

ROLE OF KAVALA IN MUKHA SWASTHYA (ORAL HYGIENE) AS DINACHARYA

Bhat Smitha U.S¹, Waheeda Banu²

¹Final year P.G Scholar, Dept. of Swasthavritta & Yoga, Alva's Ayurveda Medical College, Moodabidri, Karnataka, India

²Head, Dept. of Swasthavritta & Yoga, Alva's Ayurveda Medical College, Moodabidri, Karnataka, India

Email: drsmithapbhat@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Oral cavity is the seat of health, oral hygiene being sign of optimum health. The prevalence of the oral disease can be well combated by the practice of good oral hygiene. The importance of health and its maintenance is well explained in Ayurveda. *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Ratricharya* and *Sadvritta* are the various practices to be followed regularly to maintain health. In the context of *Dinacharya* various procedures like *Dantadhavana*, *Jihwanirlekhana*, *Gandusha*, *Kavala*, *Pratisarana* are explained which are to be practiced daily to maintain the oral health. Various formulations for *Kavala* and *Gandusha* are explained to highlight the importance of oral hygiene in maintenance of health. Due to the pressure created within the oral cavity during the procedure of *Kavala* and due to the movement of the *Dravya* there will be removal of debris, plaque from the teeth and helps in improving the oral health.

Keywords: Oral hygiene, *Kavala*, *Mukhaswasthya*

INTRODUCTION

The ultimate aim of any medical science is to preserve the health and enable the individual to lead a healthy productive economical life. Keeping the prime motto of prevention of disease and maintenance of health Ayurveda explains *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Ratricharya*, *Sadvritta*, as *Swasthya Rakshana Upayas*. In the context of *Dinacharya* it is explained that one who practices all those procedures will lead a happy disease free healthy life ⁽¹⁾. Acharya Sharangadhara has explained that whichever *Dravyas* are explained in the context of *Gandusha* can be used for *Kavala* ⁽²⁾.

The basic activities of the individual like chewing and swallowing food, nutrition, social communication like smiling, speaking are dependent on oral health. But unfortunately oral cavity is the body part which is highly neglected and ill-treated. It is always in a risk of exposure to physical, chemical, biological, thermal injuries.

ORAL HYGIENE

WHO defines Oral health as a “state of being free from chronic mouth and facial pain, oral and throat cancer, oral sores, birth defects such as cleft lip and palate, periodontal disease, tooth decay and tooth loss, and other diseases and disorders that af-

fect the oral cavity”⁽³⁾. Oral hygiene is the practice of keeping the mouth clean and healthy by brushing, flossing, gum massage, hydrotherapy or any other procedure to prevent tooth decay and gum disease. Good oral hygiene results in a mouth that looks and smells healthy, clean teeth, pink gums which do not hurt or bleed during brushing or flossing.

MUKHA SWASTHYA

The term “*Mukha Swasthya*” is not found directly in Ayurvedic classics. The techniques used to improve the health of oral cavity are explained in *Dinacharya*, *Dantadhavana*, *Jihwanirlekhana*, *Kavala*, *Gandusha* and *Pratisarana*. These are the procedures told by Acharyas for the maintenance of oral hygiene as a part of daily lifestyle to keep the oral cavity in healthy state.

KAVALA

Kavala is a procedure of movement of any liquid easily in the oral cavity for certain duration⁽⁴⁾.

Bheda^{(5) (6) (7)}

Kavala has been classified into 4 types based on its action and Doshagna property. They are

1. *Snehi/Snaihika* (Lubricating)
2. *Prasadi/Prasadana* (mitigating/cooling)
3. *Samshodhana/Shodhi* (purificatory)
4. *Ropana* (healing)

1. Snehi/Snehika Kavala:

In this type of *Kavala*, *Snigdha* and *Ushna Dravyas* which are *Madhura* in *Rasa* are used. This is effective in correcting the imbalances of *Vata Dosh* in the oral cavity.

2. Prasadi/Prasadana Kavala:

Kashaya or *Taila* is used in this type of *Kavala* which are *Madhura*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya Rasa*, *Sheeta* in *Veerya*. This is effective in mitigating the alleviated *Pitta Dosh* in the buccal cavity.

3. Samshodhana/Shodhi Kavala:

In this type of *Kavala*, *Kashaya* or *Taila* are used which are *Tikta*, *Katu*, *Amla*, *Lavana Rasa* and *Ushna* in *Veerya*. This is beneficial in clearing the vitiation of *Kapha Dosh* in the oral cavity.

4. Ropana Kavala:

Dravya which are *Kashaya*, *Tikta Rasa* and have the property of *Vranagna* are used in this type of *Kavala*. This type of *Kavala* is beneficial in curing of mouth ulcers.

Age limitation:

Kavala can be practiced in individuals above the age of 5 years⁽⁸⁾.

Dharana Kala⁽⁹⁾

The procedure of *Kavala* should be practiced till the complete evacuation of *Dosha* is noticed; features like *Kaphapoorna Asyata*, *Netra Grana Srava* are seen.

Though this procedure can be done anytime of the day, morning hours are ideal. It is explained in *Dinacharya* that after performing *Dantadhavana* and *Jihwanirlekhana*, *Kavala* is to be practiced⁽¹⁰⁾.

Dharana vidhi⁽¹¹⁾

Poorvakarma

The client is made to sit in a comfortable knee height chair in a room devoid of heavy breeze and direct sunlight but having enough light. The client must have completed *Dantadhavana*, *Jihwanirlekhana*, *Malavisarjana Karmas*. The client is to be given with *Mrudu Snehana* and *Swedana* over *Bhaala*, *Gala*, *Nasa*, *Nayana*, *Lalaata*. Now the *Dravya* used for *Kavala* should be warmed by double boiling so that it is warmed indirectly.

Pradhana Karma

The client is to be given with the *Dravya* to hold in the mouth and asked to move or gargle it by tilting the head slightly backwards. Care should be taken so that the *Dravya* is not swallowed. After the *Samyak Lakshanas* are found the client is asked to spit the *Dravya* out.

Paschat Karma

After spitting out the *Dravya*, the oral cavity should be cleaned with warm water.

Pramana

Filling the mouth with half, one third and one fourth of its capacity is the *Pravara*, *Madhyama* and *Avara Matra* respectively for *Kavala Dravya*. In this way three, five, seven times *Aushada* should be held or till the *Doshanasha* is noticed⁽¹²⁾.

Samyak Yoga lakshana ^{(13) (14) (15) (16)}

- *Vyadherapachayaha*: remission of illness
- *Tushtih*: freshness of mouth
- *Vaishadyam*: clarity of the oral cavity
- *Vaktralagavam*: feeling of the lightness in the mouth
- *Indriya prasada*: normal functioning of the sense organs.

Heena Yoga lakshana ^{(17) (18) (19) (20)}

- *Jadya*: stiffness of mouth
- *Kaphotklesha*: excessive salivation
- *Arasa jnana*: inability of the tongue to perceive taste properly.

Ati Yoga Lakshana ^{(21) (22) (23) (24)}

- *Mukha paka*: ulceration in the mouth.
- *Shosha*: dryness of the buccal cavity
- *Trishna*: feeling thirsty
- *Aruchi*: tastelessness in the mouth
- *Klama*: sense of exhaustion.

Contraindication of Kavala ⁽²⁵⁾

Kavala is contraindicated in *Visha*, *Moorcha*, *Mada*, *Shosha*, *Raktapitta*, *Kupita Akshi*, *Kupita Mala*, *Ksheena* and *Rooksha Rogi*.

Kavala in Dinacharya

All the Acharyas have mentioned *Kavala* as one of the *Karma* in *Dinacharya* with mainly 2 intentions

- To improve the *Mukhaswasthya* thereby prevent various *Vyadhis* occurring in *Mukha*.
- To enhance the *Prakruta Karma* of *Mukha*

Pancha Ksheeri Vriksha Kashaya is to be used for *Kavala* daily to eliminate *Mala Putigandha* and *Praseka* ⁽²⁶⁾.

Kavala in Ritucharya ^{(27) (28)}

In *Vasanth Ritu Kavalagraha* is advocated to remove the *Prakupita Kapha*. Sometimes it can be implemented as an accessory measure to evacuate *Avasthika Kapha* after *Shodhana*.

Mode of action

The drug when moved within the oral cavity creates a pressure which stimulates pressoreceptor (stretch reflex) that are present in the mouth. Once the pressoreceptor is stimulated, the signals are sent to salivary nuclei in the brain stem which induces the

secretion of saliva. Lysozyme is an enzyme present in saliva is bacteriostatic in action which prevents the growth of pathogenic microorganisms in the oral cavity. Antibody IgA present in saliva also provide protection against microorganisms.

Proper absorption of the active principles takes place in the oral cavity due to the pressure created by the action of *Kavala*.

Due to the regular movement of drug within the oral cavity, the bacteria present within the oral cavity will be washed off and hence halitosis, plaque formation, tooth decay and gingivitis can be prevented.

The active principles present in the formulation like tannin in *Pancha Ksheeri Vruksha Kashaya* and *Triphala kashaya*, catechin in *Khadiradi Kashaya*, sesamol and sesamin in *Tila Taila* have anti-bacterial, wound healing property which helps in the removal of bad odour, gum bleeding and gingivitis.

Thin and highly vascular mucosal layer inferior to the tongue (sublingual) permits the rapid absorption of the lipid soluble drugs into systemic circulation. Some of the drugs irritate the oral mucosa (by their chemical nature) and increases vascular permeability. Thus an active principle of *Dravya* is absorbed into systemic circulation.

CONCLUSION

The importance of *Dinacharya* is well explained in all the classics of *Ayurveda*. The regular practice of *Kavala* improves the *Mukhaswasthya* by removing the *Mala* and *Pootigandha*. It improves the taste perception. The medicine which is moved within the oral cavity for a specific duration will create a specific pressure within the oral cavity and therefore it will be absorbed. The maintenance of oral health and also the complete health of an individual can be achieved by the regular practice of *Kavala* and *Dinacharya*.

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