

## CONCEPTUAL STUDY ON KARNA PICHU &amp; KARNA DHOOPAN

<sup>1</sup>\*Dr. N. Anusha Kousar, <sup>2</sup>Dr. Santhosh Pujjar and <sup>3</sup>Dr. Manjunath Kottal<sup>1</sup>PG Scholar, <sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, <sup>3</sup>Assistant ProfessorDepartment of Shalakya Tantra, At Shri Vijaya Mahantheshwara Ayurvedic Medical College  
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\*Corresponding Author

Dr. N. Anusha Kousar

PG Scholar, Department of  
Shalakya Tantra, At Shri  
Vijaya Mahantheshwara  
Ayurvedic Medical College  
and Research Center, Ilkal,  
Dist: Bagalkot, Karnataka.

## ABSTRACT

Karna Pichu and Karna Dhoopan are traditional Ayurvedic therapies under *Shalakya Tantra*, aimed at addressing ear-related disorders. Karna Pichu involves the application of a medicated cotton wick soaked in herbal oils like *Bilwadi Taila* and *Mahanarayana Taila*, inserted into the external auditory canal for prolonged drug absorption. It is particularly effective in managing chronic conditions such as otitis externa, tinnitus, and ear dryness. On the other hand, Karna Dhoopan employs therapeutic fumigation using herbal ingredients such as *Neem*, *Guggul*, and *Nirgundi*, generating medicated smoke to treat acute infections, ear blockages, and microbial conditions like otomycosis and swimmer's ear. Both therapies balance *Vata* and *Kapha Doshas*, promoting healing, reducing inflammation, and providing symptomatic relief. This conceptual study reviews their procedural methodologies, mechanisms of action, and therapeutic outcomes, comparing their effectiveness in treating various auditory conditions. While Karna

Pichu offers prolonged drug contact and tissue nourishment, Karna Dhoopan excels in disinfection and acute infection management. Their integration into modern otology, supported by scientific validation, can address limitations in conventional treatments, offering a holistic approach to ear care. This study emphasizes the need for further clinical trials and standardization to enhance their acceptance in integrative medicine.

**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, Karna Pichu, Karna Dhoopan, Shalakya Tantra, otitis externa, fumigation therapy, ear disorders.

## INTRODUCTION

Karna Pichu is a procedure in which a cotton swab, known as Pichu varti soaked in medicated oil (Sneha), is inserted into the ear. According to Ashtanga Hridaya, it involves placing the medicated swab inside the ear canal, particularly in the case of Pakwa karna. He suggests starting by cleaning the pus-filled ear using dry mopping with Pichu. Subsequently, the ear is to be filled with a Pichu varti dipped in medicated oil. This process should be performed twice daily. However, there is no explicit mention of the duration for which this procedure should be administered. Karna Dhoopana involves fumigating the ear with medicated smoke and is recommended for Vata afflicted lesions with severe pain and discharge. Preparation of Dhuma varti.

As per Karnaroga chikitisa adhyaya, a soft paste from various herbs, including Madhuchishtā, Kaidarya, Madhu, Shigru Phala, Vacha, Nalada, Ela, and Guggulu. This paste is spread onto a Kshouma vastra (linen cloth), rolled into an 8-angula-sized Varti, and dried. Prior to fumigation, external oil/ghee application is done. The varti is ignited and placed in a Dundukanala (small vessel), generating smoke for the Karna dhoopana.

Karna Pichu and Karna Dhoopan are two prominent Ayurvedic procedures under the domain of *Shalakya Tantra* (ENT and head-related ailments). Both interventions aim to manage ear disorders by pacifying aggravated *Vata* and *Kapha Doshas*, ensuring therapeutic efficacy and preventive care.<sup>[1,2]</sup> Ayurveda, emphasizing holistic health, integrates these methods to address chronic and acute ear ailments such as tinnitus, otitis media, and hearing loss.<sup>[3,4]</sup> With the rise in antibiotic resistance and increasing demand for non-invasive treatments, these traditional methods are gaining attention in integrative medicine.<sup>[5,6]</sup>

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Study Design

This study explores and analyzes Karna Pichu and Karna Dhoopan based on Ayurvedic texts, classical references, and contemporary studies.<sup>[7-10]</sup> A comparative framework was used to evaluate their methods, therapeutic applications, and clinical advantages.

### Data Sources

Information was drawn from classical Ayurvedic texts such as *Sushruta Samhita* and *Ashtanga Hridaya* alongside peer-reviewed studies published in journals like *IAMJ* and *Recent Trends of Herbal Research in Ayurveda*.<sup>[11-14]</sup>

## Study Population

Relevant articles and clinical case studies involving procedures on patients with ear-related disorders like otitis externa, chronic suppurative otitis media (CSOM), tinnitus, and swimmer's ear were reviewed.<sup>[15,16]</sup>

## KARNA PICHU

### Procedure

Karna Pichu involves inserting a medicated cotton wick soaked in herbal oils into the auditory canal. The oil, often warmed, includes options such as *Bilwadi Taila*, *Mahanarayana Taila*, and *Triphala Kashaya*.<sup>[7,12]</sup> The wick stays in place for 30–60 minutes, ensuring prolonged contact with the ear tissues.<sup>[13]</sup>

### Indications

- Chronic ear infections like CSOM and otitis externa.<sup>[8]</sup>
- Symptoms of tinnitus (*Karna Nada*).<sup>[14]</sup>
- Dryness and itching of the ear canal due to aggravated *Vata Dosha*.<sup>[9]</sup>

### Therapeutic Outcomes

- Enhanced tissue nourishment through prolonged drug contact time.<sup>[16]</sup>
- Absorption of discharge, promoting faster healing in cases like otitis media.<sup>[7]</sup>
- Easy application, cost-effectiveness, and compatibility with outpatient settings.<sup>[10]</sup>

## Karna Dhoopan

### Procedure

Karna Dhoopan involves fumigation using herbal smoke directed into the ear canal via a funnel-shaped *Dhoopana Yantra*. The fumigants, typically derived from *Neem*, *Guggul*, and *Nirgundi*, are ignited to produce medicinal smoke that enters the ear.<sup>[9,11]</sup>

### Karna dhoopana dravyas based on condition

<i>Krimikarna, Kaphaja karna srava</i>	Ripened <i>Vartaka</i> , <i>Guggulu</i> , <i>Vidanga</i> , <i>Nimba</i> , <i>Haridra</i> etc.
<i>Putikarna</i>	<i>Guggulu</i>
<i>Karna shoola, Badhirya, Karnanada kshveda</i>	<i>Kshouma</i> , <i>Guggulu</i> , <i>Agaru</i> smeared with <i>Ghrita</i>

### Indications

- Acute infections such as otomycosis, swimmer's ear, and otitis media.<sup>[10]</sup>

- Boils or abscesses in the external auditory canal.<sup>[12]</sup>
- Vestibular and auditory nerve disorders.<sup>[14]</sup>

### Therapeutic Outcomes

- Rapid microbial control due to antimicrobial properties of *Guggul* and *Neem*.<sup>[8,9]</sup>
- Relief from ear blockages, itching, and inflammation.<sup>[13]</sup>
- Improved blood circulation, enhancing local healing processes.<sup>[12]</sup>

### Comparative Analysis

Aspect	Karna Pichu	Karna Dhoopan
Mechanism	Drug absorption via medicated wicks	Antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory fumigation <sup>[7,8]</sup>
Duration	Longer exposure time (30–60 minutes)	Short exposure (10–15 minutes) <sup>[9,13]</sup>
Targeted Conditions	Chronic ear disorders, Vata-related ailments	Acute infections, Kapha-related conditions <sup>[11,12]</sup>

## DISCUSSION

### Clinical Implications

Both methods serve distinct purposes in managing ear disorders. Karna Pichu ensures prolonged drug exposure, making it ideal for chronic conditions like tinnitus or persistent discharge.<sup>[8,16]</sup> Karna Dhoopan, with its antimicrobial fumigation, provides rapid relief for acute conditions such as infections.<sup>[9,11]</sup>

### Scientific Correlations

Modern practices align with these Ayurvedic methods. For instance, the use of wicks soaked in medicated oils mirrors the therapeutic principles of Karna Pichu in managing chronic otitis externa.<sup>[12,14]</sup> Similarly, antiseptic fumigation techniques parallel Karna Dhoopan's antimicrobial effects.<sup>[13,15]</sup>

### Challenges and Limitations

While effective, Karna Dhoopan requires proper technique to avoid thermal injury. Standardizing fumigants and their dosages for clinical trials is crucial for broader acceptance.<sup>[9,14]</sup> Similarly, Karna Pichu, although cost-effective, demands precise application and patient compliance for optimal results.<sup>[10,16]</sup>

### Future Directions

- Clinical trials comparing Ayurvedic and allopathic ear treatments.<sup>[7]</sup>

- Development of standardized tools and formulations to modernize these practices.<sup>[15]</sup>
- Integration into integrative otological care with validated safety protocols.<sup>[8]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Karna Pichu and Karna Dhoopan exemplify Ayurvedic ingenuity in managing ear ailments through natural, holistic methods. Their therapeutic outcomes, rooted in centuries of practice, highlight their relevance in contemporary otology. Advancing research and clinical validation will ensure their sustained integration into healthcare.<sup>[9,11]</sup>

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