

## A Literary Study on Cosmetic Care with special emphasis on Varnya Bhava as mentioned in Charaka Samhita - Protocol Study

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**Introduction:** Face the most important and beautiful organ of the body and a very few people are blessed with natural perfect skin, but this skin is often affected by certain anomaly at different ages of the life like scars, wrinkles, slack skin and hyper pigmentary skin problems. Toxins seems to be everywhere, food, air, water, with diminishing ozone layer even sunshine has become hazardous. Sunburn is the clinical manifestation of a complex inflammatory process in the skin, short UV radiation from the sunlight is the main cause. A variety of treatment modalities exist and newer once are continuously being introduced to tackle the cosmetic problem of hyper pigmentary skin problem due to sunburn. Now it is a time to highlight the Ayurveda in the world of cosmetics with its unique aspects. The adverse reaction of modern cosmetics and higher cost of therapy are also one of the causes to look towards Ayurveda for its humeral approach. There is a great demand for Ayurveda in the field of cosmetology. Acharya Charaka describes 50 group of drugs based on their pharmacological actions with each group comprising of 10 drugs under the denomination of 'Dashemani'. Varnya Dashemani is one of them which is said to enhance the color in the individual. Cosmetological approach of Acharya Charaka in detail and whole aspect according to Ayurveda.

**Aims and Objective:** 1) To study and make a comprehensive review of literature on the cosmetic approach described in Ayurveda. 2) To interpret and compare the concept of 'Varnya bhava' described in Ayurveda in the backdrop of modern understandings and discuss its significance in present day scenario for skin health.

**Conclusion:** The major findings of the work highlighting its importance, relevance and utility will be summarized herein and conclusion will be made for further scope of advancement in the field of skin care and cosmetology.

**Keywords:** Varna, Varnya, Twacha, Cosmetic, Skin, Beauty, Hyperpigmentation

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## Introduction

The desire for beauty and radiant skin has been a timeless pursuit of humanity. In recent years there has been resurgence of interest in *Ayurveda* for holistic and natural approach to skincare. Three vital components of beauty are said to be a well nourished body, a balanced mind and a peaceful spirit. Outer beauty is a reflection of one's inner health and wellbeing. There is evidence of highly advanced ideas of self beautification and cosmetic usages both by men and women, in ancient India. Significantly, the use of cosmetics was directed not only towards developing an outwardly pleasant and attractive personality, but towards achieving *Aayush* (long life) with *Aarogyam* (health) and *Aanandam* (joy).

The earliest reference of a beautician is from the great epic *Mahabharata*. Draupadi worked for the queen of *Virata*. She called herself *Sairandhri* (a female attendant in the women's section of the palace). There is reference of her carrying a *Prasadhana Petika* (a vanity case containing substances to beautify, toiletries and accessories to decorate). A substance or process that improves appearance of the skin is known as *Varnya*.

According to *Acharya Charaka*, the process of formation of skin in fetus is attributed to *Paka of Rakta Dhatu*. *Agni Mahabhut* is said to be at the root of *Varna Utpatti* and *Pitta* being main seat of *Agni* is responsible for the same. Maintenance of body complexion is one of the functions of *Pitta* and *Bhrajaka Pitta* seated in the skin radiates the glow of one's natural complexion that is expressed through *Varna* (C.Chi.15/8). Hence, the herb and practices which elevates *Pitta*, *Rakta* in general either acting through *Rasa*, *Vipaka* or *Prabhava* is considered as *Varnya*. The *Varnya Bhava*, according to *Ayurveda*, includes practices, remedies and balanced diet etc. that suits an individual's constitution (*Prakriti*).

Consuming fresh fruits, vegetables, and foods rich in antioxidants improve skin health and complexion. Lifestyle practices such as maintaining good hygiene, staying hydrated, getting adequate sleep, managing stress and avoiding excessive exposure to the sun etc., protect and enhance the life of skin cells. Skincare involving use of natural ingredients like herbal powders, oils, and pastes rejuvenate the skin.

Internal detoxification approach of *Ayurveda* i.e. *Panchakarma* helps to eliminate toxins from the body which finally helps to improve the skin health.

As per modern science, activity of melanocytes, the specialized cells in the epidermis (outer layer of skin) are responsible for producing the pigment melanin. Melanin is responsible for the color of the skin, hair, and eyes. Activity of melanocytes and the production of melanin is influenced by several enzymes such as Tyrosinase, Tyrosinase-Related Proteins (TRP-1 and TRP-2), Phenylalanine Hydroxylase. Few herbs, mentioned in *Bhavprakash Nighantu* and *Charaka Samhita*, such as *Chandana* (*Santalum album*), *Manjistha* (*Rubia cordifolia*), *Madhuka* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*); have been considered responsible (directly or indirectly) to inhibit Tyrosinase enzyme activity.

### Need of the study

Cosmetics which are prepared synthetically from harsh chemicals, degrade the skin quality, increase skin aging and wrinkles and some of them are carcinogenic in nature. At the same time, indiscriminate use of such preparations, skin problems are emerging globally and scientists and researchers are looking for some new approach and remedial breakthrough to gain an upper edge on the issue. Keeping in view the point mentioned above, the concept of *Varnya Bhava* as described by *Acharya Charaka* appears to be a potent and valuable alternative to the prevailing modern chemical based cosmetic skincare practices. *Ayurveda* offers a comprehensive and holistic approach for skin health which emphasizes on natural and customized approach of skincare and overall wellbeing. It is the need of the day to explore and trust our ancient wisdom of *Ayurveda*. This study is an attempt, focusing on presenting the textual information collectively at a place along with scientific interpretations.

## Review of literature

The three aspects of beauty are like a scale, one side holds *Alankaras* or external ingredients, while others hold the *Gunas* or internal ingredients and act of balancing itself is the third aspect. According to the M. Monier-Williams Sanskrit-English dictionary the Sanskrit word *Varnyameans* relating to or useful for or giving color whereas *Varna* means outward appearance, exterior, form, figure, shape etc.

Acharya Charaka has described the Panchmahabhautik composition of Varna into three categories-

Avdat Varna - Teja + Jala + Akash

Krishna Varna -Teja + Prithvi + Vata

Shyam Varna - Akash + Vata + Jala + Prithvi

The role of Dehagni has been considered as the basic factor for Varna Utpatti -

In the context of properties of Madhura Rasa (sweet taste), Acharya Charaka describes it as Varnyakara (complexion enhancer), Tvachya (beneficial for skin) and Keshya (beneficial for hair).

Dashemani (a group of ten plants), described under Varnyakar Mahakashay, promote complexion and retard aging and increase lusture of the skin.

Madya (alcoholic preparations) also has been claimed to have Varnya properties.

Various complexion promoting Pradeha (ointment which is cold or hot and thick or thin in nature), Pralepa (ointment which is cold and thin in nature) and Alepa (ointment which is neither too thin nor too thick) have been mentioned in Ayurveda on the basis of method of application, time period to be applied, their appropriate consistency and thickness. They are also claimed for Samprasadana (which brings back the natural color of the skin).

### Plan of study

The whole study would be embodied under the following chapters-

1. Introduction
2. Literary review

- A) Review of Ayurvedic literature.
- B) Review of modern literature.

3. Aim and Objectives
4. Materials and Methods
5. Discussion
6. Summary and Conclusion
7. References and Bibliography

## Discussion and Conclusion

Cosmetology is a science of beautifying skin and its appendages. The limitation and disadvantages of modern cosmetology leads people to move towards the Ayurveda.

As face is the most exposed part of the body and highlighting organ of the personality, facial beauty is the essential part of beauty and personality. There are two types of products available in modern cosmetology viz. Skin caring and decorative. Whereas, Ayurveda has mostly curative and preventive types of treatment.

Hence, it can be said that in modern cosmetology there are products which do not cure the skin lesions but cover the disfigurement and make a person look good temporarily. As Ayurveda is the science of the life, it gives an equal importance to beauty as well as health.

The demand of cosmetology is increasing at a rapid rate, hence now it is time to establish the special branch of cosmetology in the field of Ayurveda due to its unique concept and therapy regarding beauty and health. Reviewing of various meaning of the word Beauty, it's scope can be widened to physical, psychological and spiritual level.

A detailed literary study of skincare practices in Ayurveda and analysis of Varnya Bhava and their impact on individual's skin as mentioned in Charaka Samhita will be discussed here.

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