

AN INTRODUCTION TO CLASSICAL SWEDANA KARMA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the science of health, this science have preventive and curative type of therapy for achieving complete health of individuals by maintaining tissue equilibrium. *Swedana* (body sweating) is a treatment modality common to *Ayurveda* clinical practice. It is a process of methodical and regulative sweating process with the aid to direct or indirect heat that generates the sweat to eliminates the bio-waste material from the body. *Swedan Karma* is one of the most useful therapeutic procedure it causes relief in pain, stiffness, heaviness and many other disease. This paper implies that there is an extensive area and scope for this procedure.

KEYWORDS: Swedana, Panchkarma, Upkarma, Ayurveda.**INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda is a traditional health system of Indian continent brought many minute observations of common processes with therapeutic values. *Swedana Karma* is one significant *Upkarma* out of *Shadupkramas*. *Sweda* is the mala of body, which comes out if the body in the natural form through the microscopic foramen of the skin. Therefore, it is a natural action occurring in the body but when artificially done by various means and methods, it is called as *Swedana karma*. *Panchkarma* can be performed only if the *doshas* are available in the *koshtha* from all the body, for that *Snehan* and *Swedan karmas* are merely option. According to *Acharya Charaka* the process which relieves stiffness, heaviness, coldness of the body and produces sweat is called as *Swedana*,^[1] *Vata* and *Kapha Doshes* are treated independently with *Swedana Karma*. this is the major pre-karma to be done after *Snehana*. Just as heating is required after lubrication to straighten dry wood, in the same way, *Swedana karma* is important for *Shodhana* (purification).^[2]

Properties of Sweda are^[3]

1. *Ushna* (hot)
2. *Tikshana* (acute)
3. *Sara* (flowing)
4. *Snigdha* (unctuous)
5. *Ruksha* (dry)
6. *Sukshma* (minute)
7. *Drava* (liquid)
8. *Sthira* (stable)
9. *Guru* (heavy)

Classification of Swedana

Acharya Charaka has divided *Swedana* on the basis of three different approaches. On The basis of presence and absence of fire *Niragni* (non thermal fomentation) and *sagni* (thermal fomentation). On the basis of procedure applied on area are *Ekanga* (local fomentation) and *Sarvanga* (general fomentation). Another categorization is based on whether it is wet or dry fomentation.^[4]

On the basis of area of applications thirteen type of *Sagni-Sweda*^[5] is discussed. These are as follows

1. *Sankara sweda* (bolus fomentation)
2. *Prastar sweda* (hot-bed fomentation i.e lying on medicinal mattress)
3. *Nadi sweda* (tubular steam fomentation)
4. *Parishek sweda* (afflusion fomentation)
5. *Avagahan sweda* (bath fomentation)
6. *Jentak sweda* (sudation therapy in room)
7. *Ashmaghan sweda* (stone bed fomentation)
8. *Karshu sweda* (sudation by using heat in trench under bed)
9. *Kuti sweda* (cabin fomentation)
10. *Bhu sweda* (ground- bed fomentation)
11. *Kumbhi sweda* (pitcher bed fomentation)
12. *Kupa sweda* (pit fomentation)
13. *Holak sweda* (under bed fomentation)

Archarya Charaka has discussed about ten type of *Niragni Sweda*,^[6] also, which are as follows

1. *Vyayama* (exercise)
2. *Ushnasadan* (residing in warm chamber)
3. *Gurupravarana* (wearing heavy clothing)

4. *Kshudha* (restraining Hunger)
5. *Bahupan* (excessive drinking)
6. *Bhaya* (fear)
7. *Krodha* (anger)
8. *Upnaha* (application of poultice)
9. *Ahava* (wrestling)
10. *Atap* (exposure to sunshine)

Acharya Sushrut has enumerated four type of *Swedas* i.e. *Tapa sweda*, *Ushma sweda*, *Upnaha sweda*, and *Drava sweda*^[7] *Tapa* and *Ushma Sweda* pacify *kapha dosha*, *Upnaha-sweda* pacify *Vata doshas* and *drava Sweda* is advised where *Pitta doshas* is associated with *Vata* or *kapha doshas*. Where *Vata* is associated with *Kapha dosha* and *Medo dhatu* then *Swedana* is done by exercise, wrestling, heavy clothing, basking in the sun etc.^[8] Acharya Vagbhata has discussed four type of *Sagni Sweda* similar to Acharya Sushrut. Acharya *kashyap* has given eight type of *Swedas* viz. *Hasta sweda* (fomentation by warm hand), *Pradeha* (to anoint), *Nadi sweda*, *Prastara-sweda*, *Sankar-sweda*, *Upnah-sweda*, *Avagah-sweda* and *Parishek-sweda*,^[9] details of *Swedan karma* are available in *Charak Samhita Sutrasthan 14*, *Sushrut Sutrasthan 26* and *Asthang Hridya Sutrasthan 17*, *Asthang Sangraha Sutrasthan 26*.

Swedana Dravya (Material for Sudation)^[10]

Fomentation bolus prepared with *Tila* (*Seasamum Indicum* linn.), *Masha* (*Phaseolus radiates* linn.), *kulatha* (*Dolichos biflorus* linn.), sour preparation, ghees oil, meat, boiled rice (*odana*), sweet porridge (*payasa*), boiled mixture of cereals and legumes (*krishara*) and flesh, feces of cow, ass, camel, pig and horse along with barley grains with chaff, sand, dust, stone, dried cow dung and iron powder is effective for fomentation in the cases of *Kapha* and *Vata* related diseases.

Mode of Action of Swedana^[11]

- **Stambhaghna:** *Samanvayu* by *rukshaguna* absorb *snigdhta* and cause *stambha* i.e stiffness and, due to loss of function of *Sleshak kapha* it lost its *Snigdha guna* and causes *sthambha.swedan karma* by its *snigdha* and *ushna guna* relieves *Stambha* and its *ushna guna* does *Srotosuddhi* and *Amapachan* and so it relieves stiffness.
- **Gauravaghna:** liquid substance of the body comes out through *sweda*, so it relieves heaviness in the body.
- **Shitaghna:** *Swedana* is mainly *ushna* so it relieves *sheeta* by opposite property.
- **Sweda Karakatva:** *Sweda* is a type of *mala*. *Ushna* and *tikshna gunas* of *swedan drug* are able to penetrate the microcirculatory channels where they activate the sweat gland to produce more sweat. After dilation of microchannels *Laghu* and *sara guna* of these drugs enable them to act on the *snigdha doshas* in the channel through micropore in the form of sweat, resulting in *srotosodhana*. the *doshas* brought in *kostha* are expelled out of the body with the help of *Vamana* or *Virechan* therapy.

Indication of Swedana Karma

Swedana karma is advised in cough, hiccough, *pratishtyaya* (rhinitis), breathing difficulty, pain in ear, neck and head, heaviness of body, choking sensation of throat, hoarseness of voice, paralysis of face, one limb, half of the body or whole body, distention of the abdomen, constipation, suppression of urine, yawning, sciatica, malaise, stiffness of the side, back, waist and abdomen, enlargement of scrotum, neuralgia of extremities, oedema, pain and stiffness of feet, knee, calf, disease due to impaired digestion and metabolism colic pain, stiffness, excessive heaviness, numbness and such disorder anywhere in the body.^[12]

Contraindication of Swedana Karma

Swedana karma should not administer to those who regularly consume too much alcohol and astringents, the pregnant women, diarrhea, inflammation and prolapsed of rectum, *Raktapitta* (disease characterized by bleeding from different orifice of the body), *Paittika* type of obstinate urinary disorder specially diabetes mellitus, those who are fatigue, unconscious, in toxic condition, hungry, fatty, thirsty, anger, anxiety, jaundice, abdominal disease, *Vatrakta* (gout), weakness, in *Timir roga*, and whose *ojas* has been reduced in the body.^[13]

Clinical Aspect of Swedana

Acharya's have discussed *swedana* in different diseases which are as follow

- **Sankara Sweda**
kustha –anupa ,udaka mamsa(ch chi7/51)
Rajyakshma- krisara, utkarika, masha, kulatha, yava payasa (ch chi 8/71)
Arsas- yava, masha, kulatha (ch chi 14/39)
- **Prastara Sweda**
Hikka swasa(ch chi17/71-72)
Yoni vyapat (ch chi 30/47)
- **NADI SWEDA**
Mandala kushta (ch.chi7/50)
Rajyakshma- mamsa rasa, panchmoola (ch. Chi 8/74)
Vata vyadhi- anupa, udaka mamsa, dashamool, shatavari, klatha, tila (ch.chi28/99)
- **PATRA PANDA SWEDA**
Rajyakshma (ch.chi 8)
- **UPNAHA SWEDA:**
Apakwa gulma (ch.chi 5/41)
Rajyakshma- jivanti, sadapa, vacha, vesvara (ch.chi.8/75)
- **KUTI SWEDA**
Jeerna jwara (ch.chi.8/75)
- **AVAGAHA SWEDA**
Arsa- bilwa kwath, takra, dadhi, kanji, gomutra (ch.chi14/45-47)
Vata vyadhi- kwatha, kshera,taila (ch.chi28/109)
- **PARISHEKA SWEDA**
Jeerna jwara (ch.chi3/174)
Arsas – arka, bilwa,triphaladi kwatha (ch.chi14/44)
- **PRADEHA /PRALEPA SWEDA**
Jeerna jwara – agurvadi pralepa (ch.chi3/219)
Kushta – gomaya pradeha (ch.chi7/57)

Sleepada – sarshapa lepa (ch.chi. 12/98)

• **SWEDA**

kaphaja pinasa (ch.chi.26/149)

Kaphaja shiroroga (ch.chi 26/100)

Vata vyadhi (ch.chi.28/75)

Pakshaghata (ch.chi.28/100)

DISCUSSION

Snehan and *Swedan* are generally performed before application of *Panchkarma*.^[14] *Swedan karma* is said to be the *Purvakaram* of *Shodhan*. *Sweda*, *gharma* and *nidagha* are the synonyms having the meaning perspiration. It is also used as an independent therapy to vacify *Vataja*, *Kaphaja* and *Vata kaphaja rogas*,^[15] it liquefies the *Doshas* and *Mala* due to its hot and sharp attributes. Different type of *swedana* are discussed in ayurveda considering different diseases and their stage. *Sagni-niragni*, *ruksha-snigdha* and *ekanga-sarvangaswedana* are discussed in the text which explore the area and scope for this procedure.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda described purification as an important aspect for maintaining good health and treating root cause of various diseases. *Panchkarma* therapy is mainly a purificatory process which involves utilization of five different therapies for detoxification and the basic pre requirement of *panchkarma* procedure involve *Pachan*, *Snehan* and *Swedan Karma*. *swedan* is the therapy which alleviates stiffness, heaviness, coldness and which bring out sweating from the system is the sudation therapy. It is administered as a *Shamana Chikitsa* as well as before *Shodhan Chikitsa*. The purpose is to bring the *doshas* from *Shakha* to *Koshta* as *Purvakarma* and to relieve the stiffness as *Shaman Karma*. So, due to its important role in *Panchkarma* therapy, it should be followed as *acharyas* has described in the classical text.

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