

ROLE OF PURVA KARMA AND PASHCHAT KARMA IN AYURVEDA SHALYA  
TANTRA: A REVIEW

Dr. Syed Wesal Ahmad\*

Deputy Medical Superintendent, Himalaya Ayurvedic Medical College &amp; Hospital, Chiksi, Patna-801110, India.

\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Syed Wesal Ahmad

Deputy Medical Superintendent, Himalaya Ayurvedic Medical College &amp; Hospital, Chiksi, Patna-801110, India.

Article Received on 12/01/2023

Article Revised on 07/02/2023

Article Accepted on 27/02/2023

## ABSTRACT

Ayurveda described surgical approaches under the heading of *Shalya Tantra* which encompasses three major procedures i.e.; *Purva Karma*, *Pradhan Karma* and *Pashchat Karma*. These three approaches are known as *Trividha Karma* in Ayurveda. *Purva Karma* referred to pre-operative measures which include preparation of the patient and arrangement of materials required for surgical interventions. Collection of materials, preparation of equipments and arrangement of operative theaters, etc. are mainly involves in Ayurveda surgery. *Pashchat Karma* mainly involves all approaches of post-operative care. *Pashchat Karma* is important for Ayurveda surgery to acquire maximum benefits of *Pradhana Karma*. *Pashchat Karma* improves healing process and boost up the efficacy of *Pradhana Karma*. The patient's care and precautionary measures are main practices of *Paschat Karma*. Preoperative and post-operative measures decide success of surgical interventions. Present article elaborates role of *Purva Karma* and *Pashchat Karma* in practice of Ayurveda *Shalya Tantra*.

**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, Shalya Tantra, Purva Karma, Pashchat Karma.

## INTRODUCTION

The ancient medical science of Ayurveda is a branch of the even older *Atharveda* which is one amongst the four *Vedas*. *Sushruta Samhita*, the famous surgical treatise written by the father of surgery around 500 B.C., has been inaccessible to other medical sciences of the day and the world. Ayurveda principles that are entwined with the fundamental idea of life are still highly valuable today. Ayurveda described many approaches or therapeutic modalities for treating different health problems and *Shalya Tantra* is one such modality of Ayurveda that helps to cure surgical issues. *Trividha* is important part of *Shalya Chikitsa* which involves conduction of surgical procedures in three steps.<sup>[1-5]</sup>

*Shalya* is used to remove different kinds of wood, grass, stone, dust, clods, bone, hair, metal, pus discharge and nails, etc. *Shalya Chikitsa* apply caustic alkali, blunt and sharp instruments, etc. *Shalya Chikitsa* helps to diagnose and treats wounds as well as ano-rectal disorders. *Shalya Chikitsa* performed in three stages which described as *Trividha Karma*; pre-operative, operative and post-operative measurements.

*Sushruta* discussed how to recognize a foreign body before surgery, determine its size, form, and precise location within the body, and choose the best equipment to remove it. He has also brought up starvation and pre-operative diets for different kinds of surgery. He has also

underlined the importance of taking asepsis and antiseptics precautions and protecting wounds from harmful and unseen organisms. Surgical procedures should be performed in three headings i.e., *Trividha karma* which plays an important role in the successful surgery. Amongst these three steps the pre-operative (*Purva Karma*) and post-operative measures (*Paschat Karma*) contributed remarkably towards the successful completion of main surgical procedure.<sup>[4-7]</sup>

**Purva Karma (Pre-Operative Procedure)**

*Purva Karma* refers to patient preparation; *Sushruta* emphasizes the significance of gathering all the supplies required for the operation and for post-operative care. *Sushruta* provides list of the instruments needed during surgical procedures. These include blunt and sharp objects, rods, horns, caustic alkali, leeches, *Jambavaustha*, cotton scraps, thread, gourds, leaves, bandage material, ghee and oil, etc. *Sushruta* mentioned that before surgery, obedient and powerful servants should be ready with decoction, ointment, paste, hot water, earthen jars, beddings and frying pan, etc. Patient should be given a light diet and should be seated facing eastward with his movements restrained, with the surgeon facing westward.<sup>[7-9]</sup> The patient should be operated on an empty stomach in the cases as depicted in **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1: Pathological conditions should be operated on an empty stomach.**

Surgery should be performed after the patient has consumed a light diet, since full stomach, may cause trouble in surgical intervention and patient experience agony or *Vata* aggravation also observed which ultimately worsen pathological situations.

Patient preparation, anaesthesia and sterilization, etc. are included in *Purva karma*. A unique procedure known as *Raksha Karma* was also presented by *Acharyas*. According to Ayurveda before surgery, *Mantras* should be repeated; the only goal of *Raksha Karma* is to ensure the patient's success.

*Acharyas* have also stressed the importance of collecting a complete history, performing a comprehensive physical examination, and performing many assessments before surgical procedures. The severity of the pain, appetite, bowel movements, overall health and length of the disease, etc. should be considered before surgical procedure. Before undergoing treatments like abdominal conditions, fistula-in-ano and piles, etc. the patient should be entirely starved. Following practice can be considered as preoperative measures in Ayurveda surgery:

- ❖ Cleansing, preparation and special preparation
- ❖ Spraying or washing the irritated area with liquids
- ❖ *Abhyanga*, *Sweda Karma* and Sudation
- ❖ Softening the *Vrana shotha* with *Vimlapana* Poulitices
- ❖ *Sneha Pana* and arrangement of operative theatres
- ❖ Complete examination should be performed after taking a correct medical history.
- ❖ The anaesthetist should be alerted, and information should be left for him with regard to important aspects of the patient's medical history, physical examination, and the type of surgery planned, as well as any sort of patient's history of adverse medication reactions.
- ❖ Documentation, patient consent or family member consent in case of critical surgery.

According to Ayurveda philosopher for a safe and painless recovery, a proper, normal preoperative procedure is crucial. In cases of elective surgery, the

patients should be admitted two days before the procedure. The patient is admitted early for bowel preparation if bowel surgery is required.

*Purva karma* such as *Paachana*, *Deepana*, *Swedana* and *Snehana*, etc. offer advantages in surgical treatment. *Vrana Dhoopana* and *Vranitagara Dhoopana* promote faster wound healing and sterilization prevents chances of further infection. Maintenance of aseptic condition and patient comfort, etc. also comes under the heading of *Purva karma*. *Raksha Karma* which is carried out to eradicate the fear of *Rakshas*, was also stated by *Acharya Susruta*. The main goal of this procedure is to strengthen the patient's psychologically.

#### **Paschat Karma (Post Operative Care)**

The patient should feel secure after the operation. A wick containing a thick paste of honey, ghee and sesame along with suitable medications, neither too unctuous nor too rough, should be inserted into the wound after it has been pressed all over with a finger, massaged, washed with decoction, and the watery discharge need to be wiped with a cotton swab.

One should wrap it in a thick pad of gauze and fumigate it with analgesic and antiseptic medications such as *Guggulu*, *Sarjarasa* and *Vacha*, etc. The patient should spend few days in post-operative ward. The special post operative care is required for treating conditions like; tumours, cysts, *Vidarika*, *Galashaluka* and *Kantaka*, etc. *Seevan* is performed with a variety of threads and needles. Suturing is not advised in wounds that have been exposed to caustics and poison, etc.

The surgeon and his assistant must provide thorough care after completing the *Sastra Karma* until the patient is fully recovered and the wound has healed. Bandaging, application of medicinal pastes, dressings, diet adjustments and rest, etc. are recommended as post operative measures. The dressings should be changed and bandage clothing should be sterilized and fumigated for early healing or recovery.

The patient must exercise extreme caution when moving, sitting, standing, changing positions in bed, etc. As part of the *Prasastha Aahara*, *Ushna*, *Snigda*, *Saali anna*, *Jangala maamsa rasa*, *Jivanthi*, *Modaka*, *Kaaravella*, *Mudga* and *Vilepi*, etc. should be provided. Since the immediate post-operative time is crucial, the patient should be closely monitored. Surgeon should take care of anesthetic recovery and stitches need to be examined on regular basis. The complete course of antibiotics and pain killers recommended for early recovery of patient.<sup>[10-12]</sup>

#### **CONCLUSION**

Pre-surgical, operative, and post-operative procedures are crucial for a successful operation and the patient's complete relief. Preoperative treatment, which includes establishing a clinical diagnosis and preparing the

patient, is a component of preoperative care. Postoperative care is crucial for the patient's optimal recovery and rehabilitation, and intra-operative anaesthesia and procedure demand a high level of precision for a smooth and uneventful outcome. *Pashchat Karma* offers maximum benefits of *Pradhana Karma* and improves healing process and boost up the efficacy of *Pradhana Karma*. The patient's care and precautionary measures are major components of *Paschat Karma*. Preoperative and post-operative measures are essential for the successful completion of surgical practice.

## REFERENCES

1. Susruta, Susruta Samhita Vol. I (Edited with Ayurveda Tattva Sandipika) by Kaviraj Ambika dutta Edition Print, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan. Sutrasthan, 2010; 5/3.
2. Susruta, Susruta Samhita Vol. I (Edited with Ayurveda Tattva Sandipika) by Kaviraj Ambika dutta Edition Print, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan. Sutra sthan, 2010; 25/20-32.
3. Susruta, Susruta Samhita Vol. I (Edited with Ayurveda Tativa Sandipika) by kaviraj Ambika dutta Edition Print, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan. sutra sthan, 2010; 10/5.
4. Susruta, Susruta Samhita Vol. I (Edited with Ayurveda Tatva Sandipika by Kaviraj Ambika dutta Edition Print, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan. Chikitsa sthana, 2010; 2/46.
5. S. Das, A practical guide to operative surgery chapter 2, fifth edition sep, 2007.
6. Susruta, Susruta Samhita Vol. I (Edited with Ayurveda Tattva Sandipika) by Kaviraj Ambika dutta Edition Print, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan. sutra sthan, 2010; 5/7.
7. Susruta, Susruta Samhita Vol. I (Edited with Ayurveda Tattva Sandipika) by Kaviraj Ambika dutta Edition Print, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan. Sutra Sthan, 2010; 5/14.
8. Susruta, Susruta Samhita Vol. I (Edited with Ayurveda Tattva Sandipika) by Kaviraj Ambika dutta Edition Print, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan. Sutra Sthan, 2010; 25/10.
9. Susruta, Susruta Samhita Vol. I (Edited with Ayurveda Tattva Sandipika) by Kaviraj Ambika dutta Edition Print, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan. Sutra Sthan, 2010; 15/16. 19.
10. Susruta, Susruta Samhita (Edited with Ayurveda Tattva Sandipika) by Kaviraj Ambika dutta Edition Print, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan. Sutra Sthan, 2010; 5/42.
11. Priya Vrat Sharma, Sushruta Sam- hita Vol. I, 1st edi., Varanasi, Chaukhamba Vishvabharati, 1999; 60.
12. Somen Das, A practical guide to operative surgery, 5th edi. Kolkata, published by Dr. S. Das, 2007; 23.