Agni - Key factor for Shodhananga Snehapana

Pavithra.S,1 H. Pampanna Gouda,2 Rajalakshmi MG,3
1Post Graduate Scholar,2 Associate Professor, Department of PG Studies in Samhita and Siddhanta, 3Associate Professor, Dept. of PG studies in Panchakarma, SDM College of Ayurveda, Udupi, Karnataka, India.

ABSTRACT

Agni is termed as Vaishwanara as it takes the person from Mruthyuloka to Swargaloka. It is an important factor and is equitant to Prana; is one among Dashpryuloka Ayatana. Agni in Shareera is present in different forms with different actions. It is the responsible factor for both health and disease; on the other hand the successful outcome of treatment is also dependant on Agni. Chikitsa (treatment) is the process of bestowing normalcy which is either brought by Shodhana (purificatory) or Shamana (palliative) Karma. Snehapana is a pre-operative procedure for Shodhana Chikitsa where in Sneha Dravya (medicated fat) is administered for attainment of Upasthita Dosha Avastha and further ease in elimination of the vitiated Doshas. Assessment of Dosa, Dushya, Vyadhi Avastha, Roga Bala, Rogi Bala, Agni, Koshta etc. factors are essential for the attainment of Chikitsa Phala. Assessment of Agni not only helps in understanding Vyadhi but also enables to plan the dosage of Sneha to be administered. Thus this paper is an attempt to throw light on the importance of Agni, assessment of Agni and Agni Bala prior to Shodhananga Snehapana.

Key words: Snehapana, Shodhana, Agni, Koshta.

INTRODUCTION

Chikitsa is the process adopted for bestowing Dhatusamyata and making the body disease free.[1] This is broadly classified into two; Shodhana (evacuatory or eliminatory procedures) and Shamana (pacificatory procedures).[2] Shodhana is concerned with Dushita Dosa or Mala Nirharana, while Shamana alleviates the aggravated Doshas at their place without expelling them out of the body nor disturbing the normal once.[3] As per the definition, Dosa are those which are susceptible for vitiation. In normal state it provides strength whereas, if vitiated brings diseases and hence it has to be eliminated out of the body.[4]

Shodhana plays an important role in Ayurveda. The importance of Shodhana is justified by fact that it eradicates diseases completely and such diseases once eradicated does not reoccur unless there is a strong aetiology.[5] Shodhana procedure also removes the Doshas from the site of origin, therefore covering a wide range of preventive, curative and promotive health condition. Purvakarma plays a vital role for the success of Shodhana procedure by assigning Doshas to a state called as Upasthita Doshavastha. Purvakarma includes Deepana (digestive), Pachana (detoxification of Ama), Rookshana, Snehana (oleation) and Swedana (sudation). Here presence and absence of Ama shall determine the use of Pachana Dravya, where as the strength of Agni is taken care by Deepana Dravya. Snehana (oleation) is administration of any one of Chatursneha, and is the major preparatory procedure carried out before Shodhana (purificatory procedure). Acharya Charaka in Apamargatanduliyu Adhyyaya mentions the importance of Upasthita Doshavastha (available humors) for proper expulsion of Dosa during

Address for correspondence:
Dr. Pavitra S.
Post Graduate Scholar
Department of PG Studies in Samhita and Siddhanta, SDM College of Ayurveda, Udupi, Karnataka, India
E-mail: drpavithra13@gmail.com
Submission Date : 14/02/2017 Accepted Date: 28/02/2017

Access this article online
Quick Response Code
Website: www.jaims.in
DOI: 10.21760/jaims.v2i1.7499
Shodhana therapy. Here Upasthita Dosha refers to presence of Dosha in the Koshta for expulsion. The proper mobilization of Dosha from Shakha to Koshta is achieved by the action of Snehana and Swedana.

There are different methods for application of Snehana like Pana, Nasya, Basti, Abhyanga, Murdni Taila etc., which can be broadly classified as Bahya and Abhyantara Snehana. Pravichara and Accha Snehapana is being widely practiced.

Shodhananga Snehapana is achieved through Accha Snehapana, which is dependent on Agni, Koshta, Dosha, Vyadhi etc. The applicability of which is of 4 types- Sadhya Snehana, Avara Snehana, Eshat Snigdha, and Samyak Snigdha Snehapana.

Dosage and duration of Snehapana depends on the Agni and Koshta respectively, thus assessment of the Agni and Koshta is an important factor for Snehapana and judicious application of Shodhana procedure.

Agni

According to Shabha Kalpa Druma, Agni is stated as an entity which is having Urdwagati and predominance of Teja Mahabhuta. It can be simply defined as an entity bringing out digestion in any form or it is an energy which converts one substance into another.[6]

Sneha

'Sneha' is derived from Snih Dhatu. It has two meanings,[7]

- 'Snih-preetau' means to render affection and
- 'Snih-Snehane' means to render lubrication.

The term Sneha implies to a substance that brings oiliness or unctuousness. Sneha literally means oiliness, unctuousness, fattiness, greasiness, lubricity, viscosity, affection, love, kindness and tenderness.[8]

Snehana

The procedure by which Snigdha, Vishyandana, Mardavata and Kledana is achieved is known as Snehana.[9]

Types of Sneha

a. Yoni bheda[10]
- Sthovara

Shodhananga Snehapana

Shodhananga Snehapana is a pre-operative procedure for Panchakarma. Shodhana procedure depends upon the proper mobilization of Doshas from the channels,
which is achieved with the help of Snehana and Swedana. Snehana is a procedure which leads and decides the whole outcome of Shodhana therapy. Snehana is a process of administering Sneha to achieve the desired effect in a precise duration prior to Vamana and Virechana Karma, with due consideration of dose, time, duration, etc. Both Abhyantara and Bahya Snehana is encompassed as the Purvakarma of Shodhana Chikitsa. Bahya Snehana includes Abhyanga which is followed by Swedana after the completion of Abhyantara Snehana. The aim of the Snehana therapy is to prepare the body for Shodhana by bringing the Doshas situated in peripheral tissues to the Koshta, thus easily expelled out.\[19\] Vridhya and Vishyandana Karma of Snehana is responsible for this action.

Acharya Sushruta states importance of Snehana and Swedana that Shodhana if administrated without preceding Snehana and Swedana than the body will be broken like a dry wood.\[18\]

Sneha loosens the Doshas which are adherent to the walls of minute Channels. Dalhanaacharya explains that to bring the Shakhagata Doshas into Koshta, Snehana is essential. Acharya Charaka gives simile that, as from a smooth container, contents easily separate without any effort. Similarly Kaphadi Doshas easily expelled out from the oleated body.\[19\]

As Klishta Mala of any cloth is easily washed by water, if we loosen it from its site, in the similar way, Malas are easily expelled out by Shodhana if we make them Utklishta by Purvakarma i.e. Snehana and Swedana.\[20\]

Agni

Agni has an important role to play in the physiological, functioning of body. Jathargni has been considered to be prime among all Agni’s. The functioning of other Agni’s, Dhatvagni and Bhuthagni are dependent upon the strength of Jatharagni.\[21\] Agni is said to be Pittoshma i.e. the combination of Pitta and Ushma. In our body this Ushma is said to be Agni.\[22\] Even though Agni is part of Pitta. It is considered separate exclusively of Agni because Agni has separate entity and it has different properties and functions.

Importance of Agni

Agni converts food in the form of energy, which is responsible for all the vital functions of our body. Therefore, Ayurveda considers that Dehagni is the cause of life, complexion, strength, health, nourishment, lusture, Oja, Teja and Prana.\[23\] About the importance of Agni, Acharya Charaka has mentioned that after stoppage of the function of Agni, the individual dies, and when the Agni of an individual is equal, then that person would be absolutely healthy and would lead a long, happy, healthy life. But, if the Agni of a person is vitiated, the whole metabolism in his body would be disturbed, resulting in ill health and disease. Hence, Agni is said to be the base of life.

Importance of Agni in Snehapan

Arunadatta commenting on A. H. Su-16/18, points out that the administration of Sneha (fats) without the consideration of strength of Agni is irrational. This it is important to assess Agni before Snehapano.\[24\]

Assessment of Agni

According to Acharya Charaka Agni assessment depends upon the three components viz. Abhyavaharana Shakti, (capacity to eat), Jarana Shakti (capacity to digest) and Ruchi (appetite). Unless all are considered, no proper assessment of Agni can be done. For assessment of Agni the Jarana Shakti, Abhyavaharana Shakti, should be assessed before commencing the Shodhana therapy.\[25\]

Sneha Jeeryamana Lakshana and Jeerya Lakshana

The digestion of Sneha is assessed by the Sneha Jeeryamana and Jeerna Lakshan. These acts as a tool for knowing the action of Agni on Sneha Dravya. Acharya Vagbhata has narrated the Sneha Jeeryamana Lakshan as Shirorukh (headache), Bhrama (giddiness), Nishtiva (salivation), Murcha, Saada (pain), Arati (tiredness), Klama (fatigue). These are the Lakshan seen during digestion of sneha. After the digestion of Sneha the Jeerna Lakshan appears like Vatanuloma (passing of flatus), Swasthyam (feeling of wellness), Kshudha (appetite), Trushna (thirst), Udhgarashuddhi (eructation) occurs.\[25\]
**DISCUSSION**

Abhyantara Snehapana is the process of administration of Sneha internally employed for the purpose of Shodhana, Shamana and Brimhana. It is important here to understand the signs and symptoms of Samyak Snehana described by Acharyas i.e. Snehana indicates Snigdha, Vishyandana refers to Vilayana (dissolution or diffusion) Dalhanacharya while commenting on Apyadravyaguna and Karma quotes Vishyandanam as Vishyandanam Drava Sruitihi, Mardavata means softness. Kleda is moistness or wetness. Here Kleda signifies the increase of Apya Guna in the body. Considering these Guna as the primary features the assessment of Samyak Snigdha is done.

- **Sneha** is to be considered by the unctuousness of the body, stool and skin (Pureesha Twak and Gatra Snigdha).
- **Vishyandana** is witnessed by excretion of stool with or without Sneha, (Snigdha Mala and Ahadstat Snehadarsana).
- **Mardavata** is assessed by Gatra Mardava.
- **Kledana** is assessed by consistency of stool i.e., Asamhat Varchas.

It is well-known that the Doshas are present throughout the body. Sneha, by its Sukshma Guna and Kledana Karma, bring the Doshas to Koshta from other Margas, where Kledana Karma acts as a solvent of the morbid Doshas, here the fat soluble impurities in the body will be eliminated. As Shodhana Dravya bring the Doshas to Koshta for elimination. The knowledge of digestion and absorption of Sneha Dravya is very important before commencing Snehana procedure. In Ayurveda, the Paka Karma of Sneha is not vividly explained by Acharya. Instead the process of Sneha digestion can be considered on the basis of Sneha Jeeryamana and Jeerna Lakshanas.

The Doshas present in the body has its own Gati, and in Vyadhita Avastha the Doshas will be aggravated and may be present in Shakhas (periphery). The Shodhana Chikitsa aims at expulsion of this vitiated Doshas from the body either by Urdhwamarga (administering Vamana) or Adhomarga (administering Virechana). Acharya Vagbhata in Doshopakramaniya has explained the causes for Doshas Gati. Vyayama (exercise), Ushma and Tikshnata of Jataragni, Ahita Ahara Bhojana, vitiates the Vatadi Doshas and takes the Doshas to Shakhas from Koshtas. These Doshas are brought back to Koshta by Srotomukha Vishodhana / Vivarana, Abhishyandi /making Dasha Dravibhuta, Paaka (bringing Pachana of the Doshas), which is well delivered by Snehana and Swedana Karmas.

Acharya Vagbhata in Doshopakramaniya Adhyaya quotes the actions that makes the vitiated Doshas Upasthita by bringing them from Shakha to Koshta.[26]

According to Acharya Charaka, Matra (dosage) and Kala (duration) constitute the basis for success of Snehapana where Agni (digestive function) and Koshta (alimentary tract) are the parameters to be taken into consideration. For the calculation of Agni Bala, Abhyavahara Shakti and Kala for digestion are the parameters and based on which Agni Bala can be stated as Avara, Madhyama and Pravara. Thus Acharya Vagbhata describes the Snehana based on Matra as Hrasva Matra, Madhyama Matra, and Uttama Matra where the digestion of Sneha occurs in two, four and eight Yama respectively. This classification of Snehapana is based on assessment of Agnibala. Acharya Vagbhata has also mentioned about Hrasiyasi Matra (test dose). Hrasiyasi Matra is the quantity of Sneha which digests within one Yama, and this can be used as trial dose when the Agni and Koshta are unknown.[27] During Snehapana Agni Vriddhi (increase in digestive function) is expected.[28]

All though Sneha has opposite character than Agni, when it gets digested, it serves as a fuel and kindles the Agni. This kindled Agni has more power to digest even more quantity of Sneha. Therefore while calibrating Agnibala quantity of Sneha and duration for digestion plays important role. Agnibala and digestive period are inversely proportional i.e. as Agnibala increases, the digestion period is bound to decrease, even when the same dose is administered or when the dose is increased.

Though routinely used Snehapana, the Ghrita is best known for Agni Deepana by its Prabhava,[29] but in practice the administration of Snehapana, Agni...
Agnibala Avastha is of prime importance. The *Pachana, Deepana Karmas* having *Ushna, Katu, Tikta, Kashayarasa* and *Ushnavirya Dravyas* are employed to correct the presence of *Ama* as a perquisite for *Shodhananga Snehapana*. In case of *Bhuri Shleshma, Sthoola* and *Vishamagni* the use of *Rookshana Dravya* is recommended.[80] Possessing *Laghu, Khara, Tikshna, Ushna Guna, Kashaya, Tikta and Katu Rasa*. These *Dravya* will take care of *Kleda* and regulates the *Agni* along with *Deepana, Pachana Karma*, so that the given *Sneha* does not produce any complications. Administration of *Ghrita* added with *Kshara* and *Lavana* is stated to correct *Agnimandya* and *Kroorakoshta*. Hingula-Vachadi Choorna etc. are ideally suitable in these context. And in extreme involvement of *Vatadasa* presenting with *Malabhadhata* etc. *Basti Karma* and *Phala Varti Prayoga* is planned to correct *Agni* prior to the administration of *Snehapana*.

**CONCLUSION**

Globally a new up surge is seen in the interest of *Panchakarma* for its efficiency in addressing chronic diseases. The ailments treated by *Shodhana* is said to expel it from the root and there is less chance of recurrence of the disease. *Shodhanarth Abhyantara Snehana* is an art based on precise assessment of *Dosha-Oushada Nirupana* having 11 factors to be assessed, but dose, duration were not clearly specified. By such pivotal issues *Acharya* have interpolated *Agni* as one of the technique to define the dose schedule for *Snehana*. For the attainment of *Shodhanapatha* proper *Snehapana* is an essential factor which is directly dependent on *Agni* and *Ag nibala* as a prime factor. Thus assessing *Agni* is very essential before *Shodhanarth Abhyantara Snehana*.

**REFERENCES**


http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.v2i1.7499

Source of Support: Nil, Conflict of Interest: None declared.