

## Importance of *Panchakarma treatment in Ayurveda*

Vivek Anandrao Shirke, Sheetal Vivek Shirke

1. Reader Panchakarma Department, LKR Ayurvedic Mahavidyalaya, Gadhainglaj, Kolhapur,
2. HOD- Clinical Department, PIER Institute, Chembur Mumbai

\*Corresponding Author: [vivekshr@gmail.com](mailto:vivekshr@gmail.com)

### Abstract:

The main objective of health science is to provide better health to every human being. Indian system of medicine commonly known as Ayurveda has holistic approach towards the disease and provides treatment without affecting the other parts of body. Similarly, it is effective in preventing an individual from getting diseased in the future. In Ayurveda, diseases can be classified in two basic categories such as -ailments treated or managed by Shodhan therapy and the ailments treated by surgical intervention. Further, it's suggested that in conditions where surgery is indicated, one can try *Shodhan* or *Panchkarma* therapies before performing surgery or/ if patient is not fit for surgery or not willing to undergo surgical procedure. Similarly, *Acharya* have specified that physician should not advocate Surgery in diseases which can be treated by *Shodhan* and *Shaman* therapies (conservative management). *Panchakarma* is a combination of five procedures of purification- *Vamana* (Emesis), *Virechana* (Purgation), *Niroohavasti* (Decoction enema), *Nasya* (instillation of medicine through nostrils), and *Anuvasanavasti* (Oil

enema). These procedures aim at plucking away the deep rooted imbalances in the body.

### Keywords:

*Panchakarma Treatment, Five Shodhan Karma in Ayurveda, Body Purification methods*

### Introduction:

Indian *Ayurveda* has given the world a considerable measure of things. These things have changed the way individuals live and they have made the progress from a world loaded with ailments to the world perfectly fit and healthy. The significance of *Ayurveda* is tremendous and it is without a doubt the main practice with regards to alternate forms of medicine. Ostensibly the most eminent branch of *Ayurveda* is *Panchakarma*. The name *Panchakarma* literally means "Five Actions" which is well-suited given the fact that this technique relies upon five distinctive basic activities that control the body namely Vomiting, Purgation, *Niruham*, *Anuvaasan*, and *Nasyam*. In other words, *Panchakarma* healing technique is a pillar on which majority of *Ayurvedic* techniques stand.

*Panchakarma* works best with the utilization of medicated oils that helps in eliminating the impurities from the human body. *Panchakarma* is the true manifestation of the *Ayurvedic* values and it lives up to its reputation.

### **Aims and Objectives:**

**To understand body purification measures and their benefits without any side effects**

#### *Purvakarma: Pre-purification Measures*

Before actual operation of purification begins, there is a need to prepare the body with prescribed methods to encourage it to let go of the toxins.

These two procedures are *Snehan* & *Svedan*.

*Snehan* is the oil massage. . Oil is applied to the entire body with a particular type of massage that helps the toxins to move towards the gastrointestinal tract. Oil massage also makes the superficial and deep tissues soft and supple, thus helping to remove stress and nourish the nervous system. *Snehan* is given daily for three to seven days, as indicated.

*Svedana* is sudation or sweating and is given every day immediately following the *snehan*. An herbal concoction may be added to the steam to further loosen the toxins from the individual. *Svedana* liquefies the toxins and increases the movement of toxins into the gastrointestinal tract. After three to seven days of *snehan* and *svedana*, the *doshas* become well “ripened.” A particular *panchakarma* method is then given according to the individual’s constitution and disorder, *prakruti*

### **Five Basic Shodanas: Cleansing Methods**

- *Vamana*: therapeutic vomiting or emesis
- *Virechan*: purgation
- *Basti*: enema
- *Nasya*: elimination of toxins through the nose
- *Rakta Moksha*: detoxification of the blood

#### ***Vamana: Emesis Therapy***

When there is congestion in the lungs causing repeated attacks of bronchitis, colds, cough or asthma, the

*Ayurvedic* treatment is therapeutic vomiting, *vamana*, to eliminate the *kapha* causing the excess mucus. Often times this also releases repressed emotions that have been held in the *kapha* areas of the lungs and stomach along with the accumulated *dosha*. Once the mucus is released, the patient will feel instantly relieved.

It is likely that congestion, wheezing and breathlessness will disappear and that the sinuses will become clear. Therapeutic vomiting is also indicated in chronic asthma, diabetes, chronic cold, lymphatic congestion, chronic indigestion and edema.

After *vamana*, resting, fasting, smoking certain herbal cigarettes, and not suppressing natural urges (i.e., urination, defecation, gas, sneezing, coughing) is recommended. If *vamana* is administered properly, the person should feel relaxation in the lungs, will be able to breathe freely, will have lightness in the chest, clear thinking, a clear voice, a good appetite, and all symptoms of congestion disappear.

#### ***Virechan: Purgation Therapy***

When excess bile, *pitta*, is secreted and accumulated in the gall bladder, liver and

small intestine, it tends to result in rashes, skin inflammation, acne, chronic attacks of fever, biliary vomiting, nausea and jaundice.

*Ayurvedic* literature suggests in these conditions the administration of therapeutic purgation or a therapeutic laxative. Purgatives help relieve the excess *pitta* causing the bile disturbance in the body. In fact, purgatives can completely cure the problem of excess *pitta*. When purgatives are used, the patient should not eat foods that will aggravate the predominant humor or cause the three humors to become unbalanced.

#### ***Basti: Enema Therapy***

*Vata* is a very active principle in pathogenesis (disease). If we can control *vata* through the use of *basti*,

We have gone a long way in going to the root cause of the vast majority of diseases.

*Vata* is the main etiological (causal) factor in the manifestation of diseases.

It is the motive force behind the elimination and retention of feces, urine, bile and other excreta.

*Vata* is mainly located in the large intestine, but bone tissue (*asthi dhatu*) is also a site for *vata*.

Hence the medication administered rectally effects *asthi dhatu*.

The mucus membrane of the colon is related to the outer covering of the bones (periosteum), which nourishes the bones. Therefore, any medication given rectally goes into the deeper tissues, like bones, and corrects *vata* disorders.

#### ***Nasya: Nasal Administration***

The nose is the doorway to the brain and it is also the doorway to consciousness. The nasal administration of medication is called *nasya*. An excess of bodily humors accumulated in the sinus, throat, nose or

head areas is eliminated by means of the nearest possible opening, the nose.

*Prana*, life force as nerve energy, enters the body through the breath taken in through the nose. *Prana* is in the brain and maintains sensory and motor functions. *Prana* also governs mental activities, memory, concentration and intellectual activities. Deranged *prana* creates defective functioning of all these activities and produces headaches, convulsions, loss of memory and reduced sensory perception. Thus nasal administration, *nasya*, is indicated for *prana* disorders, sinus congestion, migraine headaches, convulsions and certain eye and ear problems.

Breathing also can be improved through nasal massage. For this treatment, the little finger is dipped into ghee and inserted into the nose. The inner walls of the nose are slowly massaged, going as deeply as possible. This treatment will help to open the emotions. (Nose tissue is tender and for this application the fingernail must be kept short to avoid injuring the delicate mucus membranes.) Since most people have a deviated nasal septum, one side of the nose will be easier to penetrate and massage than the other. The finger should not be inserted forcibly. The massage should proceed by slow penetration, the finger moving first in a clockwise and then counter-clockwise direction. By this means, the emotions that are blocked in the respiratory tract will be released. One may use this treatment each morning and evening. In this way, breathing patterns will change as the emotions are released and the eyesight also will improve.

**Rakta Moksha: Traditional Ayurvedic Method for Purification and Cleansing of the Blood**

Toxins present in the gastrointestinal tract are absorbed into the blood and circulated throughout the body. This condition is called toxemia, which is the basic cause of repeated infections, hypertension and certain other circulatory conditions. This includes repeated attacks of skin disorders such as urticaria, rashes, herpes, eczema, acne, scabies, leukoderma, chronic itching or hives. In such conditions, along with internal medication, elimination of the toxins and purification of the blood is necessary. *Rakta moksha* is also indicated for cases of enlarged liver, spleen and gout.

*Pitta* is produced from the disintegrated red blood cells in the liver. So *pitta* and blood have a very close relationship. An increase in *pitta* may go into the blood causing toxicity, and thus many *pitta-genic* disorders. Extracting a small amount of blood from a vein relieves the tension created by the *pitta-genic* toxins in the blood. Leeches have been used as an alternative to bloodletting. Bloodletting also stimulates the spleen to produce anti-toxic substances that help to stimulate the immune system. Toxins are neutralized, enabling radical cures in many blood-borne disorders.

Certain substances such as sugar, salt, yogurt, sour-tasting foods and alcohol are toxic to the blood. In certain blood disorders these substances should be avoided to keep the blood pure. For *rakta moksha* treatment other than bloodletting, there are blood-purifying practices involving herbs, gem therapy or color water therapy. For any *rakta moksha* treatment or related alternative treatment, it is beneficial to refrain from yogurt, salt, sugar, alcohol, *marijuana*, sour and fermented foods.

### Conclusion:

One should undertake *Panchakarma* procedure at least once every two years. *Panchakarma* is not only for people suffering from diseases but also for healthy people who want to maintain good health and long life. *Panchakarma* is usually done at the junction of two seasons (e.g. between summer and autumn). *Panchakarma* can be done in 2 weeks.

*Panchakarma* is a special procedure which requires guidance and supervision of a properly trained *Ayurvedic* practitioner. Each person receives this treatment in a tailor made format to suit their body type and medical problems, if any. Other medical conditions like high blood pressure, heart problems, bleeding conditions etc are also taken into consideration before designing a protocol for a patient (as these may form a contra-indication for certain therapies). Always consult a fully qualified *Ayurvedic* practitioner if you wish to receive *Panchakarma* therapy.

### References:

1. Essentials of Practical Panchakarma Therapy, Dr. Vasant C. Patil, PublisherChaukhambha Publication, Edition- First,2015 Page no.01.
2. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Ayurveda Dipika commenetary by Chakrapanidatta, Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, editor, New Delhi, Rastriya Samskrit Samsasthan, Chikitsa Sthana, 2006; 21(98-100): 569.
3. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Ayurveda Dipika commentary by Chakrapanidatta, edited by Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Varanasi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit series, Siddi Sthana, 2006; 2(10): 569.
4. Astangahridayam of Vaghabhat Sutra Sathan. Chaukhambha Prakashan.

EditionReprint, 2009, Chapter 14, page no 136.

5. Astangahridayam of Vaghabhat Sutra Sathan. Chaukhambha Prakashan. EditionReprint, 2009, Chapter 14, page no 136.

6. Charak Samhita Sutra Sathan, Chaukhambha Prakashan, Edition- Reprint, 2009, Chapter 16, page no 321

7. Astangahridayam of Vaghabhat Sutra Sathan. Chaukhambha Prakashan. EditionReprint, 2009, Chapter 14, page no 136.

8. Essentials of Practical Panchakarma Therapy, Dr. Vasant C. Patil, Publisher Chaukhambha Publication, Edition- First,2015 Page no.09-10.

**Conflict of Interest:**

Non

**DOI**

<https://doi.org/10.52482/ayurline.v5i03.556>

**Source of funding:**

Nil

*Cite this article:*

*Importance of Panchakarma treatment in Ayurveda*

*Vivek Anandrao Shirke, Sheetal Vivek Shirke*

Ayurline: International Journal of Research In Indian Medicine 2021; 5(3):01-05

