



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 9 · Issue 4

April 2024

Journal of
**Ayurveda and Integrated
Medical Sciences**

www.jaims.in

JAIMS

An International Journal for Researches in Ayurveda and Allied Sciences



Maharshi Charaka
Ayurveda

Indexed

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

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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 *Snigdghata*". 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*.^[1] It is an efficient and safe method that is employed in *Chikitsa* for both *Antahparimarjana* (internal purification) and *Bahirparimarjana* (external purifications). *Acharya Vagbhata* has divided the six

Upakramas into just two primary headings for explanation. First, *Bramhana*; second, *Langhana*.^[2] 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.^[3]

Nirukti (definition)

Shabdakalpadruma states that *Rooksha* is *Aprema*, *Achikiwana*. *Ruksha* is the characteristic that lacks stickiness.^[4] 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.^[5]

Rukshana Dravyas'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*,^[6] *Pramukha Karma* (key functions), and medicinal effects of these attributes.

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Submission Date: 14/02/2024 Accepted Date: 23/03/2024

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: www.jaims.in

DOI: 10.21760/jaims.9.4.36

Table 1: Key Roles of Ruksha Dravyas and Panchabhoutikata

Guna	Pancha Mahabhuta	Pramukha Karma	Therapeutic Action
Rooksha	Prithwi, Akasha, Agni	Shoshana	Kapha Vatahara
Khara	Prithwi, Vayu, Agni	Lekhana	Kapha Vatahara
Laghu	Vayu, Aksha, Agni	Laghuta	Kapha Vatahara
Kathina	Prithwi	Dridhikarana	Vatakara
Teekshna	Agni	Shodhana	Pittakara, Kapha Vatahara
Sthira	Prithwi, Vayu, Akasha, Agni	Kshalana	Vatahara
Ushna	Agni	Pachana	Pittakara-Vata Kaphahara

Rukshaniya Rasa

Among the six *Rasa*, *Rukshana* is mostly played by *Kashaya*, *Katu*, and *Tikta Rasa*. Out of these three *Rasas*, *Kashaya Rasa* is considered the best *Rukshaka*, *Tikta* the least, and *Katu Rasa* the average *Ruksha*.^[7]

Ahara and Vihara having Rukshana properties

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

Vihara: *Nitya Sevana Madhya*, *Vyayama*, *Vyavaya*, *Shokha*, *Chinta*, etc.^[8]

In addition to *Triphala*, *Shunti*, *Maricha*, *Pippalimula*, *Chitraka*, *Jiraka*, *Shatapuspa*, *Kutaja*, *Shigru*, *Shonyaka*, *Bilwa*, *Ela*, *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*.^[9]

As Rukshana Dravya Yavagu

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

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

Amalaki and *Krusha* plant roots are used to make the decoction (*Kwatha*). It is mixed with *Shyamaka*, a type of rice grain, and then cooked. The *Yavagu* in concern is *Rukshana*.^[10]

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.^[11] Thus, the ten medications covered by *Lekhaniya Mahakashaya* viz *Musta*, *Kushta*, *Haridra*, *Vacha*, *Ativisha*, *Katuruhini*, *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*.^[12] 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*, *Kushta*, *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 Atiyoga and Samyak Yoga of Rukshana

The *Ayoga Atiyogadi Lakshanas* that are described for *Langhana* should also be taken into account for *Rukshana*.^[13] 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 Vridhhi*). 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 *Amrutottara Kashaya* and *Nimbadi 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*.

Udwartana as Rukshana

Undertaking reinforced body rubbing with a *Churna* is referred to as *Udwartana*. It produces a liquification of *Medas*, pacifies the *Kapha Dosha*, and gives the body's parts strength, stability, 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 Vriddhi* 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 liquefaction 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 Dosh* 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*, *Atapa 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 Dosh*. *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 *Urustambha*. Similar to *Amavata*, therapies like *Valuka Sweda* are quite successful in managing *Urustambha*. *Urustambha* 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 *Medasavruta 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*, *Abhigata*, 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*, *Triphala 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*. *Prithvi*, *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*, *Udvardana*, *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 Guna*. *Rukshana* is attained by *Dravyas* such as *Udvardanan*, *Vyayama*, *Madhu*, *Madhya*, *Aristha*, and *Yava*.^[33]

DISCUSSION

Qualities like *Ruksha*, *Lagu*, *Khara*, *Teekshna*, *Ushana*, *Sthira*, *Apicchila*, 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 Guna*, for example, fulfills *Shoshana* of *Dragamsha* in *Shareera*. It reduces *Varna* (complexion) and *Bala* (strength), and makes *Dhatu* dry. The body feels lighter after taking *Laghu Guna*. It exhausts the *Dhatu*, resulting in the body's *Krushata*. *Agnideepaka* is *Laghu Guna*. The scraping activity is the responsibility of *Lekhana Guna*. *Mala Shodhana* and *Dhatu Kshaya* are brought on by it.

Once more, the *Vicchadana* of sick *Doshas* conforming to the channels is the responsibility of *Teekshna Guna*. Because *Ushna Guna* is *Pittavardhaka*, the body will become warmer as a result. *Sweda's Pravartaka* is *Ushna Guna* (*Swedane Ushna*). This will result in the removal of the *Dravamsha*, or watery component, and *Rukshana*. Because *Sthira Guna* lacks mobility (*Gatiheena*), *Dhatu* remains stable. *Apicchila Guna* lessens the *Dhatu*'s slimy texture. Dryness, hardness, and *Vata Vrudhi* are caused by the depletion of *Jalaamsha*, which is attributed to *Kathina Guna*.^[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 Vrudhi*.

CONCLUSION

Shadvidhopakramas intend to take action by restoring the body's proper ratio of *Panchamahabhutas*. One of

the six *Upakramas*, *Rukshana*, primarily brings *Sneha Abhava*, while *Langhana* brings *Gourava's Abhava*. Because of their *Ruksha*, *Rukshana Dravyas* and *Ushnadi Gunas* 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*.

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How to cite this article: Radhika Ketkar, I.B. Kotturshetti, Samiuzzama Davalbai. A comprehensive evaluation of Rukshana Karma in clinical utility - A Review Article. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2024;4:224-230.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.9.4.36>

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