



Review Article

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ROLE OF SHADVIDHOPAKRAMA IN RASAVAHA SROTODUSTHI VIKARA: A REVIEW

Shreelakshmi S^{1*}, Manjunatha Adiga²

¹ PG Scholar, Department of Kayachikitsa, Sri Kalabyraveshwara Swamy Ayurvedic Medical College, Hospital and Research centre, Vijayanagar, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

² Professor and HOD, Department of Kayachikitsa, Sri Kalabyraveshwara Swamy Ayurvedic Medical College Hospital and Research Centre, Vijayanagar, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India

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*Corresponding author

E-mail: shreelakshmi97@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Among various modalities of Chikitsa given in Ayurveda, Shadvidhopakrama plays a major role. In Charaka samhita six Upakramas namely Langhana, Brimhana, Snehana, Swedana, Rukshana and Sthambhana are given. Rasa dhatu is the adya dhatu that is formed from the sara bhaga of Ahara rasa and carried to the whole body by Rasavaha srotas. Rasa pradoshaja vikara are also said to be Rasavaha sroto dusthi lakshana. According to Charaka and Chakrapani any Sroto dusthi can happen only due to the aggravation of dosha that is present in that particular dhatu and srotas (dhatugata doshakruta eva jneya). According to Ashrayashrayi Siddhanta, Rasa is the ashaya of Kapha and the qualities of both are very similar (Rasopi shleshmavat). Among Shadvidhopakrama, Langhana is the primordial line of treatment in Rasavaha sroto dusthi vikara. But according to different vyadhi and vyadhi avastha, the other modalities of chikitsa can also be adopted. The present review is an attempt to understand the role of Shadvidhopakrama in the management of different Rasavaha sroto dusthi vikaras.

Keywords: Shadvidhopakrama, Rasavaha srotas, Rasa pradoshaja vikara, Langhana.

INTRODUCTION

The word Upakrama means a kriya or chikitsa. In Vachaspathya, this word is described as 'Upayajnanapurvaka arambha'. In the context of chikitsa Upakrama can be defined as a rational line of treatment planned and performed with appropriate skills to treat a disease condition. Among various modalities of Chikitsa given in Ayurveda, Shadvidhopakrama plays a major role. In Charaka Samhita six Upakramas are given namely Langhana, Brimhana, Snehana, Swedana, Rukshana and Sthambhana¹. Vagbhata has explained two broad treatment modalities in Dvidvidhopakramaneeya adhyaya. They are Santarpana and Apatarpana. Brumhana and Langhana are synonymous to Santarpana and Apatarpana respectively and the Shadvidha upakramas can be categorised under these two based on their karma and cannot go beyond (Dvitayam naativartate)². Langhana, Swedana and Rukshana can be considered under Apatarpana due to its agneyatva and Brumhana, Snehana and Sthambhana under Santarpana due to its sowmyatva³. All six upakramas can be used in both Antah parimarjana and Bahi parimarjana chikitsa (Internal and external treatments). Rasa dhatu, the adya dhatu (first formed dhatu) when get vitiated by aggravation of tridosha leads to manifestation of Rasavaha sroto dusthi vikaras which are also known as Rasapradoshaja vikaras. Understanding the utility of Shadvidhopakrama in these Rasavaha sroto dusthi vikaras is the point of interest in this article.

Rasavaha Srotodusthi and its manifestation

Rasa dhatu is the adya dhatu (first dhatu) which is formed from the Sara bhaga of Ahara rasa and carried to the whole body by Rasavaha srotas. Hridaya and Dasha Rasavahi dhamani are said to be the moola of Rasavaha srotas⁴.



Rasa dhatu is responsible for the nourishment of Uttarottara dhatu (Rakta mamsa etc subsequent dhatus) and there by nourishment of the whole body. Tridosha, which are the vital energies that are necessary for the functioning of human body, when present in its normal state the functioning of body will be normal and when there is aggravation of doshas disharmony begins. A disease cannot occur without the involvement of tridosha (Dosha eva sarvesham roganam eka karanam)⁵. It's always the dosha dushya sammurchana (combination of dosha and dushya) that will lead to vyadhi utpatti (disease manifestation). Any srotodusthi can occur only due to the aggravation of dosha present in the dhatu which leads to dhatu dusthi, which in turn leads to that particular sroto dusthi (dhatugata doshakruta eva jneya)⁶. Acharya Vagbhata also gives an example in this context, like how we say the burn is caused by ghrita but in reality, it is due to the heat (agni tatva) that is present in ghrita (Ghritdahavat)⁷. Similarly, a vyadhi occurs due to dosha present in Rasadi dhatu.

Rasavaha sroto dusthi leads to ashraaddha aadi Rasapradoshaja vikara which are also said to be Rasavaha sroto dusthi lakshana⁸. Rasa dhatu being jalamahabhuta pradhana, has its properties (Drava, sara, manda, snidha, mrudu, picchila)⁹ and action similar to that of kapha (Raso api shleshmavat- Shleshmavat agnisadadin karoti)¹⁰. Rasavaha Srotodusthi karana are given as guru sheeta (heavy and cold), ati snidha ahara (excessively unctuous), ati matra ahara sevana (taking food in excess quantity), samashana (consuming both pathya and apathya ahara together)

and ati Chintana (excess thinking)¹¹. All the ahara nidana that are given are also the aggravating factors for kapha dosha. According to Indu teeka on Ashrayasghrayi bhava, the causative factors which are responsible for vrudhhi and kshaya of Ashraya are same as that of Ashrayi and vice-versa¹². With the help of Ashrayashrayi siddhanta¹³ (shleshma shesheshu) we can conclude that Rasa is the ashraya of Kapha dosha and Rasavaha srota dusthi involves Kapha dosha as pradhana dosha.

But as it is mentioned in Rasa Vaisheshika Sutra that there is no sthana niyama for prakupita dosha to vitiate dushya (Nastyeva sthana niyamaha prakupitanam)¹⁴, which means even pitta and vata can also vitiate Rasa dhatu.

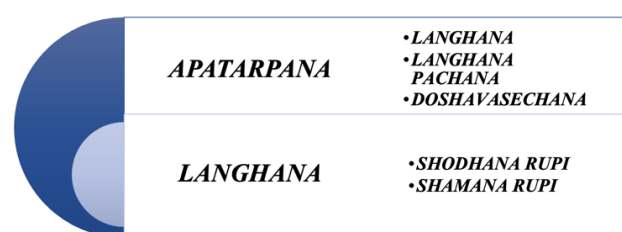
Chikitsa for Rasapradoshaja vikara

Among Shadvidhopakrama, for all Rasavahasrota dusthi vikara, Langhana is said to be the pradhana chikitsa¹⁵. This can also be justified with Ashrayashrayi siddanta as Langhana is the preliminary line of treatment for kapha pradhana vikara as well (prabhuta shleshma pittasramalaha...)¹⁶. According to Indu commentary, Langhana is considered as shamana chikitsa in kevala kapha, kevala pitta, kapha pitta and kapha vata as well (vatashleshmanostu vayooha shaityat yogavahitvaat cha langhanameva kaphepi cha)¹⁷.

In Srikanthadatta's Kusumavali vyakhyana on Vrundamadhava, Vamana and Langhana are said to be the Chikitsa for Kapha. But Vamana can be performed only when patient is having uttama bala and fit for vamana. Therefore, Langhana plays a very important role as most of the patients that we encounter in present day scenario will be having avara or madhyama bala.

LANGHANA

The therapy which induces lightness to the body is called as Langhana¹⁸. Charaka has explained Dashavidha langhana¹⁹ which includes four types of shodhana (Vamana, Virechana, Niruha basti and Shirovirechana), pipasa (remaining thirsty), maruta sevana (exposing to air), atapa sevana (exposing to sun light), pachana (by improving digestion), upavasa (fasting) and vyayama (exercise). Langhana can be ahara rupi (by means of food and drinks), vihara rupi (by means of activity) and aushadha rupi (by means of medicines). According to Vagbhata Langhana is synonymous to Apatarpana and it is divided into Shodhana rupi and Shamana rupi langhana²⁰. Langhana/Apatarpana is also categorized as langhana, langha pachana and shodhana (doshavasechana)²¹.



One should choose the appropriate type of langhana according to bala of dosha, roga and rogi and also based on roga avastha.

According to Vagbhata in alpa bala of roga and rogi, Langhana should be preferred, in Madhya bala Langhana pachana and in Prabhuta bala Shodhana or Doshavasechana should be done as it takes out the aggravated dosha completely from root²². Here, Hemadri comments that Langhana is considered as Upavasa,

Langhana pachana as Upavasayukta pachanoushadha and Shodhana as Vamanadi karma.

Different consideration of Langhana: According to Basavarajeeyam

In the context of Jwara Basavarajeeyam has considered three types of Langhana. They are Upavasa (fasting), Laghu bhojana (consumption of light food, which are easy for digestion) and also Shushkapaneeya (hot water). And Langhana is said to be the ultimate treatment²³. Here shushka paneeyam can be considered as Ushna jala.

Concept of Autophagy and Langhana in terms of Upavasa

In recent research, benefits of Langhana, especially Upavasa is studied with the concept of Autophagy. Autophagy is a catabolic process of lysosomal degradation pathway in which the cell digests its own components like organelles, proteins, cytoplasm etc, along with the microorganisms that are invading the cells. This process of autophagy is potentially triggered by fasting²⁴. An in vivo animal study has shown that exercise can also induce autophagy in multiple organs involved in metabolic regulation, such as muscle, liver, pancreas and adipose tissue. By this various disease pathogenesis breakdown can be done, especially one like Cancer according to various studies. Langhana which includes Upavasa, Vyayama, Deepana pachana etc has a key role in aama pachana which can be considered as degradation of toxic material present in the body at various levels.

A Japanese Cell Biologist Professor Yoshinori Ohsumi was awarded with Nobel Prize in Medicine (Physiology) in the year 2016 for his research on the mechanisms of autophagy and thereby the importance of autophagy for human disease. Ohsumi's research from the late 1980s and early 1990s through today has shown autophagy has a role in protection against inflammation and in diseases like Dementia and Parkinson's. But the concept of Langhana (esp Upavasa) is an age-old concept which has its deep roots in the science of Ayurveda and also in Indian culture and tradition, benefiting in preventing and treating many diseases.

Langhana in terms of Laghubhojana: Another consideration of Langhana is Laghu Bhojana, that is light food which can get digested very easily.

For example:

1. Laja peya
2. Yusha prepared out of mudga etc. dravyas
3. Yavagu with purana, shasthika shali

The above-mentioned modality of Langhana through laghu ahara or ashana can also be considered under newly emerging concept of Therapeutic foods, the foods which produces good effects on body and mind. A holistic approach of the concept of therapeutic or medicinal foods was drawn from the study that foods are not only intended to satisfy hunger and to provide essential macro- and micronutrients to the body, but also to supply it with bioactive ingredients that aid to decrease nutrition-related diseases and ensure physical and mental well-being²⁵. The above mentioned examples like Laja peya, Yavagu are light and easy to digest, provides bala (strength) to patient and when processed with deepana pachana dravya, it can also do aamapachana and agni deepana.

Ushna jala sevana and Langhana: The other mode of Langhana is Ushna jala sevana. Ushna jala is Kapha-vata hara, Medohara, Deepana, Basti shodhana, Shwasa kasa hara and Jwarahara²⁶.

Arogya udaka²⁷: When the water is boiled and reduced to 1/4th part, it is called as Arogya Udaka. It helps in reducing shwasa kasa, does vatanulomana, reduces jwara quickly, reduces pratishyaya, acts as deepana and thereby cures ajeerna. This Arogya udaka can also be considered as Shushka paniya as it does kleda nirharana and does agni deepana.

Importance of Vyadhi Avastha in deciding the Chikitsa Upakrama

Though Langhana is mentioned as major treatment modality all other Upakramas has equal role according to different Avastha of disease. In this regard Rasavaisheshika sutra rightly quotes “Chikitsayaam hi pradhanam avasthanuvidhanam”, which means there cannot be any criteria (like agni, bala etc) or chikitsa which is ultimate and the chikitsa should always be adopted based on the Avastha of the vyadhi²⁸. So, it is important to assess the Avastha of a disease condition and decide the treatment modality. Here in this article, few different Rasapradoshaja vikaras are considered as examples to emphasize the importance of different Upakramas.

Shadvidhopakrama in Jwara Chikitsa

Jwara is a Rasavaha sroto dusthi vikara. It is considered Sarvaroga agraja (first formed disease) and roga raat (king of all diseases). Jwara is an Amashaya samutha vyadhi and hence Langhana is said to be the first line of treatment²⁹. Prakupita dosha in amashaya causes agnimandya, and along with aama it does sroto avarodha. Hence Langhana is the first line of treatment that should adopted. Initially Jwara is said to be in Aamavastha and different types of Langhana should be considered according to bala of raga and rogi. But as the disease enter further avasthas, Brumhana Snehana etc chikitsa modalities has its role.

Chikitsa according to different Avastha in Jwara, according to Bhavaprakasha: In the beginning of Jwara (Jwaraadau) Langhana should be adopted, in the mid-course of Jwara (Jwaramadhye) Pachana should be done, at the end stage (Jwarante) bhesaja should be given and in Jwara mukta Avastha Virechana should be given. Here Langhana is considered as Anashana or Upavasa³⁰.

According to Charaka Nidana sthana, in Purvarupa avastha of Jwara, Langhana is indicated in the form of Laghu bhojana (laghvashanam apatarpanam va)³¹ whereas in vyaktavastha, it can be adopted in the form of Anashana or Upavasa. Laja peya, Jwarahara yusha, Yavagu with purana shali etc are indicated in Jwara chikitsa and can be considered under Laghu bhojana. When processed with deepana pachana dravyas they also do aama pachana and thereby sroto vishodhana and Jwaraharana.

Taruna Jwara Chikitsa: Langhana, Swedana, Kaala, Yavagu, Tikta rasa prayoga and Pachana are said to be the line of treatment in Taruna Jwara, as dosha will be in apakva avastha³². In this line of treatment even Swedana, Yavagu pana, Kaala, Tikta rasa prayoga (yavagu samskarartha- Chakrapani) and Pachana can also be considered under Langhana chikitsa only as all of these do Apatarpana karma.

- **Langhana** is adopted in the form of Upavasa or Laghu bhojana helps in aama pachana.
- **Swedana** chikitsa in the form of swedana anna pana (the food or drinks that induces sudation like madira etc) or Gurupravaranaadi Niragni sweda helps in srotoshodhana and dosha koshthabhisamana.
- **Kaala** refers to time duration which is necessary for dosha pachana.

- **Samskarita yavagu** that is prepared with tikta, pachana dravya helps in dipana pachana. As Yavagu is Jwara satmya it does Jwara nirharana.
- **Pachana** helps in aama pachana and srotoshodhana.

Shadanga paniya prayoga³³ can be considered under pachana and rukshana chikitsa as the drugs present in shadanga paniya are having deepana pachana karma. The drugs are Tikta-katu-madhura rasa pradhana (where tikta rasa is pitta hara, katu is kaphahara, madhura is vatahara), Laghu-Ruksha guna which helps in achieving niramata, Sheeta virya helps in reducing daha and jwara tapa, Katu vipaka does ama pachana and amashaya kledanashana. In pitta pradhana avastha Shadanga paniya without shunthi can be used for pachana karma. It also induces swedana due to srotoshodhana.

Shodhana in Jwara

1. **Vamana**: Can be done in Kaphapradhana Utklistha dosha which is present in amashaya³⁴.
2. **Virechana**: When pitta is involved or pitta along with kapha or pittashaya gata dosha- sramsana is indicated³⁵.
3. **Niruha basti**: In person debilitated by jwara (Jwaraksheena) where Vamana and Virechana are not advised, dosha nirharana should be done with Niruha basti³⁶.
4. **Shiro virechana**: When shiro gourava, shirashula, indriya vibandha is present (indriyas not able to sense their vishayas) and in Jirna jwara where aruchi is present³⁷. (Ex:Anosmia during and Post covid)

Pipasa, maruta sevana, atapa sevana and vyayama are some methods of Langhana that are contra-indicated in jwara.

Other treatment modalities in Jwara

SWEDANA	RUKSHANA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 13 types of sweda as per Avastha (in sheeta jwara)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kuti shayana• Avachadana• Swedana anna pana<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avagaha	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kashaya pana• Shadanga paneeya	
BRUMHANA	SNEHANA	STHAMBHANA
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ksheera prayoga – jeerna jwara• Yusha prayoga• Mamsarasa prayoga• Anuvasana basti prayoga	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ghruta prayoga –in manda kapha and vata pittottara jwara• Abhyanga – Chandanadi taila- Ushna jwara, Aguru kushthadi taila- sheeta jwara	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dadimamla sa nagara - Jwaratisara

Karshya chikitsa

Ahara rasa and Adya rasa dhatu is said to be responsible for Sthoulya and karshya (Rasanimitameva Shoulyam Karshyam)³⁸. As Karshya is an Apatarpana janya vyadhi Santarpana (Brumhana) is the chief mode of treatment.

Samprapti of Karshya: Due to Vatala ahara sevana, ati vyayama, vyavaya, adhyayana, bhaya shoka etc nidana, there will be Upashodhana (drying up) of Rasa dhatu and there will be no Prenana karma (loss of nourishment) leading to Karshya³⁹. Hence in Karshya, Laghu Santarpana⁴⁰ is the line of treatment mentioned, considering agni bala (digestion).

Table 1: Karshya chikitsa

Ahara	Vihara	Aushadha
Nava anna, Nava madya	Swapna	Rasayana and Vrushya yoga
Shali, Masha, Godhuma	Harsha	Payasya, Ashwagandha, shatavari, Bala, Atibala etc
Gramya, audaka, anupa mamsarasa-samskrita	Sukha shayya	Brumhana basti
Dadhi, sarpi, paya	Mano nivrutti from chinta	
Guda vaikruta		

Malnutrition is one of the chief considerations in Karshya. The WHO has taken many necessary steps like introducing RUFT (Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods) to improve the nutrition status of Malnourished children. Ready to use therapeutic food is any appropriate food product or products, enhanced nutritionally, and thus made to be more energy-dense and more nutrient- dense.

Table 2: Contents of RUFT⁴¹

Ingredients	Weight in %
Milk powder	30
Sugar	28
Vegetable oil	15
Peanut butter	25
Mineral Vitamin Mix	1.6

NAIDS - Nutritionally Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

Underweight and undernutrition, currently known as childhood malnutrition, is the most common cause of secondary immunodeficiency worldwide. In this condition Malnutrition worsens infection and infection worsens malnutrition, producing a vicious cycle. Immunodeficiency related to malnutrition accounts for nearly 50% deaths from common infections among under-five children⁴². RUFT is the main precaution that is undertaken to prevent NSAIDS. But RUFT can only provide required nutrient component, but Ayurveda has potential classical medicines which can be used like RUFT, that can also play a role in immunomodulation by enhancing the immunity along with nutrition.

Examples with Phalashruti:

1. Chyavanaprasha- Balanam angavardhanam (Promotes the growth of the body)⁴³
2. Kalyanaka Ghrita – Brumhaneeyanam visheshena (Especially helpful for providing nourishment)⁴⁴
3. Swarna prashana- Vyadhibihi na cha ghrushyati, Grahapaha⁴⁵ (Increases immunity so that the child will not get diseases, especially infectious diseases easily)

Pandu Chikitsa

Pandu is one among Rasa Pradoshaja Vikara where Snehana Chikitsa is highlighted. The Chikitsa Sutra emphasise on using few specific ghrithas for Shodhananga Snehapana⁴⁶ (Snehapana prior to Shodhana), which can be considered according to pradhana dosha involved as given in table.

Table 3: Ghritas mentioned for Shodhananga Snehana in Pandu Chikitsa

Ghrita	Dosha
Panchagavya Ghrita	Kapha
Mahatiktaka Ghrita	Pitta
Kalyanaka Ghrita	Vata

Many other ghrithas are mentioned for Shamana purpose in Pandu Chikitsa.

Example: Dadimadya ghrita, Pathya ghrita, Katukadya ghrita, Draksha ghrita, Dantyadi ghrita.

Ghrita pacifies Pitta and Vata, but by the samskara (when processed with other drugs) it also pacifies Kapha dosha as well. Dhātu shaithilya is one among major aspect of samprapti of Pandu. This dhātu shaithilya can happen due to which Snehā vruttdhi or due to Snehā kshaya. In pandu, the dhātu shaithilya occurs due to Snehā kshaya, as the Nidanās like Ushna, Teekshna, Amla Katu ahara which reduces Snehā guna in the body. Ghrita also nourishes the Rasa dhātu and creates mruduta in Rasavaha srotas, thereby helping to clear avarodha and reduces vata.

In Mrudbhakshana Janya Pandu, Ghrita prayoga is mentioned after Shodhana for the purpose of Brumhana. In this condition, teekshna shodhana is advised and after shodhana there will be Vata vruttdhi and dourbalya. To improve bala and nourishment to different dhātu after shodhana, Ghrita is indicated after shodhana in Mrudbhakshana janya pandu⁴⁷.

Amavata Chikitsa: The Chikitsa sutra of Amavata highlights Swedana and Rukshana Chikitsa⁴⁸. As Ama increases snigdha guna and gourava in body, Swedana and Rukshana which has opposite properties helps in counteracting these gunas.

Among different types of Swedana, Ruksha sweda is specially highlighted in Amavata like Valuka sweda and Upanaha Sweda. Different Choorna Pinda Swedas and Lavana pinda sweda can also be considered in Amavata. In Bhaishajya Ratnavali, different drugs are mentioned for Pinda swedas like Karpasa bija, Kulatha, Tila, Erandamoola, Atasi etc either individually or in combination can be used with Kanji for Swedana⁴⁹.

Different Upanahas are also given in Bhaishajya Ratnavali like Himsradi lepa/Upanaha, Shatapushpa lepa.

Other special Ruksha swedas that can be adopted are Agni lepa and Dhanyamla Dhara, which are Anubhuta yogas that are given significant results in day-to-day practice.

For Rukshana and Pachana purpose many Choornas are also given in Amavata Chikitsa like Vaishvanara Choorna, Panchakola Choorna, Pathyadi choorna etc and Kashayas like Rasna saptaka, Rasna panchaka and Shunthyadi kwatha are given.

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda being a holistic science has its time-tested treatment principles and its applicability remains the same forever. For any disease to occur Tridosha are responsible, as they are the basic vital energies, which decides the healthy and disease state of human body. Any Srotodusthi can happen only when there is aggravation of Tridosha present in the dhātu that a particular srotas carries. The treatment of any srotodusthi will eventually be done by correcting the tridosha there by achieving the dosha and dhātu samyavastha. The concept of Shadvidhopakrama has a vital role in chikitsa aspect in Ayurveda. All treatment modalities will be having its own properties and actions, based on which if we classify them, they will come under these basic six Upakramas. Rasa dhātu which is adya dhātu, carried by Rasavaha srotas is responsible for nourishment of uttarottara dhātu and thereby the whole body. Among Shadvidhopakrama, Langhana is the main and first line of treatment for Rasavaha srotodusthi vikaras, as Rasa is the ashraya of Kapha and according to Ashrayashrayi Siddhanta, Rasa and Kapha are having similar guna and karma, and their dusthi karana and chikitsa will also be the same. However, according to roga avstha different other modalities of treatment like Rukshana, Swedana etc can also be adopted. Jwara is one among Rasavaha srotodusthi and has a very important place in classics as it is rightly mentioned by Srikanthadatta in Vrundamadhava as “Chikitsa

Jwarajanaadhina”, which means the entire knowledge of treatment is based on understanding of Jwara and its Chikitsa. Therefore, to understand Rasavaha srotodusthi chikitsa, understanding Jwara Chikitsa principles plays a vital role.

CONCLUSION

In Ayurveda Shadvidhopakrama has a vital role in Chikitsa. According to Ashrayashrayi Siddhanta, Rasa is ashraya for Kapha and most of the Rasapardoshaja vikara are Aamashaya samutha and Kapha dosha pradhana. But pitta and vata dosha can also cause rasa dusthi. Langhana is the first line of treatment in all Rasavaha sroto dusthi vikara. Langhana need not be Upavasa always, but various methods of Langhana can be adopted in chikitsa based on roga rogi bala and avastha of the vyadhi. The age-old traditional concept of Langhana is now gaining importance in research in modern science. The research on Autophagy and Therapeutic diet/medicinal foods proves the benefits of Langhana in preventing some of the challenging diseases like Cancer, Parkinson's etc and in curing many metabolic disorders. Though the other treatment modalities (Rukshana, Brumhana etc) can be used in Rasavaha sroto dusthi vikara according to roga avastha, Langhana is the important treatment modality that is most beneficial.

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