

REVIEW OF LANGHANA THERAPY- THE BOON OF AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda the ancient science of life describes various types of treatments in context of healthy individual and also diseased one. Amongst them *shadvidhopkrama* bears a lot of significance in today's life. *Shadvidhopkrama* means combinations of six types of treatments, viz *Langhana-Bruhana*, *Swedana-Stambhana*, *Rukshana-Snehana*. These are the *shadvidhopkrama*. The ultimate result of all of them is *Dosha saamyata*. Whatsoever may be the modality of treatment main objective is to achieve *dosha saamyata* since *Doshas* are basic principle of *Ayurveda*. Here special efforts are taken to study *Langhanaopkrama* with special context to its definition, types, indications and contraindications.

KEYWORDS: *Langhana*, *apatarpana*, autophagy.

INTRODUCTION

Taking into consideration today's lifestyle and various disorders rising due to it, *langhana* is best remedy for them. Disturbed daily schedule like late night sleeping, getting up late in the morning, excessive consumption of junk food, excessive stress all are responsible for these disorders. Since they affect the digestion and disturb the digestive power and hence *aamadosha* the root cause of all diseases according to *Ayurveda* is generated and thus one becomes a diseased person.

Since *langhana* is one of the important *opkrama* in repairing vitiated *doshas* and establishing *dosha saamyata* this is the most important *chikitsa opkrama* included in day today clinical practice.

The word *langhana* is derived from the word *laghu* which means light(opposite to heavy). the purpose of *langhana* is to make the body light by relieving heaviness.^[1]

Acharya charaka states: the modalities or treatment or lifestyle or medicine or *panchkarma* therapies that bring about lightness and thinness to body is called *langhana*.^[2] Whereas *acharya vagbhat's diwidhopkrama* includes *shadvidhopkrama* under the two modalities.^[3]

Santarpana, Aptarpana. According to this classification *langhana* comes under the *aptarpana* modality of treatment. This classification holds good because diseases too are classified as *santarpanajanya* and *apatarpanjanya vyadhis*.

Vagbhata correctly defines *langhana* as treatment which is useful in lightening in the body.^[4] Thus the procedures which create lightness in the body are called *langhana*. the substances that carry out function of *langhana* have the following properties; *Charaka* states them as follows:^[5]

Laghu(light):herbs or medicines, diet which predominantly have lightness as its quality.

Teekshna (sharp): the purpose of *langhana* is to open channels or blockages hence medicines or remedies with sharpness are choosen which enter the minute channels and eliminate the morbid matter and open the channels.

Vishada (clear or pure):helps to clear channels by taking away stickiness.

Ushana(hot):since hot substances are light in nature they are usually used.

Rooksha (dry):dryness brings lightness. Hence substances with rookshaguna are used.

Sookshma (minute):helps the medicine to enter each and every channel of the body and brings lightness.

Khara (rough) and *Sara* (mobility):relieves the obstruction. eliminates morbid matter from the channels helps to clear channel and ensuring movement of body fluid in normal direction.

In *Ashtang sangraha bhautik sanghatan* of *laghu dravyas* is stated as: *vayu+aakash+agni Doshaprabhava: agnivaatkar and kaphghana*.^[6]

Types of *langhana*.

Vagbhat states following two types of *langhana* as *shodhana* and *shaman*.

Shodhana type of *langhana* includes-*niruhabasti, vamana, virechana, murdhavirechana, raktamokshana*.

Shaman type of *langhana* includes-*Pachana, deepana, kshudha, trishana, vyayama, aatapa, maruta*.

Similarly *charaka* states four types of *shudhi*(purifying therapies) told in *panchakarma*^[8]

Vamana-vomiting therapy. It is given when *bahu dosha shlesma(kapha)* is present.

Virechana-purgation given. When *pitta dosha* is present in excess and disorders related to it accompany.

Niruhbasti-enema made from decoction of herbal medicines is given in various *vaatvyadhis*.

Nasya –Drugs having purifying agents as its main contents are administered through nasal route.

Subtypes of *Shamana* type of *langhana* are stated as below-

Pipasa (thirst control), *Maruta*(exposure to wind), *Atapa* (exposure to sun), *Pachana*(medication helpful in digestion used), *Upavasa* (fasting), *Vyayama*(exercise).

All above are the various methods of *langhana* mentioned in different text.

Acharya Charaka states the use of different types of *langhana* according to *prakruti*, strength of disease and strength of diseased one. This can be tabulated as below.^[9]

Types of <i>langhana</i> indicated	<i>Rugnabala</i>	<i>Rogabala</i>	<i>Roga</i>
1. <i>Shodhana</i>	<i>Bruhatasharer (balvan)</i>	Balvanarog	<i>Prabhutshlesma-pitta, asra(rakt)mala</i> along with <i>vaat</i> .
2. <i>Pachana</i>	<i>Madhyamabala</i>	Madhyamabala.	<i>Vami, aatisara, vibandha, gaurav, hrudrog, visuchika, alasaka, jwara, arochaka</i> .
3. <i>Pipasa, Upwas</i>	<i>Alpabala</i>	Alpa	<i>Vami, aatisara, gaurav, hrudrog, visuchika, alasaka,</i>

			<i>jwara, arochaka, kaphapittajanitroga.</i>
4. Vyayama, atapa, marutasevan	Balvan	Madhya bala	<i>Vami, aatisara, vibhanda, gaurav, hrudrog, visuchika, alasaka, jwara, arochaka, udgara, kaphapittajanitroga.</i>

DISCUSSION

Indications for *langhana* therapy According to *vagbhata mehadasha, aamadosha, snehaadhikya, jwara, urustambha, kustha, visarpa, vidradhi, pleeharoga, sheeroroga, kantharog, netra roga* are few indications where *langhana* is the foremost given treatment.^[10]

Similarly *yogratnakar* has stated that *aakshiroga, kukshiroga, pratishaya, vrana, jwara*, can totally be cured by *langhana* therapy within 5 days.^[11] thus for a physician it is helpful in day today clinical practice.

Contraindications of *langhana* therapy

Vaidya shodhala states *avasthavishesh langhananishidha*:

Vaatrogi, shudha, trushanapeedit, mukha shosha, bhram, bala, vriddha, garbhini, durbala, one who is tierd due to *margparikramana, krodha, shoka, kaam* and *kshayajajwara*.^[12]

Its very essential to follow the indications and contraindications during treatment. Since *dosha samyata* is our main objective if don't follow this then instead of establishing the balance it would vitiate the *doshas*.

Appropriate time of *langhana*

Twak doshi, pramehi, atisnigadha, abhishyandi, aatisthool, vaatrogi should be treated with *langhana* in *shishir aritu*.^[13]

Though it is stated that *vaatrogi* is contraindicated for *langhana*, *acharya charaka* says that it can be done only in *shishira ritu*.

Signs and Symptoms of proper *langhana*:

Vagbhata states that

Vimal indriyas i.e. cleanliness or freshness of organs.

Proper defeacation, micturition and sweating.

Lightness in the body.

Zest's hunger or appetite.

Establishes feeling of hunger and thirst simultaneously.

Pure form of eructations i.e. *shudha udgara*.

Decreased strength or intensity of disease.

Feeling of enthusiasm and energetic.

Eliminates fatigue or sluggishness or sleepiness.^[14]

Similarly in *gadnigraha acharya shodhala* states one extra symptom i.e. *nirvyartha antaratmani* which means no trouble or discomfort from within.^[15]

Thus after treating patient with *langhana* one must look for above signs and symptoms for being a successful physician. Signs and Symptoms of *Aatilanghana*.

According to *shodahla* following are the signs and symptoms of *aatilanghana*-

Severe pain in interphalangeal joints.

Bodyache.

Cough, dryness of mouth.

Loss of appetite, anorexia.

Increased thirst.

Visual and auditory function disturbance.

Unstability of mind.

Loss of strength.

Destruction of digestive power (*nashtaagnibala*).^[16]

Since treatment of complications has always been a major issue for physician knowledge regarding this is important.

Importance of *balaraksha* in *langhana*.

Whatever the modality of treatment ultimate end result is *dosha saamyata*. since according to Ayurveda *dosha saamyata* is the state of wellbeing. *Acharaya shodhala* in his *gadanigraha* states that: *langhana* should be done in that quantity in which it would be *BALAAVIRODHI*. Which means it wont be harmful to bala of individual. Since *bala* is base of health and *langhana* etc are the modalities we use for health maintenance. Thus its essential to have knowledge regarding *balaraksha* in *langhana*.^[17]

Importance of *langhana*

Langhana digests *aamadosha* and increase digestive power and establishes *dosha saamyata*. *Langhana* leads to decrease in intensity *dosha* increases digestive fire and brings lightness in the body. Thirst and hunger develop well accordingly.

Langhana eliminates: *aamadosha yukta vaat* in seven days.

Aamadosha yukta pitta in ten days.

Aamadosha yukta kapha in twelve days.

In *saanipaathavastha* of *jwara langhana* becomes important modality since it leads into *Arogyadarshana*.^[18]

Medicines used for *langhana*- after studying *rasa*, *veerya*, *veepaka*, *prabhava*, *panch bhautikatva*, few medicines that bring lightness in the body are listed below -*Amalaki*, *mudga*, *kulatha*, *shunthi*, *guduchi*, *muta*, *triphala*, *vidanga*, *lohabhasma*, *kshara*, *yavachurna*, *brihat panchmoola*, *madhu*, *madhoodaka* etc.

As like *Ayurveda* modern science too states the theory of autophagy which resembles *langhana* according to *Ayurveda*.

What is autophagy

The word autophagy is derived from greek word “auto” meaning self and “phagy” meaning eating. Autophagy is normal physiological process in the body that deals with cell destruction in the body, it maintains homeostasis or normal functioning by protein degradation and turnover of the destroyed cell organelle for new cell formations. During cellular stress the process of autophagy is upscaled and increased, cellular stress is caused when there is deprivation of nutrients or growth factors.

Hence autophagy may provide an alternative source of intracellular building blocks and substrates that may generate energy to enable continuous cell survival. Autophagy degrades damaged organelles, cell membranes and proteins. Failure autophagy is the main reason for accumulation of cell damage and aging.^[20]

CONCLUSION

Langhana is important therapy in *Ayurveda* since it can be used in all types of patients by various means viz, under the title *shodhana* and *shaman*.

Whenever *aamadosha* increases in the body it disturbs the *doshas*, blocks the body channels, and leads to heaviness. In such condition *langhana* is best modality of treatment whereby it helps in removing blockages of channels and brings lightness in body.

Langhana helps in purifying body channels.

Increases digestive power and boosts up hunger and thirst.

Thus *langhana* according to *Ayurveda* and autophagy according to modern science maintain good state of health.

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