

**KSHARAKARMA AND AGNIKARMA IN SHALAKYATANTRA: A REVIEW****Dr. Sakshi Chauhan***

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ABSTRACT

Ksharakarma and Agnikarma are two among the para surgical techniques mentioned in Ayurveda and are explained to provide complete relief in certain diseases which are not cured by herbal medicine or surgical interventions. According to Ayurveda Kshara is 'Pradhanatama' among Shastra and Anushastra, and Agni is 'Shreshta' among Anushastras. Our Ancient Acharyas described external and internal uses of Ksharakarma in various disorders in two forms- Pratisaaraneeya and Paaneeya; whereas based on the specific site, heat retention and transmission capacity different materials had prescribed to perform Agnikarma. The use of these two para-surgical procedures has been mentioned in the different contexts of Shalakyatantra. This review article deals with various aspects of Kshara and Agnikarma in Netra- Karna- Nasa- Mukha and Shiroroga.

KEYWORDS: Ksharakarma, Agnikarma, Netra- Karna- Nasa- Mukha and Shiroroga.**INTRODUCTION**

Kshara is a caustic alkaline substance obtained from the ashes prepared in a specific way from medicinal plants. Ksharakarma is versatile because even in places that are difficult to approach by ordinary measures can be treated by Ksharakarma and it is the only thing that can take internally among Shastra and Anushastra. The etymological significance of the term Kshara is based on their property of corroding (the skin or the flesh of an affected part of the body), or on their peculiar quality in destroying the skin and flesh where such an effect is desired. Because of its Chedya- Bhedya- Lekhya action, Tridoshaghna property and *Visheshakriyavacharanata*; Acharya Sushruta considered Kshara as 'Pradhanatama' among Shastra and Anushastra. According to Ashtanga Sangraha, Kshara is 'Sarvasastra-Anushastranam Varishta' (superior). Clinically Agnikarma is the prime para-surgical procedure, to treat chronic diseases, which are most difficult to manage because of the antagonistic property of doshas, like disease caused by Vata and Kapha. Agnikarma can be done in all seasons except autumn and summer but in an emergency it can be performed in any seasons with appropriate precautions³ like covering the site with moist clothes, having Picchila- Sheeta foods and smearing cold pastes over the body so that the increase in pitta which generated out of the excessive hot climate can be countered. Among Anushastra Agni is 'Shreshta' according to Acharya Sushruta and Agni is 'Pradhanatara' according to Acharya Dalhana. While explaining the importance of Agni karma, Acharya Sushruta told that in Dagdha

Kriya, Agnikarma is better than Kshara because Agnidagdha Rogas are Apunarbhava and Bhesaja-Shastra- Kshara Asadhya Rogas are Sadhya by Agnikarma⁴. Ayurveda Acharyas have mentioned these two para surgical procedures in different diseases explained in Shalaky tantra. The purpose of this review article is to combine the various aspects of Kshara and Agnikarma mentioned in Shalaky Tantra.

Ksharakarma

Classification of Kshara:

Based on Administration

1- Pratisaaraneeya Kshara (Bahyaparimaarjanam-Ashtanga Sangraha) - External administration
2- Paaneeya Kshara (Anta: parimaarjanam- Ashtanga Sangraha) - Internal administration
Pratisaaraneeya Kshara is again classified into three on the basis of Concentration:

- i- Mridu
- ii- Madhyamaⁱⁱⁱ- Teekshna

General dose of Kshara

Dose of Paaneeya Kshara

- i- Uttama:** 1 Pala (4 Karsha)
- ii- Madhyama:** ¾ Pala (3 Karsha)
- iii- Avara:** ½ Pala (2 Karsha)

Dose of Pratisaaraneeya Kshara

- Mridu: 2 Pala
- Madhyama: 1 Pala

- Teekshna: ½ Pala

Properties of Kshara

Kshara is Tridoshagna (pacifies Tridosha) because of Nanaushadha samavaayat (as it contains variety of medicines), Shuklatwat (white colour) it is Soumya (cooling), has good Dahana (digestive), Pachana (suppurating) and Dharana Shakti, Katu rasa (Katu-Lavana rasa bhuyishtam- Ashtanga Sangraha), it has Ushana (hot), Teekshna (sharp), Paachana (suppurating), Vilayana (liquefacient), Shodhana (purifying), Ropana (healing), Shoshana (drying), Stambhana (stopping) and Lekhana (scraping) guna, it is Krimi- Aama- Kapha- Kushta- Visha and Medhohara (act as antihelentic, reduce phlegm, cures skin ailments, has antitoxic effect and reduces fat).

General indications of Pratisaarneeya Kshara

Alkaline preparation should be externally used in diseases such as Skin diseases such as Kitibha Kushta, Dadru, Mandal and, Kilasa, Bhagandara (Fistula-in-ano), Arbudha (Tumour), Arsha (Haemorrhoids), Dushta vrana (chronic ulcer), Nadi vrana (sinus), Charma kila(warts on skin), Tilkalaka(moles), Nyaccha, Vyanga, Mashaka, Bahya Vidradhi (External abscess), Krimi (worms), Visha (toxins), Seven forms of diseases which affect the cavity of the mouth such as Upajihvika, Adhigihvka, Upakusha, Danta vaidarbha and in the three types of Rohinis. Ashtanga Sangraha added the disease Granthi and Vartmagata roga.

General indications of Paaneeya Kshara

Garavisha, Gulma, Udara, Agnisanga, Ajeerna, Arochaka, Aanaha, Sharkara, Ashmari, Abhyantara Vidradhi, Krimi, Visha, Arshas. Ashtanga Sangraha added Shoola.

General contra indications of Kshara

Raktapitta, Jwara, Pittaprakruti (Vata Pittardhita-Ashtanga Sangraha), Baala, Vriddha, Durbala, Moorcha, Timira, Brama and Mada.

KSHARA PRAYOGA

Poorvakarma

The patient is made to sit in Nivata pradesha(devoid of sun light), all the necessary arrangements should be done which is told in Agropaharaneeya Adhyaya. Examination of the patient and Ksharakarma Pradesha has to be done. Do Doshanusaara poorvakarma like In Vata dushti- Lekhana karma (scrapping); In Pitta dushti- Gharshana Karma (scrubbing) and in Kapha Dushti- Pracchana karma (incision).

Pradhanakarma

Apply Kshara using Shalaka (rodlike instrument) for the duration of 100 maatraakaala. According to Ashtanga Sangraha10:

In Vartmagata roga

Vartma Nirbhujya (eyelid should be held everted),

Cover the Krishnamandala using Pichu or Madhucchistha Apply Kshara in 'Patmapatra tanu pramana'(thin layer as lotus petal).

In Ghrana Arsha and Arbuda: The Patient is made to sit Pratyadithyamukha (facing towards the sun), Unnamya Nasa (Lift the tip of the nose) Apply Kshara with Shalaka. It should retain 50 Maatraakaala.

In Karna

The procedure is the same as that of Ghrana (nose).

Paschatkarma

After observing Samyak dagdha lakshnana(proper cauterization), Shamana prayoga is done with Amlavarga, Sarpi and Madhuka (Vaghbhatta told Madhu instead of Madhuka). For Kshara vranaropana, Tilakalka, Madhuka and Ghrita have to be applied as Lepana thereafter. In the case of Heena or Adhidagdha Vrana do treatment according to the Dosha.

General indications of Agnikarma

Agnikarma is indicated in all ritus except Sharat and Greeshma ritu; but in Aatyayika condition, it can be done in all Ritus with proper Pratyaneeka Chikitsa. Indicated conditions are Twakroga, Mamsaroga, Sira, Snayu, Sandhi, Astigata rogas, Teevavedhana, Vrana with Uchrita-Katina and Supta mamsa, Granthi, Arsha, Arbuda, Bhagandara, Apachi, Shleepada, Charmakeela, Tilakaalaka, Antravridhi, in Sandhi-Sira Chedana, Naadvirana and Shonitaatipravritti. While performing Agnikarma Rogasamsthana, Marma, Balaabala and Ritu should be considered.

General contraindications of Agnikarma

Pittaprakruti, Anta:Shonita, Bhinnakoshta, Anudhrita Shalya, Durbala, Baala, Vriddha, Bheeru, Anekavrana peedita (Aneka vyadhi peedita) and Aswedya (Pandu-Meha- Raktapitta and Trisha).

DISCUSSION

Probable mode of action of Ksharakarma

Kshara has Shodhana, Ropana, Shoshana, Sthambhana, Vilayana and Lekhana properties. Shodhana property helps in the elimination and expulsion of unwanted and harmful substances from the diseased part by desquamation of sloughs and draining the pus. Ropana property helps in healing due to the antiseptic action of Kshara. Shoshana property helps in drying up and absorption of mucus discharge and promote granulation. Sthambhana property of Kshara helps in the contraction of the diseased areas to promote healing and Vilayana property causes liquefaction and dissolves localized unhealthy tissue. Hence these all properties help to fasten the process of healing. In the modern view, local application of Kshara acts on rogas like polyps or hypertrophied turbinate etc in two ways: 1) It cauterizes the hypertrophied or enlarged mass directly because of its corrosive nature thus producing the shrinking effect on tissues. 2) Kshara penetrates tissues and coagulates protein in the local plexus. Coagulation of protein leads to

the disintegration of haemoglobin into heme and globin. The synergy of these actions results in decreasing the size of the mass and further necrosis of the tissue occurs. This necrosed tissue sloughs out within 3-7days. Thus the disease process obliterates permanently and there is no recurrence of the disease.

Probable mode of action of Agnikarma

The disease in which Agnikarma is indicated is due to vitiation of Vata and Kapha and Agnikarma is considered as better therapy to pacify these Doshas. Due to the Ushna, Teekshna, Shookshma and Aashukari guna of Agni, Agnikarma pacifies vitiated Vata and Kapha Dosha. As per Acharya Sushruta, basically, Agnikarma is used in two manners, i.e., for Roga unmoolana and other for pain management. For the disease cure mainly used in the assistance with surgery and for pain management, it is used independently. As per the modern view, application of heat stimulates lateral spinothalamic tract which leads to stimulation of descending pain inhibitory (DPI) mechanism thereby causing the stimulation of CNS. Which cause the release of endogenous opioids in POMC (Proopiomelanocortin) cells in the arcuate nucleus and in the brain stem and thus blocks the transmission of pain sensation.

CONCLUSION

Kshara and Agni karma are the two potent and minimally invasive para surgical procedures that have far-reaching applications especially in the management of pain, recurrency and unwanted growth conditions in the number of diseases explained in Shalaky Tantra. New research works should be opened in these topics for achieving apellucid validation of its applications in the field of Shalaky Tantra.

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