

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW ON SHASHTIKA SHALI PINDA SWEDA: AN AYURVEDIC THERAPEUTIC APPROACH

Dr. Rahul Dandiya^{1*}, Dr. Sarvesh Kumar Singh², Dr. Kshipra Rajoria³ and Dr. Swati Malsariya⁴

¹PG Scholar, Department of Panchakarma, National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed to Be University, Jaipur.

²Associate Professor, Department of Panchakarma, National Institute of Ayurveda Deemed to be University, Jaipur.

³Assistant Professor, Department of Panchkarma, National Institute of Ayurveda, Deemed to be University, Jaipur.

⁴PhD Scholar, Department of Prasutitantra and Streeroga, National Institute of Ayurveda Deemed to be University, Jaipur.

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*Corresponding Author

Dr. Rahul Dandiya

PG Scholar, Department of
Panchakarma, National
Institute of Ayurveda,
Deemed to Be University,
Jaipur.

ABSTRACT

Swedana Karma, a preparatory procedure (*Purva Karma*) in Panchakarma therapy, primarily aims to induce sweating (*sudation*) to prepare the body for the main Panchakarma procedures such as *Vamana*, *Virechana*, and *Basti*. The purpose of *Swedana* is to dilate the body channels (*srotas*), liquefy aggravated *doshas*—particularly *Vata* and *Kapha*—relieve stiffness, heaviness, and pain, and enhance circulation and metabolic activity. Among the different types of *Swedana*, *Sankara Sweda*.^[1] utilizes medicinal substances encased in cloth boluses for the purpose of fomentation." *Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda* is a specialized form of *Snigdha Sankara Sweda*, using cooked *Shashtika Shali* (rice harvested in 60 days) with medicinal decoctions and milk. **Aims and Objectives:** To review the therapeutic procedure of *Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda* through a comprehensive analysis of classical Ayurvedic texts and contemporary scientific literature,

including research publications and textbooks. **Materials and Methods:** Sources consulted include authoritative Ayurvedic scriptures such as the *Brihatrayi* and *Laghutrayi*, along with peer-reviewed articles from platforms like Google Scholar, PubMed, and respected

Ayurvedic journals. **Results and Conclusion:** *Shashtika Shali Pinda Swedana*, a type of *Snigdha Swedana* therapy, has proven to be highly effective in treating musculoskeletal and joint disorders, especially those linked to imbalances of *Vata* and *Kapha* doshas. It effectively reduces pain, stiffness, and inflammation, offering significant therapeutic relief in conditions characterized by these symptoms.

KEYWORDS: *Swedana*, *Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda*, *Sudation Therapy*, *Vata Vyadhi*, *Ayurvedic Fomentation Therapy*.

INTRODUCTION

Panchakarma is a traditional *Ayurvedic* treatment system comprising five core therapeutic procedures designed to eliminate accumulated toxins (vitiated *doshas*) and restore equilibrium among the three doshas—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*. *Shashtika Swedana*, also known as *Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda* or *Navara Kizhi*, is a form of *Swedana* (sudation/fomentation therapy) that utilizes medicated rice boluses to nourish and strengthen the body. As a *Snigdha* (unctuous) type of *Swedana*, it is especially beneficial in managing *Vata* and *Kapha* disorders,^[2] including neuromuscular conditions, muscle wasting, and joint disorders. Although it is traditionally administered following internal and external *Snehana* (oleation), it can also be employed as a standalone therapy in certain conditions. *Swedana* is known to alleviate various *Vata* and *Kapha*-related disorders and helps prevent the obstruction of bodily channels, such as those of urine, stool, and semen. It removes *stambh*, *Gaurav sheeta* from body.^[3]

This review article delves into the concept and clinical practice of *shashtika shali pinda sweda*, examining its historical roots, methods of preparation, therapeutic efficacy, and practical applications. By integrating perspectives from classical *Ayurvedic* literature with contemporary scientific findings, the article provides a comprehensive overview of *shashtika shali pinda sweda* and highlights its significance in the management of diverse health conditions.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This review conducted a thorough analysis of both classical and contemporary sources to achieve a comprehensive understanding of *Shashtika Shali Swedana*. Classical *Ayurvedic* texts such as the *Brihatrayi* and *Laghutrayi* were reviewed along with electronic databases like PubMed, Google Scholar, and esteemed scientific journals. These sources were

thoroughly examined to identify associated conditions and to develop a well-rounded interpretation of the therapeutic applications of *SHASHTIKA SHALI PINDA SWEDA*.

Review On *SHASHTIKA SHALI PINDA SWEDA*

Swedana karma is a crucial and essential preparatory treatment (*purvakarma*) that follows *Snehana* (oleation). In *Ayurvedia Sudation* is a therapeutic technique aimed at inducing perspiration through the heat direct or indirect method with heated medicinal substances. In *Ayurveda*, on the basis of heat *swedana* categorized into 13 types of *Sagni Sweda*.^[4] (heat induced sweating) and 10 *Niragni Sweda*.^[5] (non-heat-induced (sweating) each serving specific healing purposes. *Swedana* classified into two types (based on its properties)^[6]: *Ruksha Sweda* (dry fomentation) and *Snigdha Sweda* (oily fomentation), in *snigdh sweda* herbal oils or medicated substances that have been processed or cooked in oil, typically following an oil massage to enhance the therapeutic effects In *Snigdha Pinda Sweda*, substances such as sesame (*Tila*), black gram (*Masha*), horse gram (*Kulattha*), tamarind (*Amla*), and others are boiled rice, rice mixed with ghee or oil, or meat. Alternatively, a combination of rice pudding (*Payasa*), sesame paste (*Tila Kalka*), and meat may be used. These ingredients are then placed in a cloth pouch (*Pottali*) and applied to the body while still warm. In *Ruksha Pinda Sweda*, the dung of animals such as cow, donkey, camel, boar, or horse is heated and enclosed in a *Pottali*. Alternatively, a mixture of husk and barley (*Yava*) is boiled together and placed in the *Pottali*. *Ruksha Sweda* is recommended for conditions where pain and associated symptoms due to accumulation of *Ama* (toxins), *Meda* (fat), or *Kapha dosha*.

Various types of *Pinda Sweda* are practiced, each serving different therapeutic purposes, including *Shastika Shali Pinda Sweda*, *Patra Pinda Sweda*, *Jambira Pinda Sweda*, *Churna Pinda Sweda*, *Baluka Sweda*, and *Anda Sweda*. Each variation utilizes different substances and methods to address specific health conditions. Procedure of *shalishastika pinda sweda* is performed in *ekanga* or *sarvanga* with the bolus of boiled *shastika shali* with *bala mool kwath* and *ksheera*. The primary qualities of *Shashtika* include *Snigdha* (unctuousness), *Guru* (heaviness), *Sthira* (stability), *Sheeta* (coolness), and *Tridoshaghna* (balancing all three doshas). Although it is a *Sweda Karma* (sudation therapy), it possesses *Brimhana* (nourishing) properties and *Njavara* rice starch has bigger granule and has a high (85 °C) gelatinization temperature and shows high thermal stability. The swelling power, solubility, water absorption capacity, and enthalpy of gelatinization were found to be high compared to

the native rice starch. The 6% (w/v) *njavara* rice starch gel had 87.45% clarity and its pasting properties such as peak viscosity (957 cP), break down viscosity (324 cP), and set back values (421 cP) were also higher.^[7]

Procedure Of *shalishastika pinda Sweda*: It is divided into three parts.

I. *Poorva Karma*

II. *Pradhana Karma*

III. *Pashchata Karma*

I. *Poorva Karma*

A. Collection of essential material for *shastikashali pinda sweda*

B. Preparation of the *kwath*

C. Preparation of boluses

D. Preparation of patient

A. Essential material for *shalishastika pinda sweda*

1. Shashtika Shali	-	500g (half prasarat)
2. Balamoola root(<i>sida cordifolia</i>)	-	750g (12 pala)
3. Water	-	Q. S. (12 prasarat)
4. Cow's milk-	-	3litres
5. Vessels-	-	4 (5ltr each)

For preparing *Kwath* (decoction)

For cooking rice

To heat the mixture of cooked rice, *Kwath* (decoction) and milk during the procedure

6. Thread	-	75cm *8
7. Oil for <i>talam</i>	-	10ml
8. Stove	-	1
8. <i>Rasnadi/Aamlaki Choorna</i>	-	5g
9. Suitable oil for <i>Abhyanga</i>	-	100ml
10. Tissue paper/towel	-	2
11. Masseurs	-	2
12. Attendant	-	1
13. Cotton cloths (45cm *45cm)	-	4

B. Preperation of the kwatha

Balamoola Kwath (Decoction) 750g of *Balamoola* is cleaned, crushed and boiled in 12 litres of water and reduced to 3 litres.

C. Preparation of boluses

Shashtika rice cooking In 1.5 litres of *Balamoola Kwath* and 1.5 litres of milk, 500 g of *Shashtika* rice should be added and boiled till it becomes thick and semisolid. An adequate amount of hot water should be used to ensure proper cooking of the rice. "Another method is that the *Shashtika* rice can be semi cooked in pure water; gradually added milk and *Kwath* (decoction), cooked again. to prepare the boluses the cooked rice should be devided into four equal parts and put into four equal piece of cotton cloths three corners should be folded neatly The folds are arranged so that the fourth corner covers the other three corners beneath it. The boluses should be tied in a manner that leaves a tuft at the top of the bundle, allowing for easy handling. These prepared bundles are known as *Pinda*, *Pottali*, *Kizhi*, or bolus." These *pottalis* are intended for single use only and must be discarded after each session.

D. Preparation of the Patient

Prior to commencing any treatment, it is essential to thoroughly assess factors such as *Desha* (geographical location), *Ritu* (season), *Rogabala* (severity of the disease), *Rogibala* (patient's strength), *Jeerna* Lakshana (signs of chronicity), and *Vaya* (age). Based on the evaluation of these factors, the suitable type of *Swedana* (sudation therapy) should be carefully selected and administered. The ideal time for the procedure is the morning hour after evacuating the bowel and bladder, and a gentle massage is performed over the affected area. the patient is subjected to be seated with legs extended over the *Droni* (massagetable). *Shiroabhyanga* (head massage) is performed, and when necessary, *Amalaki Tala Dharana (talam)*—a preliminary procedure involving the application of *Amalaki* (*Emblica officinalis*) paste on the crown of the head—is administered to safeguard the brain and sensory organs from the effects of heating therapies. This provides a coolant effect on the body and mind of the patient. But when only a part of body like low back or lower limb or upper limb or shoulder are to bedone *Shasthikashali Pinda Swedana*, *Talam* need not be done. *Abhyanga* is done for 15–35 min with medicated oil applied to the head and body according to the advice of the physician so as to make the body well anointed before the application of the prepared bolus.

II. Pradhana Karma

Therapists must ensure that the temperature of the boluses is comfortable for the patient by first testing them on the dorsum of their hand. Once the ideal temperature^[8] (around 45°C) is confirmed, the procedure involves two therapists gently applying warm boluses simultaneously on either side of the *Droni*, followed by a gentle massage with the free hand. The attendant should gently apply the boluses with mild pressure on the affected area. Subsequently, the boluses should be gently tapped, pressed, or momentarily held against the body. The technique should be performed following defined movement patterns.

- On the extremities: The boluses should be moved in a linear motion from top to bottom.
- On the trunk: The movement should be directed upwards, from the lower to the upper part.
- On the joints: The boluses should be applied using circular motions.

The heat should be maintained throughout the procedure by alternately reheating the boluses in a mixture of milk and *Kwath* (decoction) and relaying them continuously. The treatment should continue until the patient exhibits *Samyak Swinna Lakshana* (proper sweating) or until the contents of the boluses are fully used.

This procedure is carried out in seven positions, as in *Kayaseka*, or as directed by the physician.

Duration: 45 minutes – 1 hour, preferable time is in between 7-11 am and 4-6 pm for 7 to 21 days. The procedure may be discontinued once the medicinal contents of the boluses or the milk mixture are fully depleted.

III. Pashchata Karma

At the conclusion of the therapy, any remaining medicine on the body should be gently scraped off using coconut leaves or a similar tool, and the body should be dried thoroughly with tissue paper or soft towels. After that medicated oil should be applied. *Talam* should be removed and *Rasnadi Choorna* applied over the head. *Erandmooladi Kwath* can be given for drinking. The patient should rest completely for at least half an hour before being permitted to take a warm water bath. This allows the body to receive balanced and effective treatment, promoting enhanced relaxation, and promoting overall well-being.

Precautions

1. During rice preparation, avoid overcooking or undercooking by stirring frequently to ensure proper extraction and even cooking.
2. Securely tie the bolus to prevent leakage of contents during application.
3. Therapists on both sides of the patient should massage with the bolus in a synchronized manner.
4. Maintain uniform pressure and temperature across all body parts, and always check the temperature of the pottali before applying it.
5. Apply boluses at a therapeutic temperature range of 45°C to 50°C.
6. Discontinue the therapy immediately if the patient experiences excessive perspiration or shivering.
7. Observe dietary restrictions and avoid physical and mental exertion during the treatment period and for an equal duration afterward.
8. Ensure all equipment is thoroughly cleaned before and after use.
9. Monitor the patient carefully for any signs of adverse reactions.
10. Maintain rigorous hygiene standards throughout the entire procedure
11. Avoid excessive sudation on the occipital and cardiac regions.

Complications and Management

1. Shivering: This commonly occurs due to uneven heat distribution, long gaps between bolus replacement, or exposure to cold air immediately after the treatment. Allow the patient to rest, cover them with a blanket, and provide a warm liquid diet.
2. Fainting: May result from elevated body temperature, low heat tolerance, or excessive intensity of the procedure (*Atiyoga* of *Kriyakarma*). Cool the patient by sprinkling cold water on the face and body, apply *talam* using appropriate medicated oil and powder (*choorna*), and administer *Drakshadi Kwath* internally.
3. Rashes: Caused by heat intolerance, particularly in patients with Pitta constitution. Apply honey and ghee, preferably *Shatadhouta Ghrita* or *Murivenna*, to soothe the skin.

Indications^[9,10]

Vatika conditions *Sandhigata vata* (osteoarthritis), *Gridhrasi* (sciatica), Cervical and Lumbar spondylosis, Ankylosing Spondylitis, *Avabahuka* (frozen shoulder), *Pakshavadha* (Hemiplegia) etc. Diseases of nervous system, spinal cord degeneration, neuropathy, chronic rheumatism, nourishes in the cases of muscle dystrophy, later stages of demyelination, palsy,

cervicalmyelopathy, post-polio residual paralysis, conditions that results in muscle dystrophy and emaciation, disorders of joints, fatigue syndrome, and restless leg syndrome.

Contraindications^[11,12]

Paittika conditions, Open wound (*Vrana*), *Ajeerna*, *Taruna Jwara*, *Raktapitta* (Hemorrhagic disorders) *Madhya-Vikara* (also one who has consumed alcohol), *Kamala* (jaundice) *Garbhini* etc. body. One of the key benefits of *Patra Pinda Pottali Sweda* is its adaptability to the individual's specific needs. For example, in cases where Vata aggravation causes.

RESULTS

The review shows that *Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda* is effective in managing *Vata-Kapha* dominant musculoskeletal disorders, offering relief from pain, stiffness, and inflammation. It improves mobility and supports dosha balance through its combined *snigdha* (unctuous) and *swedana* (sudation) effects.

DISCUSSION

Shalishastika Pinda Swedana is a classical *Ayurvedic* treatment categorized under '*Swedana*,' which refers to *sudation* therapies." It is a highly nourishing, strengthening, and rejuvenating treatment that plays a pivotal role in managing conditions associated with musculoskeletal and neuromuscular disorders. The term "*Shalishastika*"^[13] refers to a special type of rice known, which is harvested in sixty days and is rich in nutritional value. Pinda means a bolus or bundle, while '*Swedana*' refers to the process of inducing sweating.

Therefore, *Shalishastika Pinda Swedana* involves the use of boluses filled with cooked medicated rice, dipped in herbal decoctions and milk, and then applied warm to the body in a synchronized manner. This therapy is particularly effective in balancing the Vata dosha and kapha *dosha*, which is often responsible for causing joint pain, stiffness, neurological deficits, and degenerative diseases. *Shalishastika Pinda Swedana* is both external and systemic.

Externally, the warmth of the boluses improves circulation, relieves muscular tension, and facilitates detoxification through sweating. Systemically, the herbal rice and milk components offer nourishment to body tissues (*dhatu*s), enhance strength, and improve the flexibility of joints and muscles. Unlike other *swedana* procedures that are more detoxifying in nature, *Shalishastika Pinda Swedana* also has a pronounced *brumhana* (nourishing) effect, making it

suitable for individuals suffering from weakness, emaciation, or post-paralytic conditions. The procedure typically involves a preparatory phase wherein the patient undergoes *Abhyanga* (herbal oil massage) to lubricate and prepare the tissues. Following this, the warm boluses are gently massaged over the body in specific directions. The duration and frequency of the treatment vary depending on the individual's condition, but it is often prescribed in a series of daily sessions over a period of 7 to 14 days. Therapeutically, *Shalishastika Pinda Swedana* has shown promising results in managing conditions like osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis (in non-inflammatory stages), spondylosis, muscular dystrophy, hemiplegia, cerebral palsy, and various forms of muscular weakness and atrophy. It is also helpful in geriatric care and rehabilitation after trauma or surgery. The holistic benefits of this therapy not only lie in symptom relief but also in enhancing tissue resilience, boosting immunity, and promoting overall well-being. In conclusion, In children with cerebral palsy, *Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda* along with oral preparation of *Samvardhana Ghrita* moderate and mild improvement was seen in 50% and 37.5% patients, respectively.^[14,15,16] It is used in the *Nirama Avastha* of *Gambhira Vatarakta*(Ankylosing spondylitis).^[17] "It is used to delay premature aging."^[18] It plays an important role in the management of muscular dystrophy (Duchenne muscular dystrophy)^[19] and multiple sclerosis.^[20] "Carpal tunnel syndrome cases respond effectively to *Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda* combined with other treatments."^[21] Mild-to-moderate improvement are seen. In conditions involving *Ekanga Vata* accompanied by *Mamsakshaya* (nerve demyelination).^[22] Effect of this is also seen on primary progressive multiple sclerosis^[23] and spondylosis,^[24] Ayurvedic management for a rare disorder Takayasu arteritis and along with other interventions^[25] and management of spinocerebellar ataxia-2.^[26] Management spondyloepiphyseal dysplasia tarda, a rare hereditary disorder.^[27]

CONCLUSION

Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda is a well-established Ayurvedic treatment known for its ability to provide both nourishment and therapeutic heat, making it particularly effective for conditions involving joint, muscular, and neurological issues, especially those arising from Vata and Kapha imbalances. This therapy uses rice cooked in medicated milk and herbal decoctions, delivering deep tissue rejuvenation by targeting muscle (Mamsa), bone (Asthi), and nerve (Majja) tissues. Combining the dual benefits of *Brimhana* (tissue nourishment) and *Shamana* (symptom alleviation), it proves highly useful in managing disorders such as paralysis, muscular dystrophy, osteoarthritis, and general physical debility. While its therapeutic potential is rooted in classical Ayurvedic literature, there remains a need for

further scientific research to validate its efficacy in the framework of modern medicine. Integrating this approach into contemporary clinical practice may offer a natural, holistic, and non-invasive alternative for patients dealing with chronic pain and degenerative conditions.

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