

MURDHNI TAILA – BOON FOR AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda treats mankind through a special and holistic way and it aims at removing the *doshas* from the root in chronic disease conditions. *Murdha* or *Murdhni* means Head, *Taila* means oil. Thus it is a procedure of conducting treatment/therapy over the *Shirapradesha* (Head) with medicated *tailas* (oil) such that the oil remains in contact with the scalp for a fixed duration of time is called as *Murdhni Taila* or *Murdha Taila*. This contact period of oil on the scalp is necessary for begetting its benefits. The head is called as “*Uttamanga*” part of the body because it is the control centre of the entire body. It regulates all the sense organs and *Pranaa* (Life element controlling all the activities of *Vayu* functions) this is the place where all *Indriyas* (Sense organs) are located and regulated. In today’s era most of the people are suffering from different types of Stress related disorders among them anxiety, insomnia, depression etc for them *murdhni tailas* are one among the best treatment procedures.

KEYWORDS: *Murdhni taila, Shiro, Uttamanga, Indriyas, Stress related disorders.*

INTRODUCTION

As per world health organisation 10 % of the world population is affected with this.¹Head is one among the *Tri marma* (vital point) of the body it has control on different body functions and any trauma (*Marmabhighata*) to this part may give rise to disturb the function of *prana*, as loss of function of that organ or site may leads to so many complications and even death may occur² So it is considered ideal for relieving stress, anxiety, insomnia, and the ailments of the scalp. It is indicated for patients suffering from various disorders such as Headache (*shira shoola*), Baldness of hairs (*khalitya*), Premature graying (*palithya*), Hair fall (*Kesha patana*), It helps hairs to get deep rooted, long, dense, look beautiful and

black in colour, It keeps the sense organs in a healthy condition, It helps in improving the glow and complexion of the face, It helps in inducing good sleep (*Nidraalabha*), *Sukha kara* to the mind.³

TYPES⁴

- 1) *Shiro Abhyanga*
- 2) *Shiro Seka*
- 3) *Shiro Pichu*
- 4) *Shiro Basti*

Shiro Abhyanga > *Shiro Seka* > *Shiro Pichu* > *Shiro Basti*. They are told ‘*Uttarotara Gunaprada*’.

1) SHIRO ABHYANGA⁵ (*Shiro*=Head, *Abhyanga*=Massage) *Shiro Abhyanga* means massaging the head with herbal oils. *Shiro*

(head) is the *moolasthan* for *indriyas* and one among important *Marma*.

METHOD:

PRADHANA KARMA:

Shiro abhyanga can be performed at any time of the day before the bath. Person in the early morning after brushing his teeth and washing the face after evacuating his natural urges should sit in comfortable chair. Then lukewarm oil should be applied slowly gently to the hair and scalp in the direction of the hair. It should be done gently with finger tips because forceful massage can damage the hair. Pounding of the head with hand joint loosely together can be done to excite the fine capillaries of the circulatory system and the nervous system. While doing head massage masseur should stand slightly on higher position behind the patient.

PASCHATA KARMA:

Patient is advised to take rest for about 10 – 20 minutes and then allowed to take head bath with *sukhoushnajala*.

INDICATION^{6,7}

It helps in *Shirorogas*

It nourishes hairs make them smooth, long, thick, and black in colour.

It helps in nourishing the *Shiropradesha*

It provides good lusture to the face

It helps in *tarpanaofindriyas*.

It helps in reducing *rookshata, kandu, mala* of *shiropradesha*.

CONTRAINDICATION:

Kapha dominant diseases

Indigestion

Tarunajwara

Amadosha

Disease caused by excessive nutrition

Who have given *Vamana, Virechana, Niruhabasti* (*abhyanga* in these conditions

causes *agnimandya* and increase in those diseases)

Shiroabhyanga is contraindicated after food.

TAILA YOGA:

Nimbadi taila – Darunaka

Prapaundrikadi taila – Sarva murdhagata rogas.

Brahmi taila – Murdharuja, Jatruddhwa roga

Asanavilwadi taila – Netra roga

Triphaladi taila – Shiro roga, Pratisyaya, Khalitya, Palitha

1) SHIRO SEKA / SHIRO DHARA^{8,9}

A process of *murdhni taila*, in which a suitable *taila* and other substances such *asghritas, takra, ikshu rasa, kashaya, ksheera* etc is continuously poured on forehead and then allowed to flow over the scalp in a specific rhythm, is called *shirodhara*.

PROCEDURE:

PURVAKARMA:

Abhyanga is to be done all over the body or at least on the face, neck, shoulder and chest. Gauze is to be tied around the head above eye brows of the patient. Then patient is to be to close his eyes. Two cotton pads are to be placed over eyelids and then theses are to be tied with another gauze piece. Ear plugs are to be applied.

PRADHANA KARMA:

Patient should lie on the *Droni* (*Shirodhara* table) in supine position with a pillow under the neck. The *Dharapatra* is to be adjusted over the forehead so that the gap between end part of wick and forehead should remain 4 *anguli* (1 *anguli* = 1.93 cm). Than lukewarm / *Sukhoushna*, nearly equal to body temperature¹⁰ medicated oil is to be poured into the *dharapatra*. A continuous

flow of liquid should be maintained and the entire forehead should be sprinkled by a rhythmic oscillation of *Dharapatra*. A gentle massage following the *Dhara* over the forehead should be done in between the process. The oil collected in the vessel placed beneath the *Droni* should be reheated and poured again into *Dharapatra*.

DURATION:

It should be continued for 45 -60 minutes for 4 – 7 days and depend upon yukti of physician.

According to *Dharakalpa* Chapter 17 the patient having dryness and *Pittayukta Vata*, the period of *Shirodhara* should be two and half *Prahara* or Two *Pragara* and in *Snigdha Kaphayukta Vata* it is one *prahara*.¹¹

TIME OF PROCEDURE:

The appropriate time for *Shirodhara* is in *pratahkala* (morning). *Parisheka* should not be given at noon or night *dharakalpa*¹²The process may be continued up to maximum one and half hours. First day it is to be given for 1 hour. Then every day the time may be increased by 5 minutes. Thus on 7th day, the duration should be one and half hour. After that, 5 minutes to be gradually decreased every day so that on 14th day it comes to 1 hour. If *parisheka* is to be continued up to 21 days, then the duration of *dhara* should remain constant from 7 to 15 days as one and half hours. After that, gradually decrease of 5 minutes every day is to be started so that on 21st day it comes to 1 hour. *Parisheka* therapy should not be extended beyond 21 days because it is believed that by this therapy the effect can be achieved up to the limbs and entire body by 21 days.¹³

PASCHAT KARMA:

After the *Dhara* process is completed, the head of the patient should be wiped out and dried. This is followed by a short duration of rest and massage of the body including head with oil and then a lukewarm bath. Apply *RasnadiChurna* to the vertex of head

PRECAUTIONS¹⁴

1. *Dhara* should not be flowed too slow or too fast as it aggravates the disease condition.
2. *Dhara* is to be fallen over forehead from one side to another in a controlled and continuous rhythm. *Dhara* should not fall outside the head.
3. If automatic *shirodhara* machine is to be used, then flow of medicine is to be adjusted prior to taking patient onto *droni*. The temperature also is to be set.
4. If there is a tube having cork-screw system instead of wick in *Dharapatra*, its distance from forehead should be the same i.e., 4anguli.
5. The thickness of *Dhara* should be as that of little finger.
6. Patient should not sleep during the procedure.
7. Special care should be taken to prevent falling of oil into the eyes.
8. Hair of the patient should preferably be shaved.

SELECTION OF SNEHA¹⁵

According to *Dharakalpa*, *Sneha* is taken according to the condition of *dosha* predominance.

Dosha	Sneha
Vata	Tila taila
Pitta & Rakta	Ghrita
Kapha	Tila taila
Vata + Pitta + Rakta	Taila & Ghrita in equal quantity
Vata + Kapha + Rakta	1 part Taila + ½ Part Ghrita

Arumshika (As. Hr. Su. 22/24)

Shiroshula

Daha

Paka

Vruna over shiro pradasha

Vata janya Shiro abhitapa (vata vyadhi) (As.Hr.Utt.24/1-3)

Sankakh Roga (Ch. Si.9/63)

Pittaja Shiro roga (Ch. Chi. 26/ 176) should be done with ghrita and ksheera

Pitta & Raktaja shiro roga (Su. Utt. 26/12)

Vatika Shiro roga (Su. Utt.26/5)

CONTRAINDICATION:

In Kaphaja vikara shirodhara further increase kapha, which makes the disease difficult to cure. Shirodhara should not be performed in extreme hot or cold weather, in rainy day or in breezy area

TAILA YOGAS:

Mahavishagarbhataila –

Vatajanyashirobhitapa, Sankakhroga,

Vatikashiroroga

Himasagartaila – Pitta & raktajashiroroga

Eladikeram, Ksheerbalataila – Daha, Paka

2) SHIRO PICHU¹⁶

ShiroPichu is a procedure in which a sterile piece of cloth or gauze is folded and dipped in specific *taila* and kept on *Brahma randhra* (anterior frontenalle).

PURVA KARMA:

Do *abhyanga* over head, neck and shoulders.

PRADHANA KARMA:

The patient is made to sit comfortably in an armed chair. Tie a band of cloth around the forehead above the ears. Place a piece of cloth having length and breadth of 16 cm each over the vertex. Then keep cloth pieces of same size one over the other to reach a height of about 2 cms. Pour the luke warm oil at the center till the cloth is soaked completely. Generally *pichu* is maintained for 30-90 minutes.

PASCHAT KARMA:

Remove the *pichu* and wipe the head completely. Apply *Rasnadi churna* over the vertex region (*brahma randhra*).

DURATION:

It should be given 30-90 minutes and can be continued up to 7-14 days.

INDICATION:

Keshapata (As.Hr. Su. 22/25)

Keshabhumi sputhana (cracking of the skin over scalp region)

Palitya (premature graying of hair)

Vrana (wound)

Netrastambha

Pakshaghata

Ardita

Anidra

Cerebellar dysfunction

PRECAUTIONS:

If patient is having *Peenasa* during the treatment then stop the procedure and treat accordingly.

YOGAS:

Narayanadi taila – Ardita

Triphaladi taila – Khalitya, Palitya, Vrana

Brahmi taila - Anidra

3) SHIRO BASTI¹⁷

Shiro basti is a procedure in which a *Basti* cap is constructed over the head of the person (in sitting position) using a leather cap, its junction with the head sealed with wet flour of black gram and filled with medicated oils.

PROCEDURE OF SHIRO BASTI¹⁸

PURVA KARMA

It includes- *Atura Siddhata* and *Sambhara Sangraha*

Atura Siddhata includes the procedure of *Shodhana* by *Vamana* and *virechana karma*.

Sambharasangraha includes the preparation of *charmappatta* and *mashakalka* pasted to the *charmappatta* and 2 strips of cloths.

PRADHANA KARMA

Basti yantra dharana, taila dharana, observation of *samyak yoga lakshanas*, removal of *taila* and *basti yantra*, The patient is made to sit erect on a chair, one strip of cloth, smeared with *Masha kalka* is pasted around the head, above the ear. Then leather sheet of about twelve *angulas*, applied with *masha kalka* at the bottom of the inner surface of it is tied around the head, so that the lower part of leather sheet is attached to the strip of the cloth. The two ends of the leather sheet are attached together by using *Masha Kalka*. Another strip of cloth pasted with *Masha kalka* is wrapped on the leather sheet. Then the suitable medicated oil warmed by keeping in hot water is poured on the inner surface of leather cap slowly and carefully, also one

can pour the oil on the coconut leaf. This help to prevent sudden falling of warm oil on the head. The quantity of oil should be two *angulas* above the scalps i.e., one and half inch above the scalp. The process should be continued until the appearance of *samyak lakshanas* such as *Vaktrashrava* (watering in mouth), *Nasikotaklesha* (moisture in nose), *Karna Srava*.

PASCHAT KARMA:

When the procedure is over, i.e., when secretion starts from mouth and nose, the *sneha* with-in the cap is to be removed with the spoon or sponge. The head should be well dried with the help of a towel. The shoulder, neck is to be massaged again. The cap should be cleansed and preserved for the next use. *Rasnadi churna* should be applied on the head of the patient. The dietetic and behavioural regimens are to be followed as mentioned in *sneha vidhi*.

PRECAUTIONS:

- 1) Very hot is to be prohibited. Oil should not to be poured directly but on the dorsum of the palm slowly.
- 2) The patient is to advised not to nod his head. During the therapy, he should not talk, laugh or open his mouth. If patient sneezes, the assistant will hold the cap carefully.
- 3) Leakage of oil should be prevented.
- 4) The temperature should remain constant. For this, some oil should be periodically be replaced by some warm oil.

TIME & DURATION:

Vataja Vyadhi – 10,000 *matra kala* or 53 minutes (1 *matra* = 19/30 seconds)

Pittaja Vyadhi – 8,000 *matra kala* or 43 minutes

Kaphaja Vyadhi – 6,000 *matrakala* or 31 minutes

Swastha– 1,000 *matra kala* or 5-6 minutes
Acharya Vagbhata told *shirobasti* should be conducted for 3, 5, 7 days but maximum is 7 days. According to *Sarangadhara* the duration of *shirobasti* is advised for 5 – 7 days, but *Acharya Sushruta* has recommended it for up to 21 days.

TAILA YOGA:

Ksheer bala taila - Ardita, sirashula condition.

Dhanvantaram taila, Mashabaladi taila - Kampavata

Himasagara taila, Brahmi taila -Anidra.

Nakula taila, Tungadhrumadi taila - Kampavata

INDICATION

Loss of sensation in scalp.

Facial palsy (*ardita*)

Insomnia (*anidra*)

Dryness of nose and mouth (*nasha* and *mukha sosh*)

Timira

Dauna Shiro roga

Shiro basti is considered as the most effective one amongst these

DISCUSSION

Shiro abhyanga will oil nourishes the hair, skin and makes them smooth. Mode of action of *abhyanga* can be considered here as oil which is a type of *sneha dravya* is used to apply over the skin of scalp. Oil applied to the head is absorbed into the hair roots which in turn, are connected with nerve fibres leading directly to the brain. *Shiro abhyanga* in particularly increases the supply of fresh oxygen and glucose to the brain, along with circulation of the *prana* given sap of cerebro-spinal fluid. It increases the growth hormones and enzymes necessary for growth and development of

the brain; it also increases the level of Pranic energy. If *abhyanga* is done for 300 *Matrakala*, than reaches down to the *skin* through the hair follicles in 400 *matrakala* than to *rakta* 500 *matrakala*, than to *mamsa* 600 *matrakala*, than to *medas* 700 *matrakala*, than to *asthi* 800 *matrakala*, than to *majja* 900 *matrakala*.

Shirodhara stimulates *Sthapani marma*, *Shankha marma*, *Utkshepa marma*, *Adhipati marma*, *Agnya chakra* and improve blood circulation, as it improves blood circulation of brain, this improves the higher intellectual functions also. So an improvement in psychic symptoms is achieved and improves the function of Autonomic Nervous System as its stimulation during stress causes many physiological disturbances. *Shiropichu* helps in balance between the circulation *rakta* and *pitta*. It enhance blood supply and nutrition to brain healing *marma*. *Vyana Vayu*, *Ranjaka Pitta*, *Avalambaka Kapha* and *Udana Vayu* controlling the heart functions and circulation. *Shirobasti* helps to control over vitiated *vata & pita, marmas*, master glands, pituitary, endocrine function. According to classics, the effect and potencies of the articles of an ointment, sprinkling immersion and plasters which are digested in the skin enter through these orifices into the internal organs. The exterior of minute capillaries are attached to the root of hairs through which perspiration takes place and *Rasa dhatu* and *twak* are nourished by application of *sneha*. The *pitta* which is located in the skin is known as *Bhrajaka pitta*. It enables the digestion and utilization of substances used for *murdha*

tailas. Application of *Sneha* on the *twak* stays in hair follicles.

CONCLUSION

In today's era so many people are suffering from the anxiety, depression, insomnia, alzheimer's disease, dementia, geriatric diseases, psychological disorders for them there are no successful treatment available anywhere except some anti-depressant, tranquilizers, antipsychotics drugs, Vitamins supplements. In that condition *Ayurveda* is boon for the society, with the help of *Murdhini Tailas (Abhyanga, Seka, Pichu, Basti)* can successively cures the disease located on those *dhatu*s respectively (*Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Asthi, Majja*) in easily manner. *Shiro abhyanga* improves arterial, venous and lymphatics flow and nourishes the skin and local tissues. The concept of Percutaneous absorption is explained in the modern physiology and biochemistry say that it is possible to produce a certain amount of absorption by the application of the substances conveyed in fatty vehicles. In *Shirobasti*, oil is combined with other *Vata Shamana* drugs, as it can carry the properties according to its combination to eradicate any disease.

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