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# Ashtavidha Shastra Karma in Surgical Practice

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## ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the oldest life science which deals with eight different branches (*Astanga Ayurveda*) related to different therapeutic aspects. *Shalya Tantra* is one of them which deals with surgical and parasurgical concept. *Acharya Sushruta* has been recognized as father of surgery world wide and documented surgical principles to conduct safe surgery in his compendium known as *Sushruta Samhita*. *Ashtavidha Shastra Karma* (eight principles of surgery) is a unique contribution comprises with *Chhedana* (excision), *Bhedana* (incision), *Lekhana* (scrapping/debridement), *Eshana* (probing), *Aharana* (extraction), *Visravana* (drainage), *Seevana* (suturing) *Karma* of *Acharya Sushruta*. Till date, these eight surgical procedures are being used in modern surgical science to combat the surgical disorders. This article summarizes the applicability of *Ashtavidha Shastra Karma* in current surgical practice.

**Key words:** Ayurveda, Ashtavidha Shastra Karma, Shalya Chikitsa.

## INTRODUCTION

The term Ayurveda translates “(knowledge of life)” has been described for healthy humanity and it is being practiced as holistic healing of medicine for curing an ailing person. It comprises with all kind of medical & surgical, spiritual concepts and herbal, mineral remedies for treatment as well as prevention of diseases. *Sushruta* (500BC) was ancient Indian surgeon has written *Sushruta Samhita* with aiming to deal different surgical conditions and to remove factors responsible for producing pain or misery from the body or mind. *Shalya Chikitsa*, one important specialty among *Astanga Ayurveda* is having detail

description of different treatment modalities like *Ashtavidha Sastrakarma*, *Saptopakarma*, *Ksharakarma*, *Agnikarma Raktamokshana*. *Acharya Sushruta* had been performed surgery in India and took to admirable heights. The era was later on regarded as The Golden age of surgery. To obtain better results in all types of surgical procedures *Sushruta* has described three type of *Karmas* (i.e. *Poorvakarma*, *Pradhankarma* and *Paschatkarma*). However, the *Pradhankarma* mainly encompasses eight techniques which are termed as *Ashtavidha Shastra Karma*.<sup>[1]</sup> The principles of eight basic surgical procedures are being used in day to day surgery and many advancement made in modern surgery in terms development of minor surgical instruments to Robotic surgery. But, the principles of surgical treatment is remained same even today.

## Ashtavidha Shastra Karma

It is composed of eight surgical procedures viz. *Chhedana* (excision), *Bhedana* (incision), *Lekhana* (scrapping), *Vyadhana* (puncturing), *Visravana* (drainage), *Eshana* (probing), *Aharana* (extraction), *Seevana* (suturing). These all techniques offer relief in various surgical adversity like; *Sadhyovrana*, *Nadivrana*, *Bhagandara*, *Vidradi*, *Granthi* etc.

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### 1) Chhedana Karma

It involves excision of part from the body with the help of *shastra* like *Mandalagra*, *Karpatra*, *Vrudhipatra*, *Mudrika* and *Utpalpatraka*.<sup>[2]</sup> *Anushastra* used in *Chhedana Karma* are *Sphatika*, *Kacha*, *Agni*, *Kshara*, *Nakha*. Indications of *Chhedana Karma* - *Bhagandara*, *Kaphajgranthi*, *Vranavartama*, *Charmakeela*, *Asthimamsagata Shalya*.<sup>[3]</sup> Scalpel, Scissors etc. are modern instruments used for this purpose

### 2) Bhedana Karma

It is defined as incision to lay open a cavity for draining out tissue debris, blood, pus and waste discharge with the help of *Shastra* like *Vrudhhipatra*, *Nakhashastra*, *Mudrika*, *Utpalapatraka* and *Ardhadhara*.<sup>[4]</sup> *Anushastra* used in *Bhedana Karma* are *Sphatika*, *Kacha*, *Agni*, *Kshara*, *Nakha*. Indications of *Bhedana Karma* - all types of *Vidradhi* except *Sannipataja*. *Vataj Pittaj* and *Kaphaj Granthi*, *Vataj Pittaj* and *Kaphaj Visarpa*, *Stana Roga*, *Shopha*, *Prameha Pidika Alaji*, *Kshudra Rogas*. *Bhedana Karma* is also indicated in deep/ superficially seated abscesses, pocket of puss in fistula / sinus tract.<sup>[5]</sup>

### 3) Lekhana Karma

*Lekhana Karma* is performed to scrap out of debris from affected part with the help of *shastra* like *Mandalagra*, *Vridhhipatra*.<sup>[6]</sup> *Anushastra* used in *Lekhana Karma* are *Kshara*, *Gojihva*, *Sephalika*, *Nakha*. Indications of *Lekhana Karma* - *Vataja Pittaja Kaphaja* and *Sannipattaja Rohini*, *Kilasa*, *Medaja Granthi*, *Adhijihvika*, *Arsha*, *Mandala Kushta*, *Mamsakanda* and *Mamsaunnati*.<sup>[7]</sup>

*Acharya Sushruta* has explained certain parameters to assess proper and improper *Lekhana Karma*. Absence of bleeding from the site, itching, Oedema and appearance of lid like finger nail are characteristic features of *Samyak Lekhana Karma*.

### 4) Vyadhana Karma

*Vyadhana Karma* means puncturing, by this technique a affected part is punctured with the help of

*Kutharika*, *Vrihimukha*, *Ara*, *Vetasptra* and *Suchi*<sup>[8]</sup> and *Anushastra* used for *Vyadhana Karma* is *Kareera*. Indications of *Vyadhana Karma* - *Siravyadhana*<sup>[9]</sup> and to remove the fluids from any cavity.

### 5) Eshana Karma

It involves sponging of waste discharge, debris and foreign body etc. with the help of *Eshani*<sup>[10]</sup> from affected body parts and *Anushastra* used in *Eshana Karma* are *Kareera*, *Bala*, *Anguli*. Indications of *Eshana Karma* - *Nadivrana*, *Sashalyavrana*, *Unmargivrana*.<sup>[11]</sup>

### 6) Aharana Karma

It involves extraction of waste from diseased body part with the help of *Badisha* and *Dantashanku*<sup>[12]</sup> *Shastra* and *Anushastra* used for *Aharana Karma* are *Nakha* and *Anguli*. Indications of *Aharana Karma* - *Dantamala*, *Karnamala*, *Ashmari*, *Shalya*, *Moodagarbha*.<sup>[13]</sup>

### 7) Visravana Karma

In this procedure, blood letting and drainage of pus is done with the help of *Suchi*, *Kushpatra*, *Atimukha*, *Aaratimukha*, *Antarmuka* and *Trikurchaka*<sup>[14]</sup> and *Anushastra* used for the purpose of *Visravana* are *Jaloka* and *Nakha*. Indications of *Visravana Karma* are - Five types of *Vidhradhi*, *Ekdeshajshopa*, *Sleepada*, *Vishajhushta Sonitha*, all kinds of *Arbuda*, all kinds of *Visarpa*, *Vataj Pittaj Kaphaj Granthi*, *Vataj Pittaj Kaphaj Updansa*, *Stanaroga*, *Vidarika*, *Kshudra Rogas*.<sup>[15]</sup>

### 8) Seevana Karma

It is a techniques to approximate the incised and excised by using suitable suturing methods, needles and threads as post-operative management *Suchi*<sup>[16]</sup> *Rhijugranthi*, *Anuvellita*, *Gofanikaa* and *Tunnasevani* are various types of *Seevana* used in this therapy. Indications of *Seevana Karma* are - *Sadyovrana*, *Sulekhita Vrana*, diseases which are due to vitiation of *Medas*, cut wounds and disease localized on *Chalasanthi*.<sup>[17]</sup>

### Specific approaches of Ashtavidha Shastra Karma in the management of various diseases.

SN	Approach of Ashtavidha Shastra Karma	Diseases
1.	Chhedhana Karma with Tapta Shastra	Sadhyovrana
2.	Bhedana Karma and aharana with the help of Agra Vakra Shalaka	Ashmari
3.	Bhedana with Seevana Karma	Baddhagudodara
4.	Visravana with Nadi Yantra	Jalodara
5.	Visravana	Pakva Vidradhi
6.	Rakta Visravana Karma	Visarpa
7.	Bhedana Karma	Stana Vidhradhi
8.	Lekhana	Upajihvika, Dantavaidarbha

### CONCLUSION

In the field of surgery, *Ayurvedic Shalya Chikitsa* offers great contribution. Surgical instruments mentioned by *Sushruta* for each *Shastra Karma* are almost similar to modern surgical instruments. *Ashtavidha Shastra Karma* have been explained in details and, these principles are well accepted in modern surgical era. These techniques are used either alone or in combination in surgical practice.

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