

CONCEPT OF *SHODHANA* WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO *ABHRAKA*

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ABSTRACT

In *Ayurveda*, the concept of *Shodhana* for the potential herbs, minerals and metals was got references available since the time of Ayurvedic classics but the details about procedure could be traced only after the development of *Rasashastra*. *Shodhana* is procedure necessary for every drug before taking it for adding in any compound or subjecting it for further processes like *Marana*. *Abhraka* is made pure through different pharmaceutical processing like *Shodhana* and *Marana* described in classical texts of *Ayurveda* to covert it into therapeutically uses. In this article with reference to *Shodhana* of *Abhraka* (Mica) which is done by the various process according to different *Acharyas*.

KEYWORDS: *Abhraka*, *Shodhana*, *Nirvapa*, *Rasashastra*.

INTRODUCTION

Rasa Shastra deals with such pharmacologically potent minerals and metals etc. arranged under *Maharasa*, *Uparasa*, *Sadharana rasa*, *Loha*, *Ratna*, *Visha Varga* etc. these Metal/Minerals contain different impurities and toxic. Purification process (*Shodhana Samskara*) of metals and mineral is an exclusive process in *Ayurveda*.

The concept of *Samskara* according to *Acharya Charaka* is संस्कारो हि गुणान्तराधानमुच्यते (Ch. Vi. 1/21) and defined as transformation of the inherent attributes of a substance.^[1] *Rasa Shastra* explains processing of drugs under the name “*Samskara*”, which is capable of modifying the qualities of the drug. *Shodhana* is one such process used for *Samskara* of drugs. If drugs are not *Shodhita* or purified and the active principles are not modified, they may have deleterious effect over the body. So *Shodhana* (purification) is an important step towards their safe and

effective administration.

उद्विष्टैरौषधैः सार्द्धं क्रियते पेषणादिकम् ।

मलविच्छिन्तये यत्तु शोधनं तदिहोच्यते ।। R.T. 2/52^[2]

All the pharmaceutical procedures such as washing (*Kshalana*), trituration (*Bhavana*), heating and dipping (*Nirvapa*) etc. carried out over a medicinal drug with the intension of getting it purified is called *Shodhana*. The process of *Shodhana* includes both physical as well as chemical purification of the drug.

Types of Impurities

Natural Impurities - All metals and minerals available in earth, which has to be mined, so natural impurities like Stone, Sand, clay mixed with metals/minerals and other metals / minerals are also contact with each other and mixed together.

Adulterated Impurities - Adulteration by traders for business.

OBJECTIVES^[3]

Eliminates Physical & Chemical impurities:- As most of the drugs mentioned in *Rasa Shastra* are naturally available, they may contain many adulterants like stone, sand, mud, etc. Such foreign matter should be removed by the process of *Shodhana*. eg. A). *Shilajatu Shodhana*:- As per classics, to separate physical matter, *Shilajatu* has to be washed from alkaline liquid medium, sour liquid medium, cow's urine, etc.

B) *Guggulu Shodhana* :- *Guggulu* is separated from physical mixture like other resin, sand, stone.

Neutralizes the Toxins:- Most of the drugs of *Rasa Shastra* are toxic in nature. The unpurified drugs like *Gandhaka*, *Tamra*, *Haratala*, *Manashila*, *Gouripashana*, etc. have got immense toxic symptoms on administration. By impregnating and triturating with organic material like *Swarasa*, *Kwatha* etc. of herbs, they are homologous to the tissue cells and thus their toxicity is reduced and acceptability to the cells is increased.

Enhances the therapeutic qualities of the drugs:- Whatever the drugs are being used in the process of *Shodhana*, may it be herbs or animal products, and they themselves act as catalytic agent. These herbs and animal products can bring some desired changes in the drugs. These changes can be identified as *Gunantaradhana*. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned that

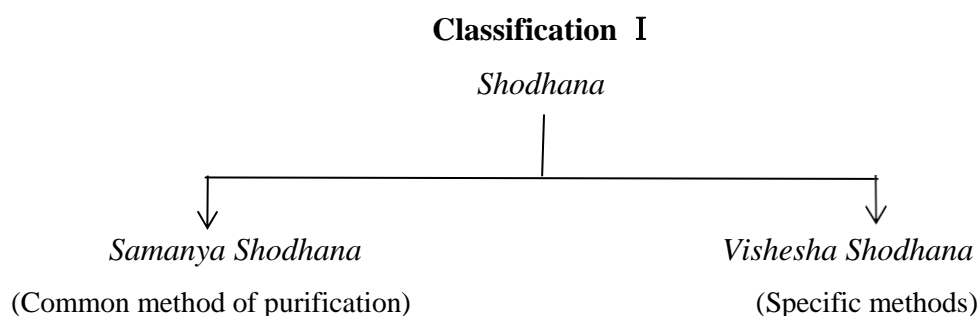
Samsakarohigunantaradhana for *Ghrita*.

Example: *Gandhaka Shodhana* - In cow's ghee & cow's milk this particular method has been focused on physico-chemical impurities and reducing *Tikshanata* of *Gandhaka*, at the same time it also enhances the pharmacological properties of the *Gandhaka* (Sulphur).

Makes the Metals & Minerals suitable for further process:- Most of the Metals & Minerals are basically hard in nature. These hard Metals & Minerals have to be converted into *Bhasma* form by the process of *Marana* (Incineration), So, here the *Shodhana* plays a very important role by imparting brittleness & softness. Obviously, by this process which easily facilitates & fasten the process of *Bhasmikaarana*. Hence *Shodhana* is highly beneficial in further process like *Marana*, *Satvapataana*, etc.

Brings Organic qualities:- Most of the drugs in *Rasa Shastra* are Inorganic in nature. It is a known fact that the living beings are organic in nature. So, it clearly indicates that it is highly impossible to administer in their natural form. Hence, during purification process herbal drugs not only nullify the toxicity & modifies the active principles, but also brings organic qualities, which is highly necessary for administration.

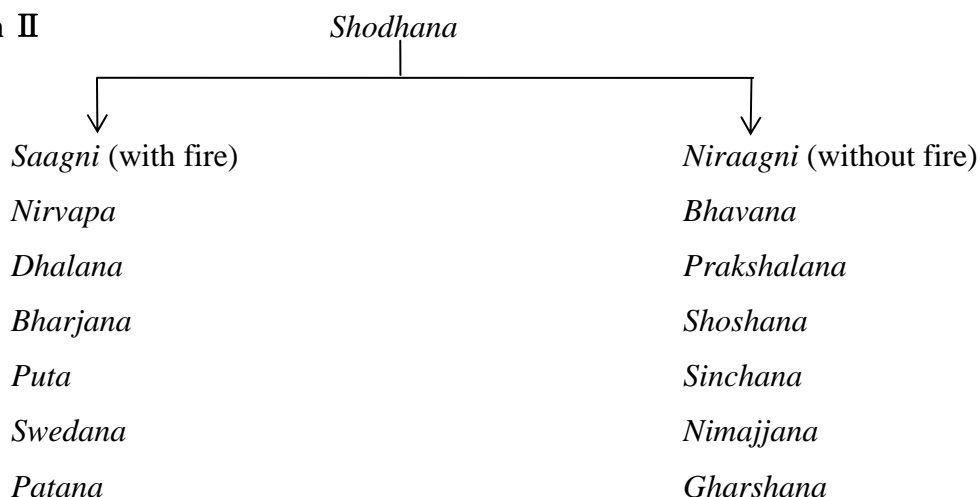
CLASSIFICATION



***Samanya Shodhana* :-** *Samanya Shodhana* is generally applied for the drugs which come into one group i.e. *Maharasa*, *Uparasa*, *Sadharanarasa*, *Dhatu* and *Sudha Varga* etc. The drugs of the one group have some similar type of impurities can be removed with the help of *Samanya Shodhana*. Eg. *Dhatu samanya shodhana* - it means all the metals get purified when they are heated and impregnated in *Taila*, *Takra*, *Gomutra*, *Aranala*, *Kulattha* serially and for 7 times in each liquid. *Sadharana rasa samanya shodhana*- when the drugs of *Sadharana rasa varga* are triturated with *Matulunga swarasa* or *Adraaka Swarasa* they get purified.^[4]

Vishesha Shodhana :- It is used as specific procedure for particular drug material individually not for a group. it should be applied after *Samanya Shodhana*. E.g. *Vanga shodhana* -when liquified *Vanga* dipped in to *Nirgundi swarasa* containing *Haridra* powder, gets purified.^[5]

Classification II



Various types of *Shodhana dravya* which is categorized according to *Rasa & Sneha* which are mentioned in table no. 1.

Table no. 1: Drug used in *Shodhana*.

S.N.	<i>Shodhana dravya</i>	Examples	Reference	Utility
1.	<i>Sneha varga</i> (e.g.- <i>Ghrita, Taila, Dugdha</i>)	<i>Bharjana</i> by <i>Ghrita</i> in <i>Gairika Shodhana</i>	A.P. 2/272. ^[6]	Softening of hard material
2.	<i>Amla varga</i> (e.g.- <i>Takra, Kanji, Nimbu, Amalaki</i>)	<i>Hingula Shodhana</i> by <i>Nimbu Swarasa</i>	A.P.2/74. ^[7]	Mass breaking and disintegration
3.	<i>Kshara varga</i> (e.g.- <i>Mutra, Churnodaka, Snuhi Kshira</i>)	<i>Vanga Shodhana</i> by <i>churnodaka</i>	R.T. 18/8-9. ^[8]	Makes the material soft and brittle
4.	<i>Katu varga</i> (e.g.- <i>Nirgundi, Haritaki, Bhringaraja</i>)	<i>Samanya Shodhana</i> of <i>Parada</i> by <i>Rasona</i>	R.T.5/27-29. ^[9]	Disintegration and breaking the cohesion
5.	<i>Tikta varga</i> (e.g.- <i>Vasa, Swarna Ksheeri, Shireesha</i>)	<i>Somala Shodhana</i> in <i>Karvellaka Swarasa</i>	R.R.S.3/125. ^[10]	Absorption of Moisture
6.	<i>Kasaya varga</i> (e.g.- <i>Triphala, Kanchanara</i>)	<i>Abhraka Shodhana</i> by <i>Triphala kwatha</i>	R.R.S. 2/16. ^[11]	Eliminates external impurities

Abhraka (Mica) is hard and stony in nature .Various physical impurities such as clay, sand, rock pieces are present in it and it is a group of minerals that contain Potassium, Silica, Aluminum, iron and other element. So physical as well as chemical impurities are also present in it hence its *shodhana* is necessary. If intake *Ashodhita Abhraka* it will produced Toxic effect which are mentioned in table no. 2. So, before internal application of *Abhraka*

bhasma it should be purified properly.

Table No. 2: Ashudhda & Apakwa Abhraka Bhasma Sevan Vikar acc.to different Acharyas.

S.N.	Dosha	A.P. ^[12]	R.S.S ^[13]	R.P.S ^[14]	R.R.S. ^[15]	B.Vj. ^[16]	R.J.N. ^[17]	R.C ^[18]
1.	<i>Kushtha</i>	+	—	—	—	+	—	+
2.	<i>Kshaya</i>	+	—	—	—	+	—	+
3.	<i>Pandu</i>	+	—	—	—	+	—	+
4.	<i>Shodha</i>	+	—	—	—	+	—	+
5.	<i>Hridya-Parshvapira</i>	+	—	—	—	+	—	+
6.	<i>Agnimandya</i>	+	—	+	+	+	—	+
7.	<i>Guru</i>	+	—	—	—	—	—	—
8.	<i>Vata-Kapha Vardhaka</i>	—	+	—	—	—	—	—
9.	<i>Visha tulya</i>	+	—	+	—	—	+	—
10.	<i>Vajra tulya</i>	—	—	+	—	—	—	—
11.	<i>Shastra tulya</i>	—	—	+	—	—	—	—
12.	<i>Prameha</i>	—	—	—	+	—	—	—
13.	<i>Mrityu</i>	+	—	—	—	—	+	—
14.	<i>Bhrama</i>	—	—	—	—	+	—	—
15.	<i>Ahitkaraka</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
16.	<i>Pida</i>	+	—	—	—	—	—	—

Different type of *Shodhana* of *Abhraka* are mentioned by various *Acharya* which are mentioned in Table no. 3. *Abhraka Bhasma* possesses *Singdha guna*, *Sita virya* and *Madhura rasa*. It is a great increaser of vitality and also increases longevity, energy and strength. It is useful in treatment of many diseases i.e. *Kasa* (cough), *Swasa* (cold), *Pandu* (anemia), *Klaivya* (infertility), *Agnimandya* (loss of appetite), *Netraroga* (eye diseases) etc. Its improves *Medha* (intellect) and encourages lactation.^[19]

Table no. 3: Various types of Shodhana of Abhraka according to different Acharyas.

S.N.	Shodhana Dravya	Process	Time	References
1.	<i>Lalamuli+ Ghanarava + Karvira+ Kira + Jambira Swarasa + Kapivetas +Aarnal + Ratotpala +Shashwasa + Shashi + Sharng taila</i>	<i>Swedana</i>	-	R. M. ^[20]
2.	<i>Shyama+ Shami + Madana phala + Kodrva + Mashaparni + Shringi + Ghatotbhava + Ghandhwani+ Vetas + Kulatha Kwatha</i>	<i>Swedana</i>	3 days	R.M. ^[20]
3.	<i>Agastya Pushpa Swarasa + Kumud + Kapikakchu</i>	<i>Swedana</i>	3 days	R.Nv 6/10-13 ^[21]

	+ Jambiri Nimbu + Meghnath + Punarnava + Chinchu + Aarnal + Amla dravya + Karvira + Utpala + Vanasurana + Bhudhatri + Bhindi mula + Amlavetas + Meshashringi + Shashak Vasa + Shringa Taila + shami + Vjravalli + kshrirakanda + Marich + Tulsi			
4.	Godugdha (S) & Meghanth, Amladravya (M)	Sinchana & Mardana	21 & 24 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R.Mj. 3/ 42^[22] • B.Vj.^[23] • R. Chi 4/16^[24]
5.	Godugdha/ Triphala Kwatha	Nirvapa	7	R.T.10/ 20 ^[19]
6.	Kanji (N) & Amladravya (M)	Nirvapa & Mardana	7 +1	R.T.10/ 18-19 ^[25]
7.	Nirgundi swarasa	Nirvapa	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.R.R.Su^[26] • R.J.N.^[27] • A.S.S.^[28] • R.P.7/29^[29] • R.S.^[30]
8.	Bhringraja Swarasa	Nirvapa	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R.Mr.^[31]
9.	Badar Kwatha	Nirvapa	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R.T.10/ 21-22^[32] • A.P. 2/112^[33] • R.S.S 1/156^[34] • B.R.R.Su^[26] • R.J.N.^[27] • A.S.S.^[28] • R.C. 2/134^[35] • R.S.^[30]
			-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R.P. 7/28^[29]
			21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R. Mj. 3/43^[22]
10.	Godugdha (N) & Amladravya + Tanduliyak Swarasa (M)	Nirvapa & Mardana	7+1+1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R.T.10/ 23-24^[36] • Y.R^[37]
11.	Kanji/ Gomutra/ Triphala Kwatha/ Godugdha	Nirvapa	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R.Chu. 10/16^[38] • R.P.S 5/13-15^[39] • R.R.S. 2/16-17^[15] • A.P.-2/ 110-11^[33] • R.S.^[30] • R.S.S 1/155^[34] • Y. R.^[37] • B.R.R.Su^[26] • R.J.N.^[27] • R.T.S. & S.P.S.^[40] • R.Mr.^[31] • R.C. 2/133^[35] • R.P. 7/27^[29]
			3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.R.R.Su^[26]
12.	Gomutra/ Triphala Kwatha/ Godugdha	Nirvapa	7	A.S.S. ^[28]

13.	Godugdha (N) & Tanduliyak Mula Swarasa + Amladravya (B)	Niravapa & Bhavana	7+8Yama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A.P.-2/ 109^[33] • R.J.N.^[27]
14.	Kanji + Kulatha kwatha + Takra + Mutra	Swedana	1day (each)	R.P.S ^[39]
15.	Godugdha (N) & soaked in Tanduliyak Swarasa+Amladravya	Niravapa	1day	Sh. S. 11/60 ^[41]
16.	Ravi Kshira /Kanji /Gomutra/Triphala Kwatha/ /Tanduliyak Swarasa &Tanduliyak Swarasa + Kanji (B)	Nisechana & Bhavana	3	A.K.161-162. ^[42]

[(N)- Nirvapa, (S) Sinchana, (M) – Mardana, (B) – Bhavana]

Ashodhita Abhraka Vikar Shanti

उमाफलं जले पिष्ट्वा सेवते यो दिनत्रयम् ।

अशुद्धाभ्रकदोषेण विमुक्तः सुखमेधते ॥ R.J.N.^[43]

Umaphala is ground in water and given for three days to get rid of Ashudhda Abhraka Dosha.

CONCLUSION

Shodhana is essential for the efficacy and safety of Ayurveda formulation. Different methods, such as Nirvapa, Swedana, Mardana etc are a part of Shodhana process. All those method each have a unique mode of action to obtain the desired effects. It can be concluded that, Though in classics, there are mainly 3 type of Shodhana of Abhraka are mentioned mostly Acharya still considers Nirvapa method for the Abhraka because repeated process of heating and quenching sudden change in the temperature breaks the strong bonds to reduce the hardness and increases the brittleness of Abhraka and at the same time toxic element are remove from Abhraka to quenching media through ion exchange process. This process suitable for further processing by size reduction.

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