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# A REVIEW ON GANDUSHA: AN AYURVEDIC THERAPEUTIC PROCEDURE FOR ORAL DISORDERS

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### **ABSTRACT**

Oral cavity is constantly exposed to external environmental toxins which cause bacterial invasion in the oral cavity and leads to increase risk of oral diseases. Hence to avoid the chances of bacterial invasion, it is very important to maintain a good oral hygiene. Ayurveda recommends *Gand sha* as a specialized therapy for good oral hygiene. It will maintain and promote the oral hygiene by exerting the cleansing action and by increasing the defence mechanism in the oral cavity. *Gand sha* is used for both prevention and treatment of oral diseases. The present review article highlights how the *Gand sha* therapy will act as a basic tool for good oral hygiene.

**Keywords:** Gand sha, Mukhagatarogas, Oral hygiene, Oral disease

#### INTRODUCTION

Oral cavity is such a part of the body which is constantly exposed to many risk factors in day-to-day life. The external environmental pollutants in the form of endogenous toxins (mavisha) and exogenous toxins (garavisha) enter the body through contaminated foods-drinks-air, junk food habits and addictions like tobacco-guthaka chewing, smoking, alcohol intake, soft drinks, irregular food habits, mental stress etc. Gradually they result in accumulation

of toxins in the oral cavity and cause bacterial invasion leading to bad oral hygiene. Therefore, the problems regarding bad oral hygiene are progressively increased and finally lead to increased risk of oral disorders. Hence in order to avoid the chances of bacterial invasion, it is very important to remove such toxins from the mouth to maintain good oral hygiene. Ayurveda recommends the use of *Gand sha* to remove such accumulated toxins safely from the

oral cavity. Regular practice of *Gand sha* will help to regain good oral hygiene.

In Ayurveda, Gand sha is explained as one of the routine procedure under the context of daily regimens (dinacharya)<sup>1,2</sup> for the maintenance of good oral health. It can be done in both healthy and diseased persons. In a healthy person it can be done by using plain sesame oil (tila taila). For a diseased person it can be done by using different medicated liquids or decoctions depending upon the condition of the disease and desired therapeutic effects. Gand sha will maintain and promote the oral hygiene by exerting the cleansing action and by increasing the defence mechanism in the oral cavity.

#### **DEFINITION:**

Gand sha is the process of "holding any medicated liquid in the mouth to its full

capacity for a specific time without allowing any movement inside the mouth". <sup>3,4,5,6</sup> Gand sha is done with the unctuous substances or fats (sneha) like oils (tail di) or ghee (grita) etc., milk (Ksh ra/paya), honey (kshoudra), honey-water (madh daka), meat soup (m msarasa), wine (madhya), urine of animals (m tra), sour liquids (mla), wash of grains fermented by keeping overnight (dh ny mla), herbal decoctions (kash ya) or warm water (ushnodaka) etc. according to the dosh s<sup>7,8</sup>

#### **TYPES:**

Depending upon the *doshic* vitiation (*doshagnat*) and the therapeutic effect (*k rmukat*), the classical text books of Ayurveda have mentioned four types of-Gand sha as mentioned in below.

<b>Table 1:</b> Types of Gand sha according to different Ayurvedic ch ry	n ry	Ayurvedic (	different A	ng to	sha accord	Gand	ypes of	<b>:</b> 1: '.	Table
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Sushruta <sup>9</sup>	VriddhaV gbhata <sup>10</sup>	V gbhata <sup>11</sup>	Sh rangadhara <sup>12</sup>
Snehana(oleating)	Snigdha(oleating)	Snehika(oleating)	Snigdha(oleating)
Pras dana	Shamana	Shamana	Pras dana
(palliating)	(palliating)	(palliating)	(palliating)
Shodhana	Shodhana	Shodhana	Samshodhana
(purificatory)	(purificatory)	(purificatory)	(purificatory)
Ropana(healing)	Ropana(healing)	Ropana(healing)	Ropana(healing)

Snigdha Gand sha: It is oleating type of Gand sha. In this, unctuous substances (sneha) like oil (taila) or ghee (grita) are processed with herbs which have the properties like sweet taste (madhura rasa), sour taste ( mla rasa) and salt taste (lavanaand hot potency navirya)<sup>12,13</sup>. This type of Gand sha is effective in correcting the imbalance of the V ta dosha in the mouth. So, it is useful in V taja diseases of the mouth (v taja mukha roga) i.e. diseases associated with dryness and roughness in the mouth<sup>12</sup>. A paste of sesame with water

(tilakalkodakam) or milk (kshira) or oil (sneha) is ideal for Snehika Gand sha<sup>10</sup>.

Shamana Gand sha: It is palliative type of Gand sha. Here, the decoction (kash ya) is prepared from the herbal drugs which are having the taste (rasa) of bitter (tikta), astringent (kash ya) and sweet (madhura) and cool potency (sh ta virya)<sup>12,13</sup>. This type of Gand sha is beneficial for the alleviation of morbid Pitta dosha in the buccal cavity. As the name itself suggests, this type of Gand sha reduces the irritation due to Pitta dosha and has soothing effect in

the buccal cavity and hence called Shamana Gand sha. So, it is useful in Pittaja diseases of the mouth (pittaja mukha roga) i.e. diseases associated with burning sensation in the mouth.

Shodhana Gand sha: It is purificatory type of Gand sha. Here, the decoction (kash ya) is prepared from the herbal drugs which are having the taste (rasa) of pungent (katu), sour (mla) and salt (lavana) and hot potency (ushna virya) drugs of Shirovirechana gana<sup>12,13</sup>. This type of Gand sha induces excessive oro-pharyngeal secretions. It is capable of eliminating the morbid Kapha dosha along with the oropharyngeal secretions in the oral cavity and hence the name Shodhana Gand sha. So, it is useful in Kaphaja diseases of the mouth 12 (kaphaja mukha roga) i.e. diseases associated with excessive salivation and stickiness in the mouth.

Ropana Gand sha: It is healing type of Gand sha. Here, the decoction (kash ya) is prepared from the herbal drugs which are having the taste (rasa) like astringent (kash ya), bitter(tikta) and sweet (madhura) and cool potency (sh ta virya) 12,13. Since the drugs are used here are capable of healing ulcers (vrun s) and hence the name Ropana Gand sha. This type of Gand sha promotes healing of ulcers in the mouth and hence useful in case of mouth ulcers 12 (mukha vran s).

Kash ya Gand sha contains mainly watersoluble ingredients which will remove all water soluble toxins from the mouth. Sugar molecules remain in the mouth are the main source of food for the growth of oral bacteria. They cause inflammation in the oral cavity and produce oral problems. The western science also agrees that the oral bacteria contribute tooth decay, gingivitis and other oral cavity diseases. Sugar molecules which remain in the mouth are water soluble. The ingredients of Kash ya Gandsha neutralize sugar residues immediately and it stops food supply to the bacteria's survival and growth. In this way it will help to remove bacterial load from the oral cavity and regain of oral health.

Sneha Gand sha contains mainly lipid-soluble ingredients which will remove all the lipid-based toxins from the mouth. The bacteria, viruses, fungi and other parasites, toxins and other debris produce oral health issues like gum disease, teeth problems etc. Sneha Gand sha has a powerful detoxifying effect. The oil acts like a cleanser. It removes such toxins from the oral cavity. Plaque is also one of the major contributing factors for oral health problems. It is fat-soluble toxins. Sneha Gand sha helps to reduce plaque and oral bacterial load from the mouth and regain of oral health.

Hence in a nut shell it can be said that, the Gand sha can be either water-soluble (Kash ya Gand sha) or lipid-soluble (Sneha Gand sha) based on its primary contents and different effects.

### **PROCEDURE:** 9,14,15,16

The individual should be made to sit comfortably in erect posture in devoid of breeze in sunlight. His shoulders, throat, cheeks and forehead should be massaged and fomented. He should be asked to hold the medicated liquid in his mouth without doing any movement inside with concentrated mind and face slightly lifted up. He should be advised not to drink the liquid and hold it until the mouth gets filled with oro-pharyngeal secretions (kapha) and watery discharge (jalasr va) appears from the nose (n sa) and the eyes (netra). Then it

should be spat out and relaxes. After that next *Gand sha* should be done.

In this way at a stretch, three, five or seven times Gand sha dh rana can be done to get rid of the dosh s till the appearance of signs and symptoms of proper (Samyaklakshanas) of Gand sha therapy. The person is advised to do gargle (kavala) with warm water, spit out and relaxes.

**DOSAGE:** The quantity or dosage for *Gan*d sha differs as individuals oral cavity capacity differs. Hence it is difficult to fix the exact dose. According to Sh rangadhar, a mouth full of liquid is dose of Gand sha. And further, he states that one kola (6gm) by measure is the dose of either a liquid (decoction) or a powder for Gand sha. 17 V gbhata states that a liquid is filled the mouth about ½ of capacity of the oral cavity (is pravara m tr), or  $1/3^{rd}$  of capacity of oral the cavity (is madhyama  $m \ tr$  ) or  $\frac{1}{4}$  of capacity of the oral cavity (is avara m tr)<sup>15</sup>. Among the above said dosages, Sh rangdhara's dosage holds good as per the definition Gand sha.

**DURATION:** 9,15,16 The medicated oil has to keep in the mouth till the person develops following symptoms: Once the person develops these symptoms, he can spit out the oil. If required the procedure may be repeated.

- Filling the throat by oro-pharyngeal secretions (*kapha purnasyat*)
- Watery discharge from the nose (khantha sr va)
- Watering of the eyes (akshi sr va)

ASSESSMENT OF PROCEDURE OF GAND SHA: When the person is treated with *Gand sha*, physician or therapist should assess the therapeutic effect of the

Gand sha in every case in following manner. 18,19

Symptoms indicative of proper effects: (Shuddha Gand sha Lakshana): A proper Gand sha therapy brings about following symptoms if performed systematically and correctly.

- 1. Alleviation of illness or disease (vy dherapachayah)
- 2. Freshness of the mouth or feeling of contentment (tushtih)
- 3. Clarity of the oral cavity (vaishdyam)
- 4. Feeling of lightness in the mouth (vak-tral ghavam)
- 5. Clarity or normal functioning of the sense organs (indriyapras da)

# Symptoms indicative of inadequate effects: (Heena Yoga Gand sha Lakshana)

- 1. Stiffness of the mouth (j dyah)
- 2. Excessive Salivation (kaphotklesha)
- 3. Inability of the tongue to perceive taste properly(arasajn nah)

# Symptoms indicative of Excessive effects: (Ati Yoga Gand sha Lakshana)

- 1. Ulceration in the mouth (mukhap ka)
- 2. Dryness of the buccal cavity (shosha)
- 3. Feeling thirsty(trushn)
- 4. Tastelessness in the mouth (aruchi)
- 5. Sense of Exhaustion(klama)

#### Chikitsa:

Yog tiyoga laxanas should be treated appropriately. In case of shodhanaatiyoga, snehana gand sha should be done and in snehanaatiyoga, shodhana gand sha is to be done. Shamana and ropana gand sha should be continued until the disease (roga) is cured.

## **CONTRA-INDICATION**<sup>20</sup>:

Gand sha (sukhoshnodaka) should not be advised to a person who is poisoned (visha), unconsciousness (murch), weak or emaciation (shoshi), bleeding disorders (raktapitta) conjunctivitis (kupit kshi) and children less than five years of age. It should not be administered to persons suffering from rhinitis (p nasa), indigestion (aj rna), lack jaw (hanugraha), anorexia (Aruchi), who has received Nasya therapy, and in case of loss of sleep due to awakening (j garana). It is advocated after the age of five years. Patient having chronic or carcinogenic ulcers in oral cavity are also avoid.

### BENEFITS OF TAILA GAND SHA:

Gand sha can be practiced daily to maintain good oral health. Regular practice of Taila (oil) Gand sha elaborates the following benefits:<sup>21</sup>

- 1. It strengthens the voice (swarabalam) by supporting and promoting the vocal chords. It lubricates, reduces toxic load and purifies the vocal chords. Voice becomes more effective and melodious.
- 2. It strengthens the jaws or mandible (hanurbalam) by lubricating and supporting.
- 3. It nourishes the mouth (vadanopachaya) and makes face healthy and beautiful by giving proper exercise to the muscles of cheeks, tongue, lips and soft palate. It also increases motor functions of these muscles.
- 4. It improves taste perception (param-rasajnanamruchyam) by honing the taste buds. It also preps the appetite, clearing any fogs covering the digestive fire of the stomach.
- 5. It prevents dryness of mouth and throat (nachasyakanthashosha) by balancing the pH of the oral cavity.

- 6. It prevents cracking of lips (naoshthayohsputhanadbhavam) and supports the lips health.
- 7. It makes the teeth strong (*dridamu-ladanta*) and healthy by strengthening the roots of the teeth. It increases the stability of teeth and gums.
- 8. It prevents dental caries (krimidanta) and toothache (nashulyante) and dental hypersensitivity (nahrishyante) by nourishing the nerve tissue and nerve endings.
- 9. It also provides resistance against the oral disorders of oral cavity. It prevents the disorders of oral cavity (doshaja or ganthujamukharogas), head (shirah), throat (kantha), ear (karna), nose (n sa) and eye (netra). It also helps indirectly to improve immunity system (vy dhikshamatwam).

## **PROBABLE MODE OF ACTION OF** *GAND SHA* <sup>22,23</sup>:

The drug which is taken by the mouth is passed through the liver and then absorbed into the bloodstream (systemic circulation). But in other forms of drug administration, the drug by-passes the liver and directly entering the bloodstream and results in rapid onset of drug effect.

Gand sha is other form of drug administration into the oral cavity in which the active ingredients and chemical constituents of the drugs are absorbed through the buccal mucosa and reach the blood stream. It is having both in local and systemic action but generally more in local effect. The probable mode of action is explained in following actions:

## Exerts increased mechanical pressure:

Gand sha increases mechanical pressure inside the oral cavity. The active ingredients and chemical constituents of the medi-

cated liquid stimulate the chemoreceptors and mechanoreceptors in the mouth to send signals to salivary nuclei in the brain stem. As a result, the parasympathetic nervous system activity increases and impulses sent via motor fibres in facial and glossopharyngeal nerves. They trigger a dramatically increased output of salivary secretion which predominantly watery (serous). The metabolic waste (toxins), food debris and depositions as well as superficial infective micro-organisms present in the oral cavity gets dislodged and mixed with retained medicated liquid and removed from the oral cavity. Thus, Gand sha will act as a good oral cleansing method and helps to improve or regain the oral hygiene.

## Stimulates salivary gland:

Gand sha stimulates the salivary glands to secrete more saliva. Saliva contains a variety of host defence factors. The IgA, IgM antibodies and lysozyme (a bactericidal enzyme that inhibits bacterial growth in the mouth) present in the saliva provide protection against micro-organisms by acting as local antibiotic. Saliva also contains coagulation factors (factors VIII, IX & X) which protect wounds from bacterial invasion. Hence, Gand sha increases the local defence mechanism of the oral cavity and helps to regain oral hygiene.

## Increases the vascular permeability:

Gand sha increases the vascular permeability in the oral cavity. It creates pressure over the oral mucosa. The active ingredi-

ents and chemical constituents of the warm medicated liquid irritate the oral mucosa and increase the vascular permeability. Therefore, the drugs get rapidly absorbed both locally and systemically. This can help to reduce inflammation and enhance the healing process of disease and thus cures the disease of oral cavity.

## Maintains oral pH:

The main function of salivary buffer is to maintain pH at the mucosal epithelial cell surface and the tooth surface. Healthy mouth is a non-acidic or neutral. Unhealthy mouth is acidic and increases the risk of oral diseases. Gand sha is an immediate solution for mouth acidity and change the oral pH quickly into a safe zone. The active ingredients and chemical constituents of the medicated liquid of Gand sha regulate and balance the pH of the oral cavity and help to reduce bacterial growth in the mouth. Thus Gand sha cures the disease and helps to regain oral hygiene bymaintaining a good pH balance in the mouth.

## GAND SHA AS AN UPAKRAMA FOR MUKHAGATA ROGA:

Gand sha is also explained as a remedy (upakrama) for diseases of the oral cavity (mukhagata rogas). It is having both preventive and curative effect.

Gand sha is indicated in following diseases and it can be done by using different medicated liquids or decoctions depending upon the condition of the disease and desired therapeutic effects.

**Table 2:** Indication of *Gand sha* in different *diseases* 

Diseases of the	Pinasa(Atrophic rhinitis), Pratisy ya(Rhinitis) <sup>24</sup>
Head and Neck	
Diseases of Oral	KaphajaOshtaprakopa (Herpes labialis) <sup>25</sup> ; Dantaharsha (tingling/hyper-
cavity	sensitiveness of teeth) and Dantachala (Shakey teeth) <sup>26</sup> ; Krumidanta (den-
	tal cavity) <sup>27,28</sup> ; DantaSharkara(Tartars) <sup>29</sup> ; Sheetada(Bleeding Gums, Gum

Boil, Gingivitis)<sup>30</sup>; Dantaveshta(Pyorrhoea alveolaris)<sup>31</sup>; Saushira(Apical abscess or Chronic Gingivitis)<sup>32,33</sup>; DantaVidarbha(Allergic Gums)<sup>34</sup>; Dantan di (Sinuses of Gums)<sup>35</sup>; Dushta Jihwaa(Chronic Glossitis)<sup>36</sup>; Upa-jihw <sup>37</sup>; Galashundi<sup>38</sup>; Talusosha(Atropy of Palate)<sup>39</sup>; V taja Kantharohini(Painful Diphtheria)<sup>40</sup>; Gala Vidradhi (Throat Abscess)<sup>41</sup>; Mukhap ka (Stomatitis)<sup>42</sup>; MukhaArbuda (Tumours in Oral Cavity)<sup>43</sup>; Durbala Dwija (weak Teeth)<sup>44</sup>; S dhya Rohini (Diphtheria)<sup>45</sup>; Kaphaj Mukha Roga (Oral diseases due to Kapha)<sup>46</sup>

## CLINICAL WORKS ON GAND SHA:

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### **CONCLUSION**

Ayurveda explained Gand sha as one of the daily routine procedure under the context of dinacharya for maintenance of oral hygiene. It is one among the important therapeutic procedures as well as an effective detoxifying measure in oral diseases. It will maintain and promote the oral hygiene by exerting the cleansing action and by increasing the defence mechanism in the oral cavity. It is having both preventive and curative effect if it is performed systematically. It is better to take an advice of an Ayurvedic physician before taking Gand sha therapy.

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