

ANJANA AS A BOON FOR AYURVEDIC OPHTHALMOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, classifies ophthalmology under one of its eight specialized branches, emphasizing ailments above the *Jatru Pradesha*. Vision is revered in Ayurvedic philosophy due to its irreplaceable role in perception, knowledge acquisition, and interaction. Among the therapeutic procedures described, Anjana stands out as a vital *Netra Kriya Kalpa*—methods of ocular treatment—that serves both preventive and curative purposes. *Acharya Sushruta* detailed five types of *Netra Kriya Kalpas*, with *Anjana* being notably impactful in maintaining ocular health in both healthy individuals and patients with eye disorders. *Anjana* is broadly categorized based on its potency into *Mradu Anjana* (mild) and *Tikshna Anjana* (intense), offering tailored therapeutic potential depending on the condition and constitution of the patient. Its significance is supported by classical *Ayurvedic* texts that highlight the

primacy of vision and the value of daily eye care regimens to preserve ocular vitality. This ancient formulation of medicated collyrium is traditionally applied to enhance ocular comfort, reduce inflammation, and detoxify the visual apparatus. This article explores the pharmacological depth, modes of application, and clinical utility of Anjana in Ayurvedic ophthalmology, proposing it as an effective and sustainable ocular therapeutic in integrative eye care. Reviving such traditional methodologies could pave the way for innovative practices in modern vision science.

KEYWORDS: *Anjana, Netra Kriya Kalpa, Ophthalmology, Mradu Anjana, Tikshna Anjana, ocular therapy, Ayurvedic eye care, Raskriya, Shalaka, collyrium, karma.*

INTRODUCTION

In Indian culture, the name Anjana can refer to different things depending on context—sometimes it's a personal name, other times it connects to mythology or tradition. But in the context of weddings, it's most commonly encountered as a bride's name or as part of a real-life wedding story like a example. In the grand tapestry of Indian wedding traditions, bridal adornments like those worn by Anjana often reflect the deeper cultural practice of *Shodas-Shringaram* a set of sixteen symbolic embellishments. From the *bindi* and *sindoor* to the *maang tikka*, each element carries its own meaning, representing beauty, auspiciousness, and the sanctity of marital commitment.

Eyes are most precious among the five senses as mentioned in our texts. *Anjana* is one of the *netra kriya kalpas* are various methods of application of medicine in eye. Acharya shushruta explain 5 types of *kriya kalpas*.^[1] One of the eight specialized branches of Ayurveda, is devoted to addressing ailments that manifest above the *Jatru Pradesha*, encompassing the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, throat, and related areas. Among these, the eyes hold a particularly esteemed status among the sensory organs due to their pivotal role in facilitating social interaction and intellectual growth. Indeed, vision is indispensable for acquiring knowledge through direct observation, highlighting the crucial importance of ocular health. As aptly expressed in ancient wisdom, the preservation of vision is emphasized as paramount, as blindness not only alters one's perception of time but also renders the splendours of the world meaningless, irrespective of material wealth. Hence, in the pursuit of maintaining optimal health and vitality, our revered *Acharyas* have advocated a range of preventive and therapeutic measures, including the application of collyrium, aimed at safeguarding ocular well-being *Anjana* is one of the *netra kriya kalpa* that has a significant impact on both healthy person and ophthalmic patients. *Anjana* categories two type based on its potency *mradu Anjana* and *tikshnanjana*.^[2]

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The study reviews reference from Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Astang Sangraha, Astang Hridaya, Sharangdhar Samhita, Bhaisajya Ratnavali and other relevant commentaries in order to evaluate and understand the concept of *Anjana* as a treatment for various diseases mentioned in ayurved.

CLASSIFICATION OF ANJANA

According to different types of *acharyas Anjana* is as described as follow –

Based on the form for use^[3]

1. *Gutikanjana* (pind)
2. *Raskriya*
3. *Churnanjana*

Their strength increases in preceding order I.e. *Gutikanjana* is strongest.

Based on their therapeutic action

Acharya Sushruta has mentioned 3 type of Anjana which are^[4]

1. *Ropan* (healing)
2. *Lekhana* (scraping)
3. *Drishti prasadana* (cosmetic)

According to *acharya shushruta* this *snehana* type is included in *Drishti prasadana Anjana* type.

Vruddha vagbhatta describes *snehana Anjana* as fourth types.^[5]

Based on rasa action (drug taste)

Vagbhatta has describes 6 types of Anjana as follow^[6]

1. *Madhura*
2. *Amla*
3. *lavana*
4. *katu*
5. *tikta*
6. *kashaya*

Based on rasa shastra classification^[7]

1. *Souviranjana*
2. *Srotoanjana*
3. *Rasanjana*
4. *Puspanjana*
5. *Neelanjana*

Based on karma action (drug potency)^[8]

1. *Mridu*
2. *Teekshna*

Lekhana is categorized under the *Teekshna* (sharp/potent) type, whereas *Snehana*, *Ropana*, and *Prasadana* fall under the *Mridu* (gentle/soothing) category based on their inherent properties and therapeutic effects.^[9]

1. *Lekhana Anjana* (Scraping Collyrium)

- Definition & Action: these are basically scraping collyrium they are also called as *Shodhana Anjana* because they are cleaning nature.^[10] serves a cleansing purpose. It effectively scrapes and expels morbid doshas from the eyes and head via the ocular, nasal, and oral routes.
- Composition:^[11]
 - Made from herbs possessing all tastes (*Rasa Dravyas*) except *Madhura* (sweet).
 - Common rasas include: *Amla* (sour), *Lavana* (salty), *Kashaya* (astringent), *Katu* (pungent), and *Tikta* (bitter).
 - The selection of herbs is tailored according to the predominant dosha involved^[12]
 - *Vataja Roga*: Prefer *Amla* and *Lavana* rasa.
 - *Pittaja Roga*: Favor *Tikta* and *Kashaya* rasa.
 - *Kaphaja Roga*: Use *Katu*, *Tikta*, and *Kashaya* rasa.
 - *Raktaja Roga*: Choose *Tikta* and *Kashaya* rasa.

Therapeutic Use

- A precise combination of herbs with diverse tastes is formulated to address different pathological states.
- *Lekhana Anjana* works by clearing the eyelids, associated vessels, sac-like structures, vital channels (*Srotas*), and key points such as *Shrangataka Marma*.

Its cleansing effect spreads via upward and downward pathways—through the mouth, nostrils, and eyes—ensuring complete detoxification and restoration of ocular balance.

2. *Prasadana Anjana*

Prasadana collyriums are known for their soothing and calming properties. These formulations are crafted using herbs imbued with *Madhura Rasa* (sweet taste) and enriched

with unctuous substances (*Sneha Dravyas*)^[13] such as oil and ghee. The plants selected for these *anjanas* are naturally sweet in taste and are blended with nourishing agents to form a gentle application for the eyes.

When applied, these collyriums help pacify aggravated *doshas*, bringing about a sense of comfort and tranquillity. They not only promote ocular health but also enhance the visual appeal—imparting brightness, vibrancy, and a natural glow to the eyes.

3. *Ropana Anjana* (Healing Collyrium)

Preparation & Properties^[14]

- Formulated using herbs with *Kashaya* (astringent) and *Tikta* (bitter) rasas.
- Combined with *Sneha* substances (ghee, oil, etc.) and cooling agents.
- These formulations possess unctuous and cold qualities, aimed at strengthening ocular tissues.
- Their healing properties help restore normal coloration and enhance visual acuity.

Classification Based on Formulation Type

1. *Churna Anjana* (Powdered Collyrium)

Prepared by powdering herbal medicines^[15]

Applied directly to the eyes using a *Shalaka* (collyrium rod).

Effective in treating mild disorders and doshic imbalances.

Subtypes:

- *Churna Lekhana Anjana*
- *Churna Ropana Anjana*
- *Churna Prasadana Anjana*

2. *Rasa Anjana* (Condensed Decoction Collyrium)

- Made by condensing herbal decoctions.
- Administered similarly to tablet or wick collyriums.
- Used for moderate-strength diseases and dosha disturbances.
- Subtypes:
 - *Rasa Lekhana Anjana*
 - *Rasa Ropana Anjana*
 - *Rasa Prasadana Anjana*

3. *Gutika Anjana* (Tablet Form Collyrium)

- Prepared in tablet form, known as *Gutika*.
- Also used for treating moderate-strength conditions.
- Subtypes:
 - *Gutika Lekhana Anjana*
 - *Gutika Ropana Anjana*
 - *Gutika Prasadana Anjana*

Time of Application (As per Sushruta)^[15]

- **Morning:** For disorders dominated by *Kapha*.
- **Evening:** For conditions primarily influenced by *Vata*.
- **Night:** For diseases associated with *Rakta* and *Pitta* doshas.

Acco. to Ritu by Acharya Sharangdhara^[16]

- (a) *Hemanta – Madhura*
- (b) *Varsha – during sunlight*
- (c) *Sharada and grishma – aprahna and purvahna*
- (d) *Basanta – any time*

Acco. to Types of *Anjana*^[17]

- (a) *Lekhana- Poorvahna*
- (b) *Ropan – Maddhyahna*
- (c) *Sneha/Prasadana – Aprahna*

Timing and Properties of *Anjana* Application^[18]

• Morning Application

In the early hours of the day, there's a natural tendency for *Kapha* to become aggravated. Therefore, *Anjana* used during this time should possess *Kapha-pacifying* properties to counterbalance heaviness, sluggishness, and excess moisture. Such formulations help maintain ocular clarity and reduce congestion.

• Evening Application

After exposure to the sun's heat, *Pitta* tends to become aggravated, leading to burning sensations and dryness. Hence, *Anjana* applied in the evening should have *Pitta-soothing* and cooling properties to refresh and calm the eyes, restoring their natural balance.

Consideration for Tikshna (Potent) Anjana^[19]

- *Tikshna Anjana* contains a potent blend of *Katu* (pungent), *Lavana* (salty), and *Amla* (sour) taste profiles, which collectively stimulate the *Agni* (fire) and *Vayu* (air) elements.
- Applying it during daytime, when environmental heat is already high, may lead to excessive irritation or damage to delicate ocular tissues.
- Conversely, using it at night—when lunar coolness prevails—allows the eyes to recover more efficiently, minimizing the adverse effects caused by heat and promoting gentle detoxification.

Classification of Anjana (Acco. To Matra)- [Table no. 0.1]^[20]

Types of Anjana	Lekhana	Prasadana	Ropana
Gutika	1 harenu	1 ½ harenu	2 harenu
Raskriya	1 harenu	1 ½ harenu	2 harenu
Churna	2 shalaka	3 shalaka	4 shalaka

Application of Anjana Karma^[21]

Equipment *Anjana patra* (vessels for collyrium)

Anjana shalaka (collyrium applicator – look rod like)

Drugs are the essential material for *Anjana karma*

1. Poorva Karma (pre procedure)

Position – can be applied in supine or sitting position. Once determining the type and dosage of Anjana the appropriate quantity can be administered to the eye lid utilizing specific applicators designed for this purpose.

2. Pradhana Karma (procedure)

The left hand is used to retract the eyelids while right hand use applies Anjana with *shalaka* from inner to outer canthus and vice versa.^[22] Then pt. is asked to close the eyelids gently and rotate the eye ball which help in spreading of medicine in eye. Repeat to proses 2-3 times and one condition no eye ball blink.

3. Pashchata Karma (Post Procedure)

Following the Anjana karma when lacrimation ceases *Netra prakshalana* is conducted using an appropriate.^[23] He must not be allowed to open or rub the eyes. After 5-8 minutes the eyes are washed with suitable luke-warm water. After irrigation the lids are down a part carefully inspected for drug precipitants.

It is not advised to blink touch your eyes again the eye is gently wiped with a clean cloth and *pratyanjana* of the opposite quality of the initial Anjana is applied.

Samyaka yoga atiyoga and heenyoga of Anjana^[24,25,26]

- (1) *Samyak yoga* – (*Lekhana Anjana*)- the eye appears clear, devoid of any discharge, accompanied by sensations of lightness. Improve in vision of eye and proper functioning of eye lids. There are no eye complications.
- (2) *Atiyoga* (*Lekhan Anjana*)- cause stuffiness, squint, dryness, and excessive discharge.
Treatment- there is *vata* imbalance so can *vata shamak chikitsa*.
- (3) *Heenyoga* and its treatment – dosha aggravation take place and method like *dhoom*, *nasya*, and *Anjana* are recommended to eliminate *doshas*.

Samyaka Yog Atiyog of Ropan Anjana are Explained Similarity to Prasadana Anjana^[27]

Samyak Yog- The eye experiences a pleasant sensation free from doshas achieving a lubricated natural colour strength and the ability to execute proper eye movements.

Atiyog- Manifestations like eye heaviness tear. Filled eye excessive moisture tear proper production itching and eyelash sticking exhibit milder severity compared to the excessive usage of tarpana.

Ayoga- Falls to fulfil the intended application.

Contra-Indication^[28]

If in this condition applied Anjana may cause redness of eyes, discomfort, felling of darkness in front of eye or dusky, fill discharge pain and congestion, swelling and inflammation would get increased. This would damage eye and vision.

Also contraindicated disease like *shrama udavartha*, *rudita*, *bhaya*, *jwar*, acc. To *vagabhatta* in these who have forcibly controlled the body urges and *shirorogas*.

Mode Of Action^[29,30]

According to classical Ayurvedic texts, the mode of action of *Lekhana Anjana* is attributed to its *Teekshna* (sharp and potent) nature. This type of Anjana works by eliminating morbid doshas from the *siras* (vessels) related to the eyelids (*Varthma*) and the eyes, along with the associated *Srotas* (channels) and vital points such as the *Shrungataka Marma*. The doshas are expelled from the body through the mouth, nose, and eyes. Upon application, the medicinal

substance spreads across the *Netra Sandhi* (ocular junction), enters the nasal passages via the nasolacrimal duct, and reaches the *Nasa Siras* and *Shrungataka Marma*, facilitating the detoxification process.

Formulations like *Gutika* and *Churna Anjana* contain extremely fine particles that tend to settle in the cul-de-sac of the eye. This positioning enhances their bioavailability and supports improved absorption. After penetrating the conjunctiva, which primarily absorbs hydrophilic substances, the drug reaches the sclera, where increased permeability allows it to further diffuse into internal ocular structures such as the ciliary body, iris, and aqueous humour. Absorption may also occur through the cornea, followed by enzymatic metabolism within the aqueous humour. These properties make Anjana therapy particularly effective and beneficial in the management of ocular diseases.

Anjana therapy includes three key forms: *Gutika*, *Raskriya*, and *Churna*. Of these, *Raskriya Anjana* resembles modern eye drops as it is fully soluble and free of sediment. However, its rapid drainage from the cul-de-sac limits its bioavailability and ocular absorption compared to *Gutika* and *Churna* types. This therapeutic approach, blending traditional Ayurvedic insights with physiological compatibility, showcases the precision and depth of ocular treatments in *Ayurveda*.

Anjana Karma Used in Some Eye Diseases: [Table no. 02]

1	<i>Praklinna varthma</i>	<i>Kashishadi Anjana</i>	<i>Su.U.12/46</i>
2	<i>Krimi granthi</i>	<i>Ras kriya</i>	<i>Su.U. 14/8</i>
3	<i>Praklinna varthma</i>	<i>Ras kriya</i>	<i>Su.U. 12/46</i>
4	<i>Aklinna varthma</i>	<i>Tutthanjana</i>	<i>Su. U. 12/53</i>
5	<i>Arjuna</i>	<i>Rasanjana</i>	<i>Su. U. 12/22</i>
6	<i>Balasha grathita</i>	<i>Ksharanjana</i>	<i>Su.U. 11/11</i>
7	<i>Shuska akshipaka</i>	<i>Anjana karma</i>	<i>Su.U. 9/20-21</i>
8	<i>Ashopa akshipaka</i>	<i>Anjana karma</i>	<i>Su.U. 12/44</i>
9	<i>Sirotpata</i>	<i>Saindhava kasisanjana</i>	<i>Su.U, 12/15</i>
10	<i>Sirapraharsha</i>	<i>Kasisanjana</i>	<i>Su.U.12/17</i>
13	All type of <i>timira</i> in management of <i>Anjana karma</i>	<i>Vataja timira</i> <i>Pittaja</i> <i>Kaphaja</i> <i>Sannipataja</i>	<i>Su.U. 17/35</i> <i>Su.U.17/39</i> <i>Su.U.17/43</i> <i>Su.U.17/45</i>
14	<i>Pitta vidagdha drishti</i>	<i>Anjana</i>	<i>Su.U.17/5</i>
15	<i>Kapha vidagdha Drishti</i>	<i>Anjana</i>	<i>Su.U.7/18</i>

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

consideration of the various factors discussed above, *Anjana* therapy emerges as a holistic and well-developed method for topical ocular drug administration. Detailed descriptions in authentic texts outline its indications, contraindications, application methods, pre- and post-procedure measures, dosage forms, and proper storage guidelines. *Anjana* therapy represents a further evolution from *Aschotana*, offering increased bioavailability on the ocular surface. Ancient Acharyas also provided insights to overcome practical challenges associated with *Anjana* therapy. Techniques such as applying *Anjana* from the medial canthus to the lateral canthus and vice versa, along with eye movements and slight eyelid massages, aim to enhance bioavailability by facilitating absorption and minimizing nasolacrimal drainage. Despite these advancements, the exact mechanism of action remains unproven by experimental studies, highlighting the need to bridge ancient knowledge with modern perspectives. Challenges such as ocular irritation and limited contact time present obstacles to *Anjana* therapy.

However, optimizing particle size, pH levels, viscosity, and tonicity can mitigate irritation and enhance bioavailability. Understanding the kinetics of drug disappearance from the cul-de-sac, particularly in relation to timing between successive applications, can further optimize therapeutic outcomes, especially in *Rasakriya Anjana*. Acharyas have highlighted the use of *anjana* for both preventive and curative purposes. In terms of prevention, daily administration of *anjana* can help alleviate meibomian gland dysfunction. For curative aspects, it is effective in treating conditions related to both the anterior and posterior chambers of the eye. *Anjana* is a paste applied to the inner part of the eye lid and it is used to protect eye and maintain good eye health and vision. It is an effective remedy for many eye disorders as well as systemic disorders. It is used in the form of Tablet, Juice, powder, Wick and many other forms it serves one or more of the benefits including scrapping, Healing and soothing effect. As in *Ayurveda* we are applying ophthalmic therapeutic either in the form of local therapy i.e. *Kriyakalp* or in the form of systemic use i.e. oral *Chakshushya dravyas*. The main aim of any pharmaco-therapeutics is the attainment of an effective concentration at the site of action for a sufficient period of time to elicit the response.

So, we conclude that the *Anjana* can maintain and management some critical clinical stages and produce preventive and local effect.

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