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# Importance of *Poorvakarmas* in *Shodhana* therapy - A Review

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## ABSTRACT

In recent era *Panchakarma* has got prominent place in the management of the diseases through Ayurveda, because *Panchakarma* is only hope in patients who are bushed after all the *Shamana* treatments. *Panchakarma* expels the *Doshas* from their causative roots so diseases cannot revert after; like tree cannot grow without its root. Without proper *Poorvakarma* physician cannot get truly result though *Shodhana* procedure (like *Vamana/Virechana*) performed well, because without *Poorvakarmas* *Doshas* cannot be changed in particular forms through which they can be expelled out from the body. The present paper is focused on explanation of the principle that how *Poorvakarma* is essential for *Shodhana* therapy, how they change *Dosha's* form and elucidate the *Kala* and *Matra* of *Poorvakarma* particular in *Snehapana*.

**Key words:** *Panchakarma, Poorvakarma, Vamana, Virechana.*

## INTRODUCTION

In recent era *Panchakarma* has got prominent place in the management of the diseases through Ayurveda, as it is widely practiced by most of the *Ayurvedic* physicians but sometime, we observe that through the same *Panchakarma* procedures a physician gets marvelous result while sometime he may not. So many causes may be there for that, but while going through the *Shodhana* therapy; physician should perform *Poorvakarmas* as primacy. Without *Poorvakarmas* *Doshas* cannot be changed in particular

forms through which they can be expelled out from the body.<sup>[1]</sup> *Shodhana* would be easy to perform if *Poorvakarmas* were done properly.<sup>[2]</sup> Same approach is applied in the modern surgery; patients who are physically and psychologically well prepared for surgery tend to have better surgical outcomes. Pre-operative care is extremely important prior to any invasive procedure whether the procedure is minimally invasive or a form of major surgery.<sup>[3]</sup> In this study we have tried to explain the importance of *Poorvakarmas* in a *Shodhana* therapy.

*Panchakarma* is helpful for those patients who are bushed after all the *Shamana* treatments because *Panchakarma* expels the *Doshas* from their causative roots, so diseases cannot revert after; like tree cannot grow without its root.<sup>[4]</sup> *Panchakarma* can be performed whenever *Doshas* are available in *Koshthas* (*Upasthita Doshani*) in particular form of the suitable person.<sup>[5]</sup> Here commentator *Chakrapani* has explained that *Doshas* which are accumulating from *Shakhas* to *Koshthas* from all over the body and *Doshas* which have changed their forms from *Linatva*

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to *Utkleshita* can be said as *Upasthitadoshas*.<sup>[6]</sup> Five causes are responsible for the movement of *Doshas* from *Shakhas* to *Koshthas* like; 1) *Vridhhi* of the *Doshas* 2) *Vishyandana* of the *Doshas* 3) *Paka* of *Doshas* 4) *Srotomukha Vishodhana* 5) *Nigrahana* of *Vata*.<sup>[7]</sup> These all five causes can be achieved by the *Poorvakarmas* i.e. *Snehana* and *Swedana*. Internal *Snehapana* plays a key role in *Vridhhi* of the *Doshas*. *Sneha* does *Dosha Vridhhi* (*Shodhanartha Sneha*), *Doshashamana* or *Brihanakarma*, if it uses in particular *Matra* (quantity) and *Kala* (time).<sup>[8]</sup>

- 1) ***Vridhhi of the Doshas*** - For *Vruddhi* of the *Doshas*, *Sneha* is consumed in empty stomach in the morning (after digestion of previous night meal) in such a dose which takes about 12 or 24 hours to digest. For *Dosha Shamana*, after digestion of the previous night meal when the patient feels hungry at that time *Sneha* is consumed in such a dose which takes about 12 hours to digest and for *Brihanakarma*, *Sneha* is consumed along with the food, in such a dose which takes about 6 hours to digest.<sup>[9]</sup>
- 2) ***Vishyandana of the Doshas*** - Definition of *Snehana* itself says that *Sneha* does *Vishyandanakarma*.<sup>[10]</sup>
- 3) ***Paka of Doshas*** - Here *Swedana Karma* plays a key role because *Ushnata* is essential *Guna* in the *Swedana Karma* and *Ushna Guna* does *Pachanakarma*.<sup>[11]</sup>
- 4) ***Srotomukhavishodhana (to clean the orifices of Srotas)*** - While describing the benefits of the *Swedana Karma*, *Acharya Sushruta* says that *Swedana* creates *Nirmalatva* (cleanliness) in the *Srotas*.<sup>[12]</sup> So *Swedana* cleans the orifices of *Srotas*.
- 5) ***Nigrahana of Vata*** - The first line of management of *Vatadosha* according to *Acharya Vagbhatta* is *Snehana* and *Swedana*.<sup>[13]</sup> So *Vatadosha* can be controlled (*Nigrahana*) very well by the *Snehana* and *Swedana*.

## DISCUSSION

*Shodhana Karma* means elimination of *Doshas* from the body.<sup>[14]</sup> For that physician has to, bring *Doshas* from *Shakha* to *Koshtha* and change the form of *Doshas* through which they can be easily removed from the body.<sup>[15]</sup> These can be done only by *Snehana* and *Swedana Karmas*. Five causes are responsible for the movement of *Doshas* from *Shakhas* to the *Koshthas* like *Vridhhi* of the *Doshas*, *Vishyandana* of the *Doshas*, *Paka* of *Doshas*, *Srotomukha Vishodhana* and *Nigrahana* of *Vata*.<sup>[16]</sup>

*Vridhhi* of *doshas* can be done after the *Nidana Sevana*, but *Nidana Sevana* may not be able to change the form of the *Doshas* to *Vishyandana* simultaneously. *Vridhhi* of *Doshas* can be achieved only if *Snehapana* is done on particular *Kala*, i.e. an empty stomach in the morning when previous night meal gets digested.<sup>[17]</sup>

Three types of *Karmas* (functions) have been mentioned which can be achieved by *Snehana* if it is used according to *Matra* and *Kala*. They are *Dosha Vridhhi* (*Shodhanartha Sneha*), *Dosha Shamana* (*Shamanartha Sneha*) and *Brimhana*.<sup>[18]</sup> *Samskarasyaanuvartana* property of *Sneha*,<sup>[19]</sup> especially in *Ghrita* is responsible for all three types of *Karmas*. *Samskara* means putting together.<sup>[20]</sup> So *Sneha* is given in empty stomach in afternoon when the person feels hungry, it combines (have *samskara*) with *Agni* not with *Doshas* because *Agni* digests *Doshas* if *Anna* (food) is not present,<sup>[21]</sup> so consumed *Sneha* causes *Agnidipti* further it does *Doshapachana* in extent level. Now considering the *Kala* of *Shodhanartha Snehapana*, an empty stomach in the morning; at that time the state of *Agni* is not capable to perform *Doshapachana*, So consumed *Sneha* will be combined (have *samskara*) with *Doshas* and causes for *Vridhhi* of *Doshas*.<sup>[22]</sup> Same principle is applied for *Brihana Snehapana*, if *Sneha* combines with *Anna* it surges the nutritional quality of *Anna* and creates *Brihanakarma*.

*Matra* of *Sneha* also has much important as *Kala*. If it is taken on *Shodhanarthakala* in such a dose which takes about 12 hours to digest, it is ideal *Snehapana*

for *Shodhanakarma*.<sup>[23]</sup> The dose of *Sneha* should be increased in gradual manner as *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned minimum 3 and maximum 7 days to achieve all the characteristics of proper *Snehana* according to *Koshta*.<sup>[24]</sup> Hence one should not complete *Snehapana* in one day. Second cause for gradual increasing the dose of *Sneha* during *Snehapana* is to acquire maximum utility of *Sneha* as *Acharya Charaka* says, if *Snehapana* is not done gradually, it flushes out entirely from the body (without affecting body) like water poured over an earthen mass quickly flows out without moistening it.<sup>[25]</sup>

Definition of *Sneha* itself says that, it creates *Vishyandata*.<sup>[26]</sup> *Vishyanditata* means *Vilayana* (dissolve). *Lina Doshas* are difficult to eliminate in their own forms, *Sneha* creates the suitable forms of *Doshas* for elimination. *Sneha* also facilitate passage of *Utkleshita Doshas* in *Srotas* and *Doshas* float without adhesion in the body, like honey kept in a pot smeared with fat, toward the *Koshtha*.<sup>[27]</sup>

*Ushana Guna* is indispensable quality for the *Swedana*.<sup>[28]</sup> because in *Swedana* there is always *Agnisamshraya* either directly or indirectly.<sup>[29]</sup> So *Doshas* get digested by the *Pachana* property of the *Ushnaswedana*. Here *Tikshnaguna* of *Swedana* also helps in *Pachana*.<sup>[30]</sup>

*Swedana* not only digests *Doshas* (*Paka* by the *Agnipradipti*) but it cleans the orifices of *Srotas* (also *Srotomukha*) consecutively. So without *Swedana Karma* movement of *Doshas* cannot be achieved.

*Vridhhi* of the *Doshas*, *Vishyandana* of the *Doshas*, *Paka* of *Doshas*, *Srotomukhavishodhana*, these all functions are conducted only by *Snehana* and *Swedana* altogether, which was discussed previously. With these, physician does not need extra efforts for *Nigrahana* of *Vata*, because *Snehana* and *Swedana* are the foremost treatment for *Vata*.

In addition to this, form of *Doshas* transformed to *Klinnatva* and *Dravatva* by *Snehana* and *Swedana* respectively,<sup>[31]</sup> which is necessary for the movement of *Doshas* toward the *Koshta* as well as for elimination from the body. *Snigdha* is indispensable quality

for the *Snehana*<sup>[32]</sup> and *Snigdha* does the *Kledanakarma*.<sup>[33]</sup> *Dravaguna* of *Sneha* also helps in *Kledanakarma*.<sup>[34]</sup> *Ushna* and *Tikshnagunas* of the *Swedana* transform *Doshas* in *Drava* form.<sup>[35]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

*Panchakarma* can be performed only if the *Doshas* are available in the *Koshtha* from all over the body. For that *Snehana* and *Swedana Karmas* are the merely options. Five causes responsible for the movement of *Doshas* from the *Shakha* to *Koshta*, *Vridhhi* and *Vishyandana* of the *Dosha* can be done prudishly by *Snehanakarma* while *Swedana* does *Srotomukha Vishodhana* and *Paka* of *Doshas*. Physician can control (*Nigrahana*) *Vatadosha* certainly by *Snehana* and *Swedana Karmas*. *Snehapana* can cause for *Vridhhi* of *Doshas* only, if it is consumed in empty stomach at that time when *agni* is not in increased state, otherwise it increases *Agni* not *Dosha*. *Sneha* especially *Ghritha* is imperative factor in treatment due to its *Samskarasya Anuvartana* quality. With this *Guna* it causes for *Vridhhi*, *Shamana* of *Doshas* or *Brimhana* of the body. Practically the dose of *Sneha* for *Shodhanakarma* should be that, which takes about 12 hours to get digested. *Snehapana* is an imperious *Poorvakarma*. In a nut shell without performing *Poorvakarmas*, *Doshas* cannot accumulate into the *Koshta* in a particular form for the *Shodhana*.

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