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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 ailment. These different forms like *Lepa*, *Udvardhana*, *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*, *Udvardhana*, *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 *Keshranjan 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

द्रव्यमार्द्रशिलापिष्टं शुष्कं वा सद्रवं तनु ।

देह प्रलेपनार्थं तल्लेप 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^[1] has been described the properties of *Lepa* –

नातिस्निग्धो न रूक्षश्च न पिण्डो 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 वेश्मन्यम्भसा परिषेचनम् ।

क्षिप्रं प्रशमयत्यग्निमेवमालेपनं 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 आध उपक्रमः, एषसर्वशोफानां सामान्य प्रधानतमश्च ॥ (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]

आलेपस्य च नामानि लिप्तो लेपश्च 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]

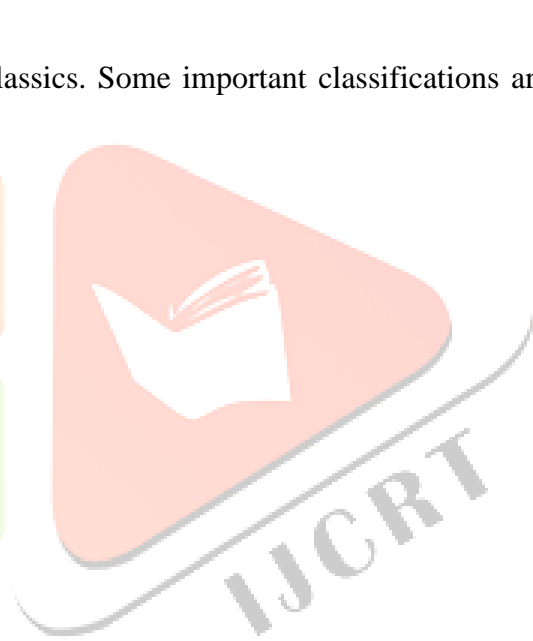
- *Pralepa*
- *Pradeha*
- *Alepa*

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^[5]

- (A) **Pralepa** : Properties of this type of *Lepa* are *Sheeta*, *Tanu* and *Aishoshi*, *Avishoshi* (not to dry in non-compressing wound)
- (B) **Pradeha** : In this type of *Lepa*, properties like *Sheeta/Ushna* thick or thin.
- (C) **Alepa** : It is mix in properties in sense of *Pralepa* and *Pradeha*.

2. According to Acharya Vagabhatta^[6]

- (A) **Snaihika Lepa** : In this type of *Lepa*, *Sneha Dravya* are used as contents and applied in *Vatavikara*.
- (B) **Nirvapana Lepa** : In *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 *Nirvapana Lepa* but it is applied in *Vatadishitraktavikara*.
- (D) **Stambhan Lepa** : it is anticoagulant in nature which used in *Atiraktasrava*.
- (E) **Vilayan Lepa** : *Ushnaviryia Dravya* are used in this *Lepa* and generally applied in *Apakvashotha*, *Kaphamedavilayana*, *Granthishotha* etc.
- (F) **Pachana Lepa** : Main contents of this *Lepa* Are *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** : *Shodhan Lepa* is used in *Shodhan* of the *Vrana* (wound refinement).
- (I) **Ropana Lepa** : This *Lepa* is applied for *Ropan* of the *Vrana* (wound healing).
- (J) **Savarnikaran** : it is a specific type of *Lepa* which used to change the wound color to skin color.

3. According to Acharya Sharangdhar^[7]

Acharya Sharangdhar describe the *Lepa* according to their use of purpose. He also mentioned the *Praman* of *Lepa* for particular application purpose.

- (A) **Doshaghna lepa** : This type of is applied according to *Doshas*. It $\frac{1}{4}$ part of *Angula* thick in size.
- (B) **Vishaghna lepa** : In this type of *Lepa*, applied in *Vishaghnta* and thickness is $\frac{1}{3}$ part of *Angula*.
- (C) **Varnya Lepa** : This type of *Lepa* is applied for cosmetic purpose and Thickness for this *Lepa* is $\frac{1}{2}$ part of *Angula*.

THICKNESS OF THE LEPA

It must need that when applied *Lepa* on skin than how it working proper. It is depended on the applied quantity of *Lepa* because of very thin or very thick *Lepa* will not working proper. So, it must need that *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^[8]

Acharya Charaka has been described first about thickness of the *Lepa*

त्रिभागांगुष्ठ मात्रः स्यात् प्रलेपः कल्कपेषितः । (Cha. Chi 21/100)

According to acharya *Charaka* *Pralepa* should be applied $\frac{1}{3}$ part of the *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]

तस्यस प्रमाण महिषार्द्रमाहिषचर्मोत्सेधमुपदिशन्ति ॥ 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]

त्रिप्रमाणश्चतुर्भागत्रिभागोऽर्धागुलोल्लतः ॥ Sha. Sa. Ut. Kha. 11/2

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

QUANTITY OF SNEHA DRAVA 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*

षड् भागं पैतिकं चतुर्भान्तु वातिके ।

अष्टभागान्तु कफजे स्नेहमात्राम् प्रदापयेत् ॥ (Su. Su. 18/10)

According to *Acharya Sushruta* *Sneha Dravya* in 1/4th part used in *Vatika Doshas*, 1/6th in *Paitika Doshas* and 1/8th part *Sneha* used in *Kaphaja Doshas*.

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 प्रतिलोममालिम्पेन्नानुलोमम् ।

प्रतिलोमे हि सम्यगोषधमवतिष्ठतेऽनुप्रविशति ॥

रोमकूपान् स्वेदवाहिमिश्च सिरामुखैर्वीर्यं प्राप्नोति ॥ (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 चालेपं रात्रौ प्रयुंजीत, मा भूच्छैत्यपिहितोष्मणस्तदनिर्गमाद्विकार प्रवृत्तिरिति ॥ (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^[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*

न च पर्युषितं लेपं कदाचिदवचारयेत् ।

उपर्युपरि लेपं तु न कदाचित् प्रदापयेत् ॥ Su. Su. 18/15

Acharya Sushruta described that stale *Lepa* should not be used because of loss of quality and it may be cause unwanted effect.

Also mentioned that *Lepa* should not be followed another *Lepa* without remove of previous *Lepa* because of as the density and compactness of the drug increase, it causes rise in temperature, pain etc. Thus, a specific action of a *Lepa* which not produce in this condition.

Acharya Sushruta^[15] also mentioned that -

न च तेनैव लेपेन प्रदेहं दापयेत्तपुनः ।

शुष्कभावात् स निर्वीयो युक्तोऽपि स्यादपार्थकः ॥ (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. *Sharangdhar Samhita*, *Yogaratanakar* etc. for different dosage form.

According to *Acharya Sushruta*^[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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