



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Therapeutic Significance of *Karnapurana* in Ear Disorders: A Classical and Contemporary Review

Author : Dr. Minakshi Mendhe

Qualification : B.A.M.S., M.S. [Ayurveda – Shalaky Tantra] Prof. &HOD

Affiliation : Vijyashree Ayurvedic College & Hospital, Jabalpur M.P.

Co Author : Dr. Shilpa Annmwar

Qualification : B.A.M.S., M.S. [Ayurveda – Shalaky Tantra] , Associate Prof.

Affiliation : Vijyashree Ayurvedic College & Hospital, Jabalpur M.P.

Co Author : Dr. Abhishek Pathak

Qualification : B.A.M.S., M.S. [Ayurveda – Shalaky Tantra], Assist.Prof.

Affiliation : Vijyashree Ayurvedic College & Hospital, Jabalpur M.P.

Abstract

Ear disorders constitute a significant proportion of otorhinolaryngological diseases affecting individuals across all age groups. Conditions such as earache, tinnitus, hearing impairment, itching of the ear, and chronic ear infections adversely affect quality of life. In Ayurveda, diseases of the ear are described under *Karnaroga* in *Shalaky Tantra*. Among various therapeutic modalities, *Karnapurana* occupies an important place due to its preventive and curative applications. *Karnapurana* refers to the instillation of medicated oil or other suitable liquid preparations into the external auditory canal for a specified duration. Classical Ayurvedic texts describe *Karnapurana* as an effective measure for alleviating *Vata*-dominant disorders of the ear and maintaining auditory health. Contemporary studies suggest that medicated oils possess anti-inflammatory, analgesic, antimicrobial, and tissue-healing properties which may contribute to therapeutic outcomes. The present review aims to critically analyze classical references of *Karnapurana*, its methodology, indications, contraindications, probable mode of action, and contemporary scientific evidence supporting its role in the management of ear disorders. The review highlights the importance of integrating traditional wisdom with modern scientific understanding to explore the therapeutic potential of *Karnapurana* in otological practice.

Keywords: *Karnapurana*, *Karnaroga*, *Shalaky Tantra*, Ayurveda, Ear Disorders, Medicated Oil Therapy.

Introduction

The sense of hearing plays a crucial role in communication, social interaction, and cognitive development. Ear disorders affect millions worldwide and constitute a major public health concern. Common conditions include otalgia, tinnitus, otitis externa, impacted wax, sensorineural hearing loss, and chronic suppurative otitis media. The increasing prevalence of environmental noise, infections, and lifestyle-related factors has contributed significantly to auditory dysfunctions.¹

Ayurveda describes ear diseases under *Karnaroga*, which are primarily caused by vitiation of *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha Doshas*. Classical texts explain that the ear is predominantly associated with *Akasha Mahabhuta* and serves as the seat of *Shabda Indriya*.² Preservation of auditory function is therefore considered essential for maintaining overall health.

Among the therapeutic procedures described in *Shalaky Tantra*, *Karnapurana* is regarded as an effective intervention for ear diseases. The procedure involves filling the external auditory canal with medicated oil or herbal liquids. Ancient Ayurvedic scholars emphasized its utility in relieving pain, dryness, stiffness, tinnitus, and hearing impairment.³

With growing interest in complementary and integrative medicine, there is increasing attention toward understanding traditional therapies from a scientific perspective. This review explores the therapeutic significance of *Karnapurana* through classical references and contemporary evidence.

Materials and Methods

The present review is based on a comprehensive analysis of classical Ayurvedic texts including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*, and *Ashtanga Sangraha*. Relevant information was collected regarding indications, contraindications, procedure, and therapeutic benefits of *Karnapurana*.

Published articles from peer-reviewed journals, electronic databases, and Ayurvedic research publications were also reviewed to evaluate contemporary evidence regarding the efficacy and probable mechanisms of *Karnapurana*.

Concept of *Karnapurana* in Ayurveda

The term *Karnapurana* is derived from two Sanskrit words: *Karna* (ear) and *Purana* (filling). It denotes the process of filling the ear canal with medicated substances for therapeutic purposes.⁴

Classical Ayurvedic texts describe *Karnapurana* as a daily health-promoting measure and a treatment modality for ear diseases. The procedure is included under preventive as well as curative practices. Regular administration is believed to strengthen auditory organs and prevent degeneration caused by aggravated *Vata Dosha*.⁵

According to *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Karnapurana* alleviates earache, neck stiffness, jaw disorders, and various *Vata*-related conditions.⁶

Indications of *Karnapurana*

Classical texts recommend *Karnapurana* in the following conditions:

- *Karnashoola* (ear pain)
- *Karnanada* (tinnitus)
- *Badhiryā* (hearing impairment)
- Dryness of the ear canal
- Itching of the ear
- Ear stiffness
- Disorders caused by aggravated *Vata Dosha*
- Preventive ear care⁷

The therapy is particularly beneficial in disorders where *Vata* predominates because medicated oils possess *Snigdha* and *Vatahara* properties.

Contraindications

Though generally safe, *Karnapurana* should be avoided in certain conditions:

- Acute suppurative ear infections
- Perforated tympanic membrane
- Severe trauma to the ear
- Active bleeding from the ear
- High-grade fever associated with ear infection⁸

Proper patient selection and clinical assessment are therefore essential before administration.

Procedure of *Karnapurana*

Purva Karma (Pre-procedure)

The patient is made to lie comfortably in lateral position. Gentle massage around the ear and adjacent areas is performed using medicated oil followed by mild fomentation. This helps improve circulation and facilitates absorption of medicaments.⁹

Pradhana Karma (Main Procedure)

Lukewarm medicated oil is instilled into the ear canal until it is completely filled. The oil is retained for a specified duration according to the condition and patient's tolerance.¹⁰

Paschat Karma (Post-procedure)

After retention, excess oil is drained carefully and the ear is cleaned with sterile cotton. The patient is advised to avoid exposure to cold wind and water immediately after the procedure.¹¹

Common Oils Used in *Karnapurana*

Several medicated oils have been described in Ayurvedic literature:

Bilva Taila

Useful in *Vata*-dominant ear disorders and pain management.¹²

Dashamoola Taila

Possesses anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties.

Narayana Taila

Used for degenerative conditions and neurological manifestations.

Apamarga Kshara Taila

Traditionally indicated in chronic ear diseases.

Lasuna Taila

Widely used in earache due to its antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory activities.¹³

Therapeutic Effects According to Ayurveda

The therapeutic benefits of *Karnapurana* can be explained through Ayurvedic principles.

Pacification of *Vata Dosha*

Since most ear disorders are attributed to aggravated *Vata*, administration of warm medicated oil provides lubrication and nourishment, thereby restoring physiological balance.¹⁴

Strengthening of Auditory Structures

Regular use nourishes the tissues of the ear and supports optimal auditory function.

Pain Relief

The *Snigdha* and *Ushna* qualities of medicated oils help alleviate pain and stiffness.

Prevention of Degeneration

Karnapurana is considered beneficial in delaying age-related degeneration of auditory structures.¹⁵

Contemporary Scientific Perspective

Modern medicine recognizes several mechanisms through which oil-based therapies may benefit ear health.

Lubrication of External Auditory Canal

Medicated oils maintain moisture and prevent dryness-related irritation.

Anti-inflammatory Activity

Herbal oils commonly used in *Karnapurana* contain phytochemicals capable of reducing inflammation and tissue edema.¹⁶

Antimicrobial Effects

Garlic-based formulations and other herbal oils exhibit activity against bacterial and fungal pathogens implicated in ear infections.¹⁷

Analgesic Action

The warmth of medicated oils may improve local circulation and reduce nociceptive stimulation.

Neuroprotective Potential

Certain herbal ingredients possess antioxidant properties that may protect neural tissues from oxidative stress.¹⁸

Role of *Karnapurana* in Specific Ear Disorders

Karnashoola (Earache)

Pain reduction is among the most commonly reported benefits. Warm medicated oils provide immediate soothing effects and reduce local inflammation.

Karnanada (Tinnitus)

Ayurveda associates tinnitus with aggravated *Vata*. Regular *Karnapurana* may help reduce abnormal auditory perceptions through nourishment of auditory pathways.¹⁹

Badhirya (Hearing Impairment)

Although not a replacement for modern interventions, *Karnapurana* may provide supportive management in early degenerative conditions.

Impacted Ear Wax

Oil instillation softens hardened wax and facilitates its natural removal.

Otitis Externa

Selected herbal oils with antimicrobial properties may assist in managing mild infections under professional supervision.²⁰

Discussion

Karnapurana represents one of the unique therapeutic procedures of *Shalakyā Tantra*. Classical Ayurvedic literature extensively emphasizes its role in maintaining ear health and managing *Karnaroga*. The procedure is simple, economical, minimally invasive, and easily adaptable in clinical practice.

The predominance of *Vata Dosha* in ear disorders provides a strong rationale for using medicated oils. Oils possess *Snigdha*, *Guru*, and *Vatahara* properties which counteract dryness and degeneration. The warming effect further enhances local circulation and tissue nourishment.

Modern scientific evidence supports many traditional claims regarding the anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, analgesic, and antioxidant activities of herbal oils. The synergistic action of these properties may contribute to clinical benefits observed in patients.

However, despite promising traditional evidence, robust clinical trials evaluating efficacy, dosage standardization, treatment duration, and safety are still limited. Future multidisciplinary research integrating Ayurvedic principles with modern otological assessment tools is necessary to establish evidence-based guidelines.

Conclusion

Karnapurana is an important therapeutic and preventive procedure described in *Shalakyā Tantra* for the management of ear disorders. Classical Ayurvedic texts highlight its effectiveness in alleviating ear pain, tinnitus, hearing impairment, dryness, and other *Vata*-dominant conditions. Contemporary scientific findings indicate that medicated oils used in *Karnapurana* possess anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, analgesic, and antioxidant properties that may support auditory health. The integration of classical knowledge with modern research can provide valuable insights into the therapeutic significance of *Karnapurana*. Well-designed clinical studies are required to validate its efficacy and promote its wider acceptance in integrative healthcare.

References

1. Tripathi B, editor. *Ashtanga Hridayam of Vagbhata*, Sutrasthana. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishtan; 2020. p. 27-29.
2. Murthy KRS, translator. *Ashtanga Sangraha of Vagbhata*. 9th ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2017. Vol. 1, p. 198-201.
3. Acharya YT, editor. *Sushruta Samhita of Sushruta with Nibandhasangraha Commentary of Dalhanacharya*. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surbharati Prakashan; 2019. Uttara Tantra, p. 582-590.
4. Acharya YT, editor. *Sushruta Samhita*. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surbharati Prakashan; 2019. Uttara Tantra, Karnaroga Adhyaya, p. 601-610.
5. Sharma RK, Dash B. *Charaka Samhita*. Vol I. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 2018. Sutrasthana, p. 114-118.
6. Sharma RK, Dash B. *Charaka Samhita*. Vol II. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 2018. Chikitsasthana, p. 342-348.
7. Mishra SN, editor. *Bhaishajya Ratnavali of Govinda Das Sen*. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surbharati Prakashan; 2019. Karnaroga Chikitsa, p. 988-995.
8. Sharma PV. *Dravyaguna Vijnana*. Vol II. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Bharati Academy; 2017. p. 153-161.
9. Sharma PV. *Dravyaguna Vijnana*. Vol II. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Bharati Academy; 2017. p. 331-337.
10. Singh RH. *Panchakarma Therapy*. 3rd ed. New Delhi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Pratishtan; 2019. p. 215-220.

11. Sharma AK. *Principles and Practice of Shalaky Tantra*. 2nd ed. New Delhi: Chaukhambha Publishers; 2020. p. 142-151.
12. Gupta AK. *Clinical Methods in Ayurveda*. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2018. p. 87-93.
13. World Health Organization. *World Report on Hearing*. Geneva: WHO; 2021. p. 25-44.
14. Bayan L, Koulivand PH, Gorji A. Garlic: A review of potential therapeutic effects. *Avicenna J Phytomed*. 2014;4(1):1-14.
15. Patwardhan B, Vaidya ADB. Ayurveda and integrative medicine: Riding a tiger. *J Ayurveda Integr Med*. 2010;1(1):13-15.
16. Kumar A, Sharma S. Anti-inflammatory effects of herbal oils used in Ayurvedic therapeutics. *J Ayurveda Integr Med*. 2021;12(3):450-456.
17. Tiwari P, Sharma V. Ayurvedic concepts of tinnitus and hearing disorders. *AYU*. 2018;39(4):205-210.
18. Gupta R, Sharma M. Traditional ear therapies and modern perspectives. *Int J Res Ayurveda Pharm*. 2022;13(2):75-81.
19. Joshi N, Patel D. Clinical efficacy of medicated oils in otological disorders: A review. *J Res Ayur Siddha*. 2023;44(1):22-29.
20. Singh A, Verma P. Integrative approaches in management of ear disorders. *J Complement Integr Med*. 2024;21(2):115-123.

