

A Critical Review of Relevance of Sneha in Day-to-Day Life

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Abstract

Sneha occupies an important part of our daily life. Sneha occupies a vital role as both Oushada and Ahara. Snehana Karma brings about softness and removes dryness of the body. Judicious use of Sneha is also essential in maintenance of appropriate digestive fire. The qualities of Sneha are based on the source of origin and Ashaya. Guru, sheeta, Sara, snigdham, Manda, sookshma, mrdu, dravam are the gunas of sneha dravya. Sneha is used both externally as well as internally. The day begins and ends with sneha. The dinacharya context explain about usage of sneha as gandusha, nasya, abhyanga, murdhni taila. Whereas acharya also emphasis the usage of pada abhyanga at the end of the day. Internal and external use of Sneha checks day to day wear and tear of body components and acts as a Rejuvenator as well. A deep insight of this topic can help in the prevention as well in the curing of diseases. Here an effort is being done to decipher the pharmacological action of Sneha dravya in the light of qualities.

Keywords: Sneha, Snigdha, Mardava, Kleda

Introduction

Ayurveda is the science of holistic way of living. Ayurveda has designated ^[1] Ahara (food), Nidra (sleep) and Brahmacharya (*celibacy*) as the three sub pillars of life. They support the body just like the pillars support a building. ² Ahara, vihara and Oushada are considered as the three quadrants of treatment. Among this Sneha occupies a vital role as both Oushada and Ahara. Judicious use of Sneha checks the daily wear and tear of body elements while complete avoidance of Sneha-a trend that follows can lead to many diseases. Unctuous substances exhibit Rasayana (Rejuvenating) effect as well ^[3]. Sneha is considered as the sara or essence of Purusha. Even Prana: the supreme vital force is rooted in Sneha. Human body undergoes catabolism throughout their lifespan. When food is devoid of Sneha is essential quantity, catabolism may overthrow anabolism which lead to degenerative diseases triggering Vata Vyadhi. The foods having essential Sneha component lead to softness of the body components. Pitta-the dosha which maintains sustainability and Kapha the source of energy is of Sneha in nature ^[4]. The same Sneha when used as a part of Sodhana karma, produces unctuousness, Vishyanda, softness and produces Kleda in the body. Thus, apt administration of Sneha dravya helps in maintenance of a healthy life.

Aims and Objectives

- To study the role of Sneha dravya in maintenance of health.
- To analyse the pharmacological action of Sneha dravya.

Materials and Methods

For the analysis of Sneha dravya thorough literary study has

been conducted using Samhitas, references, reference books, journals, and publications.

Review of Literature

Unctuous substances are heavy, unctuous, cold, soft, liquid, mobile and mild in properties ^[5]. Among them heavy quality results in more time for digestion. Its five karmas are causing weariness, causing obstruction, providing strength, providing satiation, and causing nourishment. Saada (weariness) will in turn result in glani (fatigue), whereas upalepa (obstructions) increase mala.

The qualities of Sneha are based on the source of origin and Ashaya. Based on karma, unctuous substances can either be Brimhana (nourishing), Shamana (pacifying) or Sodhana (purifying) in action. Snehana is explained as Dosha mardhavakarana. Among the four types of Sneha, Grtha is considered as best because of its madhurya (sweetness) and avidahitva (does not cause burning sensation). It exhibits samskara anuvartana: retains its own goodness along with the health benefits of whatever it is processed with.

Grtha acts as both Agni deepana and Pitta shamaka. The nourishing nature of Grtha makes it Pitta pacifying, whereas Grtha ignites and maintain a good digestive fire as well. Sneha when used as a Purva karma produce liquefaction and movement of Dosha whereas if used as pacifying is mitigator of diseases. Sneha dravya will be having a Rasayana action as well when used in pacifying form.

Charaka Chikitsa quotes judicious administration of unctuous dietary substances helps in results in stability of digestive fire. Bhela Samhita has elaborated that Snehana increases the Rasa. The movement of Dosha to Koshta after consumption of Sneha as a Purva Karma is being compared with movement of water from a height downwards.

Discussion

The existence of humans is based on Srishti or Sneha. Consumed Sneha has its primary action on Rasa dhatu. Its daily usage results in pratyagra Dhatu. The rasa increased by Sneha can be attributed as the Ahara rasa which on further cyclical catabolism and anabolism generates the Dhatus. Thus, proper Sneha ensures both qualitative and quantitative excellence of Rasa Dhatu and thus the excellence of subsequent formed Dhatus.

Deciphering Pharmacology of Sneha Based On Guna

According to bhavaprakasha, In Sneha dravyas, Guru Guna pacifies Vata, Aggravates Kapha, nourishes and is difficult to digest. Sheeta Guna produce refreshment, is strengthening, pacifies thirst, burning sensation and excessive thirst. Mridu Guna produces looseness in organs while Drava Guna causes oozing and liquefaction in the body. Drava Guna will result in spreading and thus enhances liquefaction of Doshas. Pichila Guna produces vitality while Sara Guna causes anulomata of Vata and mala.

Sara Guna is Apya in nature. Manda Guna according to arunadhata results in slow progress (Chirakari) and is pacifying in nature whereas hemadri it is shamana. These attributes results in pacification of Pitta Dosha.

Sukshma Guna helps in traversing the subtle channels of the body. Acharya susrutha explains. Snigdha Guna concerned with four specific actions i.e. It produces unctuousness, softness, strength, and complexion of body. It also enhances liquefaction of Doshas in the Dosha. (Hemadri). Acharya Dalhana has narrated that usage of unctuous substances acts as protectives to sensory organs. (Dalhana).

Sneha increase Ojas which is unctuous, smooth, soft, cold, sweet, and heavy. Grtha has properties which are like Ojas and it in turn nourishes Ojas. Regular application of Sneha as Moordhni taila especially Shiro abhyanga provides anulomata of Vata which is essential in day-to-day life. Navana with Sneha ensures proper nourishment to Shiras which is one among the Trimarmas. Gandusha (gargling) with Sneha not only eliminates Doshas but also provides stability. Abhyanga one among the important part of daily regimen followed by Vyayama, a mode of niragni sweda. It also pacifies Vata Dosha. Abhyanga rejuvenate the body and pacifies Vata Dosha. It provides clarity of sense organs, normalcy of Dhatus and provides stability of the body.

Conclusion

Sneha dravya form and important component of day-to-day life. It helps in maintenance of normalcy of digestive fire. It helps in brings about dosha mardavata, proper nourishment of Dhatus as well as Vata Anulomana. External application of Sneha dravya as Abhyanga, Nasya and Kavala form a part of Dinacharya. Avoidance of Unctuous substances can add on to the daily wear and tear changes of body elements. Hence Usage of Sneha Dravya forms a component of preventive as well as in curative aspects.

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