



CRITICAL REVIEW OF SNEHANA KARMA (OLEATION THERAPY)

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ABSTRACT

Snehana karma (Oleation therapy) used in the preoperative of *shodhana* (purification) *karma*. Generally, *sneha* is administered in an increasing manner for 3 to 7 days or till the appearance of proper oleation features. Oleation acts in every respect of the processes to bring *dosha* to *koshtha* and bring *utklesha* of the *dosha*. Oleation therapy is the main preparatory procedure to be performed before purification. *Acharya Charaka* has described a lot of about *snehana karma*.

Keywords: *Snehana karma*, *abhyanga karma*, oleation therapy, *shodhana*, *panchakarma*.

INTRODUCTION

The process which brings softness and removes dryness of the body is called *snehana*. This is the first stage of detoxification. Medicated oils, *ghrita*, animal fats, and bone marrow were recommended for *snehana* by ancient sages. External or internal application of *sneha* is considered under *Snehana karma*. This procedure oleate the body and results in tenderness, and considered under *shada upakrama*.¹ *Snehana* is a method of Purva karma essential before *shodhana karma*.² *Snehana* is the process intended for the alleviation of vitiated *dosha* particularly *vata* as a part of preparatory therapy for *shodhana* and imports strength and unctuousness to the body.

Indication for *snehana* therapy:-³

The persons indicated for *snehana* are

- 1) Who have to undergo *swedana* and *shodhana* therapies.
- 2) Those who indulge more in wine, women, and exercise.
- 3) Persons having *raktakshaya* and *shukrashaya*.
- 4) Those who are suffering from *vata* disorders and eye diseases like *abhishyanda* and *timira*
- 5) Old persons, children, debilitated persons.

Contraindications for *snehana* therapy: -⁴

- 1) Those who has increased levels of *kapha* and *meda*

2) Immediately after performing *nasya*, *basti*, *virechana*, etc.

3) Persons who are *sthula* or even very *krisha*

4) Who is suffering from problems like *trishna*, *murchha*, *talushosha*, *aruchi*, *chhardi*, *ajirna*, *atisara*, *urustambha*, *jalodara*

DEFINITION

Acharya Charaka defines *snehana* as the process which imparts *sneha* (unctuousness), *vishyanda*, *mardava* (softness) and produces *kleda* (fluid) in the body.⁵ Here *Chakrapani* attempts to elucidate the meaning of *vishyanda* as *vileyana* (solubility).⁶ *Acharya Charaka* expounds that *sneha* attributes life, complexion, strength, nourishment, vitality, etc. to the body and removes the *tridosha*, which were in the morbid state.⁷

It performs following functions: -⁸

_ Produce an effect of *snehatva*, *mardava*, *vishyandata*, *kledata*.

_ Helps to appease the *vata dosha*.

_ Smoothen the body tissues.

_ Helps to take off the blockage of *mala* from the body.

_ Produces *bala* and *varna*.

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, *sneha* is the *sara* of the human body, *bala* depends upon the *sneha* of body, therefore *sneha dravya* help to save the life.⁹

Result of snehana: ⁻¹⁰

Snehana karma should be applied according to the *agni* of the person, after appropriate administration of *snehana* it proceeds various functions as it produces.

_ *Diptagni*

_ *Diptagni* (improvement of digestive power)

_ *Parishudha koshttha* (purification of the gastrointestinal tract)

_ *Pratayagra dhatu* (renovation of body tissues)

_ *Bala* (improvement in body strength)

_ *Varna* (improvement of skin texture)

_ *Mandajara* (postponed aging process)

_ *Shatayu* (longevity)

Properties of sneha dravya:

All *sneha dravyas* have *prithivi* and *jala mahabhuta* and the properties of *sneha* captured by the eyes.¹¹ *Sneha dravya* should have *drava*, *sukshma*, *sara*, *snigdha*, *pichchhila*, *guru*, *sheetala*, *manda*, *mridu* physical properties.¹² *Tila taila*, and *Eranda taila* are mentioned best.¹³ Among *snehadravya* because *tilataila* helps in *snehana* the body and makes it strong, whereas *eranda taila* and *shamkhini taila* are used as purgative oil and best for *rasayana karma* (rejuvenation therapy).¹⁴

SNEHA PRAVICHARANA: ⁻¹⁵

The application of *snehana dravya* is considered as in "*pravicharna*" which are the form of meal, *leha*, *abhyanjana*. According to *Acharya Charaka*, these are of twenty-four types *aoudana*, *vilepi*, *rasa*, *mamsa*, *payo*, *dadhi*, *yavagu*, *soup*, *shaka*, *yusha*, *kambalika*, *khada*, *sattu*, *tila pishta*, *madya*, *leha*, *bhakhshaya*, *abhyanjana*, *basti*, *uttarbasti*, *gandusha*, *karna taila*, *nasya*, *akshi tarpana*. Different type of formulations can be applied according to *oak*, *ritu*, *roga* and *purusha satmya*, it may be of sixty-three types according to the combination of six flavours, despite them one form is without any combination of any *dravya* called "*achha sneha* (pure *sneha*)", so all *pravicharna* could be counted sixty-four types. *Achha peya sneha* should be applied to them who have *satmya* to *sneha* (suitable) and can tolerate *klesha* (affliction/distress). *Achha peya sneha* (pure form of *ghrita*/oil) is the main form of instant oleation.¹⁶

Indication of sneha pravicharna:¹⁷

Sneha dweshi, *sneha nityam*, *mridu koshttha*, *madya nityam*, *sukumar*, *krish*, *vridhdha*, *balaka*, *trishnal* & *ushna kala*. *Snehana* procedure should be applied at *sadharana kala* (normal season) and shiny days. But if there is an emergency to oleate in day time at summer the oil should be administered at night time,¹⁸ the same rule should be followed for *vata pitta* disorders. In *kaphaja* disorders, which are generally in winter, the *snehana* should apply at day time,¹⁹ otherwise *snehana* procedure harms the health.²⁰

PRAKARSH KALA OF SNEHA (DURATION OF OLEATION):

The time limit for one attempt should be three to seven days, after that oil may become *satmya* (suitable) to the body tissues,²¹ and does not produce any effect. *Asatmya* (unsuitable) *sneha* can be able to mobilize the removable *mala doshas* from the body.²⁵ The duration *snehana* depends upon the *koshttha* type (nature of digestion) of the person.

1. *Mridu koshttha* (mild) - 3 days

2. *Krura koshttha* (harsh/strong) - 7 days

Beyond the time limit of the oleation therapy, it may produce disorders of *atiyoga* (overdose), which destroys the *agni* and can also deteriorate the health by the production of diarrhoea, like the flow of water can damage the bridge of sand.²²

TYPES OF SNEHA:**1. According to the karma (action/way of mechanism):****A. Shamana sneha (pacifier)**

It travels instantly through body channels, and should be used –

_ In *uttam matra* (maximum amount).²³

_ After the digestion of last day meal.

_ Empty stomach, without having a meal.

_ When a patient feels hungry.

B. Shodhana sneha (purifier):

It is also called as *mandavibhransha*.²⁴ For this purpose, *madhyam matra* of *sneha* is introduced.

C. Brimhana sneha:

Hrasva matra of *sneha* should be administered.²⁵ it may produce *vrushya* karma. The quantity of *sneha dravya* which could digest within half day.

2. Source of origin (utpatti sthana):²⁶

- Sthavara sneha* (vegetable origin).
- Jangama sneha* (animal origin).

3. Division on the basis of digestion:

Acharya Charaka subdivided "achha" (pure *sneha*) on the basis of their accumulation (digestion) and should be considered on the basis of the properties of the *purusha* (person)²⁷

a. Pradhana matra/ mahan: digest within a full day and full night i.e. 24 hours (8 yama) and is the *uttam matra* (best).

b. Madhyama matra: digest within a full day i.e. 12 hours (4 yama).

c. Hrasva matra: digest in half-day i.e. 6 hours (2 yama)

Precautions during snehana karma (ahara & vihara):²⁹

- A proper meal should be taken by the person before and after the *Sneha* pan (oral administration), which should be in proper quantity, consistency (not more liquid), hot (*ushna*), not *abhislyandi*, without excessive *sneha* and should not take *asankirna* (impure meal) *bhojana*.
- Use of lukewarm water during *sneha pana*, (i.e. before and after) for all-purpose.
- Brahmcharya* (involved in regulated/ restricted sexual activities)
- Sleep at night
- Do not hold natural urges.
- Heavy exertion.
- Avoid sleep at day time.
- Keep away from dust, *pravata* (direct wind), *dhupa* (direct sunlight), *shita* (cold atmosphere).
- Keep control of *krodha* (anger), *shoka* (sadness). Before the *sneha pana*, some drugs should be administered which can *pradipta* the *jatharagni* (increase the digestive power) make the *koshtha laghu* (lightens the abdomen) and which are *mridu* in nature (mild) drugs.

SNEHA PROPERTIES:³⁰

Taila belongs to mainly *vata hara dravya* and considered best among them. after addition and proper preparation (*samyoga* and Sanskrit), *taila* can cure all diseases. various formulations of oils used in *basti*, for internal via the oral route, for the filling of eyes and ears, and for *vata* pacification it used as meal and drinks.³¹

EXTERNAL SNEHANA OR ABHYANGA:

Ghrita and oil should be used for *abhyanga*, according to '*prakriti*', (body constitution), *satmya* (suitability), *ritu* (season), *desha* (habitat), *dosha*. it should not be applied in *kaphaja vyadhies*, *sama dosha* (raw), *taruna jwara* (acute fever), *ajirna* and after *Sanshodhana* procedure (purification methods) and in *Santarpanotha vyadhi* (Disease due to excessive satisfy).

Period of staying of oil on different sites:³²

Table 1: Showing the staying time of *Sneha* in *Dhatu*:

Sr. No.		Period of stay
1	<i>Roma kupa</i> (hair follicles)	300 <i>matra</i>
2	<i>Twacha</i> (skin)	400 <i>matra</i>
3	<i>Rakta</i> (blood)	500 <i>matra</i>
4	<i>Mansa</i> (muscles)	600 <i>matra</i>
5	<i>Meda</i> (fat)	700 <i>matra</i>
6	<i>Asthi</i> (bone)	800 <i>matra</i>
7	<i>Majja</i> (bone marrow)	900 <i>matra</i>

Benefits:

Abhyanga helps to make the body tissue more numerous, strengthen the skin texture and make skin excellent, pacify *vata* disorders, the body can tolerate the effect of *klesha* (distress) and physical exercise. According to the theory of *panchamahabhuta* skin is the root place of *vayu*, the tactile sensation can feel only by the skin because *taila* is best for pacifying the *vata dosha* that's why *taila* may subside the skin disorders of the skin. It produces sound sleep, increases body strength and helps to produce *bruhata* of the body (bulkiness, well-shaped).

CONCLUSION

The human body is one of the most exciting of nature's miracle. It is a very complex multicellular organism in which survival and health depend upon proper organization and coordination, homeostasis and harmony between self and surroundings. *Snehana* is one of the foundations of *panchakarma*,

following preliminary methods tolerance and acceptance of the consequence of the main procedure is improved. It makes changes in vitiated *dosha* to mobilize them without trouble, and thus easily removed from the body tissues without creating harm to the body. *Purvakarma* helps to achieve the best response of the main procedure of *panchakarma*, subsequently; the body develops sensitivity, to keep balance throughout the process of *pradhanakarma*. Devoid of pre-procedure produces complications as an unripe fruit gets crushed during juice extraction, whereas ripped fruit is best, and juice can easily be extracted.³³

Probable mode of action of *snehana karma*:

Snehana Karma is performed as *purvakarma* to various *shodhana* therapies. The following actions are done by *snehana karma*.

- _ It increases the *apyansha* of the body.
- _ It acts as a solvent.
- _ It brings the lodged morbid and no excreted waste products into the gastro-intestinal tract.

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