



## APPLICABILITY OF PANCHAKARMA IN SURGICAL PATHOLOGIES- A REVIEW

Ayesha Kaladgi<sup>1</sup>, P G Gannur<sup>2</sup>, A M Madni<sup>3</sup>

1. II Year PG Scholar, Dept. Of Shalya Tantra, BLDEA's AVS Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Vijayapur, Karnataka, India
2. Professor & HOD, Dept. Of Shalya Tantra, BLDEA's AVS Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Vijayapur, Karnataka, India
3. Associate Professor, Dept. Of Shalya Tantra, BLDEA's AVS Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Vijayapur, Karnataka, India

Corresponding Author: [aishafayazkaladgi@gmail.com](mailto:aishafayazkaladgi@gmail.com)<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj2112032024>

(Published Online: March 2024)

## Open Access

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Article Received: 07/02/2024 - Peer Reviewed: 04/03/2024 - Accepted for Publication: 11/03/2024.



## ABSTRACT

*Panchakarma* is an integral part of Ayurveda and is an essential therapy inhabiting all eight branches of Ayurveda. Its applicability extends to *Shalya Tantra* (School of Ancient Indian Surgery). *Panchakarma* is used to treat a variety of acute and chronic surgical conditions, such as *Vrana* (wound), *Bhagna* (musculoskeletal injuries), *Arsha* (haemorrhoids), *Bhagandara* (fistula in ano), *Arbuda* (tumours), *Shlipada* (filariasis), *Shopha* (swellings) and *Vidradhi* (abscess) etc.

*Panchakarma* includes *Vamana* (therapeutic vomiting or emesis), *Virechana* (therapeutic purgation), *Basti* (therapeutic enema), *Nasya* (elimination of toxins through the nose/errhine therapy) and *Raktamokshana karma* (therapeutic bloodletting). In the classical texts of Ayurveda, an elaborative description of the applicability of *Panchakarma* is available, with particular relevance in the management of various surgical pathologies. In this article, an effort has been made to explore the applied concepts of *Panchakarma* in *Shalya Tantra* with reference to *brihatrayi*.

**KEYWORDS:** *Arsha, Bhagandara, Bhagna, Panchakarma, ShalyaTantra.*

## INTRODUCTION

*Panchakarma* is a prominent Ayurvedic tool with five specially designed procedures for the internal purification of the body through the nearest possible routes. These are *Vamana* (emesis therapy), *Virechana* (purgation therapy), *Basti* (therapeutic enema), *Nasya* (errhine therapy) and *Raktamokshana karma* (blood-letting therapy).<sup>1</sup> Such purification allows the biological system to return to homeostasis and to rejuvenate rapidly and also facilitates the desired pharmacokinetic effect of medicines administered after that. *Panchakarma* provides a comprehensive therapy role as a promotive, preventive, curative & rehabilitative procedure. *Panchakarma* is not merely bio-purificatory therapy as it is understood, but also has a more comprehensive range of therapeutics such as replenishing, depleting, rejuvenating therapies, etc.<sup>2</sup>

In the classics, proper application of *Shodhana* (purification), *Shamana* (pacification), *Ahara* (diet), and *Achara* (behaviour) is advised to prevent and cure diseases. It eliminates toxins, stagnated excreta and metabolites from the body, cleanses the macro and micro-channels, maximises the absorption and metabolism of nutrients and drugs and helps minimise their dose and toxicity.<sup>3</sup>

Diseases are classified into two types- One which is cured by the *Shastras* (surgical) and one which is cured with *Snehadisadhya* (conservatively). But having classified this way, they are not exclusive of each other, which means *Shastrasadhya* (surgically treated) can be *Snehasadhya* (purificatory). If the *Vyadhi* is *Snehasadhya* (purificatory treated), then *Shashtra karma* (surgery) need not be done.<sup>4</sup>

Acharya Sushruta explained *Shashti Upkrama* for managing *Vrana*.<sup>5</sup> Out of *Shashti Upkrama* from

**More specifically, the indications for individual procedures include:**

Indications	Procedure
In patients who have complications and are rough, emaciated and consumptive due to wound. <sup>9</sup>	<i>SNEHANA KARMA</i> (UNCTION THERAPY)
In inflammatory swellings that are painful, harsh and hard, and in similar type of wound also. <sup>10</sup>	<i>SWEDANA KARMA</i> (SUDATION THERAPY)
In case of wounds having inflammation along with granulation tissue vitiated darkish blood, therapeutic emesis is useful particularly in that caused by <i>Kapha</i> . <sup>11</sup>	<i>VAMANA KARMA</i> (THERAPEUTIC EME-SIS)

*langhana to virechana* 11 *Upakramas* include *Panchakarma* procedures.<sup>6</sup>

*Panchakarma* procedures are necessary for several *Shalya Tantra*-related pathologies. Surgical intervention is typically necessary for advanced disease states. Chronic illnesses cause metabolites to build up and strangle in a variety of small spaces and channels (*Srotodushiti*), weaken the digestive fire (*Agnimandya*), improperly nourish tissues and lower immunity (*Ojokshaya*), which need the body for purification. The fundamental principle of treatments expounded by Acharya Sushruta is replenishing the deficiency, reducing the exaggerated levels and preserving the equilibrium of *Doshas* (Bio-humors-*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*).<sup>7</sup>

Understanding the importance of managing surgical pathologies; Acharya Sushruta has elaborated the *Panchakarma* procedures in *Chikitsa Sthana* along with pre-procedure preparations, complications, and management.

**Primary surgical conditions requiring *Panchakarma* procedures are described as follows:**

### 1) *VRANA*:

According to Acharya Sushruta in the management of wound, owing to *Rakta kshaya* in case of *Chinna* (Excised), *Bhinna* (Ruptured), *Viddha* (Punctured) and *Kshata* (Lacerated) wounds, *Vata* dosha gets aggravated resulting in severe pain. To alleviate vitiation of *vata dosha*, *Sneha-pana*, *Seka*, *Snigdha-upanaha*, and *Snehabasti* are specifically indicated.<sup>8</sup>

In wounds vitiated with pitta associated with <i>Vata</i> and which are chronic in duration. <sup>12</sup>	<i>VIRECHANA KARMA</i> (THERAPEUTIC PURGATION)
In wounds that is rough, severely vitiated by <i>Vata</i> and is particularly situated in lower part of the body. <sup>13</sup>	<i>BASTI KARMA</i> (MEDICATED ENEMA)
In retention of urine, disorders of urine and semen, wounds caused by calculus and in menstrual disorders. <sup>14</sup>	<i>UTTARA BASTIKARMA</i> (DOUCHES)
Wounds and inflammatory swellings that are located in supraclavicular region. <sup>15</sup>	<i>SHIROVIRECHANA KARMA</i> (ERRHINE THERAPY)
In wounds with inflammation, hardness, dark-red discolouration, pain and uneven surface.in poisoned wounds, bloodletting has been prescribed with leeches and scarification. <sup>16</sup>	<i>RAKTAMOKSHANA KARMA</i> (THERAPEUTIC BLOODLETTING)

व्रणानामादितः कार्यं यथासन्नं विशोधनम्|

ऊर्ध्वभागेरधोभागे: .....|| cha.chi 25/38

While describing wound management, Acharya charaka mentioned that evacuation with *Vamana*, *Virechana*, *Basti karma* & *Shastra karma* are the primary treatment modalities that should be adopted.

## 2) Various surgical conditions & applicability of *Panchakarma*:

DISEASES	PROCEDURE INDICATED
1.Arsha	In <i>Vatajaarsha-Snehana</i> , <i>Swedana</i> , <i>Virechana</i> , <i>Anuvasana</i> and <i>Asthapanabasti karma</i> In <i>Pittajaarsha-Virechana karma</i> . तत्र, वातप्रायेषु स्नेहस्वेदवमनविरेचनास्थापनानुवासनमप्रतिषिद्धं, पित्तजेषु विरेचनम्,  su.chi.6/16
2.Gudabhrmsha	<i>Picchabasti</i> (Slimy enema) .....पिच्छाबस्तिरयं सिद्धः सघृतक्षौद्रशर्करः  प्रवाहिकागुदभ्रंशरक्तसावज्वरापहः.....  cha.chi 14/224-229
3.Parikartika	<i>Picchabasti</i> and <i>Snehabasti (Anuvasanabasti)</i> .....पिच्छाबस्तिरयं सिद्धः सघृतक्षौद्रशर्करः  प्रवाहिकागुदभ्रंशरक्तसावज्वरापहः.....  cha.chi 14/224-229
4.Ashmarichikitsa	Post-operative <i>Swedanakarma</i> , <i>Uttarabasti</i> , <i>Asthapana</i> and <i>Anuvasanabasti karma</i> . स्वमार्गप्रतिपन्ने चोत्तरबस्त्यास्थापनानुवासनैरुपाचरेन्मधुरकषायैरिति;.....  su.chi 7/35
5.Bhagandara	<i>Swedana karma</i> & <i>Virechana karma</i> In <i>Kaphaja(Parisravibhagandara)</i> mild laxative followed by drastic ones have been advised. .....छित्वाऽग्निना दहेत् सम्यगेवं क्षारेण वा पुनः   Su.Chi 8/27
6.Shopha	<i>Teekshna vamana</i> , <i>Virechana</i> , <i>Asthapanabasti</i> , <i>Snehana</i> , <i>Swedana</i> , <i>Upanaha</i> & <i>Sira-vedha</i> . .....वमनविरेचनास्थापनानि तीक्ष्णान्यजस्रमुपसेवेत, स्नेहस्वेदोपनाहंश्च; सिराभिश्चाभीक्षणं शोणित मवसेचयेदन्यत्रोपद्रवशोफादिति   Su.Chi 23/12
7.Bhagna (Musculo-skeletal injuries)	<i>Nasya karma</i> in fracture & dislocations involving the parts above neck. <i>Anuvasanabasti</i> in <i>prashakhabhagna</i> <i>Basti karma</i> in <i>katibhagna</i> <i>Swedana&amp;nasya karma</i> in dislocation of <i>hanu</i> (Mandible). ऊर्ध्वकाये तु भग्नानां मस्तिष्क्यं कर्णपूरणम्   घृतपानं हितं नस्यं.....  su.chi 3/54

	<p>.....कटिभग्नं तु मानवम्    ततः स्थानस्थिते सन्धौ बस्तिभिः समुपाचरेत्   su.chi 3/28  हन्वस्थिनी समानीय हनुसन्धौ विसंहते     स्वेदयित्वा.....  su.chi 3/39  वातघ्नमधुरैः सर्पिः सिद्धं नस्ये च पूजितम्   su.chi 3/40</p>
8.Prameha pidika (Diabetic boils)	<p>Teekshanavamana, Virechana &amp; Sira-vedha.  ....तत्रोभयतः संशोधनमासेवेत..... तत्रोक्तः प्रतीकारः सिरामोक्षश्च....  su.chi12/4</p>
9.Apachi (Scrofula), Granthi, Arbuda(Tumour)	<p>Ghritapana, Tailapana, Swedana karma along with main Panchakarma procedure.  In advanced scrofula,medicated ghee should be administered to eliminate the impurities from both ways (Emesis &amp; Purgation), Shirovirechana karma.  तैलं विदद्याद्विकरञ्जगुञ्जावंशावलेखेङ्गुदमूत्रसिद्धम्  २० .....शाखोटकस्य स्वरसेन सिद्धं तैलं हितं नस्यविरचनेषु....   su.chi 18/20-23</p>
10. Granthiroga (Cystic lesion)	<p>In Vatajagranthi- Swedana,Upanaha  In Pittajagranthi- Bloodletting with leeches.  स्वेदोपनाहान् विविधांश्च कुर्यात्तथा प्रसिद्धानपरांश्च लेपान्    विदार्य.....  su.chi 18/6  जलौकसःपित्तकृते हितास्तु  क्षीरोदकाभ्यां परिषेचनं च   su.chi 18/8</p>
11. Shlipadaroga (Elephantiasis)	<p>Raktamokshana karma by Siravedha.  .....श्लीपदेऽनिलजे भिषक्    कृत्वा गुल्फोपरि सिरां विध्येत्तु चतुरङ्गुले.....   su.chi 19/52,55,56</p>
12. Pranashtashalya	<p>Vamana, Virechana, Dhumapana (Snuffs).  तद्यथा स्वभावः, पाचनं, भेदनं, दारणं, पीडनं, प्रमार्जनं, निर्धर्मापनं, वमनं, विरेचनं, प्रक्षालनं,....  su.su 27/4</p>
13.Vidradhi (Abscess)	<p>Vamana &amp; Virechana.</p>
14.Udara roga (Abdominal enlargement)	<p>Virechana, Basti karma.  पित्तोदरिणं तु मधुरगणविपक्वेन सर्पिषा स्नेहयित्वा,.....सर्वोदरेषु शंसन्ति बहुशस्त्वनुलोमनम्    su.chi14/6-9</p>
15. Yakridalyo-dara&Pleehodararoga	<p>Siravedha karma after Snehana &amp; Swedana.  प्लीहोदरिणः स्निग्धस्विन्नस्य दध्ना भुक्तवतो वामबाहौ कूर्पराभ्यन्तरतः सिरां विध्येत्, .....  su.chi 14/13  यकृद्दाल्येऽप्येष एव क्रियाविभागःविशेषतस्तु दक्षिणबाहौ सिराव्यधः   su.chi 14/15</p>
16. Vriddhi/Braddhna (Hernias)	<p>Raktamokshana by Siravedha  In Braddhna(inguinal hernia)- Virechana &amp; Niruhabasti.  .....यत्नेन सेवनीम्    व्यत्यासाद्वा सिरां विध्येदन्नवृद्धिनिवृत्तये   su.chi 19/24  विरेचनाभ्यङ्गनिरूहलेपाः पक्वेषु चैव व्रणवच्चिकित्सा   स्यान्मूत्रसेकः.....   cha.chi 12/95</p>

### 3) In AtyayikaChikitsa ( Emergency Management):

Conditions	Procedure
1.In acute conditions	<p>Siravyadhana  यान्त्याशु व्याधयः शान्तिं यथा सम्यक् सिराव्यधात्   su.sha. 8/22</p>

2. In excessive blood loss	<i>Raktabasti karma</i> (enema with blood) रक्ते रक्तेन, पिते तु कषायस्वादुतिक्तकैः सार्यमाणे कफे बस्तिः.....  cha.si 8/25
3. In <i>Dhoom-op-hata</i> (Suffocation by smoke)	<i>Vamana, Shiro-virechana karma</i> सर्पिरिक्षुरसं द्राक्षां पयो वा शर्कराम्बु वा   मधुराम्बु रसौ वाऽपि वमनाय ..... शिरोविरेचनं चास्मै दद्याद्योगेन शास्त्रवित् ....   su.su 12/33-37
4. In <i>Bahu-rajju-lata pa-shakanthapeedana</i> (Throatling)	<i>Shiro-virechana karma</i> तमभ्यज्य संस्वेद्य शिरोविरेचनं.....   su.su 27/22
5. Incompatible food	<i>Vamana, Virechana karma</i> विरुद्धाशनजान् <sup>[3]</sup> रोगान् प्रतिहन्ति विवेचनम् वमनं शमनं.....   cha.su 26/105
6. In <i>Dushivisha</i> or poisons situated in blood	<i>Siravyadha</i> along with all five evacuative measures of <i>Panchakarma</i> have been advised by Acharya Charaka. क्षारागदः कफस्थानगते स्वेदस्तथा सिराव्यधनम् दूषीविषेऽथ.....   cha.chi 23/63

## DISCUSSION

The proper healing of *Vrana* is the culmination of an excellent surgical intervention. *Vrana Chikitsa* is the most vital part of the practice of *Shalya Tantra*. Etiological classification of *Vrana* constitutes *Nija/Shareeravrana* (intrinsic wounds caused by vitiation of *dosha*) and *Agantujavrana* (exogenous wounds or traumatic wounds).<sup>17</sup> *Panchakarma* procedures have a significant place in the management of both these types of wounds.

The *Shodhana* has been specially indicated in *Dush-tavrana* to expel the *Pravruddha Doshas*.<sup>18</sup>

*Panchakarma chikitsa* can be applied under different *Avasthas* of a *Vyadhi*, which plays a significant role. In *Mootraashmari*, *Snehadikriya* is advised as *Poorva karma* before *Shastrakriya* & in *Paschata karma* after *Shastrakriya*.<sup>19</sup>

By assessing the *Taruna* and *Vrudhaavastha*, *Aama* and *Pakvaavastha* of *Shalyaja Vyadhi Panchakarma* can be adopted like in case of *Vidhradhi*, *Granthi*, *Shopha*. Clinically, the different stages of inflammation have to be assessed, and *Shopha* has to be treated accordingly. Acharya gives a clear indication of the uses of *Lepas* in *Aamaavastha* and *Bhedana* in *Pakvaavastha*, as that is said in contemporary science when to go for antibiotic therapy and incision & drainage. In a

broader range all *Panchakarma* procedures are explained under *Shashti upakrama* by Acharya sushruta.<sup>20</sup> *Doshanusaara* classification of each *shalyajavyadhi* plays a significant role in implementation of treatment, as which *dosha* is predominant in particular *Vyadhi* antagonist line of *Panchakarma* treatment is hence beneficial. *Atyayikachikitsa* is also the prime part of *shalyatantra*, where immediate treatment is given to save the person from risk. Acharya Sushruta has considered *Siravyadha* as *Ardhachikitsa* in *Shalyatantra* and indicated the procedure of *Siravyadha* (vene puncture) to relieve acute conditions due to its rapid action. It has also been mentioned as the last measure to be adopted when all other measures fail to provide relief.<sup>21</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Internationally, *Panchakarma* is recognised as a key, auxiliary, or antecedent therapy in the preservation, maintenance, and conservation of health, as well as the promotion of longevity. The practices of *Panchakarma* can be essential in the area of *Shalya Tantra* (Surgery). Adjuvant therapies of *Panchakarma* are necessary for the effective pre-operative management of many surgical conditions.



The need of the hour is required for the standardisation and scientific validation of the effectiveness of these procedures, along with the required modifications. By adopting *Panchakarma* procedures, the practice of *Shalya Tantra* will surely benefit from improved outcomes.

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**Source of Support: Nil**

**Conflict of Interest: None Declared**

How to cite this URL: Ayesha Kaladgi et al: Applicability of panchakarma in surgical pathologies- a review. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2024 {cited March 2024} Available from: [http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/596\\_601.pdf](http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/596_601.pdf)