

AA REVIEW ARTICLE: ROLE OF SWARNAPRASHAN IN IMPROVING IMMUNITY AND PREVENTING RECURRENT UPPER RESPIRATORY TRACT INFECTIONS (URTI) IN CHILDREN**Dr. Neha Bawane^{*1}, Dr. Jayprakash Khairnar², Dr. Vikram Shelavale³**

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ABSTRACT

Recurrent upper respiratory tract infections (URTI) rank among the most prevalent causes of illness in children, particularly those aged 1 to 15 years. Factors such as immature immune systems, environmental influences, and nutritional aspects lead to frequent occurrences of infections like tonsillitis, pharyngitis, and the common cold. Traditional management primarily focuses on alleviating symptoms and does not effectively prevent future infections. In Ayurveda, Swarnaprashan is recognized within Kaumarbhritya as a powerful Rasayana therapy that boosts immunity (Vyadhikshamatva), enhances intellect (Medha), and promotes overall health in children.

KEYWORDS: Swarnaprashan, Immunity, Ayurveda, Rasayana, URTI, Children, Kaumarbhritya.

INTRODUCTION

Swarnaprashana constitutes one of the 16 Essential Samskara (Regimes) outlined for children within Ayurveda, emphasizing the significance of prevention over merely providing care and health protection.^[1]

Childhood is a vital stage marked by rapid growth, development, and the maturation of the immune system. However, due to the relatively immature state of both innate and adaptive immune responses, children are particularly vulnerable to infections, especially upper respiratory tract infections (URTIs) such as the common cold, tonsillitis, pharyngitis, and sinusitis. Recurrent URTIs pose a considerable health challenge, resulting in frequent absences from school, diminished quality of life, and increased healthcare utilization. Various environmental and host-related factors, including malnutrition, pollution, inadequate hygiene, and insufficient immunity, make children more prone to recurrent infections.

In modern pediatric practice, the approach to managing recurrent URTIs centers primarily on alleviating symptoms and preventing complications. However, the rising issue of antimicrobial resistance and the limitations associated with conventional therapies have prompted an investigation into preventive and immunomodulatory strategies, including those from traditional medical systems. In this regard, Ayurveda, the ancient Indian medical system, highlights the importance of Vyadhikshamatva (immunity) and promotes preventive approaches to bolster resistance against diseases.

Among various Ayurvedic practices, Swarnaprashan (Suvarnaprashana)—a distinctive Lehana Karma outlined in classical texts such as Kashyapa Samhita—has garnered significant interest for its potential role in enhancing pediatric health. This practice involves the administration of processed gold (Swarna Bhasma) combined with honey, ghee, and selected herbal ingredients. Traditionally, Swarnaprashan is thought to augment Bala (immunity), Medha (intellect), digestive health, and overall growth and development in children.^[2,3]

Recent scientific investigations and clinical trials have sought to substantiate these traditional assertions. Evidence indicates that Swarnaprashan possesses immunomodulatory properties, elevates immunoglobulin levels, and enhances resistance to infections.

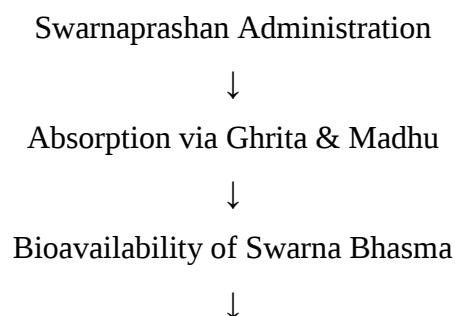
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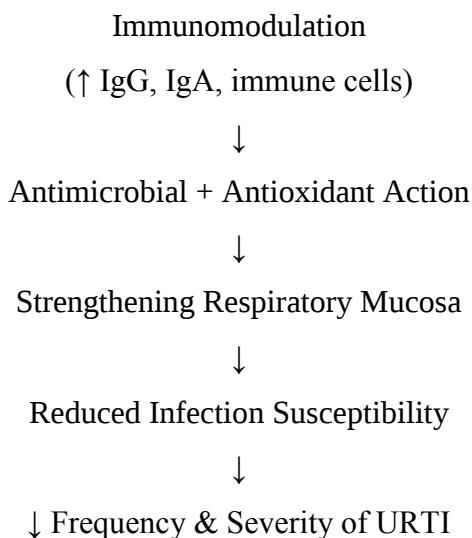
Enhances Medha (intellect), Improves Agni (digestion/metabolism), Increases Bala (immunity/strength), Promotes longevity (Ayushya), Brings auspiciousness and well-being, Improves complexion (Varna), Protects from graha roga (infections/disorders). After 1 month: child becomes intelligent and disease-resistant. After 6 months: develops excellent memory and grasping power.^[4,5,6]

In spite of these encouraging results, the existing evidence is somewhat fragmented, displaying inconsistencies in terms of study design, dosage, duration, and outcome assessments. There is an imperative need for a thorough synthesis of the current literature to gain a clearer understanding of how Swarnaprashan may bolster immunity and avert recurrent URTIs in children.

Consequently, this review seeks to rigorously evaluate and compile the available scientific data regarding the effectiveness, safety, and mechanisms of action of Swarnaprashan, particularly emphasizing its function in enhancing immune response and decreasing the occurrence of recurrent upper respiratory tract infections within the pediatric demographic.

Mechanism of Action





Swarnaprashan in Ayurveda

Swarnaprashan is a Rasayana therapy administered in pediatric age to:

- 1) Enhance immunity (Vyadhikshamatva)
- 2) Improve cognition (Medha)
- 3) Promote growth and development

Composition of swarnaprashan

- 1) Swarna Bhasma (gold ash)
- 2) Ghrita (ghee)
- 3) Madhu (honey)
- 4) Herbal extracts (e.g., Brahmi, Vacha)

Dosage of swarnaprashan: Acharya Kashyapa has not mentioned the dosage for *Swarnaprashana* in specific. However, he has given general dosage of children according to age in the same context from birth. The same can be followed to fix the dosage of *Swarnaprashana*. A few other available references regarding per day dose of *Swarna Bhasma* from various texts are as listed below

- $1/4^{\text{th}} - 1/8^{\text{th}}$ Ratti (15–30 mg) *Swarna Bhasma*^[7]
- 2 *Gunja* (250 mg)^[8]
- 1 *Gunja* (125 mg)/As per age^[9]
- 1 *Harenu*^[10]
- $1/32$ Ratti (3.9 mg)^[11]
- 15.5–62.5 mg of *Swarna Bhasma*.^[12]

By taking these adult dosages as reference standards, dosage in children can be calculated.^[13]

METHOD

- PubMed
- AYUSH Research Portal
- DHARA (Digital Helpline for Ayurveda Research Articles)
- Narrative review
- Additionally, classical Ayurvedic texts such as Kashyapa Samhita, Charaka Samhita, and Sushruta Samhita.

RESULT

Swarnaprashan demonstrates immunomodulatory, antimicrobial, antioxidant, and adaptogenic properties. Clinical studies indicate improvement in immune parameters and reduction in frequency and severity of URTI episodes.

DISCUSSION

Swarnaprashan plays a vital role in pediatric preventive healthcare. Swarnaprashan is a preventive pediatric measure based on Ayurvedic Rasayana therapy. Its multifaceted effects—immunomodulatory, antimicrobial, and antioxidant—render it effective in combating recurrent upper respiratory tract infections (URTIs).

Modern studies corroborate traditional Ayurvedic assertions, indicating:-

- Decreased frequency of infections
- Enhanced immune markers
- Improved growth and development

CONCLUSION

Swarnaprashan is a promising, safe, and effective Ayurvedic intervention for improving immunity and preventing recurrent URTI in children. It offers a preventive, holistic approach in pediatric healthcare.

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