

PADABHYANGA IN GENERAL LIFE STYLE AND ITS CLINICAL ASPECT

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ABSTRACT

Padabyanga is a holistic therapy and a religious approach towards an effective psychosomatic healing. It is a concept beyond massage (Abhyanga) and it is a part of Ayurvedic traditional treatment. Reflexology, Acupuncture, Acupressure and Pedicure seems to have originated from this ancient art of healing. Padabhyanga can be done at any time of the day; it is more effective when it is done at end part of the evening or at night before retiring to bed. Since Abhyanga is advised to be done on a daily basis for maintenance of good health, so Padabhyanga too can be done on a daily basis. Oil applied to the feet, makes the feet strong (sthairya), induces sleep (nidra), improves visual power of eye (dristi prasadana), relieves paraesthesia / anaesthesia of feet (padasupti), tiredness (shrama), stiffness (stambha), muscular cramps (sankocha) and cracking of feet (sphutana). So it can be conclude that, by coming in contact of palm and sole during massage energy must be produced which may have a great role in various effect on body system.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the science of life. From the very beginning it has given more emphasis on preventive aspect than clinical aspect. Acharya Charaka and Acharya Vagbhata the root authors of Ayurveda have described the value of preventive aspect first.¹ Acharya Susruta also accepted it as one of the important aspect of medicinal system. All those preventive aspects are described by acharyas included under dincharya. Dincharya means the daily routine profile that explains all the routine works from early rising to, bowel clearance

habit, washing of face teeth brushing and up to bed with proper procedure. But now in this present metro magic era it is difficult to perform all the activities of Dinacharya in a single day due to lack of time, lack of interest and also due to lack of equipments (anjana, tambula, prasadana etc.) and because of hectic procedures. Among the variety of procedures of Dinacharya, Padabhyanga is one of them, which means massaging of the sole. It is very simple process, requires very less time, less equipment, without assistance with no

chances of complication. 'Pada' or 'foot' has been given most importance in Indian customs, tradition and medicine.² In fact, in Ayurveda, 'Pada' is considered as an important motor organ (Karmendriya).³ The feet are more than just an essential part of body. Ayurveda says that eleven marmas (vital areas) out of 107 marmas are located in each leg.⁴ The feet are very important part in our body as it contains many nerve endings. So Padabhyanga is very necessary for day to day life.

Abhyanga: Abhyanga is highly suggested in Ayurveda. It is one of the absolute most important healing practices one can consolidate into their everyday routine to keep up a healthy body. This therapy includes massage of the body with a lot of warm oil procured with herbs for particular conditions. It (Abhyanga / oil bath) makes the body soft, controls (mitigates) kapha and vata aggravation, bestows nourishment to the tissues, good complexion/colour and strength to the body.⁵ This is the most beneficial for skin, and hence one should use it regularly. Vata is main dosha responsible for sensory function of skin. This skin is nourished or becomes more efficient by abhyanga. Therefore especially abhyanga should be done sira, karna and pada region.⁶ Among them padabhyanga is one of the multy effective procedure.

Padabhyanga: Among the variety of procedures of Dinacharya, Padabhyanga is one of them, which means massaging of the sole. It is very simple process, requires very less time, less equipment, without assistance with no chances of complication. Padabhyanga means foot massage with medicated oils. It is an Ayurvedic therapy

which can be done as an integral part of the Abhyanga. It is important because most of the nerves of our body end up in the palms and the sole. Padabhyanga mainly helps in maintaining the health of the feet and has many benefits. It is more effective when it is done at night before sleep. Padabhyanga can be done on daily basis.⁷

Procedure⁸: Padabhyanga is best effective, when it is done before going to bed. Before padabhyanga feet should be washed properly with warm water. Any medicated massaging oil can be applied. For summer season Tila oil base and for winter season mustard oil base medicated oil is preferably used. Oil should be heated in warm water bath, and then applied over feet covering the lower leg joints, soles, heel and the toes by using two fingers. The strokes given usually are downwards from the ankles towards the toes and circular movements around the joints. Supporting the heel with one of the hands, the spaces between the toes are massaged. Each of the toes is squeezed and massaged from root to tip. End the massage with the soles. Moderate pressure is applied while ending the massage. Single therapist working on both the legs is considered best to maintain synchronicity. It is done for 10-15 minutes or till warmth is produced.

Benefits: It has external or localized and internal or systemic effect.^{9,10,11,12.}

External effect: It gives relief from

- i) Cracked heal
- ii) Numbness of leg
- iii) Dryness of feet
- iv) Tingling sensation
- v) Sprain
- vi) Netrarogahara

Over all it produces soothing effect in sole and gives strength to leg.

Internal effect –

- i) It has a great role in improving eyesight
- ii) Produces calm and quiet sleep
- iii) Gives relief from physical and mental stress
- iv) Suppress kapha and vataja disease
- v) It facilitates good metabolic effect
- vi) Provides physical strength
- vii) Protects from sciatica
- viii) Vrsya
- ix) Utsahavarshana
- x) Sukhakara
- xi) Shramahara

Traditional value: Tradition of Indian culture and Ayurveda has very close relation with each other. Since a long time it is seen that younger's are used to massage elder's sole regularly before they going to bed. But with change of time culture has been changed. If we analyse the health prospects of people of that period then we can see that how they were strong. Especially problem of eyesight were rarely seen. But in this present time people are forgetting the tradition and culture.

Clinical aspects:

By external effects it cures Padadari (cracked heal), nakhabheda like vatajavyadhi as it is vatasamaka in nature, which is a very common problem in rural as well as urban area.

It gives good results in diabetic neuropathy. positive effect seen in tingling sensation and numbness by giving soothing effects on nerve endings.

Internally it acts as best eye toner. Though its effect is not 100% proved.

Primary hypertension may be relieved by padabhyanga due to induction of good sleep. Sciatica like vatajavyadhi subsides by this therapy.¹³ It is one of the best treatments for insomnia.¹⁴

DISCUSSION

As per Astanga hridya, in between the fingers of sole there are presence of many siras which are relating to eye. So it may be nourished by oil massaging method.¹⁵ As per Ayurveda vata is present in skin (twakindriya) where there is presence of sensory nerve endings. By massage it affects whole body. Having sound sleep is best medicine for all type of disease. So from hypothetical point of view it can be said that padabhyanga can produce good effect on psychosomatic disorder by producing sleep. In traditional Chinese medicinal therapy description about acupressure and acupuncture are found. It works by giving pressure on vital points present in palm and sole. So it may be get pressurized by massaging therapy.

CONCLUSION

So it can be conclude that by coming in contact of palm and sole during massage a energy is produced which has many effective role in various aspect of body system. As it is quite simple process it can be followed by everyone. As the foundation of the human body, feet receive a lot of abuse from their owners in day-to-day tasks such as standing, walking and running. According to the American Podiatric Medical Association "An average day of walking brings a force equal to several hundred tons to bear on the feet."

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