

**WISDOM OF AYURVEDA FOR MODERN WELLNESS: RTU SHODANA FOR TODAY'S
HEALTH NEEDS*****¹Prathibha M., ²Ananta S. Desai, ³Shreevathsa, ⁴Basavaraj G. Saraganachari**^{*1}Ph D. Scholar, Department of Post Graduate and Ph D Studies in Panchakarma, GAMC, Bangalore.¹Assistant Professor, Department of Panchakarma, SDM Institute of Ayurveda and Hospital, Bangalore.²Professor and Head, Department of Post graduate Studies in Kayachikitsa, Government Ayurveda Medical College and Hospital, Mysuru.³HOD and Professor, Department of Ayurveda Samhita and Siddhanta, Government Ayurveda Medical College and Hospital Mysuru.⁴Professor and Head, Department of Post Graduate Studies In Panchakarma, SDM Institute of Ayurveda and Hospital, Bangalore.***Corresponding Author: Prathibha M.**

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ABSTRACT

Rtu Shodana, the seasonal bio purification therapy described in Ayurveda, serves as a vital tool in maintaining health and preventing disease by aligning the body with nature's cyclical changes. Rtu Shodana involves tailored bio purification procedures such as Vamana, Virechana, Basti, Nasya, Raktamokshana to eliminate accumulated Doshas and toxins that vary with each season. This practice not only restores the body's natural balance but also enhances immunity, digestion, mental clarity and even the lifespan of the subjects. The effect of optimal Rtu Shodana ranges from the body as a whole to each and every cell of the body. It has the potency to remove the diseases from the root and hence they do not re-occur which is unlikely when managed through shamana medications only. In an era marked by lifestyle disorders and environmental stressors, Rtu Shodana emerges as a powerful preventive and promotive health strategy. It is the need of the hour and the only solution to make the society a healthier one. Proper and scientific awareness of Rtu Shodana should reach the whole society and widespread application is necessary. This paper explores the principles, methods, and seasonal adaptations of Rtu Shodana, emphasizing its relevance in today's era.

KEYWORDS: Rtu Shodana, Bio-purification, Preventive, Disease Lifespan.**INTRODUCTION**

The term *Rtu* denotes "season," and *Shodana* means "purification." According to Ayurveda, human physiology is intricately linked with nature's cyclical changes. Seasonal transitions often destabilize the body's doshic balance — *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* — making it susceptible to diseases. Rtu Shodana is the process of administering bio-purification at specific seasonal junctions (*Rtu Sandhi*) to expel accumulated doshas and realign the body's harmony with nature.

These seasonal detox therapies include Vamana (emesis), Virechana (purgation), Basti (medicated enemas), Nasya

(nasal therapy), and Raktamokshana (bloodletting), tailored to the prevailing dosha of the season. When practiced properly, Rtu Shodana not only restores physical and mental well-being but also prevents disease recurrence, which is a limitation of only symptomatic management through *Shamana* (palliative) therapies. Modern perspectives suggest that these practices may influence cellular homeostasis, immune modulation, oxidative stress reduction, and tissue rejuvenation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A comprehensive review of classical Ayurvedic texts (*Bṛhat Trayī* and *Laghutrayī*), commentaries, and

published research papers was undertaken to extract information on Rtu Shodana, its indications, seasonal application, and clinical outcomes. Texts such as

Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Ashtanga Hridaya formed the core classical references.

Table 1: Seasonal Dosha Accumulation and Rtu Shodana.^[1]

Season (Rtu)	Predominant Dosha	Recommended Shodana	Time of Application
Vasanta (Spring)	Kapha	Vamana	Chaitra month
Grishma (Summer)	Pitta (accumulates)	-	Avoid strong therapies
Varsha (Monsoon)	Vata	Basti	During early rains
Sharad (Autumn)	Pitta	Virechana	Ashwin month
Hemanta (Winter)	Kapha (accumulates)	-	Nourishment advised
Shishira (Late Winter)	Kapha (aggravates)	Vamana (if needed)	Magha-Phalguna months

Physiological and Therapeutic Relevance

Modern research has begun to validate the physiological basis of Rtu Shodana. These therapies potentially have an influence on Strengthening the immune response during vulnerable seasonal changes reduce oxidative stress. Helps improve the digestive fire (*Agni*) and promotes metabolism.Helps reduce mental stress, improves clarity, and promotes emotional resilience.

Classification of Seasons in Ayurveda^[2]

Depending on direction of movement of sun the year is divided in to two Ayanas (solstice). They are Uttarayana (northern solstice) and Dakshinayana (southern solstice). Three Ritus or seasons make one Ayan. The word Ritu means “to go”.

Effect of AdanaKala and Visarga Kaala

Uttarayana, is also known as *Adana Kala*, this marks the northward movement of the sun. During this period, both the sun and wind become increasingly powerful. *Adana* means “taking away.” The sun absorbs the coolness and moisture from the earth.Leads to gradual depletion of strength (Bala Hāni) in both the environment and living beings Covers three seasons: Shishira (late winter) Vasanta (spring) Grishma (summer)

Dakshinayana, known as *Visarga Kala*, refers to the sun’s southward journey, *Visarga* means “giving or distributing.” The environment becomes cooler, moist, and nourishing. The earth gives back strength and vitality to living beings. Covers three seasons:Varsha (monsoon) Sharad (autumn) Hemanta (early winter) During Dakshinayana, the environment undergoes significant changes—cloud cover, rainfall, and cold winds dominate, leading to cooling of the earth. The atmosphere becomes unctuous and moist, fostering the dominance of *Madhura* (sweet), *Amla* (sour), and *Lavana* (salty) tastes. These qualities contribute to nourishment (*Brihana*) and increase the body's strength and vitality. As the moon's influence surpasses that of the sun in this period, anabolic processes in the body are enhanced, making it an ideal time for rejuvenation and restorative therapies.

This phase is characterized by increased intensity of *Tikta* (bitter), *Kashaya* (astringent), and *Katu* (pungent) tastes in the environment, which induce dryness in the body and diminish the physical strength and endurance of individuals. The cooling quality (*Sheeta Guna*) of the earth gradually reduces, and with the rising heat and dryness, *Balakshaya* (loss of strength) is observed. The body's resilience is generally lower during Uttarayana, making it a crucial time for preventive healthcare practices.

Table 2: Differences in Adana and Visarga kaala.^[3]

Aspect	Uttarayana (Adana Kala)	Dakshinayana (Visarga Kala)
Meaning	"Taking away" (of strength & moisture)	"Giving" or nourishing
Solar Movement	Northward (Capricorn → Cancer)	Southward (Cancer → Capricorn)
Dominant Seasons	Shishira, Vasanta, Grishma	Varsha, Sharad, Hemanta
Dominant Tastes	Tikta, Kashaya, Katu	Madhura, Amla, Lavana
Environmental Quality	Dry, hot, light	Moist, cool, heavy
Bala (Strength)	Decreases gradually	Increases gradually
Dosha Aggravation	Vata and Pitta	Kapha and Pitta (Varsha), Vata pacified
Recommended Therapies	Vamana, Virechana	Basti, Virechana, Rasayana

Table 3: Panchakarama in different seasons.^[4,5,6]

SN	Season	Dosa Avastha	Panchakarma Procedures
1	Shishira	Kapha Sanchaya, Vayu Preritha	Abhyanga, Murdha Taila, Vimardana, Padaghata, Lepa, Swedana, Atapa Swedana, Ushna Sadana, Guru Pravarana, Aahava, Utsadana, Jentaka Swedana
2	Vasant	Kapha Prakopa	Tikshna Vamana, Nasya, Vyayama, Udvartana,

			Lepa, Dhoomapana, Kavala, Anjana, Lepa
3	Greeshma	Vata Sanchaya, Bala Heena, Kapha Ksheenata	Lepa (Extensive Panchakarma procedures are avoided)
4	Pravrit	Pitta Sanchaya, Vata Prakopa, Bala Heena, Agni Heenatva	Nasya
5	Varsha	Pitta Sanchaya, Vata Prakopa, Bala Heena, Agni Heenatva	Asthapana Basti, Pragharsa, Udvartana, Lepa
6	Sharad	Pitta Prakopa	Virechana, Raktamokshana, Lepa, Tikta Snehapana
7	Hemanta	Kapha Sanchaya, Vayu Preritha	Abhyanga, Murdha Taila, Vimardana, Padaghata, Lepa, Swedana, Atapa Swedana, Ushna Sadana, Guru Pravarana, Aahava, Utsadana, Jentaka Swedana

DISCUSSION

The science of *Rtu Shodana* offers profound insight into preventive health unlike symptomatic approaches that dominate modern healthcare, *Rtu Shodana* seeks to remove the root cause of disease at the most appropriate time—before they can provoke pathology. This cyclical purification helps in maintaining homeostasis, supports the body's adaptive capacity, and reduces susceptibility to disease.

1. Dosh-Specific Seasonal Adaptation

Each season has different qualities(*guna*) that influence different doshas. For example, in *vasantha* *rutu* *snigdha* and *guru* *guna* aggravates *Kapha*, leading to conditions like allergies, respiratory congestion, and weight gain. *Rtu Shodana* in the form of *Vamana* in this season ensures that these imbalances are corrected before they manifest into chronic ailments.

Similarly, *Virechana* in autumn helps to expel accumulated *Pitta*, in turn helps to address issues like hyperacidity, rashes, migraines, and inflammatory conditions. *Basti* is the prime therapy for *Vata*, when administered during the rainy season, counters dryness, joint stiffness, anxiety, and neurological disorders.

Rtu Shodana thus helps in *Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam* — preserving the health of the healthy.

2. Preventive, Promotive, and Curative Benefits

Rtu Shodana also helps in promoting *ojas* (vital essence), strengthens the immunity, and improves *dhatu poshana*. Many modern diseases—diabetes, autoimmune disorders, IBS, hypertension—have a chronic inflammatory component or are driven by metabolic and stress imbalances. Regular seasonal detoxification can significantly lower this risk burden by Improving metabolic regulation (*Agni deepana*), reducing systemic inflammation, enhancing gut health and microbiome diversity. Modulating the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis

3. Rtu Shodana and Mental Health

Seasonal changes also impact psychological well-being. Conditions such as seasonal affective disorder (SAD), anxiety, and depressive states are influenced by the three

doshas. For instance, aggravated *Vata* during the rainy season can result in restlessness, fear, and insomnia. *Rtu Shodana*, particularly *Basti* and *Nasya*, can calm the mind by nourishing the *Majja dhatu* (nervous system) and balancing neurotransmitter functions. The incorporation of *medhya dravyas* (nootropic herbs) during these therapies further enhances mental resilience.

4. Relevance in Contemporary Public Health

In the face of increasing antibiotic resistance, chronic disease prevalence, and lifestyle-induced degeneration, the importance of non-invasive, safe, and natural preventive protocols reduces reliance on synthetic drugs cuts healthcare costs in the long term.

5. Challenges and Way Forward

Despite its proven benefits, widespread adoption of *Rtu Shodana* is hindered by:

Lack of awareness among the public, limited access to trained Panchakarma professionals, misinformation about safety and applicability, need for standardization in protocols.

To overcome these, academic institutions must focus on: Rigorous clinical trials demonstrating efficacy, community-based education models, collaboration with integrative medicine platforms, policy advocacy for preventive health initiatives.

CONCLUSION

Rtu Shodana is more than just a seasonal detoxification, *Rtu Shodana* plays a vital role in preserving *homeostasis*, preventing disease onset, and promoting holistic well-being. Its foundation lies not just in the elimination of accumulated doshas, but in enhancing *Agni* (digestive fire), maintaining doshic balance, and nurturing both the body and the mind across seasonal transitions.

In today's era, with the prevalence of non-communicable diseases, autoimmune conditions, stress-related disorders, and lifestyle-induced health problems, the preventive aspect of healthcare has become more crucial.

In conclusion, *Rtu Shodana* exemplifies the preventive strength of Ayurveda—offering not just a solution to

illness but a roadmap to sustainable wellness. Its revival and widespread practice hold the potential to usher in a healthier, more balanced society in tune with nature.

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