

A REVIEW OF KARNADHOOPANA FROM BRIHATRYAYI: AS A TREATMENT OF VARIOUS KARNAGATA VYADHIS

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ABSTRACT

In Ayurveda's holistic approach to health and wellness, *Dhoopana karma* is a remarkable gem. *Karna Dhoopana*, used in Shalakya tantra, stands out as a traditional therapy specifically designed for treating ear diseases. *Karna Dhoopana* is performed by introducing medicated smoke into the ear canal. This article aims to study *Karna Dhoopana* from various references available in *brihatryayi* and contemporary *ayurveda* literature across the internet. Materials and methods used to achieve the objectives are relevant and available in Ayurveda *Samhita* and articles from the internet. The following article discusses the introduction of *Karna Dhoopana*, the probable mode of action of the treatment, and *Karna Dhoopana yoga Dravya / yoga* indicated according to various diseases and suggested SOP.

Keywords: *Karna Dhoopana*, *Karnagata vyadhi*, *Shalakyantra*, CSOM, Otomycosis

INTRODUCTION

The human ear comprises three distinct anatomical regions: the outer ear, middle ear, and inner ear, each playing a crucial role in auditory perception and bal-

ance. The vestibulocochlear system, comprising the cochlea and the vestibular apparatus, is responsible for sound transduction and maintaining equilibrium¹.

The cochlea, a spiral-shaped organ, converts sound waves into electrical signals the auditory cortex interprets. At the same time, the vestibular system detects head position and motion, providing vital information for spatial orientation and balance. Dysfunction within this system can lead to auditory and vestibular disorders, necessitating comprehensive medical evaluation and intervention.

In *Ayurveda*, human ears are vital sensory organs linked to bodily health and balance. They are associated with the element of space (*akasha*)². They are believed to facilitate the perception of sound and the flow of vital energies (*prana*) throughout the body. The ears are thought to reflect an individual's overall well-being, as well as their structure and function. Proper ear care is emphasised, as it is believed that neglecting this aspect may lead to sensory impairments and disruptions in communication, both on physical and emotional levels. Therefore, Ayurvedic wisdom advocates holistic approaches to maintaining ear health.

Dhoopana karma has been mentioned across all eight branches of *Ayurveda*. *Dhoopana* involves using drugs which have *ruksha*, *ushna*, *Tikshna* and *laghu guna*³. These drugs have volatile active potentials released by burning them on charcoal, hot plate or as a wick. *Karna Dhoopana*, a traditional *Ayurvedic* treatment, plays a significant role in the management of ear diseases within the field of *Shalakyatantra*, which encompasses the study and practice of ear, nose, throat and Oro-dental disorders. This therapeutic method uses medicinal smoke derived from specific herbs introduced into the ear canal. The intent is to alleviate symptoms such as pain and inflammation while promoting overall ear health. In diseases like *Putikarna*, *karnasrava*, and *krimikarna*, which are correlated to CSOM and Otomycosis, *Karna Dhoopana* significantly reduces symptoms. *Karna Dhoopana* essentially breaks the pathophysiology (*Samprapti bhanga*) and relieves the symptoms of the disease⁴. In conditions where *Karna purana* is contraindicated due to a perforated tympani membrane, *Karna Dhoopana* can be used.

OBJECTIVE: To study *Karna Dhoopana* from various references available in *Brihatrayayi* and contemporary *Ayurveda* literature across the internet.

MATERIALS AND METHODS used to achieve the objectives are relevant and available in *Ayurveda Samhita* and online articles.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **History of Dhoopana karma:** *Dhoopana karma has references across all eight branches of Ayurveda*. In *Vedas*, the use of homa and yagnya has been mentioned. These herbo-mineral formulations are used to heal *vrana*, and *yonivyapada*, for disinfecting *sutikagara*, *shastrakarmagruha*, *kumaragara* and for sterilization of *Aasava* and *Arishta*. *Dhoopana* is a fundamental part of *rakshavidhi*. In the treatment of *jwara*, *Arsha*, *unmada*, *romantika*, *grahabadha*, *Shotha*, *Pratishyaya*, *Karnagata vyadhi*, and various *Dhoopa yoga* have been mentioned. A total of 94 *Dhoopana* formulations have been mentioned in texts. These formulations include single drugs or multiple drugs.
- 2) **Probable mode of action:** *Agni* and *Vayu Mahabhuta-Pradhan Dravyas* are mainly utilised for this procedure. These are the natural *Laghu*, *ushna*, *Ruksha*, and *Vishada*. These characteristics of the *Dravyas* aid in its quick combustion and spreadability. In nature, the majority of these *Dravyas* exhibit volatility. Their volatility would be a clear benefit in reducing the amount of microbiological contamination in hard-to-reach surfaces of narrow ear canals. Additionally, data indicates that these oils have potent antioxidant activities, which are advantageous in counteracting the organoleptic deterioration caused by free radicals.

Guggulu, *vacha* and *neem* are widely used drugs for *Karna Dhoopana*.

Guggulu has been used in several *Dhoopana* formulas. It was discovered that *Guggulu*'s volatile oil was very effective against *Rhizoperthadominica*, indicating its potential use as a fumigant. The methanolic extract of *Guggulu* included an active component

called 5-(1-methyl,1-aminoethyl)-5-methyl-2-octanone, which had vigorous antibacterial activity against gram-positive bacteria and moderate activity against gram-negative bacteria.⁵

Vacha is another drug which is widely researched when it comes to its use as a *Dhoopana Dravya*. The primary antibacterial agents of the *Acorus calamus* are beta and alpha asarones. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that beta asarone has more excellent antimicrobial activity than alpha asarone. The *Acorus calamus*'s leaves and rhizomes were discovered to have antibacterial properties. *Acorus calamus* methanolic extract had inhibitory activity against *Salmonella typhi*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, and *Staphylococcus aureus* bacterial strains.⁶

Neem is also frequently used and is one of the main ingredients in most formulations. The chemical azadirachtin, which is present in neem seed oil, has been shown to have insecticidal effects. In a study, *Staphylococcus aureus* demonstrated a high degree of inhibition to the fragrances of *Azadirachta indica*, displaying a maximum of 90% inhibition rate in 10 minutes and 50% in 5 minutes. In addition to killing pests, this natural fumigant negatively impacts them by preventing them from feeding and oviposition, disrupting mating, and preventing growth.⁷

A study on dhoopan's efficacy against *S. Auris* showed positive results.⁸

3) *Karnadhoopan yogya Dravya / formulations:*

Acharya Charaka categorised Dhoopa based on their pharmacokinetic characteristics⁹. Two varieties of *Dhoopa*—*Vrana Kathinyakara Dhoopa* and *Vrana Mridutakaraka Dhoopa*—have been mentioned. *As-tanga Sangraha* has also made comparable remarks regarding the classification. The *Kathinyakara* type includes *Fragrant Dravyas* like *Agaru* and *Sara* like *Chandana* and *Vijaysara*. The other kind is called *Vrana Mridutakaraka Dhoopa* and includes *Majja*, *Vasa*, and *Ghee*.

Plants from the *Kusthahara*, *Krimighna*, *Kandughna*, and *Vranahara Gana* families are primarily used for their antimicrobial qualities.

minerals with sulfur-containing compounds. *Arsenic trisulfide* (*Haritala*) and *disulphide* (*Manashila*) have been used. Animal products such as hair, nails, horns, and so on are utilized since keratin from these components contains sulfur. However, for *karnadhoopan*, not many animal or mineral-derived drugs are used. Animal excreta and *ghee* might be the only animal-derived products used, which are basically used as fuel for combustion only.

	Name of drug	Parts used ¹⁰
1)	<i>Punarnava</i>	Roots
2)	<i>Devdaru</i>	Stem
3)	<i>Sarshapa</i>	Seeds
4)	<i>Vacha</i>	Rhizome
5)	<i>Rasana</i>	Dried cover of fruit
6)	<i>Nimba</i>	Tender leaves
7)	<i>Apamarga</i>	Roots

Table 1: List of *Dhoopana dravyas* and their parts to be used.

	Disease	Karnadhoopan yoga	Reference
1)	<i>Vataj Karna shoola</i>	<i>Kshauma, Guggulu, Aguru, Ghee</i> ¹¹	Su. U. 21/11
2)	<i>Kaphaj Karna shoola</i>	<i>Kaphaghna Dravya</i>	Va. U. 18/11
3)	<i>Karna sraava</i>	- <i>Sattu, Aguru, madan</i> - <i>Ghee, guggulu</i>	A. s. U. page 22 156
4)	<i>Krimikarna</i>	- <i>Vartak dhoom</i> - <i>Guggulu dhoom</i> ¹²	Su. U. 21/51
5)	<i>Karna kandu</i>	<i>Tikshna Dravya dhooma</i> ¹³	Su. U 21/56

Table 2:List of Karnadhoopana Yoga

Suggested SOP for Karna Dhoopana:

- **poorva karma:** cleaning of EAC to remove a discharge, ear wax, or fungus that might be present using dry mopping or suction.

The patient is given a comfortable place to sit. Wind and dust must be avoided while selecting the place to carry out the procedure.

-**Pradhan karma:** Dhoopana varti is burnt as indicated, or churna of Dhoopana Dravya is sprinkled over burning charcoals or hot plate.

The burning drugs are covered with a conical-shaped object that must have a small opening at the top. The smaller part is attached to a flexible tube to direct the medicated fumes to the ear, or it can be held directly in the ear canal.

The procedure is performed for about 5-7 min in one sitting.

-**Paschat karma:** Instruct the patient to avoid cold and windy weather and food items.

Entry of water in EAC must be strictly prevented.

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