

COSMETOLOGY IN AYURVEDA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CARAKA SAMHITA

Anjana R S

Assistant Professor, Dept of Samhita, Samskrita and Sidhanta, VPSV Ayurveda College, Kottakkal, Malappuram, Kerala, India

Corresponding Author: anjanars9@gmail.com

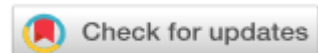
<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj2310032022>

(Published Online: March 2022)

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Article Received:21/02//2022 - Peer Reviewed:05/03/2022 - Accepted for Publication: 06/03/2022



ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an ancient science of healing. It deals with all aspects of a better living. Cosmetology is a concept that is gaining a lot of importance in the present era. The ancient acharyas have given much importance to the concept of beauty which is evident from the classical textbooks. Because of the growing demand for Ayurveda cosmetology, it is necessary to explore the concepts elaborated in the ancient Samhitas in this aspect. The concept of beauty explained in Ayurveda may be classified under the headings – factors determining beauty, maintaining beauty and improving beauty. This paper aims at analysing the concept of cosmetology in Ayurveda with special reference to Caraka Samhita.

Keywords: Ayurveda cosmetology, prakriti, sara, varya mahakashaya

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is not merely a science of medicine, but it deals with all aspects of a better living. Cosmetology is a subject having socio-medical importance, which has been accepted since time immemorial. Because of the high demand of society, the field of cosmetology

is developing at a rapid rate. Ayurveda, due to its unique concept about beauty and long-lasting beauty therapies without any side effects has a wider acceptance in this field. Cosmetology is the study and application of beauty treatment. The branches of spe-

ciality mainly consider face, hair and skin. The United States Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA, FDCA, or FD&C) is a set of laws passed by Congress in the year 1938, giving authority to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to oversee the safety of food, drugs, medical devices, and cosmetics. This Act defines cosmetics as "articles intended to be rubbed, poured, sprinkled, or sprayed on, introduced into, or otherwise applied to the human body for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness, or altering the appearance."¹A lot of evidence is available in the Ayurveda Samhitas showing the special attention paid towards the concept of beauty. This paper aims to explore the various aspects of cosmetology described in Samhitas with special focus given to Caraka Samhita.

Concept of Cosmetology in Ayurveda

The Cosmetic approach in Ayurveda is related to the healthy status of the body as well as the mind. The description available in Caraka Samhita in the context of Cosmetology may be categorized as –

- (1) Factors determining Beauty.
- (2) Factors maintaining Beauty.
- (3) Factors improving Beauty.

1. Factors determining beauty

Many factors are described in Ayurveda, which plays a keen role in the determination of beauty of a person. Some of these include the Prakruti of a person, Sara, Pramana of various body parts. etc. This provides the base of the aesthetic concept in Ayurveda.

• Prakriti

Prakriti means the basic constitution of the human being depending upon the dominance of dosha at the time of conception.²These types of the basic constitution are assessed upon specific characteristics shown by dominant dosha.³The different variations seen in persons are based upon their caste, race, place of living, season, age and individual habits.⁴Charakacharya while describing the different anatomical characters of persons with each Prakriti, has given due consideration to beauty aspects.

Table 1: Various aspects of beauty relate to Prakriti of a person

Body part	Character	Dosa
Body built	Apachita (Below BMI) Krisha – emaciated Apachita (Below BMI) Krisha – emaciated Apachita (Below BMI) Krisha – emaciated Apachita, Krisha (emaciated)	Vata
	Upachitha, mamsala (fleshy)	kapha
Body height	Hrasvakriti-short height	vata
The appearance of the body	Bahukandara sira pratana or Dhamanipratana- Prominent tendons and veins	Vata
	Sukumara gatra - Delicate body (If the person faces difficulty in Summer Pitta; or Winter- Kapha)	Pitta/kapha
	Samasuvibhakta gatra or Subhaga- Well proportionate body	kapha
	Priyadarshana - Pleasing appearance	kapha
	Prasannadarshanana- Cheerful or pleasant appearance	kapha
Skin (colour of the skin)	Gaura Varna - Lotus/ Straw / Gold colour	Kapha
	Gaur Pitanga - Fair with a yellowish tinge	Pitta
	Dhusara-Dusky & (Krishna)–Dark colour	Vata
The texture of the skin	Rukshanga or Rukshatwak- Dry / Non-lustrous skin	Vata
	Sphutitanga - Cracking of soles and palms	
	Prasanna Snigdhangha or Snigdha-chavi or Susnigdha - Unctuous skin / Smooth	Kapha.

	clear skin without moles; freckles & dryness etc	
The appearance of the skin	Prabhuta tila - Vyanga-Pidaka-Piplu Presence of moles; pimples; freckles Kshipra vali- Early appearance of wrinkles on the skin	Pitta
Keshha/Shmashru/ Loma (Roma) - hair quality (texture)	Parusha or khara keshha – Hard & Dry hair	vata
	Sphutita keshha - Split hair ends	Pitta
	Mridu Keshha – Soft hair	
Quantity/ density of the hair	Snigdha Keshha – Oily hair; Dirgha roma -long hair Kapha	kapha
	Alpa keshha / Alpa shmashru – Scanty hair	Vata and pitta
The tendency of hair fall & greying	Sthira Keshha - Ghana/Bahula keshha – Dense hair	kapha
	Akalapalita- Premature greying; Valipalitakhalitya shighrapaki/ Shighra	Pitta
	Khalitya - Early hair loss/baldness	
	Minimal/less hair fall	kapha

Sara: The anatomical consideration of organs like eye, skin, teeth, nail etc. Along with Svara, Vama etc. are given prime importance while describing the eight saras.⁵

Table 2: Various aspects of beauty related to Sara of a person

Body part	character	Sara
Skin	Unctuous, smooth, soft, clear, lustrous	Rasa
Hair	Fine, sparse, deep-rooted, delicate soft	
Ear, eye, face, tongue, nose, lips palm of hands, sole of feet, nails, forehead and genitals	unctuous, red and brilliant	Raktha
Temples, forehead, nape, eyes, cheek, jaws, neck, shoulders, abdomen, axillae, chest, hands, feet and joints	Equipped with firm heavy and good-looking muscles	Mamsa
Complexion, voice, eyes, hair, skin hairs, nails, teeth, lips, urine and faeces	Unctuous	Medas
Heels, ankles, knees, elbows, collar bones, chin, head and joints Bones, nails and teeth	Prominent large	Asthi
Organs	Soft	Majja
Complexion	Unctuous, strong	
joints	long and rounded, prominent	
Look	Charming	shukra
eyes	As if filled with milk,	
teeth	Unctuous, rounded, firm, even and compact	
Considered pure in everything		satwa

Pramana of various body parts: Charaka has described the personality and longevity of the person as per different anatomical characters like hair, skin,

head, ears, eyes, eyebrows, nose, mouth, lips, neck, chest hands, axilla etc. according to their different shapes and contours.

Table 3: Various aspects of beauty related to the size of body parts (in Anguli pramana)

Part	thickness	Width	Length
Foot	4	6	14
Legs	18	16	
Knee	4	16	
Thigh	18	30	
Testes	8	6	
Penis	5	6	
Vagina		12	
Waist			
Abdomen	12	10	
Sides of chest	10	12	
Distance between breast		12	
Breast			
Chest	12		24
Shoulder			8
Arms			16
Forearms			15
Palm			12
Axillae			8
Upper back			18
Neck	4	22	
Face	12	25	
mouth	5		
Chin,lips,ears,nose,forehead			4
In between eyes	4		
Head	16	32	
Full body	84120		

Prakruti varna and vikriti varna: External factors viz. Genetic factors (Desha, Kula, Jati), Shukra and Ahara-vihara and Internal factors viz. Mahabhoota,

Dosha and Dhatu are responsible for the creation of colour and complexion in the child.⁶

Table 4: Various aspects of beauty related to the colour of skin

Prakruti varna	Vikruti varna
Krishna,	Nila
Shyama,	Syama
Shyamavadata	Tamra
Avadata	Harita
	Shukla

2. Factors maintaining beauty: Dosha, Dhatu in their normal functioning status contribute to maintaining Beauty. ‘Agni’ in an equilibrium state, by digestion and metabolism produces

Bala, Varna, Ojas, Dhi, Dhriti, Smriti etc. Certain factors help in maintaining beauty like,

- Proper diet: According to Ayurveda it is the perfect digestion and assimilation of our food together with the regular and efficient evaluation of

wastes that is essential for a strong, well-balanced and beautiful being. Together they are responsible for producing clear skin, bright eyes, glossy hair, strong nails, stamina, clarity and gentle compassionate nature. Ayurveda has given much importance to the rasa of the ahara. Kashaya rasa is considered as Ati twak Prasadana (improves the skin tone greatly)

- Observing Dinacharya and ritucharya
- Following Sadvritta and Achara rasayana
- Rasayanatherapy

It is very much useful in maintaining Yuvavastha and delaying the changes due to Vriddhavastha

Dinacharya

Proper observance of dincharya results in beautiful wellbeing according to Ayurveda.⁷

Table 5: Benefits of dinacharya in the promotion of beauty

Charya	Prevention	Promotion
Danta dhawana, Jihvanirlekhana	Mukha malinta Durgandha Dant roga Mukha roga Alasya Angamarda	Dant dhriddha Mukh shuddhi Jivha shuddhi Bhojan
Jalaneeti		
Anjana	Stress on eyes	Clarity of vision
Nasya	Urdhva jatrugata vikara	Eyesight Voice Glow of face
Kavala evam Gandhusa	Durganthta, Arochaka Dryness of mouth Dryness of lips Dant roga Mukha roga	Oral health
Abhyanga	Anga marda, Glani, Sandhi Shool, Anidra	Skin glow and softness SarirDadhya, Samhanana
Udvardana		Skin compactness
Snana	Skin disease Prameha excessive sweating drowsiness thirst burning	improve digestion Vrisya Aayushya Strengthen energy Utsaha Bala Varna

Rithucarya: The strength and complexion of the person are enhanced by practising the suitable diet and regimen for every season.⁸

Table 6: Benefits of rithucharya in the promotion of beauty

Season	Charya followed
Sisira	Massage with oil/powder/paste, bathing with lukewarm water, exposure to sunlight, wearing warm clothes are mentioned to follow.
Vasanth	One should use warm water for bathing purposes, Udvardana(massage) with powder of Chandana), Ksara, Agarukavala (gargle), Dhooma (smoking), Anjana (collyrium), and evacuative measures, such as Vamana and Nasya are advised.
Greeshma	Staying in cool places, applying sandalwood and other aromatic pastes over the body, adorned with flowers, wearing light dresses and sleeping in the daytime is helpful. At night one can enjoy the cooling moon rays with the breeze.
Varsha	Use of boiled water for bath and rubbing the body with oil properly after bath is advised.
Saratha	One should take water purified by the rays of the sun in the daytime and rays of the moon at nighttime for drinking, bathing, etc. It is advised to wear flower garlands and to apply a paste of Chandana (Santalum album) on the body.
Hemanta	exercise, body and head massage, use of warm water, Atapa-sevana (sunbath), application of Agaruk on the body, heavy clothing, sexual indulgence with one partner, residing in warm places

Sadvrita and achara rasayana

Cutting of hair, beard moustache, nail etc. along with hair dressing are nutritive and promoters of life's beautification.

There is also an indication about the use of an umbrella alleviates natural calamities, guards against the sun, wind, dust and rains.

Acharya Charaka has mentioned that one who follows the code of conduct for health lives a life of hundred years without any abnormalities. Such a person, praised by the noble ones, fills up the human world with his fame, acquires virtues and wealth, and earns the friendship of all living beings⁹. Thus, in consideration of the social aspect, Aachara Rasayana is more useful and necessary for personality development. Cleaning of excretory passages and feet frequently, cutting of hair, saving and nail cutting should be done thrice a fortnight; one should always wear clean clothes, use flowers and fragrance. The dress should be gentle, and a proper hairstyle should be maintained¹⁰.

3. Factors improving beauty

Maharshi Charaka has grouped different herbs according to their effects such as Vamya, Keshya, Vayasthapana etc which add to the Beauty of an individual¹¹

Varnya Mahakashaya

Acharya Charaka has mentioned Vamya Dashemani¹². Chandana, Punnaga, Padmaka, Ushira, Madhuka, Manjishtha, Sariva, Payasya, Sita, Lata- these ten drugs are considered as complexion promoters. Placing the Vamya drugs along with the list of other groups of drugs indicate the importance of Cosmetology during that period. The drugs mentioned in Varnya Rasayani are being utilized in different forms like ointment, oils, tablets etc. depending upon the doshas involved and disease condition. Drugs of Vamya Dasaimani can be used as a single drug or combination of more than two drugs in a suitable form.

Table 7: Description about Varnya Dasaimani¹³

Sl No	Name of the drug	Botanical Name/Family	Part used	Dosha karma
1	Chandana	<i>Santalum album Santalaceae</i>	Heartwood	Pitta kapha samana
2	Tunga/Nagakesara (Punnaga)	<i>Calophyllum inophyllum Guttiferae</i>	Bark, seed	Kapha pitta samana
3	Padmaka	<i>Prunus cerasoides Rosaceae</i>	Twak, Beeja majja	Pittakapha samana
4	Ushira	<i>Viteveria, zizanoidis Pinaceae</i>	Root	Vatapitta samana
5	Madhuka	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra Papiionaceae</i>	Root	Vatapitta samana
6	Manjishta	<i>Rubia cordifolia Rubiaceae</i>	Root	Pittakapha samana
7	Sariva	<i>Hemidesmus indicus Asclepidaceae</i>	Root	Tridosha samana
8	Payasya	<i>Ipomoea digitata Convolvulaceae</i>	Root	Vatapitta samana
9	Sita (sweta Durva)/Shataparva/shatavalli/harita/jaya/bhutahantri	<i>Cynodon Dactylon Poaceae</i>	Whole plant	Kapha pitta samana
10	Latha (Syamadurva)			

Charaka stated that the above Varnya Mahakashaya act on those factors and enhance skin complexion asby ushna virya stimulates Bhrajak Pitta which helps in absorption of lepa and improves skin complexion. By madhura, tikta rasa and sheeta virya act as Pittaghna, By Kashaya, Tikta rasa absorb Kleda and cool down Pitta, so results in purification of blood (Raktaprasadana), By Madhura rasa and Sheeta Virya they act as Ojovardhaka which improves skin complexion. By madhura rasa, Vipaka and Ushna virya, they act as Vataghna. By their specified Karma as given in text they act as Varnya, Raktaprasadak, Vataghna, Pittaghna, Ojovardhak.¹⁴

CONCLUSION

Cosmetology which is one of the major emerging branches has now gained the attention of researchers, industry and the general public globally. Presently cosmetics have become part of life. Synthetic cosmetics can cause adverse reactions like skin and mucous membranes irritation, allergies, and several problems including systemic effects. Hence the importance of herbal Cosmetology is getting importance. During the last decade, the use of traditional medicine has expanded globally and has gained popularity. In Ayurveda, all the acharyas have given much importance to the concept of beauty. Exploring the concept of beauty mentioned in the Ayurvedic classics is thus, a need of the hour.

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Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Anjana R S: Cosmetology In Ayurveda With Special Reference To Caraka Samhita. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2022 {cited March 2022} Available from: http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/710_716.pdf