is a kind of *lepa* which acts as a cosmetic value. It improves the complexion of skin. *Chandan, Manjistha, Ushira, Shakmali, Sariva, Masoor* are some of the drugs which are attributed with this *Varnya* property.

❖ **Table 2:** Showing Thickness of lepa^[7]

According to *Sushruta* 'thickness of *Lepa*' is compared with the 'thickness of buffalo skin'⁵

<i>Lepa</i>	Thickness
<i>Doshaghna</i>	1/4 th Anguli
<i>Vishaghna</i>	1/3 rd Anguli
<i>Varnya</i>	1/2 anguli

1 angula= 1.95cm

❖ *Lepa* and *Sneha* Ratio ^[8]

According to *shushruta*, *Ghruta* and *taila* are *sneha dravyas* should be added while preparing *lepa*. This is done according to predominance of *doshas* or disease condition as follows:

Disease	Thickness of <i>lepa</i>
<i>VatajaVyadhi</i>	1/4 th part
<i>Pittajavyadhis</i>	1/6 th part
<i>KaphajaVyadhi</i>	1/8 th part

- ❖ Duration for *lepa* ^[9]: *Sharangdhar* have stated that *Lepa* should not be applied at nights nor it should be allowed to stay on after it dries up.
- ❖ Direction of *lepa*:^[15] *Lepa* should be applied in *Pratiloma Gati* (against the direction of hair follicle) on the skin to make the action of application quicker and more effective.
- ❖ Important factors in *lepa Kalpana* ^[10]
 1. The *lepa* material should be very fine.
 2. Previous *lepa* should never be covered with fresh one. If done so, it hampers the local temperature and leads to pain and numbness in the area.
 3. Application of *lepa* in night hours is prohibited because as night-time is naturally cool it helps in transfer of body temperature from hair follicle. When *lepa* is applied on the skin, transfers of this temperature will be hampered leading to vitiation of *Dosha* resulting in worsening of existing skin condition.
- 4. If the *Lepa* is prepared with bad odour, some non-irritating, soothing aromatic material of herbal origin should be used to overcome the drawback of bad odour.
- 5. After applying *Lepa* on face, it should not be scrubbed vigorously, it may result eruption of acne and dark spots.
- ❖ Contraindication of *Lepa*: ^[11]

It should not be applied to a person suffering from *Pinasa* (rhinorrhea), *Ajirna* (indigestion), Immediately after *nasya karma*, *Arochaka*, *Hanugraha* and after *jagrana* (keeping awake the previous night)

❖ Possible mode of action of *lepa*:

Lepas should be applied against the hair follicular direction, this facilitates the quicker absorption of the drugs through *Romakupa* (Hair roots), *Swedavahini* (sweat glands) and *Siramukha* (blood capillaries) [12]. In the chapter *Dhamani vyakaranasadhya Sushruta* explains *Dhamanis* which are *Urdhwagata*, *Adhogata* and *Tiryakgata*. Here he explains four *Tiryakganisiras*. Out of these four, each divides gradually hundred and thousand times and thus become innumerable; by these the body is covered like network, bound and pervaded their openings are attached to hair follicles which carry sweat and replenish rasa inside and outside through them only the *Veerya* of *Abhyanga*, *Snana* and *Lepa Dravyas* enter the body after being

transformed in skin; the same also carry the sensation of touch pleasant. [13] The function of *Bhrajaka Pitta* is said to metabolize the substance of drugs applied to the skin whereas one of its main functions is to manifest the colour and complexion of the *Twak* (skin). In function of metabolism the activities of *Samanvayu* supported by *Vyana Vayu* is of great importance. *Ayurveda* also propagates the theory of '*Strotomaya Purush*' indicating that the whole human body is porous. When the medication is applied in the form of *Lepa* or *Pradeha*, the minute particles of the substance penetrate into the *Twaka* owing to the gravitational pull and the weight of the drug. The *Upashoshana* property of *Vayu* (*Vyana* and *Samana* especially) would play a major role in the penetration, and absorption of the medicaments applied over the *Twak*. After being absorbed in the *Twak*, the drugs would act upon the body, pertaining to its *virya* (active principle) and in some cases according to its *Prabhava*. [14]

Table 3: Showing *Lepas* described in skin disorders in *Sharangdhar Samhita*.

Sr.NO	Name of formulations	Indication	Ingredients	Liquid media/ Base
1	<i>Dashang Lepa</i>	<i>Visarpa</i> (Erysipelas), <i>Shoth</i> (Swelling), <i>Vrana</i> (Wound)	<i>Powder of Shirish (Albizialebeck)</i> , <i>Yashtimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra)</i> , <i>Tagar (Valerianawallinchii)</i> , <i>Raktachandana (Pterocarpus santalinus)</i> , <i>Ella (Elettaria cardamomum)</i> , <i>Jatamansi (Nordostachys jatamansi)</i> , <i>Haridra (Curcuma longa)</i> , <i>Daruharidra (Berberis aristata)</i> , <i>Kustha (Sassurealappa)</i>	<i>Goghrita</i> (cows' ghee)
2	<i>DahanashakaLepa</i>	<i>Daah</i> (Burning sensation)	<i>Seed pulp of Bhibhitaka (Terminalia bellirica)</i>	Not mentioned
3	<i>Langlyadilepa</i>	<i>Visphota</i> (Pustules)	<i>Langli (Gloriosa superba)</i> , <i>Ativisha (Aconitum heterophyllum)</i> , <i>Alabu (Lagenariasiceraria)</i> , <i>Jalini (Luffa acutangula)</i> , <i>Mulabeeja (Raphanus sativus)</i>	<i>Kanji (Dhanya Amla)</i>
4	<i>Raktachandanadilepa</i>	<i>Vyanga</i> (hyperpigmentation), <i>Mukhakantikara</i> (Glowing skin)	<i>Raktachandan (Pterocarpus santalinus)</i> , <i>Manjistha (Rubiaccordifolia)</i> , <i>Lodhra (Symplocosracemosa)</i> , <i>Kustha (Sassurealappa)</i> , <i>Priyangu (Callicarpa macrophylla)</i> , <i>Vatankur (Ficusbenghalensis)</i> , <i>Masur daal (Lens culinaris)</i>	Not Mentioned
5	<i>Matulungadilepa</i>	<i>Pitika</i> (Pimples), <i>Vyanga</i> (Melasma)	<i>Matulunga (Citrus medica)</i> , <i>Ghruta Manashila (Reagler)</i>	Not Mentioned
6	<i>Lodhradilepa</i>	Pimples	<i>1. Lodhra (Symplocosracemosa)</i> , <i>Dhanyaka (Coriander sativum)</i> ,	Not mentioned

			<i>odara</i>), And <i>Tambula Patra</i> (<i>Piper betle</i>) are mixed together with equal quantity of <i>shankha churna</i>	
19	<i>Kandudadrulepa</i>	<i>Dadru, kandu, vicharchika</i> (Fungal infection, Ring worm, pruritus)	<i>PrapunnataBeeja</i> (<i>Cassia tora</i>), <i>Bakuchi</i> (<i>Psoraleacorylifolia</i>), <i>Sarshapa</i> (<i>Brassica campestris</i>), <i>Tila</i> (<i>Sesame indicum</i>), <i>Kustha</i> (<i>Sassurealapa</i>) <i>Nishadway</i> (<i>Haridra</i> and <i>Daruharidra</i>), (<i>Curcuma longa</i> and <i>Berberis aristata</i>), and <i>Musta</i> (<i>Cyprus rotundus</i>)	<i>Takra</i> (Buttermilk)
20	<i>KanduPama Dadrulepa 2</i>	<i>Pama, Dadru, Vicharchika and kandu</i>	<i>Hemakshiri</i> (<i>Argemone mexicana</i>), <i>Vidanga</i> (<i>Embeliaribes</i>), <i>Darada</i> (<i>cinabar</i>), <i>Gandhaka</i> (<i>sulfur</i>), <i>Dadrughna</i> (<i>Cassia tora</i>), <i>Kushtha</i> (<i>Saussurealapa</i>), and <i>Sindura</i> (<i>lead oxide</i>)	<i>Dhattur, Nimba, Tambul</i> (<i>Nagvallipatra</i>)
21	<i>Dadruharlepa</i>	<i>Kandudadru</i>	<i>Durva</i> (<i>Cynodondactylon</i>), <i>Abhaya</i> (<i>Terminalia chebula</i>), <i>Saindhava</i> (<i>rock salt</i>), <i>Chakramarda</i> (<i>Cassia tora</i>), and <i>Kutheraka</i> (<i>Black basil</i>)	<i>Takra</i> (Buttermilk)
22	<i>Pamadilepa</i>	<i>Kandu, Pama, Krumi, Dadru, Shitpitta</i>	<i>Durva</i> (<i>Cynodondactylon</i>)and <i>Haridra</i> (<i>Curcuma longa</i>)	Not mentioned
23	<i>Dadruharlepa</i>	<i>Dadru</i>	<i>Durva</i> (<i>Cynodondactylon</i>), <i>Abhaya</i> (<i>Terminalia chebula</i>), <i>Saindhava</i> (<i>rock salt</i>), <i>Chakramarda</i> (<i>Cassia tora</i>), and <i>Kutheraka</i> (<i>Black basil</i>)	<i>Katutaila</i> (<i>sarshaptaila</i>)
24	<i>Vatajvisarpa har lepa</i>	<i>Visarpa</i> (<i>Vata</i> type of <i>erysipelas</i>)	<i>Rasna</i> (<i>Alpinia galanga</i>) <i>Nilotpala</i> (<i>Nymphaea caerulea</i>), <i>Deodaru</i> (<i>Cedrus deodar</i>) <i>Chandana</i> (<i>Santalum album</i>) <i>Yash-timashu</i> (<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>) and <i>Bala</i> (<i>Sidacordifolia</i>)	<i>Goghrita</i> (Cows ghee) and <i>godugd</i> (Cow milk)
25	<i>Pitta Visarpaharlepa</i>	<i>Visarpa</i>	<i>Chandana</i> (<i>Pterocarpus santalinus</i>), <i>Mrinala</i> (<i>lotus stalk</i>), <i>Lodhra</i> (<i>Symplocosracemosa</i>), <i>Ushira</i> (<i>Vetiveriazizanoides</i>), <i>Kamalotpala</i> (<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>) <i>Sariva</i> (<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i>), <i>Amalaki</i> (<i>Emblica officinalis</i>), and <i>Pathya</i> (<i>Terminalia chebula</i>)	<i>Godugd</i> (Cows milk) and <i>Goghtita</i> (Cows ghee)
26	<i>Kaphaj Visarpaharlepa</i>	<i>Visarpa</i>	<i>Triphala</i> (<i>Three myrobalans</i>), <i>Padmaka</i> (<i>Prunus padam</i>), <i>Ushira</i> (<i>Vetiveriazizanoides</i>), <i>Samanga</i> (<i>Phragmites maxima</i>), <i>Karavira</i> (<i>Nerium indicum</i>), <i>Nalamula</i> , and <i>Ananta</i> (<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i>)	<i>Godugd</i> (Cow milk) and <i>Goghrita</i> (Cows Ghee)

DISCUSSION

Sharangdhara Samhita named *Lepadi Vidhi Adhyaya* in the 11th chapter of *Uttarkhanda* explains total 94 *Lepa* formulations, of which, 26 *Lepa* formulations are mentioned in skin disorders. In these formulations, different types of materials are used as a liquid medium or base. In most of the *lepa* formulations *Goghrita*, *Gomutra* or *godugdha* are used.

Sharangdhar have mentioned a separate *adhaaya* (chapter) for *lepakalpana*. Viewing this we can estimate the importance of *lepa* in treatment. *Lepa* is used for external application in various diseases. *Lepa* is a powdered form of various drugs either fresh or dry. Fresh herbs are collected and grind together and mixed with some media/base and applied over the desired site. Dry herbs are crushed together and grinded into fine particles and mixed with some liquid medium and applied over the face. Acharya have mentioned different liquid mediums for different *Lepas*. As per therapeutic view. Different media like cow urine, goat urine have different importance, there may have some special therapeutic potential in different media and could have supportive role in absorption of drugs. *Sharangdhar* have mentioned total 94 *lepas* in *lepa adhyaay* (chapter) in *Madhyamkhand*. Nomenclature of *Lepas* depends upon the prime ingredient in the *lepa* (*Langlyadilepa*) or total content of the *Lepa* (*Dashnagalepa*) or diseases it cures (*Shwitrahara lepa*) or property (*Varnya*). *Sharangdhara* have mentioned herbal, mineral, marine, animal, herbo-mineral compounds as ingredients in *Lepa*. Various *Lepas* like *Bakuchi*, *Haridra*, *Daruharidra* etc are mentioned in skin diseases which also acts as antibacterial. *Dhattura*, *Manashila*, *Shankh*, *Hingula*, *Lavana*, *Parad* are used for *Lepa*. Acharya have mentioned herbo mineral compounds in various skin disorders. *Lodhra*, *Manjistha*, *Daruharidra*, *Saindhav*, *Arjuna* are the commonly used drugs in the *lepa*. *Sharangdhar* have also mentioned simple *Lepa* that is of two ingredients only (*Durva*, *Haridra*) in *Visarpa*. Various drugs like *Haridra*, *Daruharidra*, *Chakramarda*, *Karanja* which have antifungal and anti-bacterial properties which have been proven according to research. It proves the broad spectrum of acharya to prepare the formulations

used in skin disorders. Various mineral compounds like *Harital*, *Suvarnamshik* is used for application but actual effect of such study is a scope for research. Various *lepa* are mentioned as a skin care like *VarnyaLepa* it also shows the broad spectrum of *Acharaya* towards beauty and skin care.

CONCLUSION

Skin disorders are the most common growing diseases in today's era. With internal medication, an external treatment is also important in skin disorder management. As skin is the outermost layer of the body which is exposed to the environment easily and so prone to damage faster. Everybody try to keep their skin fresh and healthy so various *lepa* can be used to improve the skin beauty. *Lepas* are helpful in preventing and curative purposes of any skin problem. There is a huge scope of research as a drug discovery and development in the context of *lepa* formulations. Mentioned by *SharangdharSamhita*. However new dosage form as a cream or ointment can be a further scope for study and scientific database can be created with help of clinical study for establishment of effectiveness of *lepa*.

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