



Review Article

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RATIONALE OF DIFFERENT PRACTICES OF UPANAHA SWEDA AND ITS CLINICAL UTILITY: A REVIEW ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

Swedana karma in principle consists of induction of sweating by application of heat. There may be a number of ways and means to practice this procedure and accordingly several classifications are suggested. Upanaha is one among them. It is local treatment where in combination of different aushadhi such as churnas, sneha, kanji, Lavana etc. is freshly prepared and applied at situ. Depending on presentation of disease various classification of upanaha is explained. Therefore, an attempt is made to understand rationality and utility of different practices of upanaha.

Keywords: Upanaha, Utility of upanaha, Rationality of Upanaha**INTRODUCTION**

Swedana is one among the preliminary therapies performed before administration of purificatory procedures. Upanaha, application of medicated poultice is one among four major categories of swedana therapies¹, which relieves pain, restricted movement, and stiffness². It is a local treatment where in a combination of powdered herbs are made into paste using sneha materials such as oil/ghee/muscle fat/marrow and fermented liquid, made hot and applied over the required site and then bandaging is done with thick material. For better mode of action, the Upanaha should be left undisturbed for duration of twelve hours³. Various clinical conditions involving pain, stiffness, swelling can be efficiently managed by this external therapy. Depending on presentation of disease various classification of upanaha have been explained in classics like,

- *Sagni & Niragni*⁴
- *Pradeha, Sankara/Pinda, Bandhana*⁵
- *Salavana Upanaha*⁶
- *Snigdha & Ruksha Upanaha*

Sagni and Niragni Upanaha: In Sagni upanaha medicaments are directly subjected to heat and then applied on affected parts. In Niragni upanaha the ushna viryatmaka (drugs with hot potency) drugs are selected and without subjecting to heat application is done on affected part.

Pradeha, Sankara /Pinda, Bandhana: In Pradeha upanaha thick paste of medicaments is applied and tied on the affected part. In Pinda upanaha a bolus of paste is folded in piece of cloth and in Bandhana type the medicaments are applied on the affected part and then tied firmly with thin cloth or leaves having vata dosha hara property.

Salavana upanaha: In this variety of upanaha swedana is done by taking saindhav lavana in large quantity or as a main drug along with other drugs.

Snigdha & Ruksha: In snigdha variety of upanaha the drugs having snigdha quality are used along with other drugs. In ruksha variety the drugs which are ruksha guna are used along with other drugs.

These different variety of upanaha are clinically practised depending on various factors such as

- *Involvement of doshas*
- *Method of application*
- *Drugs used for the preparation and*
- *Stage of disease*

Table 1: Practice of upanaha on basis of dosha& its clinical utility

Dosha	Material Used	Clinical Utility
Vata	Godhuma, Sneha, Amla, Yava, Lavana, Kinva, Mamsa Rasa, Masha ⁷	Sandhivata
Vata associated with Pitta	Padmakadigana ⁸ , Ksheera, Ghrita ⁹	Shotha, Vataja vatarakta
Vata associated with Kapha	Eladigana ¹⁰ , Surasadigana ¹¹ , Vachadigana ¹² Dhanyamla, Takra, Tila	Avabahuka, Amavata, Vrana, Kustha

Table 2: Practice of upanaha on basis of method of application

Sagni Upanaha	Sandhivatav, Khalli, Katishoola, Ghridrasi
Niragni Upanaha	Amavata, Vrana, Vatarakta

Table 3: Practice of upanaha on basis of method of application

Pradeha Upanaha	Vrana, Kustha, Vyanga
Pinda Upanaha	Sira, Snayugata vata, Khalli roga
Bandha Upanaha	Sandhivata.

Table 4: Practice of upanaha on basis of drug used for Upanaha

Snighdha Upanaha	Sandhivata, Khalli, Snayugata vata, Vishwachi
Ruksha Upanaha	Manyastambha, Katigraha, Vata kaphaja ghridrasi, Avabahuka (Nirama)

Table 5: Practice of upanaha on basis of drug used for Upanaha

Salavana Upanaha	Pakshaghata, Kukshishoola
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Table 6: Practice of Upanaha on basis of stage of disease

Stage of disease	Material used
Ama	Pippali, Chavya, Chitraka, Nagara
Nirama	As explained for vata dosha
To achieve Doshapakaavatha	Ushna, Tikshna, Amla properties medicine

DISCUSSION

Though Upanaha is mainly indicated in vatavyadhi, it can also be practised in kapha and pitta associated conditions. As the duration of Upanaha is longer and drugs comes directly in contact with skin there is more retention of heat compared to other sweda.

In Saagni upanaha the drugs are given agni samskar (Heating) and then applied on affected part. Therefore, this upanaha is used in condition where only vata shamana is needed i.e. in condition where the sheeta guna of vata is leading to stabdha gatratra thus giving rise to ruja during prasara and akunchana, such as in Sandhivata. Upanaha is a type of swedana so it induces hyperthermia which improves local blood circulation thus leading to relaxation of local musculature by physical effect of heat and thereby reduces pain. In Niragni upanaha the drugs used are ushna pradhana. Ushna viryatmaka drugs are ruksha in nature, therefore niragni sweda can be indicated in condition where there is involvement of kapha or where there is sthanik ama laxanas such as in Amavata. The rukshna ushna viryatmaka drugs used in niragni sweda are having counter irritant property which stimulates the nerve ending and thus improves blood and lymphatic circulation, in turn increases local tissue metabolism, reduces inflammation by modifying secretion of various inflammatory mediators. Thus helping to relieve swelling and pain.

In Pradeha Upanaha thick warm paste on skin in opposite direction of hair roots¹³ Indicated in condition where dosha are settle in twak¹⁴. Therefore, clinically it can be used in condition where twaka and rakta prasadhana is needed such as in Kustha, Uttanavata, Vrana. The warm thick paste applied on skin induces hyperthermia thus increases the blood circulation and removes the metabolic waste through sweat leading to rakta and twak prasadhana. Bandha upanaha is done when the pathology lies in Asthi¹³. Therefore clinically it can be utilize in condition where asthi and sandhi are involved such as amavata, Sandhivata In Bandha variety the upanaha paste is applied and tied with thick cloth, this may help to prevent heat loss by radiation and there is transfer of heat from paste to skin through conduction. Pradeha and Bandha variety of upanaha can be applied as ekanga upanaha sweda where as pinda variety of upanaha is useful in condition where doshas are sarvashareera or in condition where doshas are at the level of sira, snayu, mamsa. Thus clinically pinda variety of sweda can be indicated in sira snayugata vata, khalliroga etc.

The drugs used in snighdha upanaha are taila, ghruta, ksheera which are snighdha, vatashamaka. Thus, used in condition where there is increase in ruksha guna of vata or where brhmana is needed. Therefore, this upanaha can be used in Sandhivata, Sira Snayugata Vata, Khalliroga etc. The lipoidal bond is very much suitable for penetration of drug molecule through stratum corneum¹⁴. On this basis we can assume that in upanaha, Taila helps in formation of lipoidal bond and helps in quick penetration of drug molecules. Vice versa when there is increase in snighdha guna ruksha quality of drugs are to be used such as kanji, takra etc. Therefore ruksha upanaha can be used in Manyastambha, Katigraha, Vata kaphaja ghridrasi.

In Salavana upanaha saindhava is used in large quantity or used as main drug. Saindhav is vata anulomaka, ushna, snighdha, chedaniya, bhedhaneeya destroys stambha, and disintegrates sanghata¹⁵. Thus, indicated in condition such as avarodhajanya pakshaghata, kukshishoola.

The drugs explained for upanaha in vatadosha are madhura & amla rasa, snighdha guna, vedanastapaka thus act as vatashamaka. Therefore, upanaha with this drug can be indicated in kevala vata condition such as Sandhivata, Khalli roga etc. The drugs belonging to Padmakadi & Kakolyadi gana are tikta rasa, sheeta, snighdha, vedanastapaka, jwargna, shotagna, prinanam thus proving as pitta shamaka therefore upanaha with this drugs should be given in condition such as shotha and vatarakta. The drugs belonging to Vachadi, Eladi and Surasadi gana are tikta katu rasatmaka, ruksha thus proving as kapha hara. Upanaha with vachadi gana can be indicated in swasa where nadi sweda can't be done. Surasaadi gana are used in vrana and krimi therefore it can be used in vrana to bring dosha from apakwa to pakva avastha. Eladi gana as it is varnya is indicated in condition where there is loss of complexion such as in kustha.

Vatavyadhi can be classified under two heading sama and niramamavastha. Amahara treatment should be done first in samajanya condition and then vata is treated. Therefore, for amaharanartha pippali, chavya, chitrak, nagara¹⁶ which are laghu, ushna, ruksha are used. In niramavastha upanaha with vatahara drugs to be done. In case of vrana for bhedhana pakva avastha is required. Thus to bring this dosha from apakwa to pakvaavastha amlarasatmaka, ushna, tikshna dravyas are needed. This kind of upanaha should be given in induration stage of acute inflammation as heat application will increase the cellular metabolism and capillary permeability aiding with remove of debris, increase oxygen and nutrients into the area to promote the

healing, providing analgesic effect thus to induce heat in such condition we need here drugs which are having more ushna and teekshana properly. Therefore in this variety of upanaha the drugs such as kanji, Sura, sukta, lavana, takra are used.

CONCLUSION

The action of upanaha on particular condition depends on the material used for upanaha. Thickness, duration and use of external or internal heat are the criteria which induces sweda.

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