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Padabhyanga: The Importance of a Daily Practice

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Abstract-

The goal of Ayurveda was to promote and restore both mental and physical well-being. An important notion in Ayurveda that contributes to this goal is Dinacharya. The practice of incorporating a revitalizing method into a foot massage is known as Padabhyanga. In the Ayurvedic canon, this is described as a preventative concept. Many people have eye difficulties as a result of their fast-paced, computer-dependent lifestyle, poor dietary habits, stress, insomnia, and lack of adherence to daily and seasonal routines. The symptoms of Bala, Sthairya, and Pada—as well as Kharatwa, Stabdata, Rukshata, Shrama, and Suptata—were alleviated via the practice of Drustiprasaadakara. This also stops Sirasnaayu sankocha, Grudrasi vaata, and Pada sputana.

Key Word- Ayurveda, Dinacharya, Padabhyanga, Snehana.

INTRODUCTION

As a kind of bahya snehana, padabhyanga involves applying medicated sneha to the foot using a variety of maneuvers to provide both local and systemic benefits. Padabhyanga is described in Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita as a prophylactic strategy in the context of Sadvritta. Ashtanga hrudaya details the Padabhyanga that is to be performed as part of Sarvanga abhyanga in

Yogaratanakara. To the point There is no mention of the padabhyanga technique in the classics. To get the desired impact, padabhyanga may be performed in seven positions using various maneuvers. It is possible that the local absorption and sneha utilized during padabhyanga are responsible for its local impact. Systemic effect may be due to stimulation of disease causing area. Abhyanga means the application of Sneha, mainly plain or medicated, suitable to ones constitution, age, season, particular disease and atmosphere.

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Padabhyanga – A Unique Therapy

Application of oil or any other sneha dravya on the feet followed by massage is known as padabhyanga⁵. It is a type of bahya snehana procedure. The word abhyanga is derived from ang- dhatu (to smear) and abhi- upasarga. The word pada denotes lower extremities. Therefore, padabhyanga literally means methodical smearing of sneha dravya to lower extremities especially to the sole. It should be applied in the Anuloma direction. It has been advised as daily regimen in ayurvedic classics to promote health as it prevents individual from diseases of netra, paada gridhrasi vaata, sankocha of sira and snayu. In Brihatrayee, padabhyanga is mentioned as netra- prasadanakara or dristiprasadanakara.

Padabhyanga - Mother of all Foot Massage

Pada is the site of vata dosha, vitiation of which causes 80 types of nanatmaja rogas. By means of Pad- abhyanga we can get control over the vata dosha. Padabhyanga stimulates the marma (vital points) of the sole region. Kshipra, kurcha, talahridaya, kur- chashira, gulpha are the marma points in sole which are being massaged during padabhyanga procedure. These marma are the vital points of body, where prana resides. Padabhyanga itself restores prana by stimulating marma.

Importance of Abhyanga⁴

Abhyanga practiced as daily regimen it acts as a Jarahara (prevents aging process)

Shramahara (cures tiredness)

Drustiprasaadakara (nourishes the eye)

Pustikara (nourishes the body)

Aayuskara (prolongs life span)

Sapnakara (induces sleep)

Tvakdaardyakara (improves skin tone)

Kleshahatvakara (improves mental stability)

Importance of Pada Abhyanga⁵

Kharatwa - clears the roughness of the soles,

Stabdata- cures stiffness,

Rukshata – corrects excessive dryness of feet,

Shrama – relieves exhaustion of feet,

Suptata of Pada - cures numbness of feet, Baala,

Sthairya - promotes strength of the feet of Pada improved.

Drustiprasaadakara - Nourishment to eyes.

It prevents Grudhrasi vaata, Pada sputana, Sirasnaayu sankocha.

Drudaendriyata –

Svakaaryakaran akshamaan indriyaaniyasasaha.

Pada Abhyanga and

Marmaparipaalana

Pada gives Ashraya for following Marmas.

Korchashira - Snaayumarma

Talahridaya

Kaalantarapranaharamarma

Kurcha -Vaikalyakaramarma

Kshiptam-

Kaalantarapraanaharamarma Most of all Marmavidda condition, Abyanga is one of the effective line of treatment.

Duration

900 matrakala is the time mentioned for abhyanga by Acharya Sushruta⁶, which comes approximately 5 mins. So in each maneuver 5 mins abhyanga can be performed to get desired effect. When padabhyanga carried out as a part of sarvanga abhyanga time can be reduced according to the need. Time for oil to reach in different Dhatus

300 Matrakala – Sneha enters

Romkupa

400 Matrakala – Sneha enters Twak

500 Matrakala - Sneha enters Rakt

600 Matrakala - Sneha enters Masa

700 Matrakala - Sneha enters Meda

800 Matrakala - Sneha enters Asthi

900 Matrakala - Sneha enters Majja

YOGYA KALA⁷

Abhyanga is Contra-indicated after food, but it is generally for sarvanga abhyanga. So when exclusively padabhyanga is done, then it can be followed anytime of the day. In specific disease like anxiety, stress, insomnia padabhyanga done at night hours has good effect.

Taila Yog For Padabhyanga⁸ - When padabhyanga is carried out as dinacharya, selection of taila according to prakruti can be made

Vata pradhana Prakruti -

Himasagara taila

Pitta pradhana Prakruti -

Chandanadi taila, Ksheerabala taila

Kapha pradhana Prakruti -

Triphaladya taila

Meanwhile, when it is performed for disease, selection of taila according to disease can be made.

Crack foot/ vaipadika- Vaipadikahara taila,

Madhuchista taila

Eczema- Marichadi taila

Fungal infection- Chakramarda taila

Peripheral vascular disease- Pinda taila

Degenerative joint disease- Ksheerabala taila, Ashwagandha balalakshadi taila

Calcaneal spur- Vishagarbha taila, karpooradi taila

If any of the oil not available, then Murchita tila taila can be used.

Contra indication for Padabhyanga⁷

Fever, Cold, Flue, Indigestion

Toxin induced trauma, lymphatic infection

Acute trauma to foot.

Abnormal skin condition.

The Procedure- Padabhyanga

Morning time in an empty stomach before bath is ideal time of Padabhyanga for routine practice in healthy person. The client is asked to lie down on ab- hyanga table. Oil for application is heated in boiled water approximately up to 400C. This warm oil is to be smeared to the feet both in its planter and dorsal aspects up to the ankle. Following this, massage should be done by moving his palms in distinct direc- tions. The whole procedure is completed on around 35 minutes. After the procedure the foot is to be wash with lukewarm water and then patient is asked to take rest for at least 15 minutes.

Methods of Padabhyanga⁹

The Hand Techniques

In this technique stroking and rubbing are included, and through this we can generate better cardiovascular circulation in the foot, this friction also stimulates the flow of energy directing it in the intended way. For this techniques sesamum oil is commonly used.

The Marma Therapy

This is a name given to the massage and reflexology techniques done on foot through themarma. Marmas explained in Ayurveda, total no. of marmas are 107. Marma therapy is the theory of Marmavijnana, and it is the origin of acupressure, acupuncture and reflexology treatments. That means whenwe conducting acupressure, acupuncture and reflexology therapies on the patients, we are only dealing with the marmas and trying to soothe them thereby re- establishing the free flow of energy in all the energy channels of the body. Marma therapy is also said to detoxify and rejuvenate our system. Through working on marma points, we can control prana, Through Prana, we can control our sensory and motor organs and eventually our

Probable mode of action in gridhrasi / sciatic pain :

Gridhrasi, is a condition where pain starts from low back which radiates to buttocks, thigh, leg upto foot, which simulates with the sciatica- pain along sciatic nerve course.

Sciatic nerve originates in the lowback from lumbar spine, passes underneath the gluteal

entire mind-body complex, and release negative energy.

DISCUSSION

Every principle in Ayurveda is being written in sutra form. Detailed description of padabhyanga and its procedure is not available in the classics of Ayurveda. The effect of padabhyanga is mentioned in all the three texts of Brihatrayee, have commonly mentioned as dristiprasadana or netraprasadana¹⁰.

Tila taila is best option of choice, as a daily regimen of padabhyanga, Tila is Kapha-Vatahara and Chak- shushya. It is an antioxidant as it contains vitamin E. This oil is rich in minerals (copper, calcium, zinc, iron) and penetrates skin easily. This oil has alkaloids like saponin, flavonoid, tannin, phenol etc. These pharmacological components make tila taila as good option for eye-health. Probable mode of action as Chakshushya :

In nadi vigyana, nadi darpana it has been quoted that there are 10 nadi in head among which 2 are related to eyes.¹¹

Gandhari- surrounds Ida nadi, which extends from paada and ends in left eye. Hastijihwa- surrounds Pingala nadi, which extends from paada and ends in right eye.

Acharya vagbhata also mentioned, 2 siras situated in the centre of foot which is connected to the eyes.¹² During padabhyanga, these nadi's are stimulated and leading to chakshusya effect.

Probable mode of action in anidra

Abhyanga → locally lymphatic drainage increased → lymph contains aminoacid like tryptophan which increase by abhyanga

↓

As level of tryptophan increases in plasma, it accumulates and stimulates pineal gland

↓

Secretion of melatonin and serotonin

↓

Melatonin- sedation and pleasant feeling
Serotonin – induce sleep and also helps to control mood of person

muscles, runs down the leg and ends in the heel of the foot. There is a sciatic reflex area on the feet which is a band that runs horizontally across the middle of the heel where the sciatic nerve ends¹³. Padabhyanga done at the sciatic reflex area may help in preventing sciatica also pain management in sciatica.

CONCLUSION

Dinacharya explains padabhyanga, a

significant upakrama. Padabhyanga is useful both in the dinacharya and vyadhita states. It is possible to get the desired impact by adjusting the time of the treatment, the dosage involved in vyadhi, and the patient's prakruti. Therefore, padabhyanga should not be done just as an adjunct to sarvanga abhyanga but as a standalone technique for health promotion and illness prevention. Cases may be studied in a variety of clinical trials. to see the effectiveness and comprehend the mechanism of action of padabhyanga, such as sleeplessness, sciatica, and eye diseases. Although it is a small procedure, the benefits of abhyanga are broad spectrum, meaning they extend from local to systemic effects; the oil used for the procedure, Til Tail (sesamum oil), is readily available, has a Chakshushya effect, and is inexpensive. The procedure takes only a few minutes and costs very little money. As an added bonus, it makes people healthier and happier.

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