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A critical study on *Parihara kala*

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Abstract

Shodhana chikitsa mentioned in Ayurveda grantha helps in expelling out the vitiated dosha from the body. Most of the procedures are stressful for the body and it will take time to regain the initial strength. For that all the *Acharyas* have mentioned a specific time period for following specific *pathya krama* which is known as *parihara kala*. For all the procedures including *snehana* and *swedana*, there are chances of fluid loss, electrolyte imbalance, mild inflammation and other muscle fatigueness. These procedures also compromise *agni bala* and *sareera bala*. So to regain all these, the body will need a certain time period. Hence there is a need of *parihara kala* after each procedure.

Keywords: Ayurveda, *Parihara kala*, *Shodhana*, *pathya*

Introduction

In Ayurveda, *shodhana chikitsa* has got more importance as it destroys the disease condition from the root and prevent its recurrence.¹ It deals with expelling the comorbid *Doshas* which gradually get vitiated by our day to day living *Ahara* and *vihara* (diet & life style). In addition, *Snehana*, *Swedana* and *Samsarjana Krama* is an integral part in *Panchakarma* treatment. *Ayurveda Acharyas* have explained *Pariharya Vishaya* for *Panchakarma* treatment. Dietic & behavioral restriction which should be observed before, during and after the course of *Panchakarma* therapy are called as *Pariharya Vishaya*. There is also certain time period for each *pariharya vishaya* which is known as *parihara kala*.

Pratikarma kala and *Parihara kala* was mentioned in *Charaka Samhita*.² *Pratikarma kala* means period of treatment and *parihara kala* means period of *pathya kala*. Different *Acharyas* have mentioned *pariharakala* in different way

Parihara kala helps in regaining the strength of *agni* and *sareera* after *shodhana* procedure. The word “*parihara*” means *thyaga /parivarjanam*³ and “*kala*” means *kalate* (to count)/*kalyaati* (to hold or to put on)⁴ but it is used for the time in general as well as for proper time and for a period or portion of time. Thus the term *Parihara kala* indicates the time period in which the restricted items (*pariharya vishaya*) should be avoided.

Methodology

The aim was to find out the significance and critical analysis of *parihara kala* in *Panchakarma* from classical Ayurvedic literature, scientific articles and practical experiences. Data mining was carried out from various texts, peer reviewed journals and some websites of the concerned subjects. Evaluated them using scientific basis and practical aspects. This article is based on a review of Ayurvedic texts. Materials related to relevant topics have been collected. The main Ayurvedic texts used in this study are *Charak Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtang Samgraha*, *Ashtang Hridaya*, *Chikitsa sangraha*, *Vasti pradeepa* and available commentaries on these.

Parihara kala

- कालस्तु बस्त्यादिषु याति यावांस्तावान् भवेद्द्विः परिहारकालः।५४।⁵

In *bastyadi* i.e *vamana*, *virechana*, *nasya* and *basti chikitsa*, the *parihara kala* is mentioned as two times that of period of administration, which means all the *parihara vishaya* told should be avoided for two time of the duration of procedure in- *vamana*, *virachana nasya* and especially *basti*. Where as *Vagbhatacharya* mentioned that *Parihara vishaya* should be followed during the procedure and also after *snehapana* equal to the number of days of *Snehapana*. It is not only applicable to *snehapana* but also to all other *shodhana karma*.⁶ While explaining *siravyadha*, *susruta* has recommended *parihara kala* for one month or till he get strength.⁷ *Dalhana* has commented on this verse that it is also applicable for *virechana*. In the context of *sareera sthana*, *susruta* again mention about *pariharakala* which is applicable for all *snehana*, *swedana*, *vamana*, *virechana*, *asthapana* and *anuvasana* as 1 month or till he get strength.⁸

Why 30 days ?

Dalhana gives the reason behind suggestion of one month as *parihara kala* by *susruta*. He says that after *shodhana karma* there is seven days of *samsarjana karma* and then *rasa samsarjana* by which the person get strength of *dhatu* till *sukra dhatu* and it will take 1 month.⁹ *Susruta Acharya* has already mentioned that *Rasa* stays in each *Dhatu* for a period of 3015 *Kalas*, approximate 5 days.¹⁰ Thus, in about a month the *Shukra* and the *Artava* are formed in the Male and Female respectively. But the *rasa prasarana* can be taken place as *jala santhanavat* i.e slow spreading or *sabda santhanavat* i.e fast spreading. In weak persons the *rasa prasarana* in *dhatu* take place as *jala santhana* and in person with more *agnibala* the *rasa prasarana* take place as *sabda santhana*. So in weak persons to get full strength of *dhatu*, it may take more than one month and in strong persons it can be attained within a month also, that's why *susruta* has mentioned the term "aa bala labhat" i.e till he get strength.

In case of *sweda* also there is *pariharakala* mentioned by different *Acharya*. *Charaka Acharya* has mentioned that after *swedana* one has to avoid *vyayama* for one day.¹¹ In *Ashtanga sangraha* also similar reference can be seen.¹² In *Indu* commentary of *Ashtanga hridaya* it is said that in *Sarvanga svedana*, avoid *Vyayama* absolutely on the day of *Svedana* and in others till he get strength. In *vastipradeepam* and *Chikitsa sangraha*, for *Kaya seka* the *parihara kala* is mentioned throughout the days of treatment as well as for an equal number of days after treatment along with half the number of days of treatment. For *Shashtika pinda sweda*, *Parihara kala* is more than that of *Kayaseka*.^{13,14}

Discussion

Pariharakala is the recovery period or the period upto which one has to follow all the diet and regimens after *sodhana kriya*. It is also applicable to *purvakarma* like *snehana* and *swedana*.

In modern view this *parihara kala* can be correlated with convalescence period. Convalescence period is the period to recover health and strength gradually after sickness or weakness or It is the gradual recovery period of health and strength after illness / injury.¹⁵ *Panchakaram* procedures are strenuous one which causes minor stress to the body and leads to transient weakness. The procedures like *Vamana*, *virechana*, *basti* causes temporary inflammation or injury to mucosal layer, to recover from that weakness or injury the body needs some time. In that sense *parihara kala* can be correlated to convalescence period.

Need of parihara kala

The light and non stimulating though nutritious diet, helps to give sufficient nourishment, promote sweating and bring the digestive fire to normalcy. The rationale of the regime is to secure perfect rest and quietness mentally and physically. These diet and regimen; if not strictly followed, will have an adverse reaction on the body. Hence specific diet pattern and strict regimen for a prescribed time period is highly essential to maintain the homeostasis of the bodily constituents during procedure.

1. Correction time for weakness

The weakness after panchakarma procedures are mainly due to dehydration, electrolyte imbalance and muscle weakness

Electrolyte imbalance:

The procedures like *svedana*, *vamana*, *virechana*, *basti* can cause electrolyte imbalances. Studies have shown that *swedana* procedure can cause decrease in sodium and chloride and an increase in potassium level (WNL) immediately after procedure¹⁶ and *vamana* & *virechana* procedures can lead to significant decrease in levels of serum sodium, potassium and chloride levels and significant increase in level of serum calcium (changes were within normal limit)^{17,18}

Though the changes are within in normal limits, an additional physical stress or treatment procedure can worsen the imbalance so there need time for the body to correct the change by itself

Dehydration

Vamana, *Virechana*, *Vasti* causes a state of mild fluid loss or Hypo hydration is created in the body by the loss of body fluid including water, electrolyte, proteins, and metabolic wastes. While in *Vamana* and *Virechana* this hypohydration is stimulated by administering a strong emetic or purgative which drives out the intracellular fluid into the GIT, in *Vasti* this is attained by administering a hypertonic solution into the rectum which extracts out the intracellular fluid from lower GIT.

During *Swedana*, a fluid loss upto 1.5 ltr/hr can occur.¹⁹ Even *snehapana* also can create dehydration. *Snehapana* induces ketosis in the body as a result of which ketones and sodium need to be eliminated which causes excess urination following dehydration.

To re-establish the water loss after these procedures the body needs time

Muscle weakness :

For all the *sodhana* procedures muscles are aided in the process of elimination which leads to a transient muscle fatigue. During *snehapana* also ketosis is induced in body where the body work hard in order to use an alternative source of energy apart from glucose and there is a need of more energy to digest fat than carbohydrate which causes weakness in body.

2. Correction time for Eustress

Eustress ; Stress which is defined as a physiological reaction by an organism to an uncomfortable or unfamiliar physical or psychological stimulus and it can be Eustress or Distress. In distress, outcome is a negative response where as Eustress is capable of generating a positive beneficial response in the body.²⁰

Shodhana procedure act as eustress in body and the form of eustress is different in different procedures. In *Snehapana*, a fat metabolic challenge preceded by a glucose metabolic challenge induces eustress in body where as in *Swedana*, thermal challenge is the backbone behind eustress. In *Vamana*, *virechana* and *vasti*, hypohydration of ECF is the reason behind inducing eustress in body. Eustress is the working principle behind shodhana which alerts the body's corrective mechanisms by stimulating the controlling systems of the body.²¹ Still it causes minimal level of stress in body or may take variable degree of time to get the body in homeostasis depending on each person which demands a particular time period before moving on to next level.

3. Time for correction of inflammation and restoration of gut flora

Shodhana procedures causes temporary inflammation and changes in gut flora. Studies have shown supported evidences for this fact. The Total Leukocyte Count (TLC) was found to be increased significantly after 5 min of *Vamana* as *Vamana*, *virechana*, *basti*, *nasya* etc., causes temporary inflammation on respective mucosal layer.²² Other studies had shown that there is decrease in bacterioids, *E. coli* count of intestinal flora after follow up period of *virechana* karma. During *Virechana*, The total microbial load was decreased by 31-

fold and the colonisation of the bacteria was restored after fourteen days only.²³ So to establish eubiosis after sodhana there is need of a particular time period.

4. Correction time for digestive fire

There is a transient time period of decreased digestive fire after each sodhana procedure. During snehapana, decrease in digestive fire can be easily seen. Gastrium when filled with food inhibits signals to suppress the feeding center; a small quantity of fat is enough to cause this. Fat on entering the gastrium releases cholecystokinin which inhibits further eating. It also causes stimulation of the ventromedial nuclei of the hypothalamus, thus creating complete satiety. Next, when the chyme containing fat enters the duodenum, the activity of the pylorus pump is depressed and the pylorus sphincter is slightly closed. Thus, stomach emptying is slowed. This shows the fact that *Sneha* administered for the purpose of *Shodhana* impairs the *Agni* transiently thus causing a negative energy balance.

5. Transition time from fat rich diet to carbohydrate diet in snehapana

In Snehana, the patient is sustained on a fat rich diet while maintaining a gluco-deprived state. But the normal physiology of the body is accustomed to the glucose metabolism alone for its basic energy needs. Thus *Snehapana* is actually creating a fat metabolic challenge preceded by a glucose metabolic challenge. Such a metabolic challenge is identified as a eustress -metabolic challenge at the physiological level. Though these changes are the basis for mode of action of snehapana, a sudden change from the mechanism and fat rich diet to the normal diet (*prakriti bhojana*) after snehapana can harm the body – time needed

6. Liver & ketosis in snehapana

Most organs and tissues can use ketone bodies as an alternative source of energy when it is not available through carbs. The human brain uses ketone bodies as a major source of energy during periods where glucose is not readily available. The heart typically uses fatty acids as its source of energy, but it can also use ketones for its normal function. The liver although being the primary site that produces ketone bodies, cannot use ketone bodies as a energy source because it lacks the necessary enzyme beta ketoacyl-CoA transferase. Energy need of liver may be compromised during snehapana : to recover that body need time

7. Concept of autophagy

Autophagy is the process by which a cell breaks down and destroys old, damaged, or abnormal proteins and other substances in its cytoplasm to maintain homeostasis. Lipid can stimulate autophagy in the cells. But prolonged load of lipid can cause burden on lysosomal system and vulnerability to Ischaemia-Reperfusion injury of cell: if it occurs cell need time to repair the injury by down regulation of autophagy. To normalise the alteration in the autophagic system after prolonged use of sneha, body needs time

CONCLUSION

Charaka Acharya was the first one to mention about *pratikarma kala* and *parihara kala*. Different Acharya has given different *parihara kala*. Charaka Acharya mentioned two times that of number of treatment days and *vagbhata* Acharya mentioned duration of *parihara kala* as during the period of procedure and equal to the number of days of procedure. *Susruta* Acharya mentioned 1 month or till attain bala as *parihara kala*. *Dalhana* Acharya has given the rationale behind *parihara kala*. As *shodhana* procedure compromises the *sareera bala* and *agni bala* there is need of *parihara kala* after *shodhana* procedures.

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