A comprehensive evaluation of Rukshana Karma in clinical utility - A Review Article

Radhika Ketkar¹, I.B. Kotturshetti², Samiuzzama Davalbhai³

¹Associate Professor, Department of Panchakarma, SBG Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Belagavi, Karnataka, India.
²Professor & Principal, RGE’s Ayurvedic Medical College, Hospital and Post Graduation Research Centre, Ron, Karnataka, India.
³Assistant Professor, Department of Panchakarma, SBG Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, Belagavi, Karnataka, India.

ABSTRACT

Acharya Charaka presented six unique approaches to therapy known as Shadvidhopakramas. Rukshana is one among them. The term 'Upakrama' has multiple meanings, including planning, starting, remedy, and preparation. Upakrama is the process of planning and implementing an appropriate therapy modality. The word meaning of Rukshana is "The quality that is devoid of Snigdhata". The drugs or the Procedures which induce Kharatva in the body are called Rukshana. These properties make Rukshana an important principle in the treatment of Santarpana Janya, Kapha Meda Pradhana Vadhis. It also plays a major role in controlling Kleda and treating Aama Dosha. Rukshana can be advised either internally in the form of Kashaya, Takra, Arishta Pana or externally as Udvardana, Ruksha Sweda.

Key words: Rukshana, Apatarpana, Upakrama, Shadvidhopakrama, Langhana, Ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

As a science of life, Ayurveda not only attempts to treat illnesses but also places a strong focus on leading a disease-free life by preventing illnesses from manifesting. Detailed explanations of Shadvidhopakramas were given by Acharyas in order to cure ailments and promote health. One of the widely used Upakramas among Ayurvedic doctors is Rukshana. Acharya Vagbhata has divided the six Upakramas into just two primary headings for explanation. First, Bramhana; second, Langhana. All six Upakramas are contained within them. Since the remaining four Upakramas (Langhana and Brumhana) are just intended to serve these two purposes, none of the therapy techniques are distinct from these two.

Nirukti (definition)

Shabdakalpadruma states that Rooksha is Aprema, Achikiwana. Ruksha is the characteristic that lacks stickiness. Another interpretation is Snehashoonye that is, lacking Sneha or not having Sneha.

Rukshana Dravya's Gunas

Rukshana in nature are the Dravyas possessing Ruksha, Laghu, Khara, Ushna, Sthira, and Apicchila properties.

Rukshana Dravya’s Karmukata

As mentioned before, Rukshana Dravyas possess attributes like Laghu, Ushna, Sthira, Ruksha, Kathina, and so on. The next table lists the Pancha Mahabhoutikata, Pramukha Karma (key functions), and medicinal effects of these attributes.
Among the 28 varieties of Charaka so on are other Bilwa, Ela, Kirataka, Chandana, Katuka, Vidanga, Chitraka, Jiraka, Shatapuspa, Kutaja, Shigru, Shonyaka, Shokha, Chinta, Vihara (butter milk), etc.  

Ahara: Yava, Pinyaka, Sarshapa, Madhu (honey), Takra (butter milk), etc.

Vihara: Nitya Sevana Madhya, Vyayama, Vyavaya, Shokha, Chinta, etc.  

In addition to Triphala, Shunti, Maricha, Pippalimula, Chitraka, Jiraka, Shatapuspa, Kutaja, Shigru, Shonyaka, Bilwa, Ele, Kirataka, Chandana, Katuka, Vidanga, and so on are other Dravyas with Ruksha Guna. Acharya Charaka states that Uddalakanna is the Aghraya (best) Dravya for Rukshana.  

As Rukshana Dravya Yavagu

Among the 28 varieties of Yavagu Kalpanas that Charaka described are those of Rukshanarthra Yavagu.  

For those who are suitable for Rukshana, this Yavagu will be beneficial.  

**Rukshana, performed by Lekhaniya Mahakashaya**

50 Mahakashayas were thoroughly discussed by Acharya Charaka in the fourth chapter of Sutra Sthana. Lekhaniya Mahakashayas can be taken into consideration among those Mahakashayas because Lekhana and Rukshana Dravyas share comparable traits. Thus, the ten medications covered by Lekhaniya Mahakashaya viz Musta, Kushtha, Haridra, Vacha, Ativisha, Katurohini, Chitraka, Karanja, and Hemavati can be utilized for Rukshana.

**Rukshana Yogya**

Individuals afflicted with illnesses marked by Srotas blockage. Dominant role of highly exacerbated Doshas. Rukshana should also be used to cure illnesses affecting Marma Sthana (vital parts), those with Urusthambha Vyadhi, and illnesses like Adhyavata and Prameha. Additionally, Rukshana Karma alone should be used as the initial form of treatment for a person whose body has a high level (Prachura Matra) of Dosha Sanchaya. When treating ailments like Aamavata, Shvasa, Pratishyaya, Pidaka, Kota, Kandu, Kushtha, Arohaka, Tandra, Pandu, Klaibya, Ati Sthoulya, Alasya, Gurugatrata, Shopha, etc., Rukshana is an excellent therapy option. Rukshana is the primary treatment for all cases with Kleda dominating disorder.

**Ayoga Atyiyo and Samyak Yoga of Rukshana**

The Ayoga Atyiyogadi Lakshanas that are described for Langhana should also be taken into account for Rukshana. Thus, the signs of Ayoga are as follows: Ayoga of Shodhana occurs; No alleviation from the illness treated by Upakrama; and an increase in symptoms (Roga Vridhi). The following symptoms of Ati-Rukshana: bradycardia, emaciation of the body, diminished ability to digest food, anorexia, thirst, weakness of the ears and eyes (impairment of the power of hearing and sight), pain in the extremities,
cough, dry mouth, loss of appetite, and loss of strength.\[14\]

In contrast, the Samyak Yoga of Rukshana emphasizes the following: eructation, mouth, and throat purity; appropriate elimination of flatus, urine, and feces; Gatra Laghuta (body lightness); Tandra and Klama Nasha (disappearance of fatigue and exertion); and appearance of perspiration. There seems to be an interest in food, and there is an increase in thirst, hunger, and contentment.\[15\]

**Rukshana administration methodology**

There are two ways to incorporate Rukshana into the body.

1. **Abhyantara** (Internal)
2. **Bahya** (External)

**Abhyantara Prayoga**

Internal therapies such as Ushnajala-Paana and Kashaya-Paana, such as Amrutotttara Kashaya and Nimadi Kashaya, are known to induce Rukshana within the body. Arishtas such as Takrarista, Abhayarista, and so on. Churna Kalpanas include Sudarshana, Panchakola, Vaiswanara, Ajamodadi, Shaddharana, Triphala Churna, and others.

**Bahya Rukshana:** external treatments such as Atapa, Valuka, Lepas, and Udwartana.

**Udvartana as Rukshana**

Undertaking reinforced body rubbing with a Churna is referred to as Udwartana. It produces a liquefaction of Medas, pacifies the Kapha Dosha, and gives the body’s parts stability, strength, and compactness.\[16\] It is a variant of Rukshana Kriya that is more concentrated in Medo Dhatu and Twak. In Udwartana, Katu, Tikta, Kashaya Rasa, and Ushna, Ruksha Guna Dravyas are helpful.

**Swedana as Rukshana**

Swedana is a therapeutic method in which the body or specific body areas are heated by heated medications or by applying heat and warmth in the form of steam. Ayurvedic writings explain ten varieties of Niragni Sweda and roughly thirteen types of Sagni Sweda.\[17\] Once more, there are two ways to perform Swedana: Ruksha Sweda and Snigdha Sweda. One could interpret Sagni Sweda as Rukshana Chikitsa.

When pain and related symptoms stem from Aama or Kapha (morbid Kapha), dry fomentation or Ruksha Sweda are typically the preferred treatments.

**Valmika Mrttika Utsasadana**

Bricks, ant-hill soil, and the fruits, roots, and bark of the Karanja tree (Pongamia pinnata) are all ground into powder. This is widely used for Utsadana, or dry rubbing.

**Valuka Sweda**

In addition to being a Ruksha Sweda, Valuka uses sand to fomentate sore areas. Particularly in conditions like Medoroga, Urustambha, Amavata, etc.

Other Rukshana Karmas that include Ishtika Choorna Swedana:

Similar to Valuka Sweda, Ishtika Choorna (brick powder) is utilized for Swedana.

**Employing Rukshana as the primary treatment option for various ailments**

**Sthoulya**

Obesity, or Sthoulya, has become a major global health concern. Vata’s path will be obstructed in Sthoulya Roga by morbid Medo Dhatu. Vata hence causes Agni Dushti by moving abundantly in Koshta. Dushti of Medovaha Srotas, who together with Mamsa Dhatu, leads to Ati Vruddhi of Medo-Dhatu.\[18\] The person develops pendulous breasts, abdomen, and buttocks. He experiences low energy and a slow metabolism.\[19\] The blockage in Medovaha Srotas is removed by Rukshana Dravyas because of their Rukshadi Gunas, which aid in the liquefication and removal of the stagnant sick components. Additionally, Rukshana aids in the relief of stiffness and other symptoms brought on by an excessive buildup of fat.

**Amavata**

When Rasa (Apakwa Annarasa) is formed improperly due to poor digestive fire, it is referred to as Aama.\[20\] It makes its home in Urdhwa Amashaya. Anamavata is
the state in which vitiated Vata and this Aama Dosha combine to cause stiffness in the joints. It is horrible and very hard to treat. Langhana will help if the client has both Alpa Bala and Alpa Dosh. Pachana of Amadosha is the result. The next treatment for recently developed diseases is Ruksha Sweda, which aids in the liquefaction of Aama and relieves stiffness. To deal with vitiated Aama and Kapha Dosh, Dipana and Pachana Dravyas are prescribed. Ruksha Bastis, Ruksha Paana, Atopa Swedana, Ruksha Virechana, can also be employed in accordance with the condition's desire. After completing the Aama Pachana, Vata can be treated with Snehana Karma.[21]

Urusthambha

The condition Urusthambha affects the thighs, and Panchakarma treatments were discouraged by Acharya Charaka.[22] Since the Doshas (Aama, Kapha, and Medas) are settled in Uru-Pradesha, Vamana and Virechana are also useless because Snehana and Basti raise the Kapha Dosa. Shamana, Shoshana, Kshapana, and Rukshana are hence more beneficial in Urusthambha than other Panchakarmas. The doctor should always offer the proper Rukshana therapies for their Kshapana (full extraction) and Shoshana (absorption / drying of the liquid portion) as Kapha, Vata, and Aama are predominant in the pathophysiology of Urusthambha. Similar to Amavata, therapies like Valuka Sweda are quite successful in managing Urusthambha. Urusthambha is cured by administering Ruksha Paana, such as Kshara Pana (alkali preparations), Arista-Pana, Haritaki when honey is added, and Pippali.[23]

Application of Rukshana in Kaphavruta Vata and Medasavruta Vata

Symptoms of Medasavrutta Vata and Kaphavruta include pain, heaviness, and a feeling of coldness throughout the body. By taking Katu, Ushna, Dravyas, engaging in Langhana, Aayasa, Ruksha-Vihara, and remaining in a heated room (Ushna Kamita), among other things, the patient feels better.[24]

Rukshana Chikitsa, such as Jangala Aahara, Tikshna Swedana, Niruha Basti, Vamana, and Virechana, among others, are therefore helpful in this situation.

Rukshana’s significance in Shodhana

According to Astanga Hrudhyakara, Rukshana Karma should be done first, followed by Snehana, in the case of fat people, those with high levels of Kapha vitiation, and those with irregular digestive fire.[25] These people won’t become sick from illnesses brought on by an overabundance of Snehana. When Sneha is taken in this manner, it helps the body release the Doshas more easily and does not build up within the body. When undergoing operations like Sneha-Pana, we frequently encounter Vyapats, or difficulties. It can be the result of incorrect administration or a failure to follow protocol. Rukshana can be employed successfully in these circumstances, particularly in Sneha Vyapats.[26]

Ruksha Virechana

Ruksha Guna Pradhana Dravyas is used to complete Ruksha Virechana. Sushruta states that Ruksha Virechana is used to heal individuals with Snigdha Shareera, or bodies with aggravated Doshas.[28] Acharya Charaka holds the same opinions.[29] The Sushruta Samhita lists the following as indications for Ruksha Virechana: Visarpa, Pidika, Shotha, Kamala, Pandu, Abhighata, and Visha, among others.[30]

Ruksha Basti

The primary goal of Ruksha Basti is to introduce Snehabhava, who is helpful in numerous Santarpana-janya Vikaras. In Sharangadhara Samhita’s Niruha Basti Vidhi Adhyaya, He described different Basti combinations for the Rukshana effect. Let’s take Lekhana Basti, Tripala Kwatha, Gomutra, Madhu, Kshara, Ushakadi Gana Dravyas, and consider them Prakshepaka. It’s a fantastic combination for Rukshana’s needs.[27]

Ruksha Nasya

Nasya was primarily divided into two categories by Acharya Kashyapa: Shodhana Nasya and Pooranana Nasya. Dravyas with Karshana qualities are a part of Shodhana Nasya. Prithivi, Vayu, and Agni Mahabhoota Pradhanata are their primary offerings. In the Urdhwa-Jatrugata region, this functions as Shodhana and brings Rukshana, thereby calming diseases associated with Kapha.[31] Based on the doctor’s Yukti, Rukshana Karma
can be used for a variety of additional diseases in addition to these Shodhana treatments.

**Rukshana in daily practice (Dinacharya)**

Exercises like Vyayama, Udvartana, Taamboola Sevana, Dhumapana, and others that are done on a regular basis are also included in Rukshana alone.[32] In Dakshinayana, Rukshana is ideal and is attained by Ahara and Vihara possessing Ruksha Gunta. Rukshana is attained by Dravyas such as Udvartanan, Vyayama, Madhu, Madhya, Aristha, and Yava.[33]

**DISCUSSION**

Qualities like Ruksha, Lagu, Khara, Teekshna, Ushana, Sthira, Apichila, and Kathina are possessed by Rukshana Dravyas. Every one of them has a unique significance in the course of treatment.[35] They all play important roles; Ruksha Gunta, for example, fulfills Shoshana of Dragamsha in Shareera. It reduces Varna (complexion) and Bala (strength), and makes Dhatus dry. The body feels lighter after taking Laghu Gunta. It exhausts the Dhatus, resulting in the body's Krushata. Agnideepaka is Laghu Gunta. The scraping activity is the responsibility of Lekhana Gunta. Mala Shodhana and Dhatu Kshaya are brought on by it.

Once more, the Vicchedana of sick Doshas conforming to the channels is the responsibility of Teekshna Gunta. Because Ushna Gunta is Pittavardhaka, the body will become warmer as a result. Sweda's Pravartaka is Ushna Gunta (Swedane Ushna). This will result in the removal of the Dravamsha, or watery component, and Rukshana. Because Sthira Gunta lacks mobility (Gatiheena), Dhatus remains stable. Apichila Gunta lessens the Dhatus' slimy texture. Dryness, hardness, and Vata Vruddhi are caused by the depletion of Jalaamsha, which is attributed to Kathina Gunna.[36] In the same way, the Dravyas employed in the Rukshana complete the Rukshana Prakriya by performing Shodhana, Lekhana, Agnideepana, Shodana, Dharana, Kshalana, and Vata Vruddhi.

**CONCLUSION**

Shadvidhopakramas intend to take action by restoring the body's proper ratio of Panchamahabhatas. One of the six Upakramas, Rukshana, primarily brings Sneha Abhava, while Langhana brings Gourava's Abhava. Because of their Ruksha, Rukshana Dravyas and Ushnadi Gunaas aid in the liquefaction and removal of stagnant morbid components, hence removing the barrier in Srotas. You can perform Langhana without a Dravya's assistance similar to fasting. However, Rukshana can only be performed using Rukshana Dravyas.

**REFERENCES**


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

Copyright © 2024 The Author(s); Published by Maharshi Charaka Ayurveda Organization, Vijayapur (Regd). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and perform the work and make derivative works based on it only for non-commercial purposes, provided the original work is properly cited.