



AYURVEDA CONCEPT OF SAMSKARA AND ITS UTILITY IN *BHAISHAJYA KALPANA*

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ABSTRACT

Samskara is important concepts of Ayurveda, which utilizes process or techniques to converts drugs or food materials in desired form. *Samskara* used in Ayurveda for various purposes in different aspects. It is described as *Karan* by *Charaka* and this word *Karan* used for “*Bheshja*” in Ayurveda *Samskara*. The various approaches utilizes for the preparation of foods and drugs are comes under the heading of *Samskara*. In the context of *Bhaishajya Kalpana* the concept of *Samskara* play vital role towards the specific formulations of medicines. The collection and authentication of raw materials, processing of raw materials and preparation of final products, etc. these all preparative techniques utilizes by the concept of *Samskara*. The techniques of preparation of drug formulations differ from one to another types of formations thus *Samskara Vidhi* also differ when utilizes for different types of Ayurveda formulations. Present article described Ayurveda concept of *Samskara* and its utility in *Bhaishajya Kalpana*.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda, Samskara, Bheshaja, Kalpana.*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda system works as the system of life and this is considered as an oldest system of living and medicines. Ayurveda presented several approaches for the management of health and disease free life. Ayurveda suggested various concepts for the preparation and utilization of medicines. *Samskara* is one such concept described by Ayurveda philosopher that involves different ways for the preparation and preservation of medicines and food products.

Method of drug preparation and types of formulation of medicines play important role towards its biological action thus concept of *Samskara* offers unique qualities towards the therapeutic potency of pharmaceutical

products. Method of preparation of Ayurvedic formulations has been evolved with types and advancement in preparative methods also has been adopted with the gradual development of time.^[1-4]

The traditional texts of Ayurveda described many *Kalpanas* (types of formulations or dosage forms) which ultimately provides numerous *Samskaras*. Ayurveda *Acharyas* enumerated different *Samskaras* along with their role in pharmaceutical as well as food preparations. *Samsakara* involves transformation of materials in a predefined manner to acquire products of desired qualities.^[4-6] The major processing steps involved in different types of *Samskaras* are depicted in **Figure 1**.

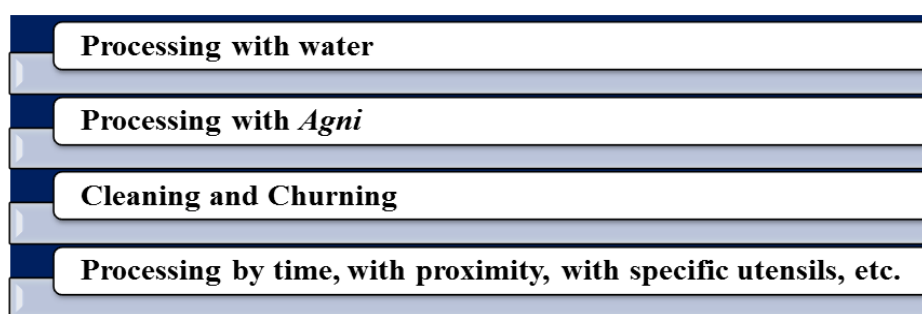


Figure 1: Some major approaches involved in the concept of *Samskaras*.

The various types of *Samskaras* described in Ayurveda texts are as follows:

- ✓ *Toya Sannikarsha*
- ✓ *Agni Sannikarsha*
- ✓ *Toyagni sannikarsha*
- ✓ *Saucha*
- ✓ *Manthana*
- ✓ *Desha*
- ✓ *Kala*
- ✓ *Vasana*
- ✓ *Bhavna*
- ✓ *Kalaprakarsha*
- ✓ *Bhajana*

Toya Sannikarsha involves processing with water, *Agni Sannikarsha* means processing with fire, *Toyagni sannikarsha* means processing with water and *Agni*, *Saucha* indicates process of cleaning, *Manthana* means churning, *Desha Samskara* means processing with the help of *Desha*, *Kala Samskara* means processing by time, *Vasana* means processing with proximity, *Bhavna* involves trituration, *Kalaprakarsha* means processing with specific time exposure and *Bhajana* involves processing with specific utensils using particular approaches. These all approaches of *Samskara* help to incorporate specific *Gunas* in the *Dravyas* and provide finally transformed products with desired quality and potency.^[6-8] With regards to the traditional medicines *Samskara* offers following advantages:

1. Specific processing of *Samskara* imparts palatability in Ayurveda formulations
2. *Samskara* either retain or enhances therapeutic potency of drugs
3. Reduces toxicity, specifically in case of *Rasa-Aushdhis*, *Samskara* significantly alter properties of herbo-metallic formulations.
4. *Samskara* converts raw materials into a palatable forms that can be administered easily with patient compliance
5. *Samskara* enhances stability of drugs formulations
6. *Samskara* imparts desired qualities in food or drug formulations by virtues of their specific processing techniques.

Toya Sannikarsha

Toya Sannikarsha means processing with water in which *Pradhan dravyas* when treated with water then their *Kathina* and *Khara guna* gets converted into *Mridu* and *Snigdha guna*. *Adhana* of *Gunas* takes place due to the *Toya Sannikarsha*. Soaking of hard *Dravyas* in water converts these *Dravyas* in soft form.

Agni Sannikarsha

Samskari dravyas possesses *Guru* and *Kathina Gunas*, these *Gunas* changed into *Laghu* and *Ushna gunas* when these *dravyas* processed through *Agni Sannikarsha*. For example *Vrihi* becomes *Laghu* and *Mridu* after processing with *Agni Sannikarsha*.

Toyagni Sannikarsha

This *Samskara* includes both *Toya* and *Agni Sannikarsha*, in which water and heating applied at the same time. The preparation of *Kwath* is an example of this technique.

Saucha

Saucha means cleaning, in this process impurities removed from the *Dravyas* by cleaning. This is basically *Shodhan samskara*, in which various substances can be implied for cleaning purposes i.e.; water, milk, *Ghrita* and plant juices, etc. The main purposes of *Saucha* are to clean raw materials, purification of poisoning drugs, filtration and discoloration, etc.

Manthana

Churning process mainly involves in the transformation of *Dravya*, *Manthana* (churning) provides *Gunas* i.e.; *Swaduta* and *Sugandha*. For example *Dadhi* possess *Amla rasa* while *Takra* having *Swadu Anurasa*. Curd generally aggravates *Shopha*, but when churned it helps to alleviates *Shopha*.

Desha

Desha means place or climatic and environmental conditions which may affects qualities of formulations. *Desha* play a role in deciding *Gunas* of *Dravya*, thus this *Samskara* offers approaches according to the *Desha*. For example some *Dravyas* offers potent *Gunas* when collected from specific *Deshas* while similar *Dravyas* shows less potency if obtained from other places. Therefore *Sheeta Virya dravya* should be collected from *Anupa desha* while *Ushna dravya* collected from *Jangal desha*.

Kala

Kala samskara means processing according to the specific time; *Kala* affects qualities of *Dravyas*. *Sthavara* and *Jangama dravyas* significantly affected by *Kala*, for example the transformation of natural plant products from their unripe to ripened state depends upon the *Kala*; thus collection and processing of herbal drugs greatly influenced by time or climatic conditions. *Kala samskara* is not only responsible for external changes, but internal changes also influenced by *Kala samskara*.

Vasana Samskara

Vasana Samskara imparts qualities of specific processing techniques in drug formulation. In this process of *Samskara*, some specific *Gunas* are imparted into the formulation. For example rose flower's *Gandha guna* can be introduced in water to prepare rose water.

Bhavna

Bhavna means mixing of *Dravyas* together, in this process solid compound acts as *Samskari* while liquid material acts as *Samskaraka*. Solid triturating with liquid imparts their *Gunas* in final formulation. *Bhavna* of *Amalaka* with *Amalaka swaras* during the preparation of *Amalaka rasayana* is an example of *Bhavna Samskaraka*.

Kala Prakarsha

Kala Prakarsha means *Samskara* processing for specific period of time which required for the expression of newer qualities in *Samskari dravya*. The specific time period (*Kala*) is required for the particular action in this *Samskara*. The preparation of *Asava* and *Arishta* involves this concept.

Bhajana

In this process the specific container acts as *Samskara* and *Samskari dravya* place in this container to acquire new *Gunas*. The container play important role to impart some qualities in *dravya*. For example the preparation of *Triphala lepa* should be done in an iron vessel and this *Lepa* can be used for *Rasayana* effect since *Lepana* on iron vessels imparts specific *Gunas* to the final formulation.^[7-9]

CONCLUSION

With the regards to the pharmaceutical formulation, the term *Samskara* referred to the various aspects including; *Shodhana karma*, *Paradi guna Samskaras* and utilization of specific formulation techniques for the preparation of food and medicines, etc. *Samskara* play important role in Ayurveda pharmaceuticals, since various approaches of *Samskara* imparts desired qualities and reduces adverse effects of Ayurvedic formulations. Specific processing of *Samskara* imparts palatability in formulations, *Samskara* enhances therapeutic potency, *Samskara* significantly alter properties of *Rasa* formulations, *Samskara* provides advantages of patient compliance, *Samskara* enhances stability of ancient formulations and *Samskara* helps to converts toxic compounds into non-toxic edible form. The applicability of concept of *Samskara* not only restricts to pharmaceutical formulation but it also offers several advantages in food preparations.

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