

PUNARNAVADI BASTI: A REVIEW OF ITS EFFICACY IN TREATING JOINT DISORDERS THROUGH ANTI-INFLAMMATORY AND ANALGESIC MECHANISMS¹*Sakshi Sharma, ²Vd. Shivani Mahajan, ³Vd. Ketan Mahajan¹P.G. Scholar, Dept of Panchakarma, Patanjali Bhartiya Ayurvedigyan Evum Anusandhan Sansthan, Haridwar.²Professor, Dept of Panchakarma, Patanjali Bhartiya Ayurvedigyan Evum Anusandhan Sansthan, Haridwar.³Professor and H.O.D Dept of Panchakarma, Patanjali Bhartiya Ayurvedigyan Evum Anusandhan Sansthan, Haridwar

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ABSTRACT

Joint disorders, including arthritis and related inflammatory conditions, significantly impact quality of life due to pain, stiffness, and reduced mobility. Traditionally, Ayurvedic treatments have utilized Punarnavadi Basti (a medicated enema therapy) for its anti-inflammatory and analgesic effects in managing such disorders. The formulation's primary ingredient Punarnava (*Boerhavia diffusa*) along with other herbal constituents is known for its potent anti-inflammatory, diuretic and analgesic properties which contribute to reducing joint inflammation, alleviating pain and enhancing mobility. The anti-inflammatory action is believed to occur through the modulation of immune responses, reduction of pro-inflammatory cytokines, and prevention of oxidative stress, all of which are critical in the pathogenesis of joint disorders.

Basti

In Ayurveda, *Basti*^[1] is a therapeutic procedure, often referred to as one of the most important treatments in the Panchakarma system of detoxification and rejuvenation therapies. The term *Basti* means bladder. The bladders of animals were used as the device for *basti karma* in olden days. *Basti* is primarily used to treat *Vata* disorders^[2] because *Vata* has primary site in the colon.

Basti involves the administration of medicated oils, herbal decoctions, or herbal infusions into the colon through the rectum.

According to Ayurvedic Acharyas like Charaka and Sushruta, *Basti Chikitsa* not only removes imbalances caused by *Vata* but also has a balancing effect on all three doshas (*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*). By purifying and nourishing the body through the colon, *Basti* helps in treating a variety of ailments, such as gastrointestinal disorders, arthritis, neurological conditions and many more.

Basti therapy not only helps cleanse the colon but also nourishes and strengthens the tissues, improves digestion, and promotes the proper functioning of the immune system. Its effectiveness in both detoxification (*Shodhana*) and rejuvenation (*Rasayana*) therapies make it a versatile treatment.

Basti is indeed considered one of the most important and effective treatments in Ayurveda, often referred to as "*Ardha Chikitsa*"^[3] or "half of all treatments."

There are two primary types of *Basti Chikitsa*^[4]: *Anuvasana Basti* and *Niruha Basti*. *Anuvasana Basti* involves administering medicated oils, which nourish and lubricate the body, helping to alleviate dryness and nourish tissues. *Niruha Basti* on the other hand, uses herbal decoctions and is more focused on detoxification, clearing toxins (*Ama*) from the colon and improving digestion and balancing all three doshas, though it especially targets *Vata*. *Niruha Basti* is also known as *Asthapana Basti* because it sustains life, dosha and mala.

Niruha Basti^[5] is administered in the form of an emulsion containing Madhu (Honey), Saindhav Lavana (Rock Salt), Sneha (Oil or Ghee), Kalka (Herbal Paste), Kwatha (Herbal Decoction) and Avapa.

This systematic mixing ensures proper emulsification of the ingredients, and the resulting mixture is ready for administration as *Niruha Basti*. Each ingredient has a specific role, contributing to the detoxification, nourishment, and balance of *Vata* dosha, making *Niruha Basti* highly effective in Ayurvedic treatments.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

पुनर्नवैरण्डवृषाश्मभेदवृश्चीरभूतीकबलापलाशः।

द्विपञ्चमूलं च पलाशिकानि क्षुण्णानि धौतानि फलानि चाष्टा॥

बिल्वं यवान् कोलकुलत्थधान्यफलानि चैव प्रसृतोन्मितानि
पयोजलद्व्याढकवच्छृतं तत् क्षीरावशेषं सितवस्त्रपूतम्॥
वचाशताहवामरदारुकुण्ठयष्ट्याहवसिद्धार्थकपिप्पलीनाम् ।

कल्कैर्यवान्या मदनेश्च युक्तं नात्युष्णशीतं गुडसैन्धवाक्तम्॥
क्षौद्रस्य तैलस्य च सर्पिषश्च तथैव युक्तं प्रसृतैस्त्रिभिश्च।
दद्यान्निरुहं विधिना विविजः स सर्वसंसर्गकृतामघ्नः॥^[6]

Ingredients Of Punarnavadi Basti	
Punarnavadi Kwath	
Punarnava (<i>Boerhavia diffusa</i>)	Bilwa (<i>Aegle marmelos</i>)
Eranda (<i>Ricinus communis</i>)	Agnimanth (<i>Premna mucronata</i>)
Vasa (<i>Adhatoda vesica</i>)	Shyonak (<i>Oroxylum indicum</i>)
Pashanbhed (<i>Bergenia ligulata</i>)	Patla (<i>Stereospermum sauveoleus</i>)
Vrishcheer	Gambhari (<i>Gmelina arborea</i>)
Bhootik	Shalparni (<i>Desmodium gangticum</i>)
Bala (<i>Sida cordifolia</i>)	Prishnaparni (<i>Uria picta</i>)
Palasha (<i>Butea monosperma</i>)	Brihati (<i>Solanum indicum</i>)
Badira (<i>Ziziphus jujuba</i>)	Kantakari (<i>Solanum surattense</i>)
Kulatha (<i>Dolichos biflorus</i>)	Gokshura (<i>Tribulus terrestris</i>)
Dhanyaka (<i>Coriandrum sativum</i>)	Madanphala (<i>Randia spinosa</i>)
Kalka Dravya- Vacha(<i>Acorus calamus</i>), Shatahva(<i>Anethum sowa</i>), Devdaru(<i>Cedrus deodara</i>), Kushth(<i>Saussurea lappa</i>), Mulethi(<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>), Sasharp(<i>Brassica nigra</i>), Pippali(<i>Piper longum</i>), Ajwain(<i>Trachyspermum ammi</i>), Madanphala(<i>Randia spinosa</i>)	
Madhu(Honey)	
Guda(<i>Saccharum officinarum</i>)	
Saindhav Lavana(Rock Salt)	
Godugdha	
Murchit Tila Taila, Goghrita	

Punarnavadi Basti is a highly effective Ayurvedic enema therapy mentioned in *Charaka Samhita*, primarily used to treat *Vata* disorders, especially those involving urinary issues, edema, and joint pain. With ingredients like *Punarnava*, *Dashamoola*, and *Triphala*, it acts as a powerful detoxifier, diuretic, and anti-inflammatory agent. The herbal components work synergistically to inhibit inflammatory mediators, reducing the inflammatory response in the body. This helps soothing inflamed tissues and supports healing. The calming effects on *Vata* dosha help mitigate nerve-related pain, which is often exacerbated by *Vata* imbalances. By addressing both inflammation and pain, *Punarnavadi Basti* supports joint health, improves mobility, and

enhances overall quality of life for individuals suffering from chronic inflammatory conditions. Its holistic approach not only targets symptoms but also works towards restoring balance in the body.

General Dose^[7]

Dravya	Pramana In Prasrita	Percentage
Madhu	2 Prasrita	16.67%
Sneha	3 Prasrita	25%
Kalka	1 Prasrita	8.33%
Kwatha	4 Prasrita	33.33%
Avapa	2 Prasrita	16.67%
Total	12 Prasrita	100%

Dravya	12Prasrita (In ml)	Uttama	Madhyama	Avara
Madhu	192	160	128	96
Sneha	288	240	192	144
Kalka	96	80	64	48
Kwatha	384	320	256	192
Avapa	192	160	128	96
Total	1152	960	768	576

1. **Madhu (Honey):** Honey is the first ingredient added in the preparation of *Niruha Basti* as it is auspicious. It acts as an emulsifier, binding the other ingredients (especially oil and water-based decoctions) together. Honey contains natural sugars which are quickly absorbed by digestive system and converted into energy. Hence it acts as an instant energizer. As it is hygroscopic, it absorbs excess fluid from tissues thus speeding up the process of healing and aids

growth of healing tissue. Honey also has nourishing and detoxifying properties.

2. **Saindhava Lavana (Rock Salt):** Rock salt is the second ingredient added to the mixture. It helps in breaking down the mucus, improving bowel movements, and facilitating the easy absorption of the medicinal substances. It also enhances the therapeutic effects of the *Basti*.

3. **Sneha (Medicated Oil or Ghee):** Sneha is the oily component, which can be medicated oil or ghee, depending on the condition and the dosha imbalance. The oil helps in lubricating the intestines, softening the toxins, and nourishing the tissues.
4. **Kalka (Herbal Paste):** Kalka is a paste made from powdered herbs. It is added to increase the potency of the *Basti* solution. The specific herbs used for the paste depend on the health condition being treated.
5. **Kwatha (Herbal Decoction):** Kwatha, or herbal decoction, forms the bulk of the *Basti* solution. It is made by boiling specific herbs in water until the volume reduces, concentrating the active ingredients. The decoction targets the particular dosha imbalance and health issue (usually *Vata* disorders).

Procedure of Niruha Basti

1. Purvakarma (Pre-procedure)

- **Abhyanga (Oil Massage):** A full-body massage using warm, medicated oils is performed to loosen the toxins in the body and prepare the tissues for detoxification.
- **Swedana (Steam Therapy):** Following the massage, a steam bath or localized sweating therapy is administered to further relax the muscles, dilate the channels, and help move the toxins towards the digestive tract.

2. Main Procedure

- **Preparation of the Basti Solution:** A mixture of herbal decoction, medicated oils or ghee, honey, rock salt, and other Ayurvedic ingredients are combined in a specific order. The solution is stirred well to create a uniform mixture.
- The patient is asked to lie down on their left side in a relaxed position, with the left leg extended and the right knee flexed.
- A specially designed Basti apparatus, typically a syringe or rubber catheter attached to a bag, is filled with the prepared decoction. This apparatus is used to administer the enema through the rectum gently.
- The herbal solution is introduced slowly into the colon, where it is held for 48 minutes depending upon physical strength. During this period, the solution works to loosen accumulated toxins and balances the *Vata dosha*.

3. Paschatkarma (Post-procedure)

- The patient is encouraged to pass the solution naturally after they feel the urge to defecate.
- Light, easy-to-digest food is recommended after the procedure to aid digestion and help with the restoration of the body's balance.

Importance of Punarnavadi Basti Detoxification

Punarnavadi Basti effectively eliminates accumulated toxins (*Ama*) from the body, particularly from the colon, promoting overall health and vitality.

Diuretic Action

With *Punarnava* as a primary ingredient, this *Basti* promotes urinary health by increasing urine output, reducing water retention, and alleviating conditions like edema (swelling).

Anti-inflammatory Effects

The anti-inflammatory properties of *Punarnava* and *Dashamoola* help reduce inflammation in tissues, making it effective for conditions like arthritis and joint pain.

Analgesic effects

By addressing inflammation and promoting circulation, *Punarnavadi Basti* provides relief from pain associated with various conditions, particularly those linked to *Vata* imbalances.

Improvement in Digestive Health

It supports digestive function by enhancing gut motility and alleviating issues such as constipation and bloating, contributing to better overall digestion.

Strengthening and Nourishing Tissues

Certain components in *Punarnavadi Basti* help nourish and strengthen bodily tissues (*dhatu*s), supporting overall health and resilience.

Balancing Doshas

While primarily targeting *Vata*, this *Basti* can also help harmonize *Pitta* and *Kapha*, promoting a balanced state of health.

Enhancing Metabolic Function

The detoxifying and nourishing actions improve metabolic processes, supporting weight management and overall vitality.

Support for Urinary Tract Health

It alleviates discomfort in the urinary tract, enhancing function and reducing issues like burning sensations or urinary frequency.

Overall Wellness

By promoting balance, detoxification, and pain relief, *Punarnavadi Basti* contributes to improved mental and physical well-being, enhancing the quality of life.

These therapeutic effects make *Punarnavadi Basti* a valuable treatment in Ayurvedic practice, addressing a variety of health conditions while promoting holistic wellness.

DISCUSSION

Punarnavadi Basti, a traditional Ayurvedic medicated enema, is attracting significant attention for its notable anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving properties. This discussion explores the importance of *Punarnavadi Basti* in the realm of modern healthcare and its potential use in treating inflammatory conditions and disorders.

associated with pain.

Personalized Medicine Approach

Ayurveda's principle of **individualized treatment** aligns well with the growing trend of **personalized medicine** in modern healthcare. Punarnavadi Basti treatments are tailored to the individual's constitution (**Prakriti**) and specific **dosha imbalances**. This contrasts with the more generalized approach of modern medicine, where treatment is often based on symptoms alone, rather than the patient's overall physiological and psychological profile.

By incorporating personalized approaches, modern healthcare can adopt Ayurvedic principles where the treatment is more specific to the patient's individual condition. This could lead to better **patient outcomes**, especially in chronic, multifactorial diseases where conventional medicine alone might not be sufficient.

Reducing Reliance on Pharmaceuticals

Punarnavadi Basti offers a natural alternative to long-term pharmaceutical interventions. For patients with conditions like **chronic pain** or **inflammatory disorders**, where painkillers or anti-inflammatories are commonly prescribed, the use of Punarnavadi Basti can reduce the dependency on these drugs. Long-term use of NSAIDs and steroids can lead to complications such as **ulcers**, **kidney damage**, and **osteoporosis**. Incorporating Punarnavadi Basti could lower these risks by providing a **natural, plant-based solution** that supports the body's own healing processes.

By offering a **natural, side-effect-free therapy**, Punarnavadi Basti can help mitigate the potential long-term consequences of pharmaceutical dependence, particularly in patients requiring chronic care.

Challenges and Limitations

Punarnavadi Basti offers significant therapeutic potential, challenges such as the **lack of standardization**, limited **safety data**, and **practitioner accessibility** hinder its integration into modern medicine. Addressing these limitations through rigorous **clinical trials**, **safety evaluations**, and standardization of preparation and dosage is essential. Future research should focus on expanding its applications, particularly in **chronic disease management** and **post-surgical recovery**, alongside modern treatments. Cross-disciplinary collaboration between **Ayurveda and modern medicine** will be crucial in unlocking its full potential, making it a viable option in **integrative healthcare**.

CONCLUSION

The phytochemicals in Punarnavadi Basti work together to provide anti-inflammatory, diuretic, laxative, antioxidant, and immunomodulatory effects. This makes the formulation effective for treating conditions like arthritis, edema, constipation, chronic inflammation, and

certain autoimmune disorders, while also supporting overall rejuvenation and detoxification of the body. The detoxifying nature of Punarnavadi Basti supports the elimination of Ama (metabolic waste) from the body, improving digestion and overall systemic function. By balancing Vata and Kapha doshas, the therapy not only addresses the immediate symptoms but also tackles the root cause of these disorders, restoring homeostasis and improving overall health. Punarnavadi Basti presents itself as a safe and effective treatment in Ayurvedic practice.

Punarnavadi Basti holds great promise for integration into modern healthcare, but challenges related to standardization, safety, and widespread acceptance must be addressed. Ongoing clinical research, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and practitioner training are essential for validating its therapeutic benefits and expanding its applications. By overcoming these hurdles, Punarnavadi Basti can become a valuable tool in managing chronic inflammatory conditions, detoxifying the body, and complementing conventional treatments in the evolving landscape of integrative medicine.

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