

Concept of Avartana in Ayurvedic Classics

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Abstract

There are many drug doses forms for drug delivery systems are available in Ayurvedic classics, *Snehapaka* is one among these pharmaceutical process. It is a method of preparation of medicated *sneha* (ghee or oil) and depending on stage of preparation, it is of three types. Among these the *madhyama paka sneha* are used to administer orally. When this *snehapaka* is done repeatedly with *drava dravya* (decoction, milk etc.) and *kalka* (paste) the process is called *Avartana*. Depending on the number of process the formulations named as *shatapaki* and *sahasrapaki*. This *avartana* process was generated to potentiate the formulation which was used from Samhita period to minimize dose, for easy consumption and assimilation of the medicine. This article aims to review on unique method of *sneha* preparation (*Avartana*) in different contexts of Ayurveda.

Keywords: Snehapaka; Avartana; Shatapaki; Sahasrapaki.

Introduction

Snehapaka is a method of preparing oil base medicines which is processed by adding *kalka dravya* (paste of drugs), *sneha dravya* and *drava dravya* (decoction, milk etc.) in the ratio of 1:4:16 respectively. The benefits of *snehapaka* are to extract active principles of *Kwatha* and *kalka* into fatty media by using oil or ghee as base. Depending on stage of preparation *snehapaka* is of three types *Mrudu paka*, *Madhyama paka* and *khara paka*. In which *Madhyama paka sneha* can be used for *basti* (therapeutic enema) and *pana* (internal use).

The term *avartana* literally means repetition of process.[1] *Sneha* (Oil/Ghee) after subjecting to the repeated process of *Paka* with *kalka* and *drava dravya* is called as *Avartita sneha*. This was the unique method of preparation of *sneha*

found in *Ayurvedic samhitas*, to fortify the *sneha* preparation. Similar concept was explained for *rasaushadhis* to increase the potency of *bhasmas* by subjecting to *Shata puti* and *sahasraputi bhasma* (method of repeated incineration) and *avartana* concept for medicated *sneha* was developed. Recently published article suggested that anti convulsant activity of *sapta avartita Hingusauvarchaladi ghrita* was more effective than *hingusauvarchaladi ghrita*[2] also the physical and chemical properties are changed by increasing the beneficial characters of fats.

Hence Ayurveda has given special attention to this formulation.

The present article was prepared by reviewing the various literatures of *Ayurveda* with search term of *AVARTANA*. The recently published literatures were also included in the study.

The available literatures were screened on method of preparation, and their specific indications.

Method of Avartana

For the preparation of medicated *sneha* the materials needed are *kalka dravya*, *sneha* (oil

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or ghee) and *drava dravya* (decoction/milk/water etc.) in the ratio of 1:4:16 respectively. The oil/ghee should be subjected to *murchana* before preparing the medicated sneha to remove moisture, bad odour and unwanted matters.[3] *Murchana* is done by adding specific drugs and water to the oil or ghee to remove impurities and enhance the potency of *sneha* and makes it more suitable to extract active principles from the medicinal drugs.[1] A study shows that the specific gravity, refractive index of *tila taila* gradually decreases after *taila murchana*. [4]

After *murchana* the above mentioned ratio of *dravyas* are taken in a big vessel and on mild flame it should be boiled by continuous stirring. As it prevents the *Kalka dravya* to stick to the bottom and prevents burn of medicine. This process continued till appearance of *madhyama sneha paka siddhi lakshanas* such as generation of good odour, colour, taste of drug, disappearance of foam in ghee based medicine[5] and appearance of foam in oil based medicine.[5] The *kalka* (paste of drug) when placed on fire it should not produce crackling sound which indicates the *sneha* does not have moisture. The *kalka* when rolled in between fingers it should become a soft roll without any cracks on it.

In *Avartana* the above process is repeatedly done by adding *drava dravya* and *kalka*. Ratio of these depends on the *sneha* obtained from earlier *paka*. Above said single process called as one *avartita*, Seven times processed *sneha* called as *saptavartita*, 100 times processed as *shatapaki*, 1000 times processed *sneha* called as *sahasrapaki*. It takes many days to prepare

and any *sneh kalpana* should not be prepared in a single day.[6]

In *sneha kalpana* both water soluble and fat soluble extractives are tried to get into the final preparation with the aim to enhance the therapeutic effect. In *avartana* process maximum possible extractives of the medicaments are tried to get into the *sneha* by repeating the process of *sneha paka*. [7]

The available *Avartita snehas* in *Brihatrayees* are - *Bhallataka Taila*[8] *Madhuka taila*[9] *Madhuparni taila*[10] *Bala taila*[11] *Anu taila*[12] *Shatapaka taila*[13] *Trivrit sneha*[14] as per processing explained in Table 1.

Administration

Shatapaka Bhallatakataila - Rasayana purpose.[8]

Shatapaka madhukataila, shatapaka madhuparni taila-Vataraktahara. [9-10]

Shatapaka Madhuparni taila is indicated in *vatarakta*, apart from that also indicated in *swasa, kasa, hridroga, panduroga, visarpa, kamala, dahanashak*.

Sahasrapaka, shatapaka, bala taila is indicated in *Vatarakta, Vata Roga, Rasayana, Jeevana, Brumhana, Swarya, Shukraasruga dosha nashana*. [11]

Anu taila is *dashapaki sneha* utilised for *nasya* purpose. In context of *anu taila* author says by repeated *sneha paka* the *sneha* becomes *anu* (nano) form and it has ability to enter into minute *srotas* (channels). [12]

Table 1: List of Avartita Sneha in Brihatrayee

SI. No	Name of the formulation	Processing (Avartana)
1	Bhallataka Taila ⁸	Shatapaka
2	Madhuka taila ⁹	Shatapaka
3	Madhuparni taila ¹⁰	Shatapaka
4	Bala taila ¹¹	Shatapaka
5	Bala taila ¹¹	Sahasrapaka
6	Anu taila ¹²	Dashapaki
7	Shatapaka taila ¹³	Shatapaka
8.	Trivrit sneha ¹⁴	Shatapaka

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