

## THE ALCHEMICAL ODYSSEY OF INNOVATION IN PANCHAKARMA

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### ABSTRACT

Innovation, a formidable catalyst for progress, has indelibly shaped human history, spanning ancient epochs to the contemporary age. Its enigmatic essence transmutes concepts into reality, shaping a realm once unfathomable. This potent force becomes a troubleshooter confronting global quandaries, and a compass guiding sustainable advancement across scientific domains. Panchakarma, an ancestral Ayurvedic tradition tracing back to approximately 1500 BCE, finds its origins in age-old medicine and enjoys centuries of practice in India. This holistic remedy seeks to amplify Aushadhi (medicinal) bioavailability, reinstate Dosha-Dhatu-Mala equilibrium, and forestall ailment recurrence by expelling vitiated doshas. Its core processes encompass Vamana (Therapeutic Emesis), Virechana (Therapeutic Purgation), diverse forms of Basti (Enema), Nasya (Nasal

Administration), and Raktamokshana (Blood Letting). Snehana (Oleation) and Swedana (Sudation) precede Shodhana therapies as curatives. Panchakarma underwent a renaissance, evolving over time. While ancient Ayurvedic texts detail procedures, these receded as practitioners explored alternate modalities. The Ashtavaidya and Nattuvaidya traditions safeguarded Panchakarma's wisdom, innovating to align with Ayurvedic principles, fostering practices such as "Keraliye Panchakarma." Modern times globalized Panchakarma, as Ayurveda offered an alternative to Western medicine. This led to its resurgence, garnering recognition across 16+ countries. Global acceptance birthed Neo-Panchakarma, transcending borders as a global gift. In the era of rapid change, where technology and lifestyles evolve,

Neo-Panchakarma adapts, offering tailored remedies. Innovations refine traditional therapies, utilizing soft gel capsules, Kashayam tablets, and modified Lehas for convenience. Enhanced instruments elevate procedure comfort and effectiveness; examples include Bashpa Sweda Yantra and Automated Shirodhara Yantra. Neo-Panchakarma amalgamates tradition and technology, as seen in Kati Basti with lumbar traction and Abhyanga with infrared therapy. Innovations, like Cupping therapy and Syringe-based Raktamokshana, amplify accessibility. Continued research sparks novel instruments, techniques, and dissemination avenues, enhancing Panchakarma's potency, affordability, and accessibility. It forges ahead by melding tradition and modernity, delivering effective, accessible healing. Panchakarma's evolution resonates with innovation's transformative essence, forging a harmonious future and a legacy for generations.

**KEYWORDS:** Innovation, Panchakarma.

## INTRODUCTION

Panchakarma, a cornerstone of Ayurveda, represents a fusion of ancient wisdom and contemporary innovation. With roots dating back thousands of years, Panchakarma is deeply embedded in Indian traditions. Its philosophy, documented in sacred texts around 1500 BCE, outlines Penta bio-purification procedures that restore balance in the body through detoxification. At its core, Panchakarma aims to enhance the efficacy of therapeutic substances by purifying the body, harmonizing Dosha, Dhatu, and Mala. Thus, endures as a holistic and patient-centric approach, personalized for each individual. The renaissance of Panchakarma reflects Ayurveda's resilience. Neo-Panchakarma, born from ancient roots, transcends borders. Panchakarma's revival, ignited in Kerala and extending globally, attests to its universal relevance. Its integration with modern medicine exemplifies personalized care through the concept of 'Precise Medicine'. The holistic approach, recognizing the uniqueness of each patient, resonates with modern medicine's shift towards personalized and patient-centered care. The changing preferences, from traditional Kashaya and Churna to modern tablets and capsules, require Ayurveda to introduce palatable forms while adhering to principles. Modern lifestyles shift focus to outpatient care due to time constraints. Traditional inpatient Panchakarma practices need modification to accommodate this shift while retaining efficacy. The need for Vaidyas to adapt Chatushpadas according to changing times and preferences is evident in the evolution of the practice. Ancient wisdom's preservation involves ongoing efforts in research, documentation, and sharing. The intersection of

tradition and innovation creates a dynamic landscape for Ayurveda. The need is to balance between preserving foundational principles and adapting to contemporary needs ensures its continued success. This essay delves into the emerging innovative trends within the Ayurveda field, showcasing its adaptability and enduring relevance.

## NEW TRENDS IN PANCHAKARMA

"Innovation is a journey, not a destination," a quote that encapsulates the ever-evolving nature of progress. In the realm of Ayurveda, ancient practices are being ingeniously transformed to reach wider audiences. This article explores innovations in pharmaceutical preparations, modified instruments, and methods.

### Pharmaceutical Preparations

Adapting traditional Yogas for broader accessibility has led to remarkable innovations that are reshaping the landscape of holistic wellness and therapeutic interventions. These innovative transformations are not only modernizing ancient practices but also making them more convenient and effective for a wider audience.

- **Soft Gel Taila Capsules:** Yogas like Virechana Taila are now available as convenient soft gel capsules. This simplifies intake, as seen in Mishraka Sneha Capsules and Nimbamrutaeranda Taila Capsules, used for Snigdha Virechana.
- **Kashayam Tablets:** Various Anulomana Kashayams like Gandharvahastadi Eranda Kashayam are now in tablet form. This enhances the palatability of kashayams and reduces the dose size.
- **Leha in Vatika Form:** Trivrut Leha for Virechana Karma is modified into Trivrut Vatika. This simplifies the consumption and mitigates worries related to experiencing nausea and vomiting.
- **Avartana Taila Yogas:** Avartana Yogas such as Ksheerabala 101 and Sahcharadi 21 Avarthi drops are enhanced oil formulations due to their repeated processing, consequently augmenting the effectiveness of Nasya therapy in chronic conditions.
- **Basti Kit:** The Basti Kit has simplified the preparation of Basti procedures by packaging all necessary ingredients, facilitating ease of use and storage. Arka Preparation, like using

Goarka instead of Gomutra, exemplifies how innovation extends shelf life and simplifies preparation steps.

### **Modified Instruments**

The utilization of instruments plays a pivotal role in enhancing the overall therapeutic experience, contributing significantly to the effectiveness of Ayurvedic therapies. The instruments, which are integral to various Ayurvedic procedures, have undergone innovative modifications to ensure better outcomes and patient comfort. These enhancements encompass a range of instruments designed for specific therapeutic applications:

- **Bashpa Swedana Yantra:** The traditional wooden steam cabinets have undergone a transformative evolution. The incorporation of glass flaps not only allows for clear observation but also enhances safety during the steam procedure. The addition of a timer facilitates precise time management, while the integration of a steam attachment further optimizes the Bashpa Sweda process.
- **Kati Snana Tub:** In response to contemporary therapeutic needs, the Kati Snana Tub has been revamped to provide enhanced relief for musculoskeletal conditions. This specialized tub facilitates the immersion of the lower back and sacral region in medicated oils or herbal decoctions, delivering targeted benefits and comfort.
- **Nadi Sweda Gun:** Upgraded Nadi Sweda tools now feature stainless-steel handles and steam flow valves. These modifications not only improve the therapist's control over the procedure but also enhance patient safety by minimizing the risk of burns or discomfort.
- **Nadi Sweda Steamer:** The Nadi Sweda Steamer continues to offer localized steam therapy, promoting relaxation and healing. This instrument's design allows for the precise application of moist steam to specific areas of the body, making it a valuable tool for therapeutic benefits.
- **Electric Avagaha Tub:** The innovative design of the Electric Avagaha Tub, known as the Avagaha Koshta unit, transforms bathing into a therapeutic experience. The precise temperature control ensures optimal comfort, while the inclusion of a targeted oil jet massage adds an invigorating dimension to the treatment.
- **Automatic Shirodhara Equipment:** <sup>4</sup>The innovative equipment streamlines the Shirodhara process by automating the liquid flow and temperature control, eliminating the need for

manual pouring. It consists of an apparatus that holds and heats the liquid, a motorized flow regulator, and a nozzle for precise application. The unit offers specifications such as oil filtration, digital temperature control, motorized oil flow, oscillatory movement, and a timer for treatment duration. The Automatic Shirodhara equipment redefines this ancient therapy, enhancing comfort and efficiency while maintaining its therapeutic essence<sup>4</sup>.

- **NASYA PEETHA:** Nasya Peetha serves as a stable platform designed for optimal alignment of the head and neck. Thus, facilitates proper administration of medicated substances and enhances the efficacy of Nasya therapy, showcasing Ayurveda's focus on precision and patient well-being.

### Modified Methods

In the realm of Ayurvedic therapies, traditional methods have been thoughtfully revitalized to cater to contemporary needs and preferences. These adaptations align ancient wisdom with modern advancements, offering enhanced benefits and tailored solutions to individuals seeking holistic well-being.

1. **Kati Basti with Lumbar Traction:** <sup>1</sup>The fusion of Kati Basti with lumbar traction exemplifies this harmonious blending of traditional and modern approaches. By combining the decompressive effects of traction with the vasodilation induced by Swedana, this method provides an elevated level of pain relief, particularly beneficial for individuals dealing with musculoskeletal issues.<sup>[1]</sup>

2. **Abhyanga with IR:** <sup>2</sup>The integration of Infrared Rays into Abhyanga showcases a creative adaptation that enhances the therapeutic impact of this traditional massage. The incorporation of infrared technology adds an extra layer of relaxation and pain relief, complementing the healing properties of Abhyanga.<sup>[2]</sup>

3. **Cupping Therapy with Syringe:** <sup>3</sup>Cupping therapy has evolved with the utilization of a syringe, allowing for efficient and precise application over smaller treatment areas. This modification not only enhances pain relief but also promotes improved circulation, offering targeted benefits in a cost-effective manner.<sup>[3]</sup>

4. **Raktamokshana with Syringe:** The adaptation of cupping therapy using a syringe introduces an innovative approach to Raktamokshana. This modified technique offers cost-

effective benefits and is particularly effective for treatments requiring reduced surface coverage.

## DISCUSSION

Modern Panchakarma deftly weaves the tapestry of ancient practices with the threads of contemporary comfort. The integration of cutting-edge equipment and thoughtfully designed facilities pays homage to the time-honored tradition while adeptly catering to the sensibilities of the modern individual. This harmonious blend not only upholds the sanctity of the healing process but also addresses the preferences and expectations of present-day seekers as patient welfare and security are of paramount importance. The emphasis on holistic well-being mirrors the ethos of Panchakarma, where detoxification finds its place alongside the focus on patient care. As tradition and innovation converge in the continuum of time, Panchakarma stands as a beacon of boundless potential.

## SCOPE OF INNOVATION IN PANCHAKARMA

Research and Development (R&D) in Panchakarma heralds a wave of progress and innovation, driven by dedicated researchers, practitioners, and institutions. Notable innovations include:

### Trivrut Leha Modification

Dr. Jayakrishnan P.S.'s research modified Trivrut Leha into Vatika form, yielding enhanced results. Vatika had lower Loss On Drying (6.68%) compared to Lehya (9.53%), and its Total Ash Value was 9.45% versus 2.03% in Lehya. Chromatography revealed compatible peaks in both forms. Clinical trials showed Vatika's efficacy in Virechana Samyaka Yoga, without complications.

### Janu Avagaha Instrument

This innovation facilitates "Janu Avagaha," immersing the knee joint in medicated oils for knee pain relief. The U-shaped instrument includes an oil chamber, water chamber, and air chamber, ensuring optimal temperature maintenance. Its utility lies in treating knee osteoarthritis, providing relief, and slowing progression. Clinical trials at SDM Ayurveda Hospital, Hassan, have demonstrated significant results.

Electrical Kati Basti Yantra: This device maintains oil temperature during Kati Basti treatment. It comprises a heating unit with a ring frame and heating plate, and a controlling unit with a DC motor, micro-controller, and thermo-sensor. It offers safe and easy application

in Panchakarma centers and for self-use. Effective for backache conditions like IVDP, spondylosis, spondylolisthesis, sciatica etc. Clinical trial of the instrument at KVG Ayurveda Hospital, Sullia, over sciatica have demonstrated significant results.

Innovation in Panchakarma marries ancient knowledge with modern ingenuity, reshaping the landscape of healing and wellness. Through research and inventive solutions, the journey toward holistic health progresses with renewed vigor.

## CONCLUSION

Innovation's eternal alchemy weaves transformative magic, shaping our species' destiny and inspiring visions beyond the present constraints. From ancient alchemists' quests to modern innovators' pursuit of a better world, innovation's timeless essence guides us toward limitless possibilities. Amid humanity's ingenuity symphony, we celebrate innovation's alchemy - a boundless force for good. With audacity and compassion as our compass, we voyage to unlock universe secrets, cultivating sustainable prosperity. Panchakarma, Ayurveda's invaluable contribution, invites us to embrace nature's harmonious wisdom. It's a holistic path to cleanse body and mind, honoring the humanity-universe link. As we journey, Panchakarma's timeless wisdom lights a path to profound healing and wholeness. This journey illustrates Ayurveda's profound legacy, inspiring health care's innovation and compassion. As contemporary alchemists, let's blend Panchakarma's ageless wisdom with evolving science and technology. With open hearts, we embrace uncharted discovery, unveiling health mysteries. In innovation's dance, unity emerges as we seek a better world, where healing and transformation resonate across generations. Together, we honor Panchakarma's legacy, charting a course toward innovation's guiding light, fostering a world of limitless possibilities. New Panchakarma trends enhance therapy quality and outcome, driven by a goal of effectiveness, convenience, comfort, safety, affordability, and accessibility. This adaptability aligns with evolving patient and societal needs. Through innovation, Panchakarma addresses evolving healthcare challenges. Its potential for disease prevention and treatment is immense, requiring continuous research and adaptation. Integration of new trends and innovations unlocks greater effectiveness and accessibility. As we venture into unexplored realms, true alchemy transcends ambition, striving to leave the world better. Embracing innovation's transformative power, Vaidyas stand at the brink of an era, merging creativity and compassion. This journey crafts a harmonious future, nourishing body, mind, and soul. In this quest, modern alchemists uplift humanity, weaving threads of

healing and transformation. Innovation's light guides us toward a world resonating with health and well-being. As we journey, remember true alchemists embrace challenges, nurturing a better world. Open hearts embrace innovation's wonder, creating a world where healing and compassion flow unbounded, and transformation's alchemy ushers a future of infinite possibilities for all.

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