

**IMMUNO MODULATORY EFFECT OF SWARNAPRASHANA WHEN USE AS A
RASAYANA****Dr. Omprakash Dwivedi***

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ABSTRACT

Infant or childhood is the growing state of life. Good health in this state gives strong foundation to the future building of life. Proper growth is observed by their physical characters like anthropometry and physiosocial development. Ayurveda mainly helps to maintain the healthy state of mind and body. Swarnaprashana is one of the sixteen Samskaras which were described in ancient scriptures. It is an ancient process of administering Swarna and other useful medicines through oral route in children for better health and prevention from many diseases. Acharyas have mentioned the importance of Swarnaprashana. They have stated that regular use of Swarnaprashana helps to sharpen the memory to its extreme level, help in proper growth and development and prevent from diseases. It's a unique method of immunization which helps the children to boost up the intellectual power and produces non specific immunity in body to fight against general disorders. Through this article researchers wants to evaluate the importance & immuno modulatory effect of Swarnaprashana on physical growth as well as to improve general health condition of children.

KEYWORD: Ayurveda, Swarna Bhasma [Gold], Rasayana, Prasana, Lehana, Madhu, Ghrita, Immuno- modulator.**INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda science is more concerned for better life by preventive and supportive measures for pediatric age group. Acharya Kashyap stated that healthy and unhealthy condition depends on the lehana. Kashyapa is described Swarnaprashana in detail with its benefits to promote immunity and memory of children. Swarnaprashana is very popular in India. Swarnaprashana boost the immunity and improve mental and physical growth. Acharyas have mentioned four Swarna yogas for proper growth and development of child. In all the four yogas swarna (gold), ghee and honey are present. As Swarna is the main ingredient of this leha, it is named as Swarna Prashana.

Swarnaprashana is administration of processed gold in liquid form with honey, Ghrita and some herbal medicine. Ayurveda recommend only purified and processed form of gold for internal administration Ayurveda explains Swarnaprashana, while modern medicine explained about vaccines. Vaccine produces immunity against specific diseases where as Swarnaprashana produces non specific immunity along with many effects.

There is misconception among the common man that, Swarnaprashana is vaccination method in Ayurveda,

because majority of the physicians administer it monthly once on the day of Pushya Nakshatra. But it is incorrect; Swarnaprashana is a Rasayana Chikitsa, should be administered continuously to get the optimum therapeutic effects for the physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual well being of the children.

Swarnaprashana

Acharya Kashyapa coined the term Swarnaprashana. By considering various references it can be said that the term Swarnaprashana signifies the administration of gold alone or along with other herbs in a Leha/Prasha form. He describes Swarnaprashana in the context of Lehana. Lehana has been indicated for those children who are healthy, but have compromised breast feeding and are having minor functional problems of metabolism. It is contraindicated in seriously ill children and also on daily basis.

In Lehana

Lehana depicts administration various herbal drugs, ghee preparations, and gold alone as supplementary feeds where in precise indications are stated. Acharya Kashyapa coined the term Swarnaprashana for administration of gold. This unique formula has been explained where in gold should be triturated along with

water, honey, and ghee on a clean stone facing eastern direction and made the Shishu (infant) lick the same.

The specific benefits ascribed to Swarnaprashana are as follows

- Medha Agni Bala Vardhanam (improvement of intellect, digestion, metabolism, immunity and physical strength)
- Ayushyam (promoting lifespan)
- Mangalam (auspicious)
- Punyam (righteous)
- Vrushyam (aphrodisiac)
- Varnyam (enhancement of color and complexion)
- Grahapaham (protection from evil spirits and microorganisms).

The specific benefits of Swarnaprashana according to the duration of administration have been mentioned such as:

- If administered for 1 month, the baby will become Parama Medhavi (highly intelligent) and Vyadhibhir Na Cha Drusyate (will not be affected by any disease)
- If administered for 6 months, the baby will become Srutadhara (will be able to remember the things, which are just heard).

All the above said benefits are indicating the enhancement of all favorable factors required for proper growth and development of a child, which is considered to be rapid during Shaishavavastha (infancy). In Jatakarma Samskara Acharya Sushruta cite administration of Swarna along with honey and ghee in one among the procedures of Jatakarma Samskara that is, as a single dose at birth in the procedure of new born care. He provided the rationale behind this practice that there will be no adequate secretion of breast milk for the first 4 days after delivery and so as to support the baby with respect to preventive and nutritive aspects such practices are indispensable. Acharya Vagbhata advises to give a combination of herbal drugs in a specific shaped spoon as that of the leaf of holy banyan tree, made up of gold to the newborn for increasing Medha (intellect). Administration of Swarna along with other herbs is also mentioned by Acharya Vagbhata in Jatakarma Samskara.

In Jatakarma Samskara

It is told that Swarna should be administered soon after birth as one of the procedures of new born care. In Lehana it should be administered in Shishu. Acharya Sushruta suggests administration of Swarna along with other herbs like Shankhapushpi (*Convolvulus pluricaulis Choisy*), Kushtha (*Saussurea lapa Clarke*), Vacha (*Acorus calamus L.*), etc., with honey and ghee for a period of one year. The term Kumara is also used in the same context that can be considered as a child of the age group in whom development of reproductive system is not yet complete. In all above references, it is said that Swarna should be administered along with honey and ghee. Acharya Vagbhata gives specific combinations of gold and herbal drugs as those who desire Ayu, Medha,

Lakshmi (wealth), and Kama (sensual enjoyment) should consume it along with Shankhapushpi (*Convolvulus pluricaulis Choisy*), Vacha (*Acorus calamus Linn.*), Padma Kinjalka (stamen of *Nelumbo nucifera Gaertn.*), and Vidari (*Pueraria tuberosa DC.*) respectively. A glimpse of administration of Swarna in newborn is also found in the text *Rasaratna Samuchaya*, which is very similar to above reference. There is no reference of any specific day or time for Swarnaprashana in children.

Administration

Swarnaprashana can be administered in all children as it acts at the level of nutrition, metabolism, growth and development, physical strength, and immunity. It is the only type of gold preparation described with its specific benefits according to the duration of administration. Even though Lehana is contraindicated on a daily basis, Swarnaprashana alone can be continued for a period of 1 or 6 months to get its specific benefits in children as stated by Acharya. Further research studies could reestablish the above said benefits of Swarnaprashana with respect to its duration.

As a general tonic, it can be administered in any age group. For the benefit as an immuno-modulator, it can be administered in children in early ages as this period until one year is considered to be the most vulnerable time for infections due to immature immune system. It can be even administered in case of immuno deficiency states provided that there is no serious illness associated with. Pharmacological studies showed specific and non-specific immune responses, which were modified in a positive manner in Swarna bhasma - treated mice. It also had a stimulatory effect on peritoneal macrophages, which may be helpful to fight against infections.

Acharya Sushruta describes administration of Swarna along with Ghrita and Madhu as one of the procedures of Jatakarma Samskara, which is given as a single dose at birth as a part of new born care. Acharya Sushruta has described four recipes [containing gold] which provide humoral immunity. These are:

1. Swarnabhasma with Kustha, Vacha, Brahmi, honey and Ghrita.
2. Swarnabhasma with paste of Brahmi and Sankhapushpi should be given with honey and Ghrita.
3. Swarnabhasma with Arkapushpa, Vacha with Ghrita and honey.
4. Swarnabhasma Kaidarya and Sweta Durva with Ghrita.

Importance of Madhu

Madhu is collection of pollen grains by bees. In today life it is observed that pollen grain acquire a great percentage in producing allergic reaction leading to many diseases. The main reason for using honey develops resistance for allergen and it remains unaffected by allergen.

Importance of Ghrita

Medhyaushad is like Mandukaparni, Brahmi, Guduchi, Yastimadhu, Vacha are added to Ghrita and according to the procedure it is prepared. This Ghrita is useful increasing the mental ability.

Importance of Swarnabhasma

Gold is considered as very precious in Ayurveda and it would possess properties like Madhura, immunity booster, rejuvenate, improve memory, also increase digestion power of the body. Gold possesses lots of antioxidant properties and it is very beneficial for babies who were delivered with difficulty during the process of delivery. Oxidative stress to the baby and this can be relieved with the antioxidant properties of Swarnabhasma. Madhu and Ghrita has natural tendency of accept and imbibe various condition. Its properties and action become more other Dravyas.

Dose of Swarnaprashana

Acharya Kashyapa has not mentioned the dose for according to age. Formulation of Swarnaprashana as per traditional method Contents Swarnabhasma 10 mg, cow's ghee 5 gm, & honey 25 gm.

Preparation of Swarnaprashana

Swarnaprashana was prepared in rasashala of institute under all aseptic precaution. Preparation involved the mixing of honey and cow's ghee till the formation of homogeneous mixture. Then swarnabhasma was added to this mixture then mixture was again triturated until the formulation becomes homogeneous. Besides this formulation of madhu jala (honey water) was done and stored in sterilized glass bottle.

Mode of Action of Swarnaprashana Drops

Gold is considered as very precious in Ayurveda. When Swarna is converted into Swarna bhasma as explained in Ayurveda, it would possess following properties

- Swarna bhasma has moisturizing & unctuous effect on body.
- It is Madhura, Rejuvenative and immunity booster.
- Improves complexion and growth of the body.
- Does Detoxification of the body.
- Has ability to treat different fevers like Vishajwara, Aantra jwara and general Weakness.

It has been proved that Swarna bhasma possesses Anti oxidants, Anti depressants, Anti cancerous, Antibacterial & Anti rheumatoid property. It also acts as Nervine stimulant. As we know a human brain grows rapidly in 1 to 16 years of life. Swarna bhasma accelerate the growth of brain and boost up its utilization capacity if Swarnaprashana is done during this phase. Other drugs in it help to build Immunity of the baby. Also it has many benefits like improvement in concentration, Grasping capacity, digestion and complexion. Swarna Bindu Prashana underwent series of clinical analysis in our hospital and our other associated hospitals. And we have

found excellent results in increasing immunity and general health in a normal healthy baby.

Co-Administration

The standard method of Swarnaprashana will be to administer the selected form of Swarna with honey and cow's ghee (in unequal amount) in a minimum possible lickable amount. However, it may also be given in the form of drops. Its dimensions may be further extended to suit the needs of the child by judiciously adding other Ayurvedic drugs such as Vacha (*Acorus calamus* Linn.), Padma Kinjalka (stamen of *Nelumbo nucifera* Gaertn.), Amrita, etc. Authentic Ayurvedic texts have also been recommending adding such drugs to the primary ingredient Swarna in Swarnaprashana. However, if the goal is to carry on nation wide Swarnaprashana as a mass drive, then for sake of convenience Swarnaprashana with pure gold (Swarna bhasma) only.

Time of Administration

Swarnaprashana can be given every day morning or on the day of Pushya Nakshtra. Pushya Nakshtra has great importance in Ayurveda. It is considered to be very effective in term of action, probably the body on this day is in a better position to absorb the drug for its optimum benefits and the drugs used are more potent than the usual.

Sushruta has advised its use after emesis of liquor amni, but before massage and bath. While Vagbhata has indicated it after massage and bath before emesis in Jatkarma Samskara to ensure sucking and swallowing reflexes.

Benefits of Swarnaprashana

“सुवर्णप्राशनं हि एतत् मेधाग्निबलवर्धनम्। आयुष्यं मंगलमप्युष्यं वृष्यं गृहापहम् ॥

मासात् परममेधावी क्याधिर्भिनर च धृष्यते। षड्भिर्मासैः श्रुतधरः सुवर्णप्राशनाद भवेत् ॥

Improvement in digestion, improvement in strength and immunity, improvement in life span, auspicious, relieves bad evil, By administration Swarnaprashana to child for one month he become Param Medhavi (super intelligent) and up to six month child become Shrutadhara (can remember whatever she/he hears).

Swarnaprashana has a vast scope in achieving immuno modulatory, adaptogenic and nootropic effects in children, thus improving overall health and vitality of children at all ages. Also, the utility of Swarnaprashana in geriatric medicine for prevention and control of neurodegenerative, senile disorders as well as for rejuvenation needs to be explored. Swarnaprashana has an excellent scope as in boosting community health by ensuring healthy childhood. It needs to be popularized and promoted as a proactive and preventive therapy in society.

CONCLUSION

Swarnaprashana is a comprehensive Rasayana Chikitsa, administered for the physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual wellbeing of the children. It can be safely administered in infants and children up to 16 years of age. Swarnaprashana does not signify administration of any specific form of gold on a specific day or time. Rather it is the administration of pure gold alone or different forms of gold along with various herbs where this specific word solely means the administration of gold. The selection of the form of gold should be based upon the factors such as better bioavailability, no adverse reactions, easier in preparation, and administration, which should be standardized by scientific studies. The benefits of Swarnaprashana in children are multidimensional. In a nut shell, Swarnaprashana can be named as a positive health care program for children. Swarnabhasma promotes immunity through phagocytosis and found to be effective in motor neuron disease in small dose. Swarnaprashana is helpful in preventing recurrent illness. It is also helpful in physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual well being of the children. Swarnaprashana has immune modulator and immune stimulant effect in children.

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