

**PANCHAKARMA IN KAUMARABHRITYA: A CRITICAL REVIEW****Dr. Betsi Mary Kharbyngar\*<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Jithesh Chowta<sup>2</sup>**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Ayurveda* is the science of life that deals with the preservation of health and the treatment of diseases. It has been classified into eight branches and *Kaumarabhritya* is one among them. It deals with the care of the child from conception until maturity. The physiological processes and the balance of *Doshas*, *Dushyas* and *Malas* differ significantly between children and adults. Therefore, the type and prevalence of diseases are also different. Thus, paediatric care is needed for the utilization of various approaches for the management of *Bala Roga*. *Pancakarma* is the most important *Sodhana Chikitsa* and it consists of *Vamana*, *Virecana*, *Basti*, *Nasya* and *Raktamokshana*. These therapies are practiced by following *Purva Karma*, *Pradhana Karma* and *Paschat Karma*. *Bala Pancakarma* is equally effective as in adults, but precautions should be taken to prevent complications. These therapies are helpful provided they are administered with due consideration according to the stage of the disease, dosage of medicines, *Vaya* and

*Bala* of the child as they will help in strengthening the immune system and a healthy body in the child.

**KEYWORDS:** *Bala Roga, Bala Pancakarma, Sodhana chikitsa.*

**INTRODUCTION**

*Kaumarabhritya*, the paediatric branch of *Ayurveda*, is dedicated to the health and holistic development of children from the antenatal stage through adolescence. This branch encompasses not only the treatment of childhood illnesses but also focuses on *Samskaras*

(rituals), *Poshana* (nutrition), *Raksha* (protection) and *Vridhhi* (growth and development). Among the diverse therapeutic modalities described in *Ayurveda*, *Panchakarma* occupies a significant place as a means of both *Sodhana* (bio-purification) and *Samana* (palliative care). *Panchakarma* is the most important *Sodhana Chikitsa* and it consists of *Vamana*, *Virecana*, *Basti*, *Nasya* and *Raktamokshana*. These therapies are practiced by following *Purva Karma*, *Pradhana Karma* and *Paschat Karma*. While *Panchakarma* is well established in adult therapeutics, its application in children is more complicated due to their *Bala*, *Agni* and *Aparipakwa Dhatus*. *Bala Panchakarma* is equally effective as in adults, but precautions should be taken to prevent complications.

### **PURVA KARMA**

#### **DEEPANA-PACANA**

Before starting *Panchakarma* procedure, *Deepana* and *Pachana* should be done for obtaining *Niramavastha* of *Doshas*.

### **SNEHANA**

*Snehana* is the process of oleation of the body by using medicated ghee and oils internally and externally. The first *Snehana* is done in baby soon after birth by smearing the baby with *Ghrita* mixed with *Saindhava*.<sup>[1]</sup> For *Praasam*, the baby is given to ingest a combination of *Madhu* and *Ghrita* processed with *Mantras*.<sup>[2]</sup> *Acharya Kashyapa* has contraindicated the use of *Snehana* in *Ksirapa*.<sup>[3]</sup>

Types of *taila* or *ghrita* used for *Snehana* in various conditions:

- *Apasmara* : *Panchagavya Ghrita*, *Mahapanchagavya Ghrita*, *Brahmi Ghrita*
- *Jwara* : *Triphaladi Ghrita*
- *Kasa* : *Nirgundi Ghrita*, *Kantakari Ghrita*.
- *Unmada* : *Kalyanaka Ghrita*, *Mahakalyanaka Ghrita*, *Mahapaischika Ghrita*.
- *Pandu* : *Panchagavya Ghrita*, *Mahatikta Ghrita*. *Draksha Ghrita*
- *Rajayakshma* : *Jivantyadi Ghrita*, *Rasnadi Ghrita*.
- *Kustha* : *Tubarak Taila*, *Bhallataka Taila*, *Katu Taila*, *Mahatikta Ghrita*, *Tikta Ghrita*.
- *Shwitra* : *Kriminashaka Taila*
- *Vata Vyadhi* : *Shatapaka Taila*.

**Indications**

- *Swedhya, Samshodhya, Ruksha Sharira, Vata Vikara, Vyayamasevi, Vriddha, Balaka, Abala, Krisha.*

**Contraindications**

- *Atisthula, Trishita, Chardi, Mandagni, Amadosha, Durbala, Atisara, Gala Rogi.*

**SWEDANA**

*Swedana* is a process by which the sweat or perspiration is produced in the body by using various methods. *Acharya Kashyapa* has explained eight types of *Swedana* such as *Hasta, Nadi, Prastara, Sankara, Pradeha, Upanaha, Avagaha* and *Parisheka*.<sup>[4]</sup> *Hasta* and *Pata Sweda* are considered useful in neonates and infants especially in abdominal colic. *Hasta Sweda* is recommended upto 4 months of age and *Pata Sweda* upto 6 years. *Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda* is commonly used in neuro muscular disorders in pediatric patients.

***Hasta Sweda***

- It is performed by applying warm hand of physician or attendant, over desired part of body. The hand should be warmed in smokeless flame.
- It is applicable in infants up to the age of four months.

***Nadi Sweda***

- *Swedana* by the steam of medicinal herbs by a special type of instrument (*Nadi Yantra*) is called *Nadi Sweda*. It is also known as *Bashpa Sweda*.

***Prastara Sweda***

- Preparing the *Swedana* materials and spreading the same over a standard sized stone slab or floor and covering it with a cloth or blanket or *Vatahara* leaves, the patient is asked to lie down over it and *Swedana* is to be done. This method is called as *Prastara Sweda*.

***Sankara Sweda***

- The method in which the materials are tied in a cloth and used in *Sweda* is known as *Sankara Sweda*. It is commonly known as *Pinda Sweda*.
- Most commonly used *Sankara Sweda* is *Shashtika Shali Pinda Sweda*.

***Pradeha Sweda***

- Luke-warm paste prepared with *Eranda*, *Shigru Patra* and *Mula*, *Gomutra* (cow's urine), *Kinva* & *Saindhava* is applied over affected area. It is changed frequently as the previous one becomes cold.
- It is effective in inflammatory conditions of throat, head, back or nape of the neck, ear, eyes, chin and chest.

***Upanaha***

- The process in which drugs appropriate for *Swedana* is applied over a limb and then covered by any leaf or bandage is called *Upanaha Sweda*.

***Avagaha***

- Immersion of body parts in warm medicated *Kwatha* or *Taila* or *Ghrita*, *Sneha*, etc. kept in a large tub is called *Avagaha Sweda*.

***Parisheka***

- Lukewarm decoction or oil or any liquid when showered over body is called *Parisheka*.

***Indications***

- *Kaphaja* condition: *Ama* conditions, *Pratishyaya*, *Kasa*, *Swasa*, *Gaurava*.
- *Vataja* conditions: *Shula*, *Sankocha*, *Graha* and *Stambha* of different body parts, all the *Nanatmaja Vata Vyadhis*.
- As *Purva Karma of Sodhana*: Before *Vamana*, *Virechana*, *Vasti* and *Nasya*.

***Contraindications***

- Mainly *Paittik* disorders: *Raktapitta*, *Kamala*, *Pandu*.
- Others: *Atisara*, *Udara*, *Chardi*, *Visha*, *Dhatu Kshaya*.

***PRADHANA KARMA******VAMANA***

*Vamana* is a procedure where the vitiated *Doshas* are eliminated through the *Urdhwabhaga*. *Garbhaodaka Vamana* is done immediately after birth for elimination of *Garbhodaka* using *Saindhava* and *Ghrita*. In *Ksheeraada* and *Ksheera Annada*, prior to *Vamana*, the stomach of the baby is filled with breast milk. In *Annada*, *Laghu* and *Tanu Peya* with *Ghrita* can be used instead of *Stanya*.<sup>[5]</sup> Children especially *Ksheerada*, vomits spontaneously even in the presence of a small *Dosha Dushti*. Hence, they require no forced vomiting. In case of

*Vamana* being the only option, *Sadya Vamana* is indicated. The ideal drug for *Vamana* is *Madanaphala*. *Madanaphala Pippali* as well as *Madana Pushpa* can be used by making a paste and applying on the breast of mother.

#### Dosage for *Vamana Dravya*<sup>[6,7]</sup>

<i>Hina</i>	1 <i>Prastha</i>
<i>Madhyama</i>	1 ½ <i>Prastha</i>
<i>Uttama</i>	2 <i>Prastha</i>

- *Churna* : *Agraparva Anguli Grahya*.
- *Kashaya* : 1 *Prasrta*
- *Kalka* : ½ *Aksha*

#### Indications

- ✓ *Rohini, Skanda Graha, Skanda Apasmara, Pitru Graha, Naigamesh.*

#### Contraindications

- ✓ *Shakuni, Putana, Mukha Mandika, Revati.*
- ✓ In children below 6 years.

#### VIRECANA

*Virechana* is the process in which the elimination of morbid *Doshas* occurs through *Adhobhaga*. It should be performed in children as the last resort if all other alternatives failing to cure a disease. It should be performed in children with extreme caution as there is a potent danger of dehydration which children are highly prone to. *Mridu Virechana Oushadha* like *Trivrit* or *Sukha Virechana Oushadha* like *Chaturangula* can be applied.<sup>[7]</sup> *Vasti* acts as an alternative for *Virechana*. *Virechana* should be performed after 15 days after *Vamana*.

#### Dosages for *Virechana*<sup>[8]</sup>

<i>Hina</i>	2 <i>Prastha</i>
<i>Madhyama</i>	3 <i>Prastha</i>
<i>Uttama</i>	4 <i>Prastha</i>

#### Indications

- ✓ *Kamala, Krimi, Udavarta.*

#### Contraindications

- ✓ *Sukumara, Ardita, Revati.*

**BASTI**

*Basti* is the procedure where the medicines are administered through the rectum or genito-urinary tract using *Vasti Yantra*. It is superior among all as it can be used liberally in children, keeping in mind the specifications in dose. *Brihatrayees* permit the administration of *Basti* from 1 year of age. *Acharya Kashyapa* has mentioned that *Basti* can be administered from crawling stage. *Basti* is the prime line of treatment for *Vata Dosha*. It is considered as *Ardha Chikitsa*.

According to *Acharya Kashyapa*, the criteria to initiate *Basti* procedure in a child as follow:<sup>[9]</sup>

- ✓ Child who has completed neonatal period.
- ✓ Child who is able to crawl, sit and stand without support.
- ✓ Child who can take solid food daily.
- ✓ Child who has started weaning from breast milk.

***Basti Netra Pramana***

Age	<i>Cha. Si.3/8-9</i>	<i>As. Hr.Su. 19/10-13</i>	Circumference of the tip ( <i>As. Hr. Su.19</i> )
Below 1 year	-	5 Angula	<i>Mudgavat</i> (wild green gram)
1-6 years	6 Angula	6 Angula	<i>Mudgavat</i> (green gram)
7 years	6 <sup>1/3</sup> Angula	7 Angula	<i>Mashavat</i>
8 years	6 <sup>2/3</sup> Angula	7 Angula	<i>Mashavat</i>
9 years	7 Angula	7 Angula	<i>Mashavat</i>
10 years	7 <sup>1/3</sup> Angula	7 Angula	<i>Mashavat</i>
11 years	7 <sup>2/3</sup> Angula	7 Angula	<i>Mashavat</i>
12 years	8 Angula	8 Angula	<i>Kalaya Matra</i> (dry pea)
13 years	8 <sup>1/2</sup> Angula	8 Angula	<i>Kalaya Matra</i>
14 years	9 Angula	8 Angula	<i>Kalaya Matra</i>
15 years	9 <sup>1/2</sup> Angula	8 Angula	<i>Kalaya Matra</i>
16 years	-	9 Angula	<i>Klinna Kalaya Matra</i> (soaked pea)
16-19 years	-	9 Angula	<i>Klinna Kalaya Matra</i>
20 years	-	12 Angula	<i>Karkandu Matra</i> (Jujuba)

**Quantity of *Sneha Basti***<sup>[10]</sup>

Age	<i>Matra</i>
Upto 3 years	3 Karsha (45ml)
4-5 years	1 Pala (50ml)
6-11 years	2 Prasrita
17 years and above	4 Prasrita
Old age	<i>Matra</i> is to be decreased

**Quantity of Niruha Basti<sup>[11]</sup>**

Age	Matra
Upto 3 years	9 <i>Karsha</i>
4 to 5 years	3 <i>Pala</i>
6 to 11 years	6 <i>Prasrita</i>
17 years and above	12 <i>Prasrita</i>

**Matra Basti<sup>[12]</sup>**

Matra Basti	Dose
<i>Hina</i>	1 <i>Prakuncha</i> (50ml)
<i>Madhyama</i>	1 ½ <i>Prakuncha</i> (75ml)
<i>Uttama</i>	2 <i>Prakuncha</i> (100ml)

**Indications of Anuvasana**

- ✓ *Sosha, Ardita, Mutrakricha, Pakwashaya Shula.*

**Contraindications of Anuvasana**

- ✓ *Pandu, Shwayathu, Kustha, Rajayakshma, Visarpa, all Kapha Rogas.*

**Indications of Niruha/ Asthapana**

- ✓ *Vibandha, Mutra Graha, Kustha, Switra.*

**Contraindications of Niruha/ Asthapana**

- ✓ *Rakta Atisara, Rudayadrava, Krusha Vyadhi.*

**NASYA<sup>[13]</sup>**

- *Nasya* is the process of administration of medicines through nostrils. According to *Acharya Kashyapa*, it is of two types: *Shodhana* and *Purana*.
- In nasal therapy, especially those given in breast fed children, *Katu Taila* or *Ghrita* mixed with *Saindhava* are given.
- *Pratimarsha Nasya* is advisable in children.

**Dosage**

- 2 drops or 3 drops in each nostril.

**Indications**

- ✓ Choice of treatment for disorders above *Greeva* (clavicle).
- ✓ In the predominance of *Vata* and *Kaphaja Rogas*.

**Contraindications**

- ✓ Below 7 years of age.
- ✓ *Trisna, Aparipakwa Pratishaya, Ajirna*, immediately after head bath.

**RAKTAMOKSHANA<sup>[14]</sup>**

- It is the process of letting out of vitiated blood. Children have *Aparipakwa Dhatu*. So, this procedure is not indicated.
- The most safe and comfortable mode of *Raktamokshana* in children is *Jalouka Avacharana*. Example: *Gudapaka*.

**Indications**

- *Vidradhi, Gulma, Arsha, Kushtha, Vatarakta, Visarpa, Vicharchika, Netraroga, Shiroroga, Kantharoga, Ahiputana*.

**Contraindications**

- *Sira Vedha* is again contraindicated in children below 16 years as they are composed of *Aparipakwa Dhatu*.
- General debility
- Cardiac problems
- Terminally ill patients
- Life threatening conditions

**PASCHAT KARMA<sup>[15]</sup>**

- *Peyadi Karma* (Dietary regime)
- *Rasayana* drugs (Rejuvenation therapy)
- *Shamana* drugs (Palliative therapy)

**Purpose of *Peyadi Karma***

- An inevitable part of *Panchakarma*.
- Marked reduction of digestive power after *Panchakarma*.
- Reduced digestive power is rectified with sequential intake of: Light diet and beginning with thin gruel and ending in normal food.

**DISCUSSION**

Though children share the fundamental principles of *Doshas, Dushyas*, and disease mechanisms similar to adults, their management demands a distinct approach due to their



unique physiological characteristics. The pediatric population is defined by *Soukumaryata* (tenderness of body), *Alpakayata* (immature organs), *Vividha Anna Anupasevanata* (inability to tolerate varied foods), *Aparipakwa Dhatu* (incomplete tissue development), *Ajata Vyanjanam* (absence of secondary sexual features), *Aklesha Sahatva* (low tolerance to stress), *Asampoorna Balam* (underdeveloped strength) and a predominance of *Shleshma Dhatu* (rapid growth and development). These features necessitate age-appropriate considerations regarding drug dosage, duration of therapy, and method of administration. Medicines should be mild, palatable and easy to digest to ensure better acceptance and efficacy in children. *Panchakarma* therapies like *Vamana*, *Virechana*, *Basti*, *Nasya* and *Raktamokshana* play a pivotal role in managing diseases caused by *Doshic* vitiation. These therapies help in eliminating accumulated toxins, balancing the *Doshas*, enhancing immunity, and increasing therapeutic receptivity. Classical texts provide detailed guidelines for implementing *Panchakarma* in children, with specific attention to indications, contraindications, and the need for individualized planning based on *Bala* (strength), *Desha* (region) and *Kala* (season/time). Utmost care must be taken to ensure safety, appropriateness, and prevention of complications during pediatric *Panchakarma* procedures.

## CONCLUSION

*Panchakarma* therapy acts as preventive as well as curative measure and improve the immunity of the body. Thus, it helps to maintain the good physical and mental health status through detoxification and rejuvenation. By incorporating these therapies, it can be effectively prevent and treat various childhood disorders, promoting overall growth and development of the child. In paediatric practice, these therapies are helpful provided they are administered with due consideration of the stage of the disease, dosage of medicines, *Vaya* and *Bala* of the child.

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