ROLE OF USHAPANA IN PREVENTION OF DISEASES

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ABSTRACT
Ayurveda the ancient Indian medical science has purpose to protect health of the healthy and alleviate disorders in the diseased. In ancient texts Acharyas has mentioned so many procedures to prevent and to maintain the health of an individual. To maintain the health Swasthvritta, recommends daily routine (Dinacharya), seasonal routine (Ritucharya), eating habits, sleep, codes of good conduct (Sadvritta) etc. Ushapana is one of the Ayurvedic Dinacharya (day regimen) procedures which play a very important role in preventive Ayurveda. Usha means dawn, Pana means to drink/intake therefore Ushapana (dawn water) means intake of water in early morning. In Ayurveda the root cause of all diseases is “Ama” which can be best understood as the accumulation of toxic metabolic by-products of poor digestion, therefore drinking water in morning can help prevent the disease caused by Ama. So, it is very important to review about the benefits of Ushapana and its role in the prevention of the diseases.

Keywords: Ushapana, Ama, Dinacharya, prevention, health.

INTRODUCTION
Ayurveda, India’s 5000-year-old medical system empowers us to take our health into our own-hand, by providing simple practices that can be easily implemented over time to ensure a happier, healthier life.
Dincharya is the Sanskrit term for daily Ayurvedic rituals which, when practiced regularly, help to support a life of optimal wellness through routine, detoxification and nourishment. When we are healthy and balanced, we are able to fulfill our Dharma. Among Dincharya Brahma Muhurta is the first step. Ushapana in Brahma Muhurta is explained by Bhavprakash. The exact time of Brahma Muhurta varies from region to region as time of sunrise is not uniform throughout the world. There are thirty Muhurta in one day-night (One Muhurta=48 minutes) i.e. fifteen Muhurta in day and fifteen Muhurta in night and it is said that fourteenth Muhurta of night is considered as Brahma Muhurta.[1] Therefore, Brahma Muhurta is a period one and half hours before sunrise-or more precisely, 1 hour and 36 minutes before sunrise.[2] Brahma Muhurta is considered as Panchamrutha vela[3] i.e. essence of Vipula Vayu, Vipula Jala, Vipula Aakashha, Vipula Desha and Vipula Kala. Usha is a Sanskrit word which means dawn, early morning and Pana means to drink/intake, therefore, Ushapana means consuming water or drinking water at Brahma Muhurta.

“Savituh Samudyakale Prasriti Salilasya Pibedastau| Rogjaraparimukto Jivedvatsalshatam Sagram” (Bz.P.Pu. 5/317) [4]

Acharya Bhavprakash advice the dose of Ushapana should be eight Prasriti (one Prasriti=80ml) which is approximately 640ml and mentioned that the person who drinks 640ml water every day before sunrise, becomes free from all ailments. He lives for 100 years and the weakness and other problems of old age do not even touch him. Indeed, people used to have hundreds of years of youthful life in the ancient age. In some texts it is mentioned that who drinks water before sunrise will live for 100 years after removing all the ailments of Vata, Pitta and Kapha.

Acharya Bhoja considers here water which is kept overnight i.e. stale water. Practice of drinking such water help in removing the diseases caused due to Vata, Pitta, Kapha and Kshat (injury). It prevents the ailments of ear, eye, throat and head and it prevents the pain of back. It helps get rid of many diseases in the body such as piles (Arsh), edema (Shotha), sprue (Grahni), Jvara, Udara Roga, lipid disorders (Medovikara), Urinary problem (Mutraagata) and bleeding disorders (Raktapitta), skin disorders (Kushtha).


Acharya Bhavprakash also mentioned about Nasa Jalapana which has more beneficial effects on health. Those who take water through nostrils before sunrise is full of intellect has sharp eyesight like an eagle and has no problems like wrinkles and graying of hair and also free from all diseases. Three Prasriti of water i.e. 240ml should be taken through nostrils. This also aids in prevention of Vali (wrinkles), Palita (Gray hair), Pinasa (Rhinitis), Swarabhanga (Hoarseness of voice), Kasa (cough), Shotha (edema) and acts as Rasayana and improves eyesight. Neti kriya which is one of the Shodhana procedure explained under Shatkarma mentioned in Hathyogapradipika and Gheranda Samhita is similar to this process.

Contraindications for Nasajalapana- Person who has consumed Sneha, who is injured, undergone Pancakarma, Adhmana (Abdominal distension), Mandagni, hiccoughs and who have Kapha and Vata related diseases.

Material and Methods - Ushapana is a simple process with many benefits. Main objective of Ushapana is to hydrate the thirsty body in morning with water. In this process one should take 640ml of water before sunrise. It should be taken without cleansing the mouth, brushing or even taking anything. Lukewarm water must be taken during winter season. As Acharya Bhoja has mentioned about consuming stored water before sunrise so it is important here to discuss about the type of vessel in which water should be stored so that it becomes more beneficial for people.

Different types of vessels for water storage and its benefits-


Acharya Sushruta has mentioned, the vessels of Suwarna (Gold), Chandi (Silver), Tamra (Copper),
Kaansa (Bronze) and Mitti (Mud) should be used to store water for drinking. The method of storage is essential in maintaining water purity and safety for drinking purposes. The most easily available and for many benefits on health, copper vessel is mostly suited vessel for storing water:
As copper is an essential trace mineral that is vital to human health.[7] Our ancestors used to store water in containers made of Copper, Copper from the vessel leached into the water and helped in purification.

Properties of Copper
Rasa- Tikta, Kashaya, Madhura, Amla, Veerya- Ushna, Vipaka- Katu, Guna- Sara, Laghu, Karma- Netrya Shodhana, Deepan, Lekhana, Aamapachana, Action on Dhatu- Rakta Prasadana, Mamsa, Meda Lekhana[8] Therefore, it is advised that water stored in copper vessel should be taken for better results. It can kill all the microorganisms, molds, fungi, algae and bacteria, present in the water that could be harmful to the body and make the water perfectly fit for drinking.

DISCUSSION
The main objective of Ayurveda is- “Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam, Aturasaya Vikara Prashamnam Cha” It means Ayurveda aims at the protection and maintenance of good health of the healthy people and elimination of and control over the ailments and disorders of the unhealthy. Ushapana is one of the procedures of Dincharya (daily regimen) which fulfills this objective of Ayurveda. After long hours of fasting at night so many harmful substances are accumulated in the body, drinking water early in the morning helps to flush out harmful substances that is accumulated and will help in cleansing the body from within. Morning water is also the greatest neutralizer, diuretic and anti-bacterial in nature. It also balances the three Doshas, maintains fluid balance in the body, helps to maintain the required output of urine thus cleansing the system, since salvia contains antibacterial properties by taking water in the morning without cleansing the mouth, as mentioned by Acharya Bhoja helps in treating many diseases and helps body to produce antibodies and improves immunity. In Ayurveda it is believed that root cause of all diseases is problems of Amashaya and drinking water before sunrise helps prevent such problems and it is more beneficial if water is stored in copper vessel. There are so many studies which show storing water in copper vessel helps in purifying the water from bacteria, algae, molds etc. A study published in Journal of health, population and nutrition in 2012 shows that copper helps in inactivation of E.coli, Staphylococcus aureus and Campylobacter jejuni. Findings of studies suggest that copper can act on a range of organisms under different conditions. Copper is an essential trace mineral that is vital to human health. It has antimicrobial, antioxidant, anti-carcinogenic and anti-inflammatory properties. It also helps neutralize toxins. When water is stored in a copper vessel or bottle, for eight hours or more, copper releases some of its ions in water, through a process called Oligodynamic effect. It assists in the formation of hemoglobin as well as cell regeneration and unfortunately, the human body cannot create the trace amounts of copper, therefore, copper has to be a part of our intake either through food or water. Copper is one of the most important metals described in Ayurveda possessing various therapeutic properties. It is indicated in the management of several diseases like Gulma, Grahn, Sthoulya, Udara Roga, Prameha etc.[10] Because of its properties like Mamsa Meda Lekhana and Katu Vipaka and Ushna Veerya drinking 2-3 glasses of copper enriched water in morning speeds up the metabolism and facilitates the breakdown of fat cells. Drinking water early morning relieves constipation as it helps in increasing peristalsis. Since ancient times Ayurveda has advocated the benefits of drinking water from copper vessel. Ayurveda states that when water is stored in copper vessel it has ability to balance all the three Doshas (Vata, Pitta and Kapha) in the body.[11]

CONCLUSION
Ushapana is the wonderful gift of Ayurveda to humans and has tremendous effect on our body. When water is stored in copper vessel has increased its effects manifolds. This will help in prevention of many diseases as drinking water in empty stomach purifies
human body. The mucus folds of colon and intestines are activated by this method, peristalsis increases and then the nutrients of the food taken several times a day will be absorbed properly that will help in the formation of Rasa Dhatu and if Rasa Dhatu is formed properly that will lead to the proper formation of further Dhatus (Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Asthi, Majja and Shukra) along with this it has ability to balance all three Doshas (Vata, Pitta and Kapha) and this will help in prevention of diseases as quoted by Acharyas that Samyak Dosha and Dhatu lead to Arogya.

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