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A CLASSICAL AND CRITICAL REVIEW OF *DHANYAMLA DHARA:* NOMENCLATURE, PREPARATION, THERAPEUTIC PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURAL CONSIDERATIONS

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ABSTRACT

'Dhanyamla Dhara' is an external therapeutic procedure in *Ayurveda*, performed by pouring *Dhanyamla* continuously over the body or a specific body part for a stipulated period. It is included under *Bahirparimarjana Chikitsa* (external therapy) and is practiced as *Parisheka Sweda* (therapeutic pouring/sudation) under *Swedana* (sudation therapy) *Karma*, which is one of the procedures associated with *Panchakarma*. *Dhanyamla* is a traditionally prepared sour fermented liquid prepared using grains and other prescribed ingredients. The therapeutic effects of *Dhanyamla Dhara* depend upon the properties of the prepared liquid and the method of its external application. The present article aims to review the classical concept of *Dhanyamla Dhara*, with emphasis on its ingredients, preparation, properties, therapeutic actions, indications, procedure and benefits. Relevant classical references are compiled to provide a comprehensive understanding of *Dhanyamla Dhara* and its therapeutic significance.

KEYWORDS: *Dhanyamla, Dhanyamla Dhara, Panchakarma, Parisheka Sweda, Swedana, Bahirparimarjana Chikitsa.*

INTRODUCTION

Panchakarma is an important therapeutic principle of *Ayurveda* comprising five principal purification procedures. Along with these, Ayurveda describes various preparatory and supportive external therapies under *Bahirparimarjana Chikitsa*. *Swedana Karma* is an important therapeutic procedure associated with *Panchakarma* and is employed particularly in the management of *Vāta* and *Kapha*-predominant conditions. *Parisheka Sweda*, a form of *Drava Sweda* (liquid sudation), involves the continuous pouring of a suitable liquid over the body or affected part for a specified duration.[1,7]

Dhanyamla Dhara is a therapeutic application of *Dhanyamla* in the form of *Parisheka Sweda*. The term *Dhanyamla* is composed of *Dhanya*, referring to grains or cereals, and *Amla*, denoting sourness or an acidic nature. *Dhanyamla* is a fermented preparation obtained from grains and other prescribed ingredients through a specific method of preparation. The ingredients and processing contribute to the characteristic properties of the final preparation.[1,9]

In *Dhanyamla Dhara*, the prepared *Dhanyamla* is poured continuously over the selected body region or the whole body from a suitable height for a stipulated period. The therapeutic effect is influenced by the properties of *Dhanyamla* along with the continuous external application of the liquid. Proper consideration of factors such as temperature, duration, quantity, height of pouring and method of application is important for carrying out the procedure appropriately.[10]

Classical literature provides important references regarding *Dhanyamla*. *Ācārya Suśruta* describes *Dhanyamla* in *Sūtrasthāna* in the context of *Madhya Varga*. In *Suśruta Saṃhitā, Sūtrasthāna* 45/214, its therapeutic effect on contact is described, including its *Dāhaśamana* action.[1]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A narrative review was undertaken based on classical Ayurvedic texts, their available commentaries and standard textbooks of *Panchakarma* and *Bhaishajya Kalpana*. The relevant literature pertaining to *Dhanyamla*, *Kanjika*, *Aranala*, *Dhanya-Kanjika*, *Swedana*, *Parisheka* and *Dhara* was identified and reviewed.

The classical references, formulations, ingredients and properties of *Dhanyamla* were compiled from the concerned Ayurvedic texts. The formulation and method of preparation of *Dhanyamla* were referred, along with relevant descriptions available in standard *Panchakarma* literature. The procedural aspects of *Dhanyamla Dhara*, including materials required, pre-procedure, method of pouring, duration and post-procedure care, were compiled from standard *Panchakarma* literature.

The collected information was organized under the domains of nomenclature, synonyms, formulation, preparation, properties and actions, therapeutic principles and procedural considerations of *Dhanyamla Dhara*. The information from different textual sources was compared and presented in a descriptive manner to provide a consolidated classical and practical understanding of *Dhanyamla Dhara*.[1,6,7]

NOMENCLATURE AND SYNONYMS OF DHANYAMLA

Name / Term	Classical reference	Remarks
Dhanyamla	*Sushruta Samhita, Sutrasthana 45/214*	Principal term used for the preparation.
Kanjika	*Sushruta Samhita, Sutrasthana 45/214, Dalhana commentary*	Identified with *Dhanyamla* in this textual context.
Aranala	*Sushruta Samhita, Sutrasthana 45; Kashyapa Samhita*	Used as a related or synonymous term in certain classical contexts.
Dhanya-Kanjika	*Sharngadhara Samhita, Madhyama Khanda, Sandhana Kalpana*	Grain-based fermented sour preparation.

The nomenclature of *Dhanyamla* varies among classical texts, and terms such as *Kanjika*, *Aranala* and *Dhanya-Kanjika* are used with some variation depending on textual context.[1,6,7]

GUNA KARMA OF *DHANYAMLA*[5,8,7]

Parameter	Description
Rasa	*Amla*
Guna	*Tikshna, Laghu, Vyavayi*
Virya	*Ushna;* the supplied source also records *Sheeta Sparsha*
Vipaka	*Amla*
Dosha Karma	*Vata-Kaphahara(vata* and *kapha* pacifying*); Pittakara(*increases *pitta)*
Karma	*Deepana* (appetizer), *Pachana*(digestive action), *Bhedi* (purgative), *Jeevana*, *Mukha-vairasyahara, Mukha-daurgandhyahara, Malahara, Mukha-shoshahara, Klamahara, Ruchyam, Hrudhyam*

INGREDIENTS OF DHANYAMLA

Sl No	Ingredients	Botanical name	Part used	Quantity
1	*Tandula* (Rice)	*Oryza sativa* Linn.	*Nistusha beeja* (Dehusked rice/ paddy)	10 *Prastha* (7.680L)
2	*Pruthuka* (Beaten rice)	-	-	10 *Prastha* (7.680L)
3	kulattha	*Macrotyloma uniflorum* (Lamk.) Verdc.	*Beeja* (seed)	24 *Prastha* (12.792L)
4	*Laja* (Parched rice)	-	-	24 *Prastha* (12.792L)
5	*Kangu beeja*	*Setaria italica* Beauv.	*Beeja* (seed)	1 *Adhaka* (3.132L)
6	*Kodrava*	*Paspalum scrobiculatum* Linn=P. *orbiculare* Forst.	*Beeja* (seed)	4 *Prastha* (3.132L)
7	*Shunti*	*Zingiber officinale* Rose.	*Kanda* (Rhizome)	2 *Prastha* (1.536L)
8	*Dantashatha (Changeri)*	*Oxalis corniculata* Linn.	*Patra* (Leaves)/ *Samoola*(whole plant)	4 *Prastha* (3.132L)
9	*Deepyaka (Ajamoda)*	*Trachyspermum rox-burghianum*	*Beeja* (seed)	8 *Kudava*

		(DC.) Sprague		(1.536L)
10	*Ushnodaka* (Warm water)	-	-	200 *Prastha* (153.60L)

Ingredients and quantities of *dhanyamla* according to *Sahasrayoga* with *Dharakalpa*, p.914.[9]

Dantashatha means "that which makes teeth blunt or causes tingling". So *Nimbuka* (Indian Lemon-*Citrus limon)*, *Kapittha* (Indian WoodApple-*Limonia acidissima), Chincha* (Tamarind-*Tamarindus indica*) and *Changeri* (Indian Sorrel-*Oxalis corniculata*) can be considered.

METHOD OF PREPARATION OF DHANYAMLA

According to *sahasrayoga*,

The preparation is commenced on an auspicious day. A *Kashaya* (decoction) is prepared from the prescribed drugs according to the general method of preparation of a decoction.

The prepared decoction is transferred into an earthen vessel (*Bhanda*), and the mouth of the vessel is sealed. The vessel is kept in a warm place and allowed to undergo fermentation.

After approximately 7–8 days of fermentation, the vessel is opened and the fermented contents are decanted. The resulting liquid is used as *Dhanyamla*/*Kanjika*.

Various methods of preparation of *Dhanyamla* are described. The supplied source notes that some methods include sesame oil or mustard oil and bamboo leaves in the *Sandhana Dravya* during fermentation, and that covering the mouth with a thick, multilayered cloth may support sour fermentation.[9]

Other methods of preparation

Method 2[11]

Ingredients Required

Raktashali (Red Rice): 1 kg

Kulmasha (Half-cooked or coarse grains / Horse gram variants depending on specific traditional contexts): 1 kg

Water: 8 times the total weight of the grains (16 liters)

Procedure

- Take 1 kg of *Raktashali* and 1 kg of *Kulmasha* in a large vessel. Add eight times the amount of water (16 liters) to it and cook the mixture thoroughly.
- Continue cooking until the grains become properly steamed, soft, and well-cooked.
- Once cooked, transfer the entire mixture along with the liquid into a large earthen (clay) pot.
- Tie the mouth of the clay pot securely with a clean cloth to prevent contamination while allowing the fermentation gases to manage. Leave it undisturbed to undergo natural fermentation (*Sandhana*).
- Let the mixture ferment for a period of 10 days.
- After the completion of the 10-day fermentation period, check the mixture to ensure proper fermentation has occurred. Then, filter the fermented liquid through a clean piece of cloth.

The sour, fermented liquid obtained after filtration is called *Dhanyamla* or *Amla Kanji*.

Method 3[12]

Ingredients Required

Grains (*Dhanya*): All specified medicinal grains.

Lemon (*Nimbu*)

Mustard seeds (*Rai*)

Radish (*Mooli*)

Water: 50 Liters

Equipment: A large boiling pot, a clean cloth (to make a poultice/bundle), a clay pot, and a string.

Procedure

- Crush or finely grind all the ingredients (the grains, lemon, mustard seeds, and radish).
- Place the crushed mixture into a clean piece of cloth and tie it securely to form a bundle or poultice (*Potali*).
- Pour 50 liters of water into a large pot and place it on the stove to boil.
- Submerge the prepared *Potali* directly into this boiling water.
- Continue boiling the mixture until the water reduces to half its original volume (i.e., reduces to 25 liters), creating a concentrated decoction (*Kwatha*).
- Transfer the reduced liquid into a large Clay Pot.
- Suspend the *Potali* inside the liquid using the *Dola Yantra* method (hang the bundle using a string tied to a stick placed across the mouth of the pot, so the bundle remains suspended inside the liquid without touching the bottom).
- Cover the mouth of the clay pot securely with a clean cloth.
- Heat this clay pot daily (mildly warming it helps stimulate fermentation).
- Repeat this daily heating process for 8 to 10 days.
- After 8–10 days, the liquid undergoes natural fermentation and becomes sour (*Amla*), resulting in the final *Dhanyamla*.
- Remove the *Potali* from the liquid – *Dhanyamla*

***DHANYAMLA DHARA* – PROCEDURE**[10]

Dharakalpa source describes *Dhara* as the pouring of liquid medicines over the scalp and body parts. Depending upon the liquid used and the site of application, different forms of *Dhara* are described; pouring over the whole body is referred to as *Kayaseka* or *Sarvangadhara*. *Dhanyamla Dhara* may therefore be performed as an external *Parisheka Sweda* using *Dhanyamla* as the therapeutic liquid.

Materials Required
Dhanyamla – 5 litres (for *sarvaga dhara*), Vessels – 4, Oil for *Abhyanga* (oil massage) – 100 mL, *Rasnadi Choorna* – 5 g, *Kindi* (traditional metal water vessel) – 2, Masseurs/attendants – 2.

Pre Procedure
The patient is made to sit or lie down on the *Droni* (therapeutic table). *Talam* (head application) is placed over the head and *Sarvanga Abhyanga* is performed. In some conditions, the procedure may be performed without *Abhyanga*. Gauze is tied around the head above the eyebrows and the ears are plugged with gauze. The patient is covered with a thin cloth below the neck. The procedure may also be performed without covering the body.

Procedure
Warm *Dhanyamla* is poured through *Kindi* by two attendants standing on either side of the *Droni*. The temperature of *Dhanyamla* is maintained at around 42°C. *Dhanyamla* is poured at a medium speed from a height of 6–12 cm. The procedure can be performed with hot or cold *Dhanyamla* according to the condition of the patient. The *Dhanyamla* should be used every day.

Duration
The procedure is performed for 45 minutes per day for a minimum of 7 days, preferably during the morning hours in a moderate climate.
Dhanyamla can be reused for 3 days if properly used.

Post Procedure
After *Dhanyamla Dhara*, the body and head are cleaned using a soft towel. The ear plugs and gauze are removed and *Rasnadi Choorna* is applied over the head. The patient is advised to take rest for one hour and then take a bath. *Abhyanga* before bath is also advised.

THERAPEUTIC ACTIONS AND BENEFITS
Dhanyamla Dhara may be understood through the properties and actions attributed to *Dhanyamla* and through the therapeutic effect of continuous external application. The *Dhanyamla* has *Vatahara* and *Vatanulomana* actions and indicates its use in *Vata* disorders. *Suśruta* also describes *Dahanashamana* action by contact.
Different methods of administration: *Pana, Lepa, Asthapana basti, Parisheka, Kavala, Gandusha*
Indication: *Krmi* - Worms, *Hrdroga* - Heart disease, *Gulma* - Abdominal tumors, Arsah - Piles, Panduroga – Anemia.[7]

RESULTS
The review identified classical references describing *Dhanyamla* and related preparations such as *Kañjika*, *Aranāla* and *Dhānya-Kañjika*. *Dhanyamla Dhara* is described as an external application performed as *Parisheka Sweda* under *Swedana Karma*. The reviewed literature provided information regarding its ingredients, preparation, properties, therapeutic actions and procedural aspects. Variations were observed in the methods of preparation and procedural practices among different sources.

CONCLUSION
Dhanyamla Dhara is an important external Ayurvedic procedure performed as *Parisheka Sweda* using fermented *Dhanyamla*. Classical literature provides a basis for understanding its formulation, properties, preparation and therapeutic application. Further clinical studies with standardized procedures are required to establish its efficacy scientifically.

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