

Review on Shiro Lepa –A Conceptual Study

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ABSTRACT:

Ayurveda the science of life is the most ancient medical knowledge in the world. Shiras is considered as uttamanga as it is the sthana where indriya, indriyavahasrotas and pranavahasrotas are located. It is one among the Praanayatana. Clinical applicability of Shiras is better understood by verse of Acharya Vagbatha, where he said that, Shiras is like moola of a plant and shaaka (Limbs) are its branches. And annihilation of moola leads to complete destruction of a plant. Shiras is one among the Shadangashareera. Injury to shiras leads to destruction of indriya and causes shareerikavyadhi. Further Indriyaarthasannikarsha is lost and buddhi is hampered resulting in maanasikavyadhi. Lepa preparations are the topical medicaments meant for external application to the skin. The topical preparations include Lepa, Upanaha, Malahara, Shirolepa etc. Lepakalpana are used in different conditions like inflammation, wound healing, and many more uses. Shirolepa benefits in curing conditions affecting the hair and scalp such as premature greying of hair and hair fall. It also shows significant improvement in case of dandruff, greasy hair, damaged hair, Alopecia Areata, facial paralysis, disorders of the eye, and even scalp disorders, as well as ear, nose and throat related disorders. Shirolepa helps in Dristi prasadhana and helping cure Anidratha and keeps the body and mind calm and peaceful, removing fatigue and anxiety. And also enhance the memory

power and managing mental disorders such as Vertigo, depression, hyperactivity and neurological disorder like Alzheimer's disease and also useful for Vata Pittajashirogogas.

I. INTRODUCTION:

देहेप्रलेपनार्थतल्लेपइत्युच्यतेबुध॥ (Paribhasha-Khanda; DG yadavji)

लिप्यतिअनेनइतिलेपनम्।

The application of medicine over body parts is known as lepa. The word Lepa is derived from its root "Lip" affixed by "Vang" Pratyaya. Also called as smearing, anointing, plastering. Alepa, Lipta, Lepa, Lepam, Anulepana, and Kulambu are synonyms of lepa. Brihatrayees and Laghutrayees have explained elaborately about lepa. Along with Mukhalepa, Annalepa and shirolepa are also mentioned. Shirolepa shows significant benefits in curing conditions such as Shirashula (headache), Darunaka (dandruff), and other conditions affecting the hair and scalp such as Khalitya (graying of hair) and Keshashathana (hair fall). It also shows significant improvement in case of Arditha (facial paralysis), Nethra roga (disorders of the eye), and even Shirokapalagatharoga (scalp disorders), as well as Karna (ear), Nasa (nose), and Galaroga (throat) related disorders. The procedure helps in Dristi tikshnatha (sharpening vision) and helping cure Anidratha (insomnia).

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Samhitha	Total types of lepa	Types
Chakrapani	4	Avachurnana, Udvartana, Jalakriyalepana, Rasakriyalepana.
Sushruta	3	Pralepa, pradeha, Alepa.
Astangahridaya	3	Doshagna, Vishagna, Varnya.
AstangaSangraha	10	Snehika, Nirvapana, Prasadana, Stambana, Vilayana, Pachana, Peedana, Shodhana, Ropana, Savarneekarana.
Sharangadhara Samhitha	3	Doshagna, Vishagna, Varnya.

Indication of lepa:

Jirnajwara, Dhatugatajwara, Kushta, Shwithra, Apasmara, Shotha, Udara, Arsha, Visarpa, Visha and also in Anidratha.

Contraindications of lepa:

Atisara, Jwara, Karnashula, Vatavikara, Adhmana, Arochaka, Ajeerna, Bhuktavat.

Thickness of lepa:

तस्यप्रमाणमहिषाद्र्चर्मोत्सेधमुपदिशन्ति॥ (Su. Su, 18/11)

Application on the skin is equal to thickness of Ardra mahishacharma.

Time for application is indicated only in day time.

Mukhalepa: Application of paste of different dravyas over face is mentioned as Mukhalepa. Indicated in Akalpalitha (premature greying of hairs), Vyanga (Blackish hyperpigmentation), Vali

(wrinkles), Timira (blurring of vision) and Neelika (bluish hyper pigmentation). Contraindicated in Pinasa (chronic rhinitis), Ajeerna (indigestion), Datta nasya (immediately following Nasya karma), Hanugraha (lockjaw), Arochaka (tastelessness) and Jagartha (keeping awake at night). Thickness of Mukhalepa should be of Avara (1/4th Angula), Madhyama (1/3rd Angula) and Pravara (1/2 Angula).

Annalepa: Application of Anna all over the body except head is known as Annalepa. It is indicated in Akala Jara-Progeria (premature aging), VyadhiKsheena- Asthenia (lack of strength) due to diseases, Shosha (emaciation) and Ksheenadhathus.

Shirolepa; Application of lepa over the head is known as Shirolepa. Commonly indicated in Nidranasha, Pitta raktajashiroroga, Twakroga (psoriasis and Eczema etc), Shirashula, psychological disorders and memory retardation. And contraindicated in Pratishyaya, Jwara and Amaja vyadhis.

Method of preparation:

Purvakarma:1. Material required:

Dravyas required	Quantity
Musta (Cyperus rotundus)	10- 20 gm
Dried Datri phala (Embelica officinalis)	250 gm
Ksheera	500 ml
Taila (suitable for abhyanga)	20 ml
Lotus Leaves	Quantity sufficient
Rasnadichurna	Quantity sufficient

Other Dravyas used in the Shirolepa:

Dravyas	Rasa	Guna	Veerya	Vipaka	Prabhava
Musta	Tikta, katu	Laghu	Sheeta	Katu	Trishnashamaka
Dhatri	Pancha rasa	Guru, ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	Rasayana, Netraroga
Ksheera	Madhura	Guru	Sheeta	Madhura	Medhya, balakaraka
Kamala patra	Kashaya Madhura	Guru, snigdha	Sheeta	Madhura	Kaphapittashamaka, Varnya
Rasna churna	Tikta	Guru	Ushna	Katu	Kaphavatashamakavishagna
Balamoola	Madhura	Laghu, snigdha	Sheeta	Madhura	Tridoshashamaka
Yastimadhu	Madhura Kashaya	Guru, snigdha	Sheeta	Madhura	Vatapittashamaka
Triphala	Madhura	Laghu, ruksha	Sheeta	Madhura	Vayastapaka, Netrya
Panchgandhadic hurnadravyas (kachura, Amalaki,	Kashaya Madhura	Laghu, ruksha	Sheeta	madhura	Bhrama, Anidra, Pittajaunmada, Jwara, Tridosahara.

Manjista, Yasti, Daru, Shwetha Chandana, Rakta Chandana, Rohoni, krishnajeeraka, Rasna, Sariva, Kumkuma Etc)					
Tugaksheeri	Madhura	Laghu, snigdha	Sheeta	Madhura	Vatapittashamaka
Dashamula	Kashaya Madhura	Guru, ruksha	Ushna	Katu	Tridoshashamaka.

2. Preparation of Takra and paste of Shirolepa:

Musta is boiled in milk. Curd is made from this boiled and cooled milk. Takra is prepared from this curd. Amalaki is taken and soaked in this Takra for over-night in mud vessel. Next day paste is prepared from this mixture without adding water.

3. preparation of the patient:

The head of the patient is to be shaved. Shiro abhyanga is to be carried out. Then patient has to sit comfortably on a chair and Varti is to be tied around patient's head.

Pradhana karma:

Prepared paste is applied on Uchhabhaga (top of the head) first, then Purvabhaga (front side of head), then Dakshina bhaga (right side of the

head), Prustabhaga (back side of head) and lastly on Vama bhaga (left side of the head). Thickness of the lepa should be of 1 angula. At the centre of the head, a trench is made and Taila is poured into it. Kamala patras are covered on the applied paste and tied.

Paschat karma:

Lotus leaves and the paste should be removed. The head is wiped with clean cloth. Mrudu Abhyanga has to be done. Afterwards head is to be washed. Rasnadichurna is applied to vertex.

Duration of Shirolepa: ½ Yama (90 minutes) to 1 Mahurtha (48 min) or until the diseases recover. And course of Shirolepa is 14 days to 21 days.

Kala: Sadharana kala and Ashada, Ashwini, Phalgun is ideal for application of Shirolepa.

Uses:

Conditions	Ingredients	Duration
In Swasta person	Bala moola, Yastimadhu, Panchagandhadichurnas,	14 days
Shiroroga	Rasna, Triphala, Brahmi	Until disease cured
Darunaka	Priyaladi siddha churna	14-21 days.
Vertigo, depression, hyperactivity, Alzheimer's diseases	Panchagandhadichurnadravyas, Brahmi, Bala moola, Yastimadhu,	Until disease cured.
Shleshmika shiroroga	Sariva, Utpala, Kusta, Madhuka, Amla with Sarpi and Taila.	14-21 days.

THALAM:

In Keraliya Panchakarma, Masthishkya is mentioned as Thalam. It is synonym of Shirolepa. Kalka is made with medicinal drugs is applied on the scalp with a small unpasted area (Bramharandra) where oil is poured and retained for a particular period of time is known as Thalam.

Purvakarma Pradhana karma and Paschat karma is same as that of Shirolepa. But the duration retained for ½ Yama to 1 Mahurtha (45-90 minutes). And the thickness of Thalam is of 1 to 2 Angula (3-5 cm approximately). Indication and contra indication is same as that of Shirolepa.

Applicatons:

Disease condition	Ingredients
Visuchika	Gritha+ Navaneetha thalam
Shirodaha	Amalaki, Madhuka, Manjista, Chandana and Stanya
Kshavathu	Balapatra, Panchagandha, Godumayusha, Navaneetha and Stanya
Shirashula in AgantujaJwara	Manjista+ Stanya
Bahyaayama	Erandataila+Navaneetha
Kamala	Navaneethaand stanyaksheerathalam
Vatashonitha associate with Daha	Navaneethaand stanyaksheerathalam
Shirobhanga	Navaneetha thalam to Brahmarandra
During Swedana karma	Amalaki+Navaneetha+Balathalam

THALAPOTHICHIL:

Thalam means scalp Pothichil means covering. Kalka is applied on the scalp with a specific thickness and is covered with a Banana leaf for a specific time period is known as Thalapothichil. It is categorized under Lepa.

Purvakarma, Pradhana karma and Paschat karma is same as that of Shirolepa. But here apart from Padma patra Banana patra is used for covering of scalp. Duration of procedure is 30-60 minutes.

Difference between Shirolepa, Thalam and Thalapothichil:

Particulars	Shirolepa	Thalam	Thalapothichil
Purvakarma Pradhana Karma Paschat karma	Followed as perclassics	Similar to Shirolepa	Similar to Shirolepa
Dravyas	According to condition	According to condition	According to condition
Taila	Trench is made at center and poured	Similar to Shirolepa	Similar to Shirolepa
Patras used for covering	Padma patra	Padma/kadalipatra	Kadali patra
Timings	½ yama or 1 mahurtha	Similar to Shirolepa	30-60 minutes Approximately (1 mahurtha)
Indication	According to condition (Vata-pittajashirorogas)	Similar to Shirolepa	Similar to Shirolepa
Contraindication	Kaphajashiroroga	Similar to Shirolepa	Similar to Shirolepa

Mode of action of Shirolepa:

Mode of action of ushna lepa: Lepa is applied over the surface of the skin in Pratilomagati. The medicine enters in to the Lomakupas. Further gets

absorbed through the Swedavahisrotas. The Bhrajaka pitta does the Pachana of Lepavirya. The Virya of the drug gets absorbed through the Sira mukha.

Mode of action of SheethaLepa: The blood is the vehicle of poison as the wind is helping for rapid burning of fire, similarly the blood which is vitiated gets circulate throughout the body. In this condition with the help of Lepa, specially which are cooling in effect, the blood gets coagulated and so it arrests the virulent spread of poison. Application of sheethalepa in Visha condition which prevents the complication like Mada, Murcha, Vishada (Depression), Hrudayadrava (tachycardia).

Mode of action according to Modern:

1. Intercellular absorption: Active principles absorbed through the glue between cells of Stratum corneum. The intercellular lipid material made up of ceramides, cholesterol, cholesterol esters and fatty acids. Hence oil-based Lepa can absorb quickly than water-based Lepa.

2. Intracellular absorption: through stratum corneum.

3. Trans-appendageal or follicular absorption: active principles enter the skin layer through pores and hair follicles and reach down fast from the upper layer of the epidermis into dermis. It enters in to blood vessels and circulate with blood which nourishes the skin.

Factors responsible for skin penetration:

1, molecular size. 2. Lipophilicity. 3. Temperature.

III. DISCUSSION:

Shirolepa is not recommended as a one-time procedure. It is repeated across 2 to 3 weeks, with definite period of rest between two sessions. In terms of the herbal formulation, Shirolepa shows highly beneficial in curing conditions such as headache, dandruff and other conditions affecting the hair and scalp such as premature graying of hair and hair fall. It also shows significant improvement in case of facial paralysis, disorders of the eye, and even scalp disorders, as well as ear, nose, and throat related disorders. The procedure helps in sharpening vision and helping cure insomnia. However, one of its other predominant effects is that the treatment keeps the body and mind calm and peaceful, removing fatigue and anxiety. An interesting application of Shirolepa is in enhancing memory power and managing mental disorders such as vertigo, depression, hyperactivity, and Alzheimer's disease by using potent medications in the form of pastes during the procedure. Overall, this procedure is useful for Vata and Pittajashirog.

IV. CONCLUSION:

Shirolepa is another form of Panchakarma therapy. And it is extremely useful in the treatment of disease related to scalp and skin. Shirolepa is a special type of treatment performed on the scalp, in which paste of various herbs and medical powders are made into a paste and applied in the scalp. The scalp is then covered and tied with special kinds of leaves which interact well with the scalp. Shirolepa is also useful in rejuvenation therapy. Shirolepa helps in nourishing the scalp and head. The most common paste that is used in Shirolepa therapy is Takra and Amalaki. This treatment is also beneficial to reduce medical conditions such as Ardhavabedhaka, Anidraha, Hypertension and Dry vision syndrome. It also helps in promoting stronger, healthier hair growth, reduce headaches, the heaviness of head and stress, premature graying and falling hair.

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