A Critical Review Study on Lepa Kalpana: An Ayurvedic Formulation

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Abstract

Ayurveda is a science which treat the diseases both external and internal application of medicines in different form. In Bahaya Parimarjan, the medicine is administered for external use only. In Ayurveda, there are different form of external application are described for cure of various ailments. These different forms like Lepa, Udvartana, Malahara, Upnaha, Abhyanga etc. Description in topical or external application of the medicine in semi-solid form is Lepa. Lepa described in classics as the treatment of the various diseases and for beauty purpose. Preparation of Lepa is the medicament meant for topical application to the skin, coloring the hairs and others. In Lepa, wet medicinal drugs are made in paste form, if the drugs are in dry state then they are converted into paste form by adding little quantity of water and grinding. This paste is used as an external application and called as Lepa Kalpana. From Pharmaceutical point of view Lepa Kalpana is a form of Kalka Kalpana.

Ayurvedic literature has not furnished complete details of Lepakalpana in a single chapter. Therefore one has to depend upon the scattered references to understand the concepts of Lepakalpana clearly. Acharya Charaka has described formulations for external application in 'Aragwadhiya Adhaya' but neither he himself nor commentator Chakrapani touched the various pharmaceutical aspects of Lepakalpana.

Key words:- Lepa, Udvartana, Semi-solid, Kalpana, Pharmaceutics, Kalka etc.
INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a science which treat the diseases both external and internal application of medicines in different form.

In Ayurveda classics, administration of drugs in three different ways, as –

- Anatah Parimarjan
- Bahaya Parimarjan
- Shastra Pranidhan

In Bahaya Parimarjan, the medicine is administered for external use only. In Ayurveda, there are different form of external application are described for cure of various ailment. These different forms like Lepa, Udvartana, Malahara, Upnaha, Abhyanga etc.

Description in topical or external application of the medicine in semi-solid form is Lepa. Lepa described in classics as the treatment of the various diseases and for beauty purpose. Preparation of Lepa is the medicament meant for topical application to the skin, coloring the hairs and others.

In the preparation of Lepas, single or compound drugs are converted into fine powder form and mixed with desire or specific liquid media.

Beauty, is a quality that provides the pleasure to the sense, is perhaps the desire of human being. It is natural desire of the human being to have a healthy glamorous appearance with attractive personality but very few are God gifted in sense of beauty. Beauty is not just an external appearance, it is a characteristic that gives a perceptual appearance to the eyes, ear, intellect or the moral sense. It is the quality that pleasure or satisfaction to the sense.

Herbs which are for the beautification is well described in Ayurveda literature since the centuries as herbal extract in a part or whole part for various ailment of the skin related and coloring of hairs for overall appearance. Marketed demand of the Ayurveda in beautification increase due to its unique concept about beauty and effective, low cost, easy availability of the contents, long lasting beauty therapy without side effect. The herbal paste which use on hairs for coloring or cure of graying of hairs etc. are known as Kesharanjan Lepa.

Kesharanjan Lepa or hair color changing Lepa is one of the well-known effective and oldest method which spread over the hairs of the head and left for some time till completely dry and washed with fresh water properly.

CONCEPT OF LEPA KALPANA

In pharmaceutical view, Lepa Kalpana is same as Kalka Kalpana. Lepa and Kalka Kalpana are only different in use, so their nomenclature has been given. In modern pharmaceutical science, there are no specific terminology has been given.

Definition

द्रव्यमाद्रशिलाशिष्टं शुष्कं वा सद्रवं तनुः
देह प्रलेिनार्र तल्लेि इत्युच्यते ||
(D.G. Uttrardha 1)

According to Yadavji Trikamji, wet medicinal drugs are made in paste form or the drugs in dry form they are convert into the paste form with help of prescribed liquid media or water and grind it. This prepared Lepa is use external application, called as Lepa Kalpana.

Thus, the selected drug in Ardra or dry form, if in dry form, taken in a Khalva yantra and other devices and converted into fine powder form and filtered it. This filtered material taken again in Khalva Yantra or device and mix with required quantity of water or other specific liquid. After it, the mixture is triturated till obtain in paste form which used as Lepa form in various ailment for treatment.

Acharya Charaka has been described the properties of Lepa –

नातितिफ्फञ्जो न रूक्षश्च न शिण्डो न द्रवः समः ||
(Cha. Chi. 21/100)

According to Acharya Charaka, Sneha Drava may be take in sufficient quantity, quantity of other liquid media should be quantity sufficient neither more or less quantity. Quantity of the Sneha Drava or other liquid media which able to form the Lepas should be take.
IMPORTANCE OF LEPA KALPANA[2]
Acharya Sushruta has been mentioned the importance of Lepa Kalpana

यथा प्रज्वलिते वै जलयन्ममसा परिषेचनम्।
किंचि प्रशामयणप्रिमेयमालेपनं रूजः।।
(Su. Chi 1/15)

Acharya Sushruta described the importance of Lepa Kalpana through an example that, when poring the water over burning house, the fire is extinguished immediately or may be control, in the same manner the Lepa pacifies the local Doshas by the instant/initial stage of local application.

Acharya Sushruta also mentioned[3] that -

आलेप आध्य उपक्रमः; एषसर्वशोचानां सामान्य प्रधानतमच्।।
(Su. Su. 18/3)

Acharya Sushruta indicate that Alepa is initial and best topical application he also mentioned that it is the best treatment Shotha and pain reliver.

SYNONYMS OF LEPA[4]

आलेप्या च नामानि लिथो लेपं लेपनम्।
(Sha. Sa. Ut. Kha. 11/01)

Alepa, Lipta, Lepa, Lepan etc. words are used as Lepa in different classics.

CLASSIFICATION OF LEPA

There are different types are described in Ayurveda Classics. Some important classifications are described below by different Acharyas

A. According to Acharya Sushruta[5]
- Pralepa
- Pradeha
- Alepa

B. According to Acharya Vagbhatta[6]
- Snaihika
- Nirvapana
- Prasadana
- Stambhan
- Vilayana
- Pachana
- Pidana
- Shodhan
- Shoshan
- Savarnikaran

C. According to Acharya Sharangadhar[8]
- Doshghna Lepa
- Vishghna Lepa
- Varnya Lepa
1. According to Acharya Sushruta\textsuperscript{[5]}
(A) Pralepa: Properties of this type of \textit{Lepa} are Sheeta, Tanu and Aishoshi, Avishoshi (not to dry in non-compressing wound)
(B) Pradeha: In this type of \textit{Lepa}, properties like Sheeta/Ushna thick or thin.
(C) Alepa: It is mix in properties in sense of \textit{Pralepa} and \textit{Pradeha}.

2. According to Acharya Vagabhatta\textsuperscript{[6]}
(A) Snaihika Lepa: In this type of \textit{Lepa}, Sneha Dravya are used as contents and applied in Vatavikara.
(B) Nirvapana Lepa: In \textit{Nirvapana Lepa}, contents are used which are Sheeta in property and applied in Pittavikara, Vishvikar, Agnidagdha, and Kshardagdha etc.
(C) Prasadana Lepa: This type is same in properties as \textit{Nirvapana Lepa} but it is applied in Vatadishitraktavikara.
(D) Stambhan Lepa: It is anticoagulant in nature which used in Atraktasrava.
(E) Vilayan Lepa: \textit{Ushnavirya Dravya} are used in this \textit{Lepa} and generally applied in Apakvashotha, Kaphamedavilayana, Granthishotha etc.
(F) Pachana Lepa: Main contents of this \textit{Lepa} are \textit{Ushnaveerya And Ruksha Dravya} and used in pachyamanshothaj vrana.
(G) Peedana Lepa: Ruksa and picchila dravya are used in this lepa and applied in small vrana.
(H) Shodhan Lepa: \textit{Shodhan Lepa} is used in \textit{Shodhan} of the \textit{Vrana} (wound refinement).
(I) Savarnikaran: it is a specific type of \textit{Lepa} which used to change the wound color to skin color.

3. According to Acharya Sharangdhar\textsuperscript{[7]}
Acharya Sharangdhar describe the \textit{Lepa} according to their use of purpose. He also mentioned the Praman of \textit{Lepa} for particular application purpose.
(A) Doshaghna lepa: This type of is applied according to Doshas. It ¼ part of \textit{Angula} thick in size.
(B) Vishaghna lepa: In this type of \textit{Lepa}, applied in \textit{Vishaghnta} and thickness is 1/3 part of \textit{Angula}.
(C) Varnya Lepa: This type of \textit{Lepa} is applied for cosmetic purpose and Thickness for this \textit{Lepa} is ½ part of \textit{Angula}.

THICKNESS OF THE LEPA
It must need that when applied \textit{Lepa} on skin than how it working proper. It is depended on the applied quantity of \textit{Lepa} because of very thin or very thick \textit{Lepa} will not working proper. So, it must need that \textit{Lepa} should be in prescribe manner.
In Ayurveda classics, it is well defined according to their presence of Doshas, or use of purpose.

Charaka Samhita\textsuperscript{[8]}
Acharya Charaka has been described first about thickness of the \textit{Lepa}

\begin{quote}
धिशापाणीय वर्ण: स्बाध्य प्रलेप: कल्पितेऽऽििृतिः। (Cha. Chi 21/100)
\end{quote}
According to acharya Charaka \textit{Pralepa} should be applied 1/3 part of the \textit{Angushta}.
Acharya Charaka has been mentioned that when rub faecient action of a drug is expected, it should be uniformly thick. But when softening action is to be elicited, the drug should be applied uniformly thin. Thus,
this statement interprets the action of the drug as per requirement. In modern, have not mention this type of requirement. It recommends uniformly application over the affected skin.

Sushruta Samhita\(^9\)

तस्य प्रमाण महिषासूरीप्रात्मोक्तेश्वरयुपायप्रशिद्धिः || Su. Su. 18/12

According to Acharya Sushruta thickness of the Lepa for the application on the skin should be equal to the buffalo’s skin.

Sharangdhar Samhita\(^{10}\)

बिज्ञानानुसारौरसांख्यान्गां ओऽहृत्वात: || Sha. Sa. Ut. Kha. 11/2

Thickness of the Lepa is one fourth, one third and half Anguli is respectively for Dosaghna, Vishaghna and Varnya Lepa.

**QUANTITY OF SNEHA DRAWA IN LEPA**

Actual quantity of Dravya which are used is most important. There may be many contents are used to preparation of Lepa. Sneha Dravya are used in formation of Lepa for mitigation of Doshas. In Doshas, there are different quantity are required. Acharya Sushruta\(^{12}\) has been advised to incorporate the Sneha Dravyas in Lepa according to Doshas

बहु भागं पैतिक चतुर्भागं वातिके || (Su. Su. 18/10)

According to Acharya Sushruta Sneha Dravyas in 1/4\(^{th}\) part used in Vatika Doshas, 1/6\(^{th}\) in Paitika Doshas and 1/8\(^{th}\) part Sneha used in Kaphaja Dosha.

**APPLYING METHOD OF LEPA**

Acharya Sushruta\(^{13}\) has been mentioned that how to applied the Lepa. They described about usefulness of Lepa according to proper methodology.

तत्र प्रतिलोममालिकेप्रातालोमम् || प्रतिलामे हि सम्योग्यमवितड्रुतुप्रतिशति || रोमकृपान्त स्वेदवाहिनिः सिरामुखैव प्रमो homosexuality प्राप्ति || (Su. Su. 18/4)

According to Acharya Sushruta it has been mentioned that Lepa should be gently applied on skin in an upward of reverse direction of the hair to make the action more effectiveness.

By this type of application of Lepa on skin enters into Romakoopa get quick absorb through Swedavahisrotas and Siramukha leading to desire effect.

This type of rubbing method increase the temperature of the skin which may be hastening the pilosebaceous uptake and skin permeation of the drug in topical formulations.

**TIME AND DURATION OF LEPA APPLICATION**\(^{13}\)

Time schedule of particular medicine is must necessary for its proper effect. This time of application is considered that there are not produce any harmful effect. Time period of applied medicine like Lepa, Upnaha etc. are considered for specific time which described in our classics.

Acharya Sushruta has been described that -

न चालनें प्रज्ञांप्रां च भूत्तेवतिहितोभावस्तवतिनिगमान्तिकार प्रदृश्यतिरिति || (Su. Su. 18/13)

Generally, it has been described that, heat of the body come out through skin pores at the night. So, if the Lepa or topical application applied in the night time, the skin pores get blocked and obstruction the transfer of the heat of the body. So, it has considered that Lepa should not be applied in the night.

Acharya Charak has been described that at the night time, all the Srotas in the body get closed. There also mentioned that their working capacity wanes as compared to daytime. Thus, the application of Lepa at night will not produce desirable effect. The other opinion may be as to why external application on medicine should not be made at night. But there are some exceptions i.e. Apakva, Rakta Shlesma Shotha etc. applied may be at night.
CONTRAINDICATION OF LEPA\textsuperscript{[14]}

Topical applications are contraindication in specific condition which may related with contents, use after long time, applied method etc. Topical application of Lepa which used in contraindication condition they will not produce actual effect. It may be cause other complication like itching, burning sensation, watery discharge if not work properly.

Thus, there are specific time duration, applicable period has been mentioned in our classics to cure the diseases and to save from harmful effect.

Acharya Sushruta has been suggested that which conditions are not suitable for proper effect of Lepa or conditions which are contraindicated for application of Lepa


Acharya Sushruta\textsuperscript{[15]} also mentioned that -

\textbf{न च तेनैव लेपेन प्रदेहादाय: ||}

\textbf{शुष्कभावात् स निर्दिष्टो युक्तो स्वादपर्यः: ||} (Su. Su. 18/16).

Effect of Lepa is properly when it should be applied in semisolid form. So. A Lepa should not be used in dry form or reused after mixing of the solvent in it, without mixing of solvent it become unaffected or useless.

SHELF LIFE PERIOD OF LEPA

In Ayurveda literature, Saviryata Avadhi refer to the period which medicine remain potent. It was not directly mentioned in our ancient classics but it was later come into force i.e. Sharangdhari Samhita, Yogaratnakar etc. for different dosage form.

According to Acharya Sushruta\textsuperscript{[16]} a drug can be utilized for various therapeutic purpose unless it remained in an intact state that is maintaining its taste, smell, appearance etc.

The shelf life of the drug can be considered up to the period when it gets deteriorated and there is an alteration in its physical state. The AFI has been given the period as the time from the manufacture within the formulation should be consumed for best results.

If a Lepa made by herbal drugs, it should be used within 24 hours otherwise the drugs get decompose and application may be harmful for skin etc: if a Lepa contents are mineral and metals, it may be used for a long period according to contents shelf life. Thus, it depends upon the base with which the drugs are mixed in particular Lepa.

DISCUSSION

The topical medication intended for external use is called Lepa. The fundamental idea behind Lepa Kalpana is that herbs are ingested as prescribed in Ayurvedic scriptures, combined with a medium to make a paste, and then applied to the skin. The Ayurvedic literature have many Lepa formulas for treating various ailments. The thickness, time technique of preparation, and application method should all be rigorously adhered to for best outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Lepa is a crucial medication that should be given topically to the skin. Lepa is used to treat a variety of ailments, including acne, wound healing, fairness, inflammation, and other skin conditions. Lepa is a key component of Ayurveda, it can be said in this way.
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