

A REVIEW ON SNEHAPANA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO AUTHARABHAKTIKA SNEHAPANA

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ABSTRACT

According to Ayurveda *Snehapana* (oral administration of unctuous substances) is a special kind of internal administration of *Snehadravya* (unctuous medicines). Even though it is internal administration, the method and dose vary in different diseases and named accordingly viz. *Acchapana*, *Vicharana*, *Avapidaka Snehapana*, *Autharabhaktika Snehapana*, *Sadyosnehana*, etc. *Autharabhaktika Snehapana* is the method of administering *Sneha Dravya* after intake of *Ahara* (food). *Autharabhaktika Snehapana* can be given to all the *Snehayogyas* (Persons indicated for *Snehakarma*). Through this review, we intend to have a detailed analysis of *Snehapana* with special reference on *Autharabhaktika Snehapana* in Ayurvedic textbooks (Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hrudaya, Astanga Samgraha, Sharngadhara Samhita, Bhavaprakasa, Chakradutta, Vangasena) along with its practical applications. *Autharabhaktika Snehapana* nourishes and strengthens the parts of the head and neck, gives strength to *Indriyas* (sense organs) and pacifies diseases above the clavicular region. It is indicated in *Avabahuka*, *Bahusosha*, *Ardita*, *Rajayakshma*, *Bahu Shirsha Gatavyadhi*, *Vataja Abhishyanda*, *Karna Shoola*, and *Kshavathu Vega Avarodha Janya Vikaras*.

Keywords: Ayurveda, *Snehapana*, *Autharabhaktika Snehapana*

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, "*Sneha*" is described as the essence of Human being i.e. lipids are the structural and functional unit of life and all the vital functions depends on lipids- "*Snehasaroyam Purusha: Pranascha Snehabhuyishta*."¹ The word *Snehana* means anointing, lubricating, rubbing or smearing with oil. *Snehana* is one among the *Shadupakramas* (six treatment modalities) mentioned by Acharya Charaka². It can be administered either as a separate treatment procedure or can be done as a *Purva Karma* (Preparatory

procedure) before *Shodhana* therapy³ (Purification therapies).

Based on the route of administration the procedure of *Snehana* is broadly divided into two categories viz *Abhyanthara Snehana* (internal unction) and *Bahya Snehana* (external unction)⁴.

Based on the method of administration *Abhyanthara Snehapana* is of two kinds i.e. *Acchapana* and *Vicharana*. *Acchapana* is the intake of a large quantity of unctuous substances through the oral route without

mixing with any other substances⁵. *Acchasneha* is of two kinds viz. *Samshodhaneeya Acchasnehapana* (purificatory simple oleation) and *Samsamaneeya Acchasnehapana* (palliative simple oleation) and *Vicharana Sneha*⁶ comprise all other modalities of administration of *Sneha* either internally or externally other than *Achapana* like *Vasti* (Unctuous enema), *Nasya* (errhines), Oral administration along with food, external unction, etc. The external application of unctuous substance does not come under the category of *Acchasneha* as it does not come in contact with *Jadaragni* (digestive fire)⁷. Dalhana opines that *Kevala Sneha* is the synonym of *Acchasneha* which means the administration of processed or unprocessed *Sneha* alone without mixing with other substances⁸. *Bahyasnehana* (External unction) are of different assortments like retaining type (e.g. *Shirovasti*, *Gandusha*, *Karnapurana*, *Akshitaropana*), pouring type (eg. *Shirodhara*, *Parisheka*), applying type (eg. *Lepa*, *Pichu*, *Utsadana*), massaging type (eg. *Abhyanga*)⁹.

Origin of Sneha Dravyas

Ayurveda recognizes *Sthavara* and *Jangama Snehas* for therapeutic purposes. *Jangama Sneha* is derived

from an animal source. *Gritha* (Ghee), *Vasa* (Muscle fat) and *Majja* (Bone marrow) come under *Jangama Snehas*. *Sthavara Sneha* is extracted from plant sources and *Taila* comes under *Sthavara Sneha*. Internal administration i.e. *Abhyanthara Snehana* can be done in different ways and means and by using substances like *Gritha* (ghee), *Taila* (oil), *Vasa* (muscle fat) and *Majja* (bone marrow)¹⁰. Among these four, *Gritha* and *Taila* are the most commonly practiced substances for *Abhyanthara Snehapana*.

Snehapaka

Group of medicated *Taila* and *Gritha* in Ayurveda are generally known as *Snehakalpas*. Ayurveda encompasses various *Pakas* (preparation time) for *Snehadravyas* like *Mridu*, *Madhyama*, and *Khara* for its therapeutic utility in various procedures. They have better pharmacokinetic action while compared to other dosage forms due to the lipid nature of bio membranes in the body. For internal administration usually, *Madhyama Paka* is preferred by all Scholars except Acharya Shusruta.

Table 1: Various *Snehapaka* and its application

Sl. No.	Indication	Charaka Samhita ¹¹	Shusruta Samhita ¹²	Ashtanga Hrudaya ¹³	Sharngadara Samhita ¹⁴
1.	<i>Abhyanga</i> (Massage)	<i>Khara</i>	<i>Madhyama</i>	<i>Khara</i>	<i>Khara</i>
2.	<i>Pana</i> (Internal Administration)	<i>Madhyama</i>	<i>Mridu</i>	<i>Madhyama/Chikkana</i>	<i>Madhyama</i>
3.	<i>Nasya</i> (Therapeutic Errhine)	<i>Mridu</i>	<i>Madhyama</i>	<i>Mridu</i>	<i>Mridu</i>
4.	<i>Vasti</i> (Therapeutic enema)	<i>Madhyama</i>	<i>Khara</i>	<i>Madhyama/Chikkana</i>	<i>Madhyama</i>
5.	<i>Karnapurana</i> (Application of oil in ear)	-----	<i>Khara</i>	-----	-----

Classification of *Abhyantara Snehana* based on the time required for digestion of *Snehadravya*¹⁵

Based on the time required for digestion *Snehana* can be classified as

Hraswa Matra (Minimal quantity) is the quantity of *Sneha* which digests in 6 hours

Madhyama Matra (Moderate quantity) is the quantity of *Sneha* which digest in 12 hours

Uthama Matra (Maximum quantity) is the quantity of *Sneha* which digests in 24 hours.

Other than these three dosage forms, Vagbhata says *Hrasweeyasi Matra* or the trial dose or test dose which is the quantity of *Sneha* which digests in less than 2 *Yama* (6 hours). When the type of *Koshta* is unknown and *Sneha* has to be administered in large quantities, *Hraswiyasi Matra* should be administered initially, otherwise it may cause *Prananasha* (death) of the patient. *Arunadutta* clarifies that some authors are having the opinion that *Hraswiyasi Matra* is of 2 *Pala*, 4 *Pala*, 6 *Pala* but *Hraswiyasi Matra* is the dose digests

in 1 Yama i.e. 3 hours. So if we want to administer Sneha in Uthama Matra, initially we have to administer Hraswiyasi Matra, followed by Hraswa, Madhayama, and Uthama Matra. Likewise, in Madhyama Matra, initially Hraswiyasi Matra followed by Hraswa and Madhyama Matra and in Hraswa Matra

initial Hraswiyasi followed by Hraswa Matra Snehapana¹⁶.

Sushruta has added two more dosages¹⁷

- That digests in 18 Hours
- That takes ¼ of the day (3 hours) for digestion

Table 2: Classification of Snehapana as per time required for digestion of Snehadravya

Author	According to the time taken for digestion			
	Hraswiyasi	Hraswa	Madhyama	Uthama
Charaka	-----	Ardhaaham (6 Hours)	Ahani (12 Hours)	Ahoratram (24 Hours)
Vagbhata	1 Yama (3Hours) (Arunadutta)	2 Yama (6 Hours)	4 Yama (12 Hours)	8 Yama (24 Hours)
Sharngadhara ¹⁸	-----	Dinardham (6 Hours)	Ahani (12 Hours)	Ahoratram (24 Hours)
Chakradutta ¹⁹	-----	Dinardham (6 Hours)	Ahani (12 Hours)	Ahoratram (24 Hours)
Vangasena ²⁰	-----	Dinardham (6 Hours)	Ahani (12 Hours)	Ahoratram (24 Hours)

Authors like Bhavamisra, Sharngadhara, and Chakradutta have mentioned dosage of Snehadravya in fixed quantity^{21,22,23}. This dose schedule seems to be for dai-

ly dosage along with other substances and not for Vardhamana Karma.

Table 3: Dosage of Sneha in fixed quantity

Author			
	Hina	Madhyama	Uthama
Bhavamisra	2 Karsha	3 Karsha**	1 Pala*
Sharngadhara	2 Karsha	3 Karsha	4 Pala
Chakradutta	½ Pala	3 Aksha	1 Pala

*1 Pala = 48 ml/ 48 gm

**1 Karsha = 12 gm (The Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia of India - API)

Table 4: Dose and Indications of Snehapana²⁴

Dose	Indications	Diseases	Action and effect
	Individual		
Uthama (digested in 24 hours)	Prabhuta Sneha Nitya Kshut Pipasa Saha Uthama Bala of Agni-Shareera and Manas	Gulma, Snake bite, Visarpa, Unmatta, Mutrakruchra, Gadhavarcha,	Sheegravikara Shamana Doshanukarshini Sarvamarganuserini, Balya, Rejuvenates the body, sense or- gans and mind
Madhyama (di- gested in 12 hours)	Mrudu Koshta, Madhyama Bala of Agni-Shareera and Manas	Aruhka, Sphota, Pitaka, Kandu, Pama, Kushta, Vata- shonita	Mandha Vibhramsa (Not much complications), Brings Snehana comfortably, Used as Shodanar-

			<i>tha Sneha</i>
Hina (digested in 6 hours)	Vridha, Bala, Sukumara, Sukhopachita, Mandagni, Avara Bala, persons not able to withstand hunger	Chronic conditions of diseases like Jwara, Atisara, Kasa	Snehaniya, Brumhaniya, Vrushya, Balya, Long standing effects, does not causes complications

Chakrapani mentions that *Uthama Matra* is for *Shamana* purpose and *Hraswa Matra* is for *Brumhana* purpose. Hence doubt may arise for using *Uthama Matra* for *Shodananga Snehapana*. In Sushruta's

commentary Dalhana clearly says that *Snehapana Matra* should be based on the strength of the patient, *Dosha* and diseases. *Vangasena* explains about the *Arohana Matra* (increasing dose) for *Snehapana*²⁵.

Table 5: Increasing Dose according to *Vangasena*

Dose & Days	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Uthama</i>	3 Pala	3.5 Pala	4 Pala	4.5 Pala	5 Pala	5.5 Pala	6 Pala
<i>Madhyama</i>	6 Karsha	7 Karsha	8 Karsha	9 Karsha	10 Karsha	11 Karsha	12 Karsha
<i>Hina</i>	3 Karsha	3.5 Karsha	4 Karsha	4.5 Karsha	5 Karsha	5.5 Karsha	6 Karsha

After considering all the classifications of *Snehapana*, we can broadly classify *Snehana* in 3 categories i.e. *Shodhana Sneha*, *Shamana Sneha*, and *Brumhana Sneha*²⁶.

Shodhana Sneha - it can be of two types i.e. *Sneha* used for *Shodhana Karma* i.e. *Vamanopayogi*, *Virechanopayogi*, etc and *Sneha* employed as preparatory procedure of *Shodhana Karma* which is to be given in more quantity in the morning when the meal taken in the last night gets digested.

Shamana Sneha - It can be defined as the administration of *Sneha* in different disorders to normalize the aggravated *Doshas* without expelling them. Here *Sneha* is administered when the patient feels hunger.

Brumhana Sneha - The administration of *Sneha* for the nourishment of body along with *Mamsarasa*, *Ksheera*, etc in *Alpa Matra* (low dose) is called *Brumhana Sneha*. It is a *Vicharana* type of *Sneha*. It can be administered in 3 ways i.e.

1. *Prakbhakta Sneha* (Before food)-Nourishes and strengthens the *Jangha*, *Uru*, *Kati*, etc i.e. the lower part of the body
2. *Madhyabhakta Sneha* (Middle of the food) – It cures the diseases of the middle part of the body
3. *Autharabhaktika Sneha* (After food)- It cures the diseases occurring in the upper part of the body that means above the *Jatru* (Clavicular region/diseases of head and neck)

Table 6: *Sneha* administration as per site affected

Serial no.	Time of administration	Action	Disease
1	Before food	Gives strength to low back region, lower limb, Normalizes natural urges.	Cures diseases of lower limb
2	Middle of food	Enhances digestive power, gives strength and stability	Cures abdominal diseases
3	After food	Enhances stability of sense organs	Cures disorders of head and neck

Autharabhaktika Sneha

The *Sneha* given after food can be called as *Autharabhaktika Sneha*. It is a *Brumhana* type of *Vicharana Sneha*. It can be given with *Mamsarasa*, rice soup, and alcoholic beverages etc. especially after food. In

different contexts, it is known as *Bhojanothara Sneha*, *Adhobhaktika Sneha*, *Bhaktopari Sneha*, etc.

Dose of Autarabhaktika Sneha

The dose of *Autharabhaktika Sneha* is *Alpa Matra*. Since it is given after food it should be administered

in small quantities, and the food taken before the administration of *Sneha* should be compatible with the *Sneha*.

Time of administration

Since *Brumhana Sneha* can be given in all types of diseases, the major part of its administration related to food intake i.e. before food, during food or after food. Here while administering *Sneha* we should always take care of the *Bheshajakalas* for various diseases. ie. Whether it should be administered with morning food (*Pratah: Kala*) or evening food (*Sayam Kala* :). We can give *Autharabhaktika Sneha* either after morning food or after evening food as per the disease. In *Urdhajatrugata Vikaras* the *Bheshaja Kala* is *Nisi* (night). So in conditions affecting head and neck usually *Gritha* or *Taila* can be administered after evening food. In *Vyana Vayu Vikruti* the *Autharabhaktika Sneha* should be given after morning food²⁷. In *Samhitas*, various references are indicating *Autharabhaktika Sneha* like *Apabahuka*²⁸, *Vata Paithika Kasa*²⁹, *Swarasada*, *Sira-Amsa-Parswa-Shoola*³⁰ (pain on the head, shoulder, and flanks) etc. In these conditions we can administer *Autharabhaktika Snehapana* as per *Bheshajakala* of the disease.

CONCLUSION

By analysing the 3 categories of *Snehana* i.e. *Shodhana*, *Shamana* and *Brumhana*, we can find that *Shodhana* and *Shamana Sneha* has its own perspective i.e. it can be applied in specific conditions where we have to analyse the strength of disease and patient and we have to follow the strict regimes while administering these two *Snehana Karmas*. But in the case of *Brumhana Sneha*, the state changes, because it can be administered in diseases of all the parts of the body and is simply related to the time of food intake and there is no specific strict *Pathyakramas* and is more patient-friendly. All these indicate that *Brumhana Sneha* is being a simple type of *Sneha* administration compared to *Acchapana*, but it can be given in diseases of all the parts of the body keeping in view of the site affected. In the present era, due to work pattern, changes in food habits, stress, and strain, etc. most of the degenerative conditions happen in early ages. Be-

ing the essence of humans, *Snehadravyas* are the best treatment option for such conditions. *Ksheera* and *Gritha* processed with *Tiktarasa Dravyas* can be administered daily for preventing such conditions. Of these *Autharabhaktika Snehapana* is one of the best treatment options for preventing and treating many degenerative conditions especially of head and neck like cervical spondylosis, as it is more patient friendly.

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