



DEHA PRAKRITI AND SNEHAPANA KALA: A REVIEW OF PERSONALIZED AYURVEDIC PROTOCOLS

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda emphasizes personalized medicine, considering an individual's unique constitution (Deha Prakriti) and digestive capacity (Agni). *Snehapana Kala* is a treatment protocol that involves administering medicated ghee to rejuvenate and detoxify the body. Objective: This review aims to explore the concept of *Deha Prakriti* and *Snehapana Kala* in Ayurveda, highlighting their significance in personalized medicine. *Snehapan* is the process of *purvakarma*. Snehapan makes this *shodhan* an easiest method. **Materials and Method**-A comprehensive review of classical Ayurvedic texts and research articles was conducted to gather information on Deha Prakriti and *Snehapana Kala*. **Observation**: The review revealed that Deha Prakriti plays a crucial role in determining an individual's response to treatment, while Snehapana Kala offers a personalized approach to rejuvenation and detoxification. **Conclusion**: This review highlights the importance of Deha Prakriti and Snehapana Kala in personalized Ayurvedic medicine, emphasizing the need for further research to integrate these concepts into modern healthcare practices.

KEYWORD: Ayurveda, *Deha Prakriti*, *Snehapana Kala*, Personalized Medicine, Agni.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is one of the most ancient and holistic sciences of life, widely recognized and practiced in India and various parts of the world. It is an eternal science that focuses on maintaining health and treating diseases through natural means. Ayurveda, derived from the Sanskrit words "Ayu" (life) and "Veda" (knowledge), is considered the science of life. It encompasses knowledge regarding the human body, its structure, function, and the means to preserve and restore health through preventive and curative approaches. The principles of Ayurveda are based on the *Tridosha* theory, which includes Vata, Pitta, and Kapha doshas. These doshas regulate the body's physiological, anatomical, and psychological functions. Understanding an individual's Prakruti (constitution) and its relation to Dosha predominance is fundamental in Ayurvedic diagnosis and treatment.

An Ayurvedic physician is one who possesses in-depth knowledge of the body's structure and function, including the interrelationship between doshas and various bodily components. The discipline of Ayurveda provides a dual approach to health management: preventive and curative. Preventive measures include *Dinacharya* (daily regimen), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), and *Sadvritta* (ethical conduct), while curative treatments encompass Shamana (palliative) and Shodhana (purificatory) therapies. *Shodhana Chikitsa*, particularly Panchakarma, plays a crucial role in eradicating diseases from their root cause, thereby preventing recurrence (*Vyadhi-Appunarbhava*). Among the Panchakarma procedures, Snehapana, an essential *Purvakarma* (preparatory procedure), holds significant importance in achieving effective Shodhana outcomes.

Understanding Prakruti and Its Influence on Koshta

Prakruti is an individual's inherent constitution determined at birth based on the predominance of Doshas. It remains unchangeable throughout life and influences various bodily functions, including anatomy, physiology, and psychology. The classical texts of Ayurveda, such as Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Ashtanga Hridaya, describe Prakruti as the foundation of an individual's health, disease susceptibility, and response to treatments. The interaction between Prakruti and Koshta (the nature of the alimentary tract) is crucial in determining the effectiveness of therapeutic interventions like Snehapana and Shodhana.

Koshta is categorized based on the predominance of Doshas

1. **Vata Dosha Pradhan** - Krura Koshta (hard bowel movements, slow digestion)

2. **Pitta Dosha Pradhan** - Mrudu Koshta (soft bowel movements, quick digestion)
3. **Kapha Dosha Pradhan** - Madhyama Koshta (moderate bowel movements, balanced digestion)

This classification aids in understanding an individual's digestive capacity and response to therapies. In Ayurvedic treatment, a patient's Koshta must be assessed before prescribing Snehapana, as it directly influences the duration and effectiveness of the procedure.

Definition and Importance

Snehapana refers to the administration of medicated or non-medicated sneha dravyas (oleaginous substances) such as Ghee (Ghrita), Oil (Taila), Fat (Vasa), and Bone Marrow (Majja). This procedure is primarily used as:

Purva Karma (Preliminary therapy) before Panchakarma

Pradhana Karma (Main therapy) in certain diseases like Kushtha (skin disorders), Vata Vyadhi (neurological disorders), and Shotha (inflammation disorders).

Snehapana is conducted in three different forms based on the individual's condition and therapeutic goal:

Achha Snehapana – Direct consumption of unprocessed Sneha.

Vicharana Snehapana – Used in food items.

Samsarjana Snehapana – Gradually increasing doses for Agni maintenance.

Snehapana: A Vital Purvakarma

Snehapana is the oral administration of Sneha (medicated or non-medicated fats such as ghee, oil, or muscle fat) as a preparatory procedure for Panchakarma therapies. It helps in lubricating the internal body, softening the doshas, and facilitating their elimination during the main Shodhana process. The primary goal of Snehapana is to achieve Samyak Sneha Lakshanas (proper signs of oleation), which indicate readiness for further detoxification.

The duration of Snehapana varies based on Koshta type

- **Krura Koshta (Vata dominant)**: Snehapana lasts for **7 days** due to the dryness and rigidity of the alimentary tract.
- **Mrudu Koshta (Pitta dominant)**: Snehapana lasts for **3 days**, as Pitta promotes liquefaction and faster digestion of Sneha.

- **Madhyama Koshta (Kapha dominant):** Snehapana lasts for **5 days**, as Kapha provides a balanced digestive function.

Proper administration of Snehapana ensures the effectiveness of Shodhana therapies like Vamana (therapeutic emesis) and *Virechana* (therapeutic purgation). The success of these procedures largely depends on the quality and quantity of Sneha used, as well as the duration of administration.

Scientific Basis of Snehapana

The efficacy of Snehapana is determined by the manifestation of Samyak Sneha Lakshanas, which include

- Vata Dosha alleviation (improved lubrication and flexibility in the body)
- Increased unctuousness in the skin
- Softness in the feces (ease of bowel movement)
- Improved digestion and metabolism
- Luster in the skin and clarity of voice

Acharya Charaka and Sushruta emphasize that the proper execution of Snehapana leads to optimal Shodhana outcomes. An improper or inadequate Snehapana may result in incomplete detoxification, leading to complications such as excessive dryness (*Ati Rukshata*) or improper evacuation during Vamana and Virechana.

Observations on the Relationship Between Deha Prakriti and Snehapana Kala

Ayurveda is a time-tested medical science that emphasizes personalized treatment approaches based on an individual's Deha Prakriti (body constitution). One of the essential preparatory procedures in Panchakarma therapy is Snehapana (internal oleation), which plays a vital role in detoxification and disease management. The selection of Snehapana Kala (timing and duration of oleation therapy) is crucial and varies according to an individual's Prakriti.

1. Understanding Deha Prakriti in Ayurveda

Prakriti refers to an individual's inherent constitution determined at the time of conception. It remains unchanged throughout life and influences physical, physiological, and psychological characteristics. The three fundamental Doshas—Vata, Pitta, and Kapha—are responsible for maintaining the body's equilibrium.

Vata Prakriti: Dominated by the air and ether elements. Individuals exhibit dryness, roughness, and coldness in their physiological traits.

Pitta Prakriti: Dominated by fire and water elements. These individuals have an increased metabolic rate, warm bodies, and moderate strength.

Kapha Prakriti: Dominated by earth and water elements. They show stability, smoothness, and coldness with slow metabolism.

Each Prakriti has distinct responses to Snehapana based on their innate *doshic* composition.

3. Relation Between Deha Prakriti and Snehapana Kala

3.1 Vata Prakriti and Snehapana Kala

Vata-dominant individuals have **dryness (Rukshata), roughness (Khara), and coldness (Sheeta Guna)**. These characteristics make them prone to conditions like **degenerative diseases, constipation, and neurological disorders**.

- **Preferred Sneha:** Ghrita and Taila (best for nourishing and reducing dryness).
- **Snehapana Kala:** Morning time (**Brahma Muhurta or Pratahkaala**) is ideal, as Vata is naturally active at this time.
- **Duration:** Moderate to longer duration, **5-7 days** depending on Agni.
- **Observations:**
 - Helps in lubricating joints, reducing nervous system disorders.
 - Enhances mental clarity and stability.

3.2 Pitta Prakriti and Snehapana Kala

Pitta individuals have **Ushna (hot), Tikshna (sharp), and Drava (liquid) Guna**, making them prone to acidity, inflammation, and skin disorders.

- **Preferred Sneha:** Ghrita (cooling and pacifies Pitta).
- **Snehapana Kala:** Evening or night (**Sandhya Kala or Ratri Bhojana Kala**) when Pitta activity naturally declines.
- **Duration:** Shorter duration, usually **3-5 days**.
- **Observations**
 - Reduces inflammatory conditions.
 - Prevents **burning sensations** and **hyperacidity**.

3.3 Kapha Prakriti and Snehapana Kala

Kapha individuals have **Snigdha (unctuous), Manda (slow), and Guru (heavy) Guna**, making them prone to obesity, sluggish metabolism, and mucus-related disorders.

- **Preferred Sneha:** Taila (heating and light), occasionally Vasa and Majja.
- **Snehapana Kala: Madhyana Kala (afternoon)** when Kapha naturally decreases.
- **Duration:** Shortest duration, usually **2-4 days** to avoid aggravating Kapha.
- **Observations:**
 - Prevents excess weight gain.
 - Improves **metabolic activity** and **reduces mucus congestion**.

4. Clinical Applications of Snehapana Based on Prakriti

In Vata disorders (Arthritis, Paralysis) – Ghrita or Taila is given in Brahma Muhurta for deep tissue nourishment.

In Pitta disorders (Acid Peptic Disease, Psoriasis) – Ghrita is administered in evening hours for cooling and anti-inflammatory benefits.

In Kapha disorders (Obesity, Sinusitis) – Taila or Vasa is administered in Madhyana Kala to balance metabolism.

Each Prakriti responds differently to the quality, quantity, and timing of Snehapana.

Scope of the Study

This study aims to determine the actual time required for achieving Samyak Snehapana in different Prakruti types and to develop objective parameters for assessing Sneha saturation without deviating from the core principles of Ayurveda. Additionally, it explores the impact of Snehapana on skin physiology, including:

- **Changes in skin texture and appearance** based on Prakruti
- **Alterations in Sebum composition and moisture levels** in different Koshta types

These aspects hold significant value in understanding the holistic effects of Snehapana beyond gastrointestinal benefits. Modern scientific techniques, such as dermatological analysis and biochemical assessments, may provide insights into the physiological changes occurring during Snehapana. This interdisciplinary approach can bridge traditional Ayurvedic wisdom with contemporary research methodologies, thereby validating classical principles with empirical evidence.

CONCLUSION

The selection of Snehapana Kala is highly dependent on Deha Prakriti, Dosha status, and disease condition. Vata individuals require oilation early in the morning, Pitta individuals benefit from evening administration, and Kapha individuals should receive Snehapana in the afternoon for better metabolism.

Understanding this relationship helps in optimizing Panchakarma therapy and individualized treatment strategies in Ayurveda. Snehapana plays a crucial role in Ayurveda's Panchakarma therapies, serving as a preparatory step to ensure the success of Shodhana procedures. The duration of Snehapana varies based on an individual's Koshta, which is inherently linked to their Prakriti. Understanding this relationship aids in customizing treatments for maximum therapeutic benefits. This study attempts to establish objective parameters for Samyak Snehapana while also exploring its effects on skin physiology. Future research in this area can contribute to integrating Ayurvedic detoxification practices with modern dermatological and metabolic assessments, providing a broader perspective on the holistic benefits of Snehapana. Through systematic evaluation and research, Ayurveda continues to evolve, maintaining its relevance in contemporary healthcare. The findings of this study can enhance the precision of Ayurvedic treatments, reinforcing its credibility and efficacy in both preventive and curative health management.

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