

LEHANA KARMA IN CHILDREN – AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

*¹Dr. Richa Danu, ²Dr. Reena Dixit and ³Dr. Sujata Sharma¹M.D Second Year P.G Department of Kaumarbhritya Rishikul Campus, Haridwar Uttarakhand Ayurved University.²Associate Professor Department of Kaumarbhritya Rishikul Campus, Haridwar Uttarakhand Ayurved University.³Assistant Professor Department of Kaumarbhritya Rishikul Campus, Haridwar Uttarakhand Ayurved University.

*Corresponding Author: Dr. Richa Danu

M.D Second Year P.G Department of Kaumarbhritya Rishikul Campus, Haridwar Uttarakhand Ayurved University.

Article Received on 15/07/2023

Article Revised on 05/08/2023

Article Accepted on 25/08/2023

ABSTRACT

In *Ayurveda* the essence of all *Dhatus* is called “*Ojus*” and it is responsible for the defense of human body against a disease (*Vyadhikshamatva*). In modern medical science, vaccination is done to produce immunity against a disease. *Acharya Sushruta*, *Vagabhata* and *Kashyapa* describe *Lehana* for this purpose which ultimately enhances immunity. *Lehana* procedure is a very unique procedure of *Kaumarbhritya*. All *samhitakaras* explain ‘*lehana*’ but *Acharya Kashyapa* explains it with special reference to child. Word meaning is any substance when given to the baby for licking is called *lehana*. *Lehana karma* is done to enhance growth and development by promoting agents which produce resistance against disease. *Acharya Kashyapa* expressed that *Sukha* and *Dukha* of a child depends on *Lehana*.

KEYWORDS: *Dhatus*, *Ojus*, *Vyadhikshamatva*, *Lehana*, *Sukha*, *Dukha*.

INTRODUCTION

Childhood is the period in which growth and development is observed. According to *Acharya*, this period comes under *Balyavastha* and *Lehana karma* is done to enhance growth and development of a child.

Concept of *Lehana karma* is one of the unique concept of *Kaumarbhritya*. Various *acharyas* have described about *Lehana karma* but detailed explanation is available in *Kashyapa Samhita* which suggests that *Lehana* is not only restricted for physical and mental health but also acts as supplementary food. It has been aimed to stimulate body’s immunity. Hence multifactorial, multidimensional approach has been explained by *Kashyapa* to bring growth and development of the child with the help of *Lehana*. Besides, providing high calorific diet supplementation to the growing child *Lehana* also take care of physical, mental and immunological facets of the child, so that he can live a happy future life.^[1] (As *acharyas Kashyapa* has mentioned “*Sukham dukham hi balanama drishyate lehanashryama*.”^[2])

Lehana karma

Leha word formed from ‘*lih*’ *dhatu* and ‘*ghaj*’ *pratyaya*. The term *Lehana* means liking or passing the tongue over something.

Kashyapa Sutrasthana 18th chapter (1st chapter in presently available *Kashyapa Samhita*) explains regarding *Lehana* and this chapter is incomplete.

Acharya Sushruta has quoted about ‘*Lehana*’ to body’s growth, to intelligence and to protect against disorders. He mainly explains four gold containing preparations for the newborn.

Acharya Vagbhata also explains regarding ‘*Lehana*’ by explaining certain *Yogas*.

Different *Acharyas* described various *Lehana* formulations for use in *balayavastha*.

Acharya Kasyapa^[3]

Suvarana prashana- Keeping the face towards the east, gold should be rubbed against a washed stone with little quantity of water. Then it is churned with honey and *Ghrta* (quantity not mentioned) and given for licking. This will increase the intellect, digestive, metabolic power, strength and gives long life. It is also auspicious, virtuous, *Rasayana*, *Vajeekaraka*, increases complexion and get rid of *Graha rogas*. By feeding this for one month, child becomes extremely intelligent and is not attacked by diseases. Using this for six months continuously child will be able to retain whatever he listens (*shrudhara*).

- *Samvardhana Ghrta*
- *Kalyanka Ghrta*
- *Panchgavya Ghrta*
- *Brahmi Ghrta*
- *Abhaya Ghrta*

Acharya Sushruta has mentioned four gold preparations of *Lehana*^[4]

1. *Suvarna + Kustha + Madhu + Ghrita + Vacha.*
2. *Masthykshataka + Shankapushpi + Madhu + Ghrita + Suvarna*
3. *Arka pushpi + Madhu + Ghrita + Suvarna + Vacha*
4. *Suvarna Choorna + Kaidarya + Shweta Dhoorva + Ghrita.*

Acharya Vagbhata

Vagbhata has mentioned the following formulations for infants and children for enhancement of *Medha* (intelligence), *Ayu* (happy and healthy life), *Bala* (power).

- *Kalka* of *Aindri* (*Bacopa monnieri*), *Brahmi* (*Centella asiatica*), *vacha* (*Acorus calamus*), *Shankapushpi* (*Convolvulus pluricaulis*), along with *Madhu* and *Ghrita* in *harenu matra*.
- Fine powder of *Chamika* (*Suvarna Bhasma*), *Vacha* (*Acorus calamus*), *Brahmi* (*Centella asiatica*), *Tapi* (sulfur or copper pyrite) and *Pathya* (*Terminalia chebula*) along with *madhu* and *Ghrita*.
- Fine powder of *Amalaki* (*Emblica officinalis*) with *Suvarna Bhasma*.^[5]

Acharya Charak

Acharya Charaka has mentioned about the topic in *Jatisutriya Adhyaya*. Newborn baby should be given *Mantropmantrit Madhu and Sarpi*.^[6]

Indications^[7]

- *Aksheerajanani*-Mother with absence of breast milk for her baby leads to inadequate feeding to her baby. Such babies should be given with *Lehana*.
- *Alpaksheeri*-Mother with scanty breast milk can't fulfill calorific requirements of her baby. So baby should be supplemented with '*Lehana*'.
- *Prasuta* and *Dushtksheera* - Mother with vitiated breast milk and with post-natal complications should avoid feeding breast milk due to the risk of *Dushta Ksheera Janya Vyadhis* in the baby.
- Mother met with difficulty in labour, *LSCS*, *Mudha-Garbha* or other complications during delivery can't feed her baby requiring necessity of *Lehana*.
- Baby to which breast milk is insufficient or inadequate. Baby which cries in spite of breast feeding should be given *Lehana*.
- Child with increased appetite.
- When a child is passing less amount of urine and stool, indirectly suggests inadequate consumption of breast milk, requiring supplementary liquid food.
- *Lehana* is indicated always for a disease free child (healthy). For instance, if a child has certain metabolic disorder, *Lehana Dravya* will not be properly metabolized.
- In a constipated child passing stool once in three days, *Lehana* is indicated.

Contraindications^[8]

- *Mandagni* -Reduced *Agnibala* is the root cause of *Ama*, which is responsible for blockage of *Srotas*. Certain micro-mineral supplementation like iron etc., if not properly absorbed, results in constipation or diarrhoea. Proteins given as supplementation if left unmetabolized or half metabolized leads to accumulation of excess nitrogenous waste products which may be hazardous to the baby.
- *Nidralu* -Child which is lazy, dull, stout or indulged in excessive sleep not be given *Lehana*.
- Contra-indications of *Lehana* in diseased conditions- *Ama*, *Jwara*, *Atisara*, *Kamla*, *Sotha*, *Pandu*, *Hridayaroga*, *Shwas*, *Kasa*, *Guda-basti* and *Udara roga*, *Anaha*, *Galganda*, *Visarpa*, *Chhardi*, *Arochaka*.
- Conditions where '*Lehana*' should not be done- *Durdina* (Bad day in terms of weather, sunlight, dust, cyclone) *Purovata* (Natural storms of air, water etc.)
- *Lehana Dravyas* which are allergic to the constitution of the child should not be used.
- Dose of *Lehana Dravya*- *Lehana* should not be given in an excessive amount.

Seasonal indication (By Astanga Samgraha)^[9]

- *Vasanta*, *Hemanta*, *Shishira Ritu*- *Aragwadadi Gana Kwatha* mixed with the drugs of *Vatsakadi Gana*, *Kakoly adi Gana* are made to boil with *Ghrita* and given.
- *Greeshma Ritu* -Cold milk treated with *Jeevaneeya Gana* drugs are mixed with *Ghrita* and Sugar.

Special indications

- (a) If a child is habituated to take more water- *Ghrita* should not be given.
- (b) Those who are habituated to *Ghrita*-Then *Ghrita* prepared by *Kakoli*, *Sharkara*, *Meda*, *Vamshalochana*, *Madhuyasti* and *Jeevaka Siddha Ghrita* should be given.

Sharad Ritu- *Pundarika*, *Madhuka*, *Mudgaparni*, *Mashaparni*, *Chirayata*, *Kakoli*, *Vidari*, *Katphala*, *Amrita*, *Draksha*, *Ajashringi*, *Dugdika*, *Ksheera Shukla*, *Ashwagandha*, *Madhuka*, *Kusuma*, *Meda*, *Mahameda*, *Rishbhaka*, *Jeevaka* are used to prepare the *Ghrita*.

Gold preparations should be taken on the day of "*Pushya Nakshatra*" for yielding special effect.

Advantages of Lehana

- *Lehana* substances are enriched with sweet substances like *Guda*, etc. due to rich content of glucose, maltose etc. So presence of carbohydrate rich food in the mouth for a longer time not only initiate digestion of maltose by salivary amylase but also stimulates the whole digestive system for the process of digestion further.
- As "*Leha*" is a semisolid and is mixed with *Guda*, *Madhura Dravyas*, this may act as a "High calorific diet" to give instant energy.

- Usually infants and toddlers will have difficulties in taking medicines and administration *Lehana* method is used where drugs are made palatable.
- Growth of sensory tissues is extremely quick in the initial five years and the *Lehana* drugs are generally *Medhya* in nature. In this way it influences the insight part.
- According to certain signs and contraindications, referenced *lehana* might be utilized as a substitute for breast milk.
- It might prompt inoculation type impacts by boosting up the *Vyadhikshamatva* (immunity).

DISCUSSION

Children are more susceptible to infections and various diseases as their immunity is yet to develop. In this phase of life, our attempt should be towards the prevention of diseases and enhancing the physical and mental growth of children. This can be done by using ayurvedic concepts as *Rasayana* and *Lehana*. It helps in the prevention of infections and also promotes growth and development in children. If the *Lehana* drugs are used in appropriate doses along with National Nutritional Programme and other National programs the better results can be implemented. We can gain better growth both physically and mentally and also social well-being.

CONCLUSION

Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam is the fundamental aim of *ayurveda*. This principle can be achieved by following certain ayurvedic concepts. Some of which are *Rasayana*, *Lehana*, *Ahar- Vihar* mentioned in *Samhitas*, *Sadvritta*, *Achar Rasayana* etc. Concept of *Lehana* as explained by *Kashyapa* and other authors clears that, its approach is multi-dimensional.

REFERENCES

1. Acharya's Text Book of Kaumarbhritya by dr. Shrinidhi Kumar Acharya, Chaukhambha Orientalia Varanasi part, 2(43): 660.
2. Kashyapa Samhita or Vridhijivkiya tantra revised by Vatsya with Sanskrit introduction Nepal Rajaguru Pandit Hemraja Sharma with Hindi commentary and Hindi translation of Sanskrit Introduction by Sri Satyapala Bhisagacharya Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi Lehana Adhyaya Sutra Sthana, 1.
3. Kashyapa Samhita or Vridhijivkiya tantra revised by Vatsya with Sanskrit introduction Nepal Rajaguru Pandit Hemraja Sharma with Hindi commentary and Hindi translation of Sanskrit Introduction by Sri Satyapala Bhisagacharya Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi Lehana Adhyaya Sutra Sthana, 4-5.
4. Sushruta Samhita, Edited with Ayurveda-Tattva-Sandipika, Hindi Commentary, by Kaviraj Ambikadutta Sashtri, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi, Reprint, part 1 Sharira Sthana, 10.
5. Charak Samhita of Agnivesh, revised by Charak & Dridhbala, with introduction by 'Vaidya samrath

- Shri Satya Narayan Shastri with elaborated Hindi commentary by Pandit Kasinath Shastri and Dr Gorkhnath Chaturvedi, Chaukhambha Bhartiya Academy, reprint, part 2 Chikitsa sthana, 2015; 18: 532.
6. Kashyapa Samhita or Vridhijivkiya tantra revised by Vatsya with Sanskrit introduction Nepal Rajaguru Pandit Hemraja Sharma with Hindi commentary and Hindi translation of Sanskrit Introduction by Sri Satyapala Bhisagacharya Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi Lehana Adhyaya Sutra Sthana, 3- 4.
7. Kashyapa Samhita or Vridhijivkiya tantra revised by Vatsya with Sanskrit introduction Nepal Rajaguru Pandit Hemraja Sharma with Hindi commentary and Hindi translation of Sanskrit Introduction by Sri Satyapala Bhisagacharya Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi Lehana Adhyaya Sutra Sthana, 3-4.
8. Murthy. K.R.Srikantha. Astanga Samgraha of Vagbhatta. Fourth Edition. Varanasi. Chaukhambha Orientalia. As. S. Ut., 2005; 1/64-68.