

Review Article

Shodhana Yogya - Ayogya (Indications and Contraindications for Shodhana)

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A B S T R A C T

The word *Shodhana* is having a lot of weightage with respect to the treatments in *Ayurveda*. This treatment is very effective, powerful for the maintenance of health in a *Swasta* individual and also for treating *Atura*. It is very much essential to know the proper disease conditions and suitable individual for *Shodhana* treatment. The disease of a person might be indicated, but the person may not be suitable. For a psoriasis patient, disease psoriasis is definitely suitable for *Shodhana* procedure by considering the disease, but same patient with the fierceful nature or patient is considering himself as having knowledge of treatment and disobedience with respect the instructions of the physician etc. makes that individual as unfit for the *Shodhana* procedure. This article throws light on taking a initial decision on the indications and contraindications for the *Shodhana* procedure.

Keywords: *Shodhana, Bahu Dosh, Apatarpana, Vega Dharana*

Introduction

Ayurveda treatments have different Modalities. Hence, for a same condition and same patient, a physician can select different modalities of treatments and results are seen. It depends upon the strength, command and rationality in selecting the treatments makes the difference. *Shamana* and *Shodhana* are the two main varieties of treatments in *Ayurveda*. *Shamana* is the one where in palliative treatment is carried out. In *Shodhana* treatment morbid *Doshas* are eliminated from the body through a systematic sequence of steps.¹

General Concept of Shodhana

Shodhana Procedure is a very effective treatment modality; where in the proper execution of the treatment will see that the relapse of the disease is not seen.² *Sushrutacharya*

narrates a guideline as, *Ksheena Doshas* should be increased/nourished (*Brihmayitavyaha*). *Kupita* doshas should undergo *Prashamana Chikitsa*. *Nirharana* should be done for *Vridhdha* doshas and those in *Samaavastha* should be maintained (*Paripalana*).³

Kshenah is nothing but decrease, and *Ksheena Dosh Laxanas* can be known by their features. Slightly aggravated *Doshas* are termed as *Kupita*. *Vridhdha* is a quite advanced stage having moved from their place which should be eliminated by *Shodhana* Procedures. Further *Dallhanacharya* goes one step ahead by telling that *Vilayanroopa Vridhdhi* has to be managed by *Shodhana* Treatment.⁴

Indications of Shodhana

Panchakarma (five purificatory therapies) described, bestow happiness to both the patients and healthy persons by

promoting their strength and longevity, and also by curing their diseases.⁵

The physician desirous of administering *Vamana* or *Virechana* to a resourceful person like a king or somebody of that status, should collect all requirements well in advance of the actual treatment.⁶ Here *Charakacharya* takes the example of king or somebody of that status. Here he highlights that the *Shodhana* procedures are expensive and can be afforded by high status people only, who have the capacity to collect all the men and materials (to carry out treatment and treat probable complications) required for the *Shodhana* treatment.

Further *Charakacharya* mentions that the needy, poor patients also should be treated with *Shodhana* Treatment. A poor man in the event of emergency requiring the administration of *Shodhana* therapy, should take the prescribed drugs available without caring for collecting all the rare medicaments in advance. So in the case of emergency, whatever the drugs are available with those the *Shodhana* therapy has to be initiated by the physician.⁷

Indications for *Shodhana* Procedures can be highlighted under the headings of *Swastha* and *Atura Avasta*.

Swastha

Rutu Shodhana (Seasonal Detoxification): Due to the extremes of weather conditions in different seasons, people are likely to suffer from morbid accumulation of the doshas and the resultant illness. These influences are best treated by the detoxification procedures. Due to the seasonal effect on the human body in *Vasanta Rutu* (15th of February - 15th of April), *Sharat Rutu* (15th of October - 15th of December) and *Pravrit Rutu* (15th of June - 15th of August) physiological accumulation of *Kapha*, *Pitta* and *Vata doshas* happens respectively and these are to be eliminated from the body through *Vamana*, *Virechana* and *Vasti* which makes the person healthy and help to increase the immunity. This also helps in prevention of forthcoming diseases.

Shodhana Prior to Rasayana: By the administration of the *Shodhana* Procedures, an individual should be cleansed, whenever the patient is comfortable, happy, regains his strength, then the *Rasayana Chikitsa* has to be administered⁸. *Sushrutacharya* narrates a simile to highlight the importance of *Shodhana* before the *Rasayana* Treatment. If coloring is done for a dirty cloth, proper coloring of the cloth will not happen and the purpose is not served, similarly for an uncleansed body if *Rasayana Chikitsa* is done, then the effect of *Rasayana* will not happen in the desired way⁹.

Atura

As a part of Langhana Chikitsa: Individual should be subjected to *Langhana* by means of *Shodhana Chikitsa* in those who are having well built body and strength, abundant

Kapha, *Pitta* and *Rakta*, *Mala* and association of aggravated *Vayu*.¹⁰ In *Ashtanga Hridaya* we will find the additional information with respect to the disease conditions viz. those suffering from *Amadosa*, fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, heart disease, constipation, feeling of heaviness, excess of belching, nausea etc, wherein the administration of *Shodhana* is advised.¹¹

As a Part of Apatarpana Chikitsa: In case of *Bahu* (abundant) *Dosas*, only letting out of *Dosas* is prescribed. There is no remedy for over flowing of a small pool except by breaking down the field barriers.¹² The therapy of letting out *Dosas* works in the same way. Set of *Bahu Dosa Laxanas* are enlisted which determines the *Bahudoshavastha* and is indicated for *Shodhana* procedure. The *Laxanas* are indigestion, anorexia, obesity, paleness, heaviness, exhaustion and appearance of boils, urticarial rashes, itching, uneasiness, lassitude, fatigue, debility, foul smell, depression, regurgitation of *Kapha* and *Pitta*, sleeplessness or over sleep, drowsiness, impotency, intellectual impairment, inauspicious dreams, loss of strength and complexion even after saturation with body promoting nutrients.¹³

As a Part of Treatment in Vegadharanajanya Rogas: In *Ayurveda* 13 *Vegas* (natural urges) are mentioned and suppression of these urges is contraindicated. If done they will lead to different disease conditions.¹⁴ *Shodhana* procedure is indicated in such diseases also. For example in case of *Mutra Dharana Janya Rogas - Trividha Vasti Karma*, in *Pureeshadharana Janya Rogas - Vasti*, in *Kshavathu Vega Dharana Janya Rogas - Nasya* etc. are advised.

Contra Indications of Shodhana

Even though required in the view of the state of disease - elimination therapies, other forms of depletion therapies, and nourishing therapies should not be administered to such of the patients as have not been absolved as the allegations against them, those who are incapable of meeting their expenditure, those who pose themselves as physicians, those who have violent behavior and jealous, who do not have faith in *Dharma*, whose *Bala*, *Mamsa* and *Shonita* have undergone excessive diminution, those who are suffering from incurable diseases and those who are having symptoms of imminent death. If the physician takes such patients, under his treatment, then he is defamed.¹⁵

The wise physicians should not give Panchakarma therapies to the following types of patients.

1. Who is *Chanda* (fierciful), *Sahasika* (rashful), *Bhiru* (cowardly), *Kritaghna* (ungrateful) and *Vyagra* (angry person).
2. Who hates good person, king and physicians and who is hated by them.
3. Who is afflicted with grief.

4. Who does not believe in god.
5. Who is in the terminal stage of disease and destined to die.
6. Who is unable to arrange the essential items for treatment.
7. Who is enemy to the physician.
8. Who is an imposter and considers himself to be a physician.
9. Who is devoid of faith in the physician.
10. Who is having doubtful nature.
11. Who does not carry out the instruction of the physician.¹⁶

The physician who administers the *Shodhana* therapy to the above mentioned patients invites many difficulties upon himself. These people will definitely not follow the *shodhana* procedures properly resulting in complications, bringing bad name to the physician and *Ayurveda*. Hence, the physician should be very careful while choosing the patient for *shodhana* procedure.

In *Vishushka* person due to *Vata*, *Atapa*, *Adhva* and *Yana*, those who are actively engaged in strenuous physical work, the physician should not administer *Shodhana* procedure to such persons.¹⁷

In persons having *Ruksha Ahara*, habitual exercise, stimulated digestive fire - the impurities gets diminished by physical exercise, exposure to wind, sun and fire. They also tolerate untoward effects of *Virudha Ahara* (incompatible food), *Adyashana* (intake of meal when the previous meal is not digested) or *Ajeerna* (indigestion). These persons should be protected from *Vayu* with *Snehana* and *Shodhana* should not be done except in illness.¹⁸

Conclusion

Shodhana procedures are indicated both in *Swasta* and *Atura*. As mentioned in the classics when the accumulated *Doshas* are expelled according to the season in *Swasta*, further progression of the pathology is controlled, thereby preventing the onset of diseases. *Shodhana* is the treatment of choice in diseases which are chronic in nature and where there is excessive aggravation of *Doshas*. The contra indication of *Shodhana* depends on various factors like strength, age, stage of a disease etc. If the *Shodhana* procedures are performed in contra indicated person or patient, it can result in serious complications. So, the physician should be very careful in choosing a person for *Shodhana*.

Conflict of Interest: None

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