A REVIEW ON DINACHARYA MODALITIES W.S.R TO ABHYANGA AS A PROPHYLACTIC MEASURE

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ABSTRACT

Abhyanga is one among the Dinacharya and it is a kind of Bhayasneha. It gives strength to the body, nourishes the sense organs, increases longevity etc. It is the most natural and powerful method of relaxing and at the same time rejuvenating the body. Abhyanga preserves the body energy and saves the individual from degeneration. It also works as a cleanser and helps the individual in expelling the toxins out of the body through sweat, urine and mucus, thus rejuvenating the body. It is done to whole body or to a particular part of the body (Shira, Karna, Pada etc). Abhyanga has been highlighted with its wide spectrum of usage both for preventive and curative purpose. Abhyanga can be correlated to massage in contemporary science. The term is applied to certain manipulations of soft tissue which are effectively performed with the palmar aspect of the hand and administered for the purpose of producing effect on nervous system, muscular system as well as on the local and general circulation of blood and lymph.

Keywords: Abhyanga, massage, Dinacharya

INTRODUCTION

Abhyanga has been explained in the contest of Dinacharya¹, Ritucharya² for Swastha and as a Bahiparimarjana Chikitsa³ in diseased. Thus it can be performed in healthy individual and in diseased to maintain the health and to cure the disease respectively. Practically it is seen that Abhyanga is advised as Poorvakarma to Shodhana karma, Pradhanakarma in many Vataja disorders and Paschatkarma after Vyayama. As a part of Dinacharya if one practices it daily will prevent the ageing process, exertion and aggravation of Vata, bestows good vision, nourishment of the body, long life, good sleep and improves the quality of skin¹. In modern science Abhyanga is compared with oil massage. It is group of procedures done with hands on the external surface of the body in variety of ways either with a curative, palliative or hygienic point of view⁴.

Aim and Objective:
To review the literature regarding Abhyanga
To review the literature regarding effects and scientific documentation regarding prophylactic effect of Abhyanga

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:
The word Abhyanga is derived from the word Ang Dhatu – to smear Abhi Upasrga⁵ – Hence; Abhyanga is defined as rubbing with any kind of Sneha Dravya (unctuous substances).
Description of Abhyanga is available in Brhat Trayis, Sharangadhara and Bhavapraka-
sha as for prevention and cure of disease. Other than Ayurvedic text the description of Abhyanga is also available in Vatsyayana Kamasutra as one among the 64 Kala (art) which has been specifically explained to enhance sexual power of an individual and in Bahvishya Purana different techniques of massage have been explained which specifies importance of pressure on different parts. The synonyms of Abhyanga are Abhyanjana, Snehana, Vimardana and Samvahana.

**Types:**
According to Vatsyana Kamasutra
- Samvahana- whole body massage
- Keshamardana- head massage
- Utsadana- massage with Kalka (paste)/sneha

According to Tiruka (author of text of Angamardana)
- Shushkangamardana
- Tailangamardana
- Ksheerangamardana
- Swayam Angamardana
- Yamalangamardana

According to Charaka Samhita
- Shiroabhyanga
- padabhyanga
- karnapoorana

According to Ashtanga Hrudaya
- Shiroabhyanga
- padabhyanga
- karnapoorana

**Procedure**
1. **Poorvakarma**
The person should undergo Abhyanga only when he feels hunger (Jata Annapanecha) The vitals should be checked.
The Sneha used for the purpose of Abhyanga should be indirectly warmed by keeping it over the hot water.

2. **Pradhanakarma**
First importance should be given to Shira (head) Sravana (ears) and Pada (foot). After this the Abhyanga should be done in a synchronized manner by the two therapists standing in each side of the person in 7 postures sitting, supine, left lateral, prone, right lateral, supine, sitting.

It is mentioned that Abhyanga should be performed in Anulomagati. Also explained the specific direction of movement depending on involvement of Dosha ie, Anuloma Gati in Vata Dushti, Pratiloma Gati in Kapha Dushti and alternate Pratiloma and Anuloma Gati in Pitta Dushti. On joints abdomen and buttocks should be in circular manner.

3. **Paschatkarma**
The procedure of Abhyanga should be followed by removal of the oil with a cloth, Swedana and Snana.

**Penetration of Sneha to different Dhatu** (Therapeutic duration)
It is mentioned that it takes 300 Matrakala (approximately 1.5 mts) for Sneha to penetrate Romakupa (hair roots), 400 Matrakala (2.1 mts) to penetrate Twak, 500 Matrakala (2.6 mts) to penetrate Rakta, 600 Matrakala (3.1 mts) for Mamsa, 700 Matrakala (3.6 mts) for Meda, 800 Matrakala (4.2 mts) for Asti and 900 Matrakala (4.7 mts) for Majja. so for the complete benefit of Abhyanga one should perform it for 35 mts, 5 mts in each 7 postures.

**Oil according to Prakruti**

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<th>Sl No</th>
<th>Prakruti</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vatapitta</td>
<td>Himasagaratala</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pittakapha</td>
<td>Chandanaadi taila, Ksheerabalatala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kaphavata</td>
<td>Tila taila, bruahatsaind-havadi taila</td>
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Oil according to Ritu

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<td>Shishira &amp; Hemantha</td>
<td>Lakshjhoadi taila, Karpoo-raadi Taila, Tila taila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Vasanta</td>
<td>Triphala taila, Bruhat saindhvadi taila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Greeshma &amp; Varsha</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sharat ritu</td>
<td>Chandanadi taila</td>
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Benefits

It mitigates Vata, Pustida (nourishment), Nidrajanaka (induces good sleep), Twachya (good lustrous skin), Bruhatwakrut (gives strength to body) Sramahara (cures tiredness), Jarapaha (delays agieng), Drustiparsadana (improves vision), Ayuprada (improves longevity), Kaphavatahara (mitigates the vata and kapha)

Indications

All healthy individuals
Abhyanga specially indicated for Bala (children), Vrudha (old age people) and Krusha (undernourished people).
All type of Vataroga (nervous disorders), Vishamajwara (intermittent fever) and all Twakkikara (skin diseases).

Contra indication

Kaphajaroga (Kaphaja disorders), Ajeerna (indigestion), Navajwara (acute fevers), and Tarunajwara (recent fevers), after Shodhana-karma (bio-purification), in Santarpanothe-roga (over nutritious disorders), immediately after consumption of food because there is chance of regurgitation of food articles and delay in digestion, person accustomed to Ruksa and Abhishyandhi Ahara, it act as Satmyavirudha to the individual and during Sneahpna.

Types and Benefits of Abhyanga

Shiroabhyanga (head massage)

Kapala and Indriya tarpana (nourishes the brain and sensory and motor organs), will not suffer from Shirashoola (prevents headache), Khalitya (baldness), Palithya (graying of hair), Keshapatanah (hair fall), increases the Bala of Shira (strengthens the scalp) and Kapalaa, the hairs will be strong black and long, there will be Indriyaprasada (strengthens the sense organs), good for skin and renders sound sleep 17.

Karna Abhyanga/Tarpana/Poorana (massage to ears)

Hanu, Manya, Shira, and Karna Shoolaghna18 (relieves pain from neck and facial region). The person will not suffer from Vataja Karnarogas, Manya and Hanusangrana will not suffers from Uchhasruti or Badhirya (deafness) who dose karnarpana daily 19.

Padabhyanaga (foot massage)

Kharatwa,(dryness of foot), Rooksata(roughness of foot), Srama (tiredness) and Suptata of Pada (numbness of foot ) will be relived immediately after Padabhyanga, increases the Sukumarata, Bala and Shhirya of Pada (strength and stability of foot), improves the vision, mitigates Vata. By doing Padabhyanga the person will not suffer from Gridhrasi (sciatica), Padasputana (cracking of foot), Sira and Snayu Sankocha20 (stiffness of tendons and ligaments).

The simile have been quoted that disease do not go near one who massages his feet before sleeping just as snake do not approach eagles 21.

Abhyanga for Bala (child)

Susrutacharya have mentioned that the Abhyanga for baby should be done with Balatilal22 (a type of medicated oil). It improves growth, renders good sleep and nourishes the Dhatu (tissues). Newborn is in growing phase, and growth velocity is highest in this period of life, which demands continuous nutrition. Also it is the time of development of central nervous system along with senses and Abhyanga helps in the healthy growth and development of baby.

Abhyanga for Garbhini (pregnant women)
Garbhini Abhyanga is only mentioned in Yogaratnakara in Ksheeradosha Chikitsa.

In practical life also it is been practiced. Mainly Vatahara and Balya Tails (oils mitigating Vata and strengthening type) are used for this. While doing Abhyanga care should be taken that it should not be done with more pressure and the lady should be seated in her comfortable posture.

**Abhyanga for Sutikastree (puerperal period)**

As per Charaka Samhita and Ashtanga Sangraha Sutikastree should be done Abhyanga with Sarpi (ghee) and Taila (oil). In Ashtanga Sangraha again he specified the Taila as Balataila. Susrutacharya also have been mentioned Balatala for Abhyanga.

Bhavaprakasha mentioned Sutikastree should undergo daily Abhyanga and Swedada for one month.

**Modern view on Abhyanga**

Definition- massage, it’s a group of procedures which are usually done with hands on the external tissue of the body in variety of way either with a curative palliative and hygienic point of view. In general massage has been classified as dry massage, powder massage and oil massage. And there are four techniques told for massage that is stroking, petrissage, friction, tapotment.

**DISCUSSION**

Mode of action of massage- Ayurvedic view

Oil applied in skin reaches up till Majja Dhatu and does nourishment of each Dhatu, if done for sufficient time and there by subsides disease related to particular Dhatu.

The site of Vata being Twak (skin) oil applied directly to skin mitigates Vata. Stana for Bhrajaka Pitta is in Twak which helps in easy and good absorption. Dashadhamanies which starts from Hrudaya makes many networks and finally opens into Romakoopaa. So oil will be absorbed in skin and circulates through Dhamanies.

As per our classics Abhyanga is to be done in Anuloma direction, as the strokes will be in the direction of muscle fiber i.e., origin and insertion, and in circular manner in joints as the muscle bulk will be less and vasculature will be more and in circular manner.

Karnapoorana, Karnatarpuna and Karna Abhyanga are mentioned under Karna Abhyanga only among this practically Karna Abhyanga can be done. The mode of action of Karna Abhyanga and Karnapoorana is that it comes under local levels of drug administration and the drug is absorbed through the mucus membrane of auditory canal, thus there will be provision of adequate concentration of the administered drug at this site of its action. The medicine poured into the ears thus produce immediate therapeutic effects.

While explaining the Poorvakarana it is told that Abhyanga should be performed when the subject feels hunger (Jata Annapanecha) it indirectly tells that the subject should be in empty stomach otherwise there will be chances of regurgitation of food materials and the digestion also will be delayed. In the benefits of Padabhaya other than local benefits Drushtiprasadana is explained to substantiate that we will get a reference from Ashtanga Hrudaya that in the centre of foot two Siras are situated which is connected to the eyes. Any vitiation to these Siras causes abnormalities to the eyes and through these Siras the effect of drugs on external application to Pada is transmitted to the eyes.

In modern view the effect of massage can be assumed in two ways- by physical manipulation and by the effect of drug in medicated oil by absorption.

By physical manipulation

- Mechanical emptying of veins and lymphatic’s by contraction of smooth muscles.
When the contraction increases beyond threshold the valves get open and the fluid moves to next segment thus facilitate the forward movement of venous blood$^{27}$.

- Improves the blood circulation of the area being massaged
- Increases RBC, HB count.
- Helps in removal of waste products.
- Increase in serum myoglobin secretion in case of muscle tension and pain$^{28}$.
- Massage is having the analgesic effect which is supported by the pain gate theory$^{29}$ i.e., by stimulating the peripheral receptors like touch and pressure which may release anti pain substance and helps in relieving pain.
- The adhesions present between the fibers are broken and maximum mobility between fibers and the adjacent structures are ensured.
- Percussion and vibration techniques of massage assist the removal of secretion from the large airways.

**Absorption through skin**

Absorption through the skin is due to their lipid solubility since the epidermis behaves as a lipid barrier. Dermis is freely permeable to many solutes. So the absorption via skin can be enhanced by suspending the drug in an oil vehicle and rubbing$^{30}$.

**CONCLUSION**

*Abhyanga* is a procedure in which oil is smeared all over the body, it improves blood circulation and helps in conveying the nourishment and oxygen to the various parts of the body. It helps to improve the skin activity. It stimulates the nervous system. It delays aging process. These benefits of *Abhyanga* can be achieved by having it daily or twice in week with suitable oil as a prophylactic measure to promote health and to achieve a disease free state.

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