

PANCHKARMA INTERVENTIONS FOR LIFESTYLE DISORDERS

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ABSTRACT

Changes in lifestyle have followed the path of development in the materialistic world and so have brought many causes for development of various disorders which are related to this new world. In the modern era of globalisation and development, due to stressful lifestyle and lack of self-observation we are facing several challenging lifestyle disorders like Diabetes mellitus, Hypertension, Atherosclerosis, Heart disease, stroke and obesity to which modern medicine has no appropriate answer.

In this field, the world's oldest life science Ayurveda gives a proven, fundamental solution in the form of Panchkarma. Ayurveda is with the important motives of protecting the healthy state of a healthy person and curing the disease. Thus it serves both purposes, preventive and curative. Panchkarma is the important path to serve the purposes. Panchkarma includes five major procedures that are designed for bio purification in both healthy as well as diseased states of body. Panchkarma means 'five actions' or 'five elements'. Since it consists of five main therapies it is named so. It has been given a special place in all ancient ayurvedic texts. It includes five specific bio purification processes namely Vamana, Virechana, Basti, Nasya and Raktamokshana. In Ayurveda the balance of tridosha in the body is health and their imbalance in body is disease. So, Panchakarma is not only good for alleviating diseases but it is also useful tool in maintaining excellent health.

KEY WORDS :*Panchkarma,Lifestyle disorder,Ayurveda*

INTRODUCTION

The aim of *Ayurveda* is to ensure health of a healthy individual and to cure disease of a diseased person¹. In both these cases, *Panchkarma* the fivefold therapy used to sanitize and purify the body is the cornerstone to the management.

All health problems start with an imbalance in *dosha*², body's metabolic system and this reduces the state of health and vitality and prepares a base for the development of diseases.

In the present era, globally the major causes of imbalance in metabolism are-

- Lack of self observation
- Sedentary lifestyle
- An improper and irregular diet
- Absence of relaxation techniques and meditation practices.
- Tension and stress

And these factors lead to accumulation of toxins in the body and these accumulated toxins have to be expelled out in order to keep our body healthy. Through the *Panchkarma* therapy these toxic clogs are removed to normalise the physiological process. So it may be called as Detoxification therapy.

In body if the *doshas* are vitiated beyond a particular level, they give rise to various toxins, which have a tendency to accumulate in the micro channels and these are beyond the level of pacification and hence they need to be expelled out from the body. In such cases the *samsodhana chikitsa (Panchkarma)* plays a vital role. *Panchkarma* is essentially designed to restore the integrity of srotas [channel] system in the body in health and disease. Each procedure of *Panchkarma* has a specific biopurification efficacy which cleanses the *srotas* for optimal functioning and maintains the essential balance of *Tridosha* in body. After detoxification medicines get absorbed better and are more effective. Moreover, the entire process improves the quality of life.

Clinical importance:-

- Immunopotentiality, biopurification and disease prevention.
- Specific disease cure (Disease curative *Panchkarma*)
- Disease suppression and rehabilitation (Palliative *Panchkarma*)

Benefits of Panchkarma³:-

- Enhances strength, energy, vitality and mental clarity.
- Slows ageing process and increases life span.
- Boosts body's immunity and energy level.
- Helps to implement healthy diet and life style.
- Balance the bodily humour *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha*.
- Reduces insomnia, anxiety and mental problems.

Purificatory effect of Panchkarma:-

- Transmembrane visceral purification of body by *pradhana karma*.
- Transdermal purification by *Bahyaparimarjan-snehan, swedan, abhyanga* (included under *purva karma*)

All the disease and health problems start with an imbalance in the body's metabolic system. Each procedure has a specific biopurification efficacy which cleanses the *srotas* (channels) of the body for optimal functioning.

In *Ayurveda* there are two major categories of treatment :

- *Samshamana chikitsa* (palliative treatment)
- *Samsamshodhana chikitsa* (detoxification/biopurification measures)⁴.

Among *samsamana chikitsa* and *samsodhana chikitsa* the *samsodhana chikitsa* is superior. *Samsamana* procedure pacifies the morbid dosha and do not expel them hence, there is possibility of recurrence of the disease but *samsodhana chikitsa* evacuates the morbid dosha out of the body there by ensures complete cure⁵. *Panchkarma* comes under the *samsamshodhana* therapy. Each *Panchkarma* procedure is designed to have a capability of evacuating any morbid matter but they are more efficacious in relation to certain dosha. *Vamana* predominantly expels *kaphadosha* from *gastrium*. *Virechana* evacuates *pitta dosha* from the lower part of gastrointestinal tract. *Basti* therapy helps in the removal of vitiated *vata dosha* accumulated in the *pakvasaya*(colon)⁶.

Samsodhana therapy is divided into three major parts:

1. *Purva Karma*(preparatory measures)
2. *Pradhana Karma*(main procedure)
3. *Paschat Karma*(postprocedure regimens)

Purva karma- It includes-

Pachan(Digestive measures)

Snehan(Internal and external oleation)

Swedan(fomentation)

Before the main procedure there is a need to prepare the body to dislodge the obstruction of the morbid matters and make it easier to be expelled out from the body. The *purva karma* helps in liquefaction and mobilization of the morbid matters present in various channels(*srotas*) of the body from the site of morbidity to the site of elimination. Thus after the *purva karma* the *dosha* become ripened to be expelled out by particular *Panchkarma* procedure according to the individual's constitution(*prakriti*) and disorders(*vikriti*) respectively.

Pradhan Karma: It includes-

VAMANA-Therapeutic emesis

VIRECHANA-Therapeutic purgation

BASTI-Medicated enema

NASYA-Elimination of morbid matters through nasal route

RAKTAMOKSHANA-Bloodletting

Paschat Karma It includes:

- *Sansarjan Karma*(specific dietics)
- *Dhumpana*(smoking of medicinal cigars)
- Rules to follow specific activities

A strict diet and lifestyle procedure has to be followed throughout the treatment. The rehabilitative procedures to bring back the body to the normal lifestyle and diet are considered as

'*paschat karma*'. In this stage efforts are done to bring back the normal physical strength lost during the eliminatory procedure and to ensure the proper therapeutic outcome.

DISCUSSION

Today, even modern science estimates that longevity is determined 30% by one's genetics and 70% by lifestyle choices.

Many diseases of modern times are caused by these deep-seated toxins which lead to improper digestion, stress, lack of sleep, anxiety, loss of concentration, premature aging, heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, cancer, neurological disorders, chronic fatigue, osteoporosis, sexual disorders, allergies, and unhappiness.

In order to maintain well-being in healthy individuals to restore balance in those experiencing illness *Panchkarma* plays a very vital role. The purpose of *Panchkarma* is to extend the quality and span of life.

Panchkarma utilizes a set of therapeutic procedures which are given in a specific order to promote the elimination of toxic substances out of the body via the nearest possible route of elimination. The resulting purification results in the intrinsic up-regulation of the body's capacity to cure itself from many conditions and diseases. But *Panchkarma* has value not only as a detoxification procedure (*samsamshodhana*) in the treatment of disease but it is also administered as a palliative and nutritive treatment. It is also an essential prerequisite for *rasayana* and *vajikarana chikitsa* in *Ayurveda*. So, *Panchakaram* is having a multiplicity of action like *shaman*, *brimhana*, *stambhana* etc.

Panchkarma is a medical treatment which when properly administered has profound effects on the detoxification mechanisms and metabolism of the human physiology.

Treatment in *Ayurveda* means the restoration of the order of physical as well as psychic reality rather than merely elimination of the syndromes of so called disease.

Ayurveda advises undergoing *Panchkarma* at the seasonal changes to clean the body, improve the digestion and to improve the metabolic processes.

Panchkarma therapy is also used as a purification therapy to cleanse the body before starting a treatment. A diseased body can be compared to a soiled cloth which cannot be colored as we desire. Hence to attain the maximum benefits, the body has to be purified or cleaned before starting the treatment. The cleared channels help medicines to penetrate the deeper tissues.

The channels (*srotas*) become devoid of obstructions (obstructions by vitiated *doshas*) after *samshodhana*. The medicines administered after *samshodhana* assimilates and reaches every part of the body through these clear channels. Hence the efficiency of medicines increases.

Panchkarma in daily routine like *Pratimarsha nasya* a kind of *nasya karma* which is administered twice a day which eliminates the risk of diseases related to head.

Seasonal *Panchkarma* advised in the seasons in which natural provocation of dosha occurs so as to remove the provoked dosha for the maintenance of health like in *vasnta ritu vaman karma* is most ideal to perform because liquefaction followed by provocation of *kaphadosha* takes place in *vasanta ritu* so by performing *vaman karma* we expel out the *kaphadosha* and prevent it to cause any disease.

CONCLUSION

In this way, *Ayurvedic Panchkarma* is applicable to all cases covering a wide range of preventive, curative and promotive conditions. Now a days due to multidimensional benefits of *Panchkarma* people from all over the world are being attracted towards it to get desired benefits. So, *Panchkarma* proves itself to be a holistic therapy for global health care.

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