Importance of Poorvakarmas in Shodhana therapy - A Review

Hemang Raghavani, Kishor Satani,1 Kunjal Bhatt.2
Assistant Professor, Dept. of Panchakarma, 1Assistant Professor, Dept. of Basic Principles, 2Assistant Professor, Dept. of Shalakya Tantra, J. S. Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Nadiad, Gujarat, India.

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 Snehapan.

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.[1] Shodhana would be easy to perform if Poorvakarmas were done properly.[2] 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.[3] 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.[4] Panchakarma can be performed whenever Doshas are available in Koshthas (Upasthita Doshani) in particular form of the suitable person.[5] 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.
to Utkleshita can be said as Upasthitadoshas.\[^6\] Five causes are responsible for the movement of Doshas from Shakhas to Koshthas like; 1) Vriddhi of the Doshas 2) Vishyandana of the Doshas 3) Paka of Doshas 4) Srotomukha Vishodhana 5) Nigrahana of Vata.\[^7\] These all five causes can be achieved by the Poorvakarmas i.e. Snehana and Swedana. Internal Snehapanas plays a key role in Vriddhi of the Doshas. Sneha does Dosha Vriddhi (Shodhanarthta Sneha), Doshashamana or Brihanakarma, if it uses in particular Matra (quantity) and Kala (time).\[^8\]

1) **Vriddhi of the Doshas** - For Vriddhi 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 Doshas 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.\[^9\]

2) **Vishyandana of the Doshas** - Definition of Snehana itself says that Sneha does Vishyandanakarma.\[^10\]

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.\[^11\]

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.\[^12\] 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.\[^13\] So Vatadosha can be controlled (Nigrahana) very well by the Snehana and Swedana.

**Discussion**

Shodhana Karma means elimination of Doshas from the body.\[^14\] 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.\[^15\] These can be done only by Snehana and Vishyandana of the Doshas, Paka of Doshas, Srotomukha Vishodhana and Nigrahana of Vata.\[^16\] Vriddhi 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. Vriddhi of Doshas can be achieved only if Snehapanas is done on particular Kala, i.e. an empty stomach in the morning when previous night meal gets digested.\[^17\]

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 Dosa Vriddhi (Shodhanarthta Sneha), Doshas Shamana (Shamanarthta Sneha) and Brihmaha.\[^18\] Samskarasyaanuvartana property of Sneha,\[^19\] especially in Ghrita is responsible for all three types of Karmas. Samskara means putting together.\[^20\] 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.\[^21\] So consumed Sneha causes Agnidipti further it does Doshapachana in extent level. Now considering the Kala of Shodhanarthta Snehana, 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 Vriddhi of Doshas.\[^22\] Same principle is applied for Brihana Snehana, 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 Shodhanarthkala in such a dose which takes about 12 hours to digest, it is ideal Snehapanas.
for Shodhanakarma.\[^{23}\] 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.\[^{24}\] 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.\[^{25}\]

Definition of Sneha itself says that, it creates Vishyandata.\[^{26}\] 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 Koshta.\[^{27}\]

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

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

Vriddhi 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 Nigrahan 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,\[^{31}\] which is necessary for the movement of Doshas toward the Koshta as well as for elimination from the body. Snigdhaguna is indispensable quality for the Snehana\[^{32}\] and Snigdhaguna does the Kledanakarma.\[^{33}\] Dravaguna of Sneha also helps in Kledanakarma.\[^{34}\] Ushna and Tikshnagunas of the Swedana transform Doshas in Drava form.\[^{35}\]

**CONCLUSION**

Panchakarma can be performed only if the Doshas are available in the Koshta 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, Vridhi and Vishayandana 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 Vridhi 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 Ghrita is imperative factor in treatment due to its Samskarasaya Anuvartana quality. With this Guna it causes for Vridhi, 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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http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.v1i2.3665

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