A SHORT REVIEW ON IMPORTANCE OF LEPA-KARMA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an ancient science. There are mainly two types of treatment. Internal medicine and external application. In Ayurvedic text external application of herbal preparation is called as bahya kalpana or bairirparimarjan, in modern science it can be co related with the topical application. lepa, upnaha, malhara are the example of bahya kalpana. Among all lepa kalpan is most common Lepa pacifies the provoked local doshas by local application. The present article is an attempt to highlighting on details about importance, types, application and time of lepa kalpana

Keywords: lepa-kalpana, bahya kalpana, importance, a short review.

No: of Tables: 2                                                                                  No: of References: 16
INTRODUCTION

There are two types of treatment given in Ayurveda for the diseases that is Antarparimarjan and bahirparimarjana. Antarparimajan means internal medicine like herbal preparation choorna, kwatha etc. bahirparimarjana treatment means, the medicine proposed for external use. For that purpose, in Ayurveda different forms of external applications are described for the convenience of treatment of different diseases. they are mentioned with term like lepa, upanaha, udvarartana, abhyanga, etc. out of all these formulations, (1) lepa kalpana is selected here for the present study.

Ayurvedic literature has not furnished complete details of Lepa kalpana in a single chapter. Acharya Charaka has described 32 formulations for external application in ‘Aragwadiya Adhaya’ (2)

ADVANTAGES OF EXTERNAL APPLICATION:

- It can be directly applied at the site of action.
- It can be easily removed if any irritation exists.
- Mode of application is easy.

SYNONAMIES:

A lepa is also known as lipta, lepa, lepana, alepa. (3)

DEFINITION:

Drugs in wet form are to be crushed to prepare in to paste form. If the drugs are in dry form then it should be converted in to paste by adding required amount of specific liquid. This paste is to be applied externally and is known as lepa. From pharmaceutical point of view, Lepa kalpana is a form of Kalka kalpana. Kalka & Lepa both are same only the purpose for which it is used, decides its nomenclature. Modern pharmaceutics have not poised any specific terminology for Lepa. However, Lepa may be equated with paste or plaster, though these words are not competent to explain Lepa in all its aspects elaborately.

IMPORTANCE OF LEPA KALPANA:

Means lepa removes bad odor, sweat and discoloration from the skin and improves its complexion. Acharya Sushruta has cited the following version while explaining the efficiency of Lepas. (4)

Viz. By pouring water over a burning house, the fire gets extinguished immediately; in the same manner, Lepa pacifies the provoked local doshas by local application. (5)

TYPES OF LEPA:

According to Acharya Shushruta there are 3 types of Lepa as (6)

1) Pralepa
2) Pradeha:
3) Alepa:
Table no 1. shows types of lepa

| Pralepa | Pradeha              | Alepa          |
|---------|----------------------|----------------|
| Shit    | Ushna /shit          | Madhyam        |
| Tanu    | Bahul                | Raktapittprasadak |
| Avishoshi | Vishoshi        |                 |
| Vishoshi | Vatshleshm-prashman |                 |

Acharya Vaggbhatt and Sharangadhara have further classified the Mukhalepa kalpana based on their therapeutic uses.

1. Doshaghna Lepa:
This variety of Lepa includes such drugs which exerts their alleviatory action directly on the doshas.

2. Vishaghna Lepa:
This kind of Lepa includes the drugs which nullifies the poisons directly at local level after application. The drugs used in this lepa are potent than those in Doshaghna Lepa. Eg. Dashang lepa

3. Varnya Lepa:
This is cosmetic application over the face, which improves colour & complexion. Chandan, manjistha, ushir, shalmalikantak, sariva, masoor are the drug which have varnya property. Most of the varnya drugs are madhurarasatmaka & shita, guru, snigdha, mrujugunatmaka & shitaviryatmaka & alleviates pitta &vata. Milk, butter, ghruta, oil & likewise unctuous stuffs are used as bases to prepare varnya lepa. Eg. Masur with kshira, varnya dashemani.

Table 2: shows Astanga Sangraha describe 10 types of Lepa

| 1) Snainika  | 5) Vilayana  | 8) Shodhana |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| 2) Niravapan  | 6) Pachana   | 9) Ropana   |
| 3) Prasadana  | 7) Pidan     | 10) Savarnikaran |
| 4) Stambana   |             |             |
Pramana (thickness) of lepa:

One fourth, one third & half angulis is the thickness of the lepa respectively for Doshaghna, Vishaghna & Varnya Lepa. [9]

Pramana of Aalepa

According to Acharya Sushruta that the thickness of Lepa application on the skin should be equal to the thickness of a buffalo's skin. The thickness of buffalo's skin is 4-5 mm approximately. [10]

This verse clarifies that when a rube fanciest action of a drug is expected, it should be applied uniformly thick over the skin. But when softening & soothing action is be elicited, the drug should be applied uniformly thin over the skin. [11]

Time of lepa application:

Pralepa should not be applied at nights nor it should be allowed to stay on after it dries up, whereas pradeha can be allowed to stay on even after drying, in order to cause constriction / pressure over the part of the body. [12]

Heat of the body comes out through the skin pores at nights normally, if medicinal applications are done at night, the skin pores gets blocked & obstruct the transfer of body heat. That's why topical application should not be done at nights. [13]

Shelf life period of lepa:

In the shelf life for lepa has been mentioned as 2 year. [14]

Exclusion:

Those who take sleep in day time, excessive speak and suffer from excessive heat excluded from lepa kalpana. [15]

Methodology of lepa application:

The Ayurvedic therapy suggests that Lepa i.e. the topical formulations should be gently rubbed in an upward or reverse direction of the hairs over the skin to make the action of application more quick & effective. Because of this, application enters in to Romkupa & further gets absorbed through swedavahisrotas & siramukh leading to quicker absorption of medicament and desired effects. This method of rubbing increases the skin temperature which might be hastening the pilosebaceous uptake & skin permeation of the drug in topical formulation. [16]

DISCUSSION:

In Ayurveda different forms of external applications are described for the convenience of treatment of different diseases. Lepa-kalpana is one of them. lepa has three types doshagna,vishaghna and varnya, and Acharya Vagghbhatt and Sharangadhara also classified as the Mukhalepa kalpana. Application of lepa enters in to Romkupa & further gets absorbed through swedavahisrotas & siramukh leading to quicker absorption of medicament and desired effects.

CONCLUSION:

lepa kalpana is well explained in Ayurvedic samhita. That ancient knowledge of Ayurveda will helps in management of diseases in present era very well. so its review article is an attempt to highlighting on details about importance of lepa-kalpana,types,uses etc.
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