



UNDERSTANDING THE MODE OF ACTION AND EFFICACY OF TAKRADHARA

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ABSTRACT

Dhara is one of the popular therapy in *Panchkarma*. *Dhara* is a procedure in which medicated oil, milk or buttermilk is poured in a continuous stream on head especially on forehead and when '*Takra*' is poured on forehead and scalp, it is called *Takradhara*. *Takradhara* is a special *Panchkarma* therapy in which medicated herbs are used in the form of external therapy Although there are many physicians conducting this treatment, only few manage it with thorough understanding of its principles. *Dhara* is grouped as *shira*(on head), *sarvanga*(all over body) and *pradeshika* (local). There are many varieties of *shirodhara*, among them *Takradhara*, *Ksheeradharma*, *Sanyadhara* and *Snehadhara*. *Takra* has *Pancha-rasa* except *lavana rasa*, *amla vipaka*, *ushna virya* and *vatakaphaghana* property. *Takradhara* procedure is found very effective in treatment of many disorders like *Insomnia*, *psoriasis*, *hypertension*.it also prevent greying of hair, reduces headache, useful in depression and other stress related ailments

KEYWORDS: *Takradhara*, *Pschyosomatic disorders*, *Psoriasis*, *Panchkarma*.

INTRODUCTION

Panchkarma is the ultimate method of *Ayurvedic* detoxification for body and mind. Now a days people are suffering from mental and psychosomatic disorder due to unhealthy social and working environment. Some special therapies of *Ayurveda* are very effective in psychosomatic disorders. *Takradhara* is a special *Panchkarma* therapy in which medicated herbs are used in the form of external therapy.^[1] This method is in general practice in kerala, but not mentioned in Ancient *Ayurvedic samhitas*. It is used in the form of thin stream. *Takra* is poured in a continuous stream over the forehead.

PROCEDURE DETAILS

Contents Required

Shirodhara yantra	1
Vessels	3(To prepare Takra, To prepare Amalaki kwath ,To take out takra from droni)
Milk	1.5 litres
Amalaki churna	200 gram
Musta churna	100 gram
Rasna churna	5 gram
Oil	10ml (for talam)
Towel	1
Cotton plug	2
Gauze piece	2

PREPARATION OF MEDICINE

1) **Takra-** 1.5 litres of milk diluted with four times of water and boiled with 100 gram of crushed musta tied in muslin bag and reduced it to one fourth. When it is cooled down, Muslin bag taken out and squeeze it. This ready milk ought to be soured overnight by adding of little sour buttermilk. Next morning the curd is churned along with 500 ml of *amalaki kwath* to prepared takra. Butter should removed completely^[2]

2) **Amalaki kwath-**Amalaki kwath should be prepared of dried 200 gram Amalaki fruit boiled with 8 litre water and reduced to 2 litre. Out of which 1.5 litres of kwath is used to mix Takra and 500 ml is used to wash the head after procedure. Milk for the preparation of takra may be medicated with *Aragwadhadi churna*, *Usheera*, *Heebera*, *Chandana*.

Pre-Operative Procedure

Suitable oils according to *roga* for application on head. Patient should lie in supine position on *droni*. Head should placed properly according to *shirodhara patra*, the eyes should be covered with cotton gauze and patient ear should be plugged with cotton.

Duration and Time

Procedure is done in morning hours between 7-10 am. If necessary it can be done in evening hours between 4-6 pm. It is done from 7 days to 14 days. It is done for 45 minutes to 1 hour.^[3]

Procedure

The *dhara* vessel should be kept on top of forehead in such a way that a nonstop stream of buttermilk poured on patient's forehead. The tip of *dharavarti* should be four *angula* i.e 6-7 cm above the forehead of the patient and total length of *varti* should be three times i.e 18-21 cm.^[4]

The *takra* is to be recollected and poured again into vessel. The attendant keeps swinging the vessel slowly across the patient's head so that *takra* will fall into patient's entire forehead. Simultaneously the head is lightly massaged for better effect. In this *takra* should not be heated or reused for next sitting. *Takra* should be taken freshly prepared and use only once.^[5]

Paschat karma

After the *dhara*, the head is washed with *amalaki kwath* or body is swabbed with warm sponging. After that wet head should be dried with towel then *rasnadi churna* may be applied for *tala dharna* (Applied on crown of scalp and rubbed for few seconds). This will balance the cold induced by the procedure. Warm water bath is advised after two hours of procedure. In diet hot and fresh food should be taken. Hot water should be used for drinking and bathing purposes.^[6]

Complication And Management-Shivering is observed in some patients due to *excess sheeta*. In such case, the procedure is stopped immediately and the patient is managed with *ushnopchra*.^[7]

MODE OF ACTION

In Psoriasis- *Takra* contains large amount of lactic acid. It is scientifically proved that lactic acid is used to moisten and lessen the appearance of thickened scales. Lactic acid is a good for vehicle trans-dermal absorption of drugs. It is also have systematic anti-inflammatory, anti oxidant effects.^[8] The efficacy of lactic acid containing products is linked to their ability to deliver it to specific skin strata. The penetration of L+ lactic acid to different skin layer of porous skin from various emulsions was measured in vitro using flow through diffusion cells.

Amalaki has anti- inflammatory, antioxidant properties, act as immune-modulator.^[9] Scientific researches on *Amalaki* extract shows inhibited cell proliferation, induced apoptosis and increased reactive oxygen species production. So it is helpful in psoriasis treatment control scaling.^[10] *Musta* also have anti inflammatory, antioxidant property, glycation inhibitory (glycation has role in production of inflammatory cytokines). *Musta* act as *kushthaghana*.^[11]

Medicinal Effect

Acharya Sushrut explained, the *pitta*, which is located in skin, is *bhrajakagni*, enables the digestion and utilization of substance used for *abhyanga*, *pariseka*, *avagaha*, *lepana* etc. *Dalhana* commenting on above and says *bhrajakagni* is located in *Avabhasini twacha* (i.e ist layer)

and *dravya* getting digested (*deepana*) and metabolized (*pachana*) by power of *bhrajakagni*. After digestion and metabolism, *veerya* of the medicines which are used spread all over the body through *dhamni* and exhibit their action all over body

In Hypertension

Takradhara relieves in insomnia, *shiroruka*, *bhrama*, *klama* and breathlessness^[12] *Sushrut* has mentioned *sthapani marma* between two eyebrows. It is *vishalyaghana* type of *sira marma*. The hypothesis effect of *takradhara* seems to be mediated through this *sthapani* or *Kurcha marma*. Being a *sira marma*, it might have some reflex action on baroreceptor (which are disturbed in essential hypertension and may be held responsible for constriction of arterioles leading to rise in blood pressure).

On Emotional and Behavioural Patterns- *Chittanasha* (psychological abnormality) and *Bhaya* is said to cause due to injury of *seemanta marma*. Thus *dhara* can heal the *marma* and it may reverse the *chitta nasha* and *bhaya*

On Endocrine System-*Takradhara* on hormone secretion can also be postulated considering the effect on hypothalamus.

Quality of Sleep

Takradhara or *shirodhara* is unique procedure for all types of *manas doshas*. It induces relaxation and natural sleep by increasing intensity of alpha brain waves and decrease the brain cortisone and adrenaline level. During the procedure, prolonged *dhara* of drug mixed with *takra* over forehead generate a conduction which not only act as tranquilizer but also induces sleep. This procedure not only normalizes serotonin and nor-epinephrine but also keep hypothalamus in normal functioning.^[13]

Diabetic Retinopathy

The procedural effect of *takradhara* induced by somato-autonomic reflex through thermo-sensors or pressure sensors in the skin or hair follicles via trigeminal cranial nerve. The process of *takradhara* might accelerate the function of *tarpana kapha* and may also bring in the specific action as demanded by the disease condition like blockage of channels by *kapha* which can be taken as microvascular occlusion which is the basic pathological process seen in diabetic retinopathy. Apart from this, it also help in proper nourishment of retina; thereby preventing further vascular leakage and the *Chakshushya* property of drugs helps in improvement of vision.^[14]

CONCLUSION

Takradhara procedure is found very effective in treatment of many disorders like *Insomnia*, *psoriasis*, *hypertension*. It also prevent greying of hair, reduces headache, useful in depression and other stress related ailments. Therefore it can be concluded that *Takradhara*

is very safe and efficacious to treat the modilities and can be used effectively in treatment of various disorders.

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