



**Original Article**

**Shodhana karma: Prime treatment modality**

**Sharma Sonam1 , Chauhan Vikas2**

1. P.G.Scholar, Yashwant Ayurvedic College Post Graduate Training And Research Center, kodoli, Maharashtra.

2. Assistant Professor in Department of Kaya Chikitsa, Prakash Institute of Ayurvedic Medical Science & Research, Jhajhar, Bulandshahr, UP.

**Abstract**

Shodhana term refer to Purification. The reference of shodhana therapy in Ayurveda intends to meant for purification of body performed by the specially designed five procedures which is unique approach through the nearest possible route. Shodhana not only help in fulfilment of the prayojana (Way of life..“Swasthasya Swastha Rakshanam Aaturasya Vikara Prashanam”) of Ayurveda as well as helps the biological system to return to homeostasis and to rejuvenate body and its mechanism, also facilitates the desired Pharmaco-therapeutic effect of medicine. Acharya charaka has described Shodhana as Panchakarma therapy which includes five procedure, these are Vamama, Virechana, Basti and Nasya. Shodhana is believed to purify or cleanse all the body tissues and to bring about the harmony of neurohumors (tridosas) (i.e. vata, pitta, kapha, and manasa dosas (i.e. satva, raja, and tama) and to obtain long-lasting beneficial effects. Shodhana is not merely a therapeutic regimen, but it may be considered a management tool when used at certain tissue and body parts. It promotes and preserves the individual’s normal health. Shodhan is an important component of Ayurvedic management of diseases. It is the comprehensive method of internal purification of the body through emesis (vaman karma), purgation (virechana karma), enema (basti karma), errhines (nasya karma), and bloodletting (raktamokshana).

**Key words:** Purification, Panchakaram, Shodhana, Homeostatis.

**Keywords:**Agni, Jhataragni, Bhutagni, Dhatuagni

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**INTRODUCTION**

Shodhana therapy is intended for purification of the body by which the accumulated morbid humors responsible for proper functioning of body. Shodhana is indicated in bahudoshavastha1. Shodhana therapy helps in eliminated vitiated dosha, enhanced power of digestion and metabolism, curing disease, restoring health, sense organs, mind intelligence and complexion become clear, gaining of strength, plumpness, offspring, and virility occur, person will not get effected by old age(Jara) and live long without any disease2.

 Bio- purification is potential in emergency condition because purificatory drugs processed the property of immediate action and help in elimination of acute and chronic poisoning, pesticides, chemical preservatives, etc from the body without damaging side effects3.

**Address for correspondence:**

**Dr. Vikas Chauhan**

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Kaya Chikitsa, Prakash Institute of Ayurvedic Medical Science & Research, Jhajhar, Bulandshahr,UP.

Email: chauhanvikas2808@gmail.com

**Types of Shodhana:-**

Different authors have their different view regarding shodhana procedures. Acharya Charaka explained Shodhana Karma are five Vamama karma (emesis),Virechana karma (purgation), Niruha Basti, Anuvasana Basti (enema) and Nasya karma (errhines)4. On other hand Acharya Dalhana commented on the point of view of Susruta, explain shodhana karma are five5and Acharya Vagabhatt6 described shodhana are Vaman karma (emesis), Virechana karma (purgation), Basti karma (enema), Nasya karma (errhines), and Raktamokshana (bloodletting).

**Vaman**7: Vamana karma is defined as “A process in which malas (Dosha) are eliminated through upper channels i.e. mouth”. Chakrapani mentions that Urdhvabhaga should be considered as Urdhvamukha. Vamana is one of the major procedures in Panchakarma, best treatment for Kapha Dosha. In addition, it has been described in many diseases also. Numerous references regarding the Vamana Karma are available in the Ayurvedic texts. It is the unique procedure of eliminating the Dosha from the body through the oral route.

**Virechana** 8:- Virechana Karma is one of the prime purificatory procedures among Panchakarma, which is a supreme procedure for elimination of Pitta Dosha. Virechana is the procedure in which the orally administered drug acts on internally situated doshas, specifically on pitta Dosha and expels them out of the body through anal route. As the evacuation of doshas is done by both Vamana and Virechana, therefore sometimes the word ‘Virechana’ broadly applies for both7.

**Basti** :- Basti Chikitsa is considered to be a prime treatment modality among the Panchakarma. It is a therapeutic procedure in which the drugs administered into the anal canal by using basti i.e. urinary bladder of animals to bring out morbid dosha from the body along with mala9,10. It has not only curative aspects but also preventive and promotive aspects. Acharya Charaka has considered it as the chief treatment regimen for various disorders and also consider as ardha chikitsa for vata vikaras11.

**1. Niruha Basti**12**:** In this type of Basti, Kashaya is the chief constituent of the Basti dravya along with Madhu, Saindhava, Kalka and Sneha. In place of Kashaya, Ksheera, Mamsarasa, Amlakanji, Gomutra, Dadhimastu etc are also used or like Avapa dravya.

**2. Anuvasana Basti**13,14**:** The Basti in which Snehas are administered into colon through anal canal is called Anuvasana Basti.

**Nasya :** Administration of medicine (drug) or medicated oil through the nose is known as Nasya15. Nasya Karma which is one among the Panchakarma has got an important role in this regard Panchakarmas and also in the management of ‘Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras’16. Nasya is said to be the door of the Shiras. The medicine administered through the nose, spreads throughout the Shiras and helps in the evacuation of Dosha, thereby pacifying the diseases. Nasya Karma is the main line of treatment for diseases above the clavicle and it is the only Shodhana Karma for the Urdhwanga.

**Raktamokshana**17**:** Raktamokshana karma is one among the Pancha Shodhana i.e. Vamana, Virechana, Basti, Shirovirechana and Raktamokshana. It is one among the unique Para-surgical procedure mentioned for the management of disorders caused due to vitiation of Rakta.

**Principles of shodhana**

1. Yathasanna Dosha Haranam

(Purification to nearest route):- When dosha come to the kostha, they should be expelled from nearest route18,19.

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| **S.No.** | **Site of Dosha** | **Dosha**  | **Nearest route** | **Therapy**  |
| 1. | Amasaya | Kapha, pitta | Mukha  | Vamana  |
| 2. | Adho Amasaya | Pitta | Guda  | Virechana  |
| 3. | Pakvasaya  | Vata | Guda  | Basti  |
| 4. | Sira  | Kapha | Nasa  | Nasya  |

1. Yatha Dosha Harana (Purification according to dosha):- Kapha, pitta and vata dosha should be removed by Vamana, Virechana and Basti respectively.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sl no.** | **Dosha** | **Therapy**  |
| 1. | Vata  | Basti  |
| 2. | Pitta | Virechana  |
| 3. | Kapha  | Vamana  |

1. Yatha Bala Shodhna (Purification according to strength):-

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sl no.** | **Dosha bala** | **Rogi bala** | **Type of Shodhana** |
| 1. | Alpa (less) | Alpa | Mridu  |
| 2. | Madhyama (medium) | Madhyama | Madhyama  |
| 3. | Uttam (superior) | Uttam | Uttam  |

**Utility of Shodhana**:-

1. The dosha which are pacified by shodhana never recure but pacified by langhana, pachana and shaman etc. may reoccur20.
2. Shodhana directly acts on root site of dosha and removed from body, so doshasanchayavatha will not take place 21.
3. Shodhana pacifies the disease, destroy the disease and increase the bala and varna of the body22.

The classical Shodhana (Panchkarma) is done in three stages:

1. **Purvakarma (Preparatory procedures)** - These procedures are done to prepare the body to undergo a proper and thorough cleansing. It involved deepan, pachana, snehana, swadana for increasing jathragni as well as dhatuagni and movement of dosha from shakata to kostha.
2. **Pradhanakarma (Main cleansing procedures)** - These procedures consist of five purification procedures especially designed to eliminate toxic materials from the imbalanced dosas of the body. They are emesis (vaman karma), purgation (virechana karma), enema (basti karma), errhines (nasya karma), and bloodletting (raktamokshana).

1. **Pashchatya karma (Post procedures)** -These procedures consist mainly of recuperative measures in the form of dietary regimens, lifestyle changes, and rejuvenating herbs.

**Beneficial Effects of Shodhana Therapy**

The beneficial contribution of shodhana therapy is that it removes the toxic materials from the body and provides purification of the body at two levels:

(1) The gross level, where various organs and systems of the body are thoroughly cleansed (e.g.,cardiovascular system, gastrointestinal tract, respiratory tract, etc.)

(2) The cellular level, where purification and cleansing of the body is produced at the level of cells, cell membranes, and molecules.

 Various other benefits are also there which makes Shodhana an important aspect in Ayurvedic treatment. Like shodhana brings flexibility in the body, delayed aging process, help in quality of life.

**Discussion**

Shodhana therapy helps in bring the whole body to normalcy, starts rejuvenation and revitalization of all body tissues, potentates the pharmacological actions of various drugs and medicines administered after shodhana, removes waste products, unwanted materials, various toxins, and stagnant dosas, and potentiates physiological functions of all the body systems (e.g. gut absorption improves considerably and metabolism is also corrected). The prognosis of various diseases that are difficult to treat with simple administration of medicines becomes significantly improved (good prognosis) after administration of Shoshana. Shodhan karma not only is a prerequisite for all the therapeutic procedures and medications but also has a full therapeutic role in promoting preventive, curative, and rehabilitative procedures.

**Conclusion**

Any type of shodhana procedure is believed to affect the cleansing of microcirculatory channels by eliminating the toxic metabolites from the body. This helps in the process of curing a disease. Scientific studies indicate that cleansing procedures appear to help in eradicating chronic diseases more effectively.

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