

PATRA PINDA SWEDANA

(A Unique Method of Massage with Fomentation) :

A Review

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Abstract:- *Swedana* or Fomentation is a treatment practice which induces sweating by means of heat either in the form of steam (*Bashpa*) or by direct contact of the body with heated medicament (*Tapa*). *Sankara Sweda*, commonly known as *Pinda Sweda* is a fomentation method in which the materials are tied in a cloth and massaged over the part to be sudated. In *PatraPindaSweda*, a type of *Pinda Sweda*, different medicinal leaves along with other drugs are roasted in suitable medicated oil, made into *Pinda* (bolus) form by tying them in a suitable cloth and used for *Swedana* after performing *Abhyanga* (mild massage). *Swedana*, in generally relieves pain, stiffness, heaviness, and coldness in the body. This treatment procedure eliminates the bodily toxins through sweating. It provides better therapeutic efficacy in orthopedic disorders especially in diseases like Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Cervical spondylosis, Lumbar spondylosis, Ankylosing Spondylitis, musculoskeletal pain as well as in neuro-muscular diseases. Present article deals with literary as well as contemporary review of the *Patra Pinda Swedana*.

Keywords:- Fomentation, *Patra Pinda Swedana*, *Sankara Sweda*, *Tapa Sweda*.

I. INTRODUCTION

The term *PatraPinda Swedana* is derived from the words *Patra*, (meaning leaves), *Pinda* which means bolus, and *Swedana*, which means sweating. So, *PatraPindaSwedana* refers to the sudation performed by a specially prepared bolus of medicinal leaves (generally *Vatakaphahara*).

II. MATERIALS & METHODS

References regarding *Swedana* and *Patra Pinda Swedana* were collected from various textbooks, published research papers, previous work done and compilation was done. Concept of *Patra Pinda Swedana* and procedure were studied in detail.

III. LITERARY REVIEW

Acharya Charaka has classified *Swedana* based on the involvement of Agni (fire)- *Sagni Swedana* and *Niragni Swedana*¹. Whereas, Acharya Sushruta and Acharya Vagbhata have classified *Swedana* procedure into four types

mainly, *Tapa* (inducing sweating by direct contact of the heated medicaments with body), *Ushma* or *Bashpa* (heat in the form of steam), *Drava* (inducing heat by means of hot liquid), *Upnaha* (inducing heat by tying poultice around part to be sudated)². On reviewing the above classifications, it can be seen that all the 13 types of *Sagni Sweda* of Acharya Charaka can be incorporated into 4 types of *Sweda* described by Acharya Sushruta and Vagbhata.

Patra Pinda sweda is a form of *Pinda sweda*, which is nothing but *Sankara Sweda* of Acharya Charaka.³ It is a form of *Tapa sweda*, as per Acharya Sushruta and Acharya Vagbhata. It includes fomentation using bolus (*Pinda*) of prescribed drugs with or without being wrapped in cloth.⁴ *Swedana* can further be classified into *Ruksha Pinda Sweda* and *Snigdha Pinda Sweda*. In *Ruksha Pinda Sweda*, hot solid substances such as sand, brick and stone are used. It is indicated in *Kapha* and *Amarelated* disorders affecting joints and muscles, whereas *Snigdha Sweda* is advised in conditions where the pain and related symptoms are due to *Vata Dosha* only. *Patra Pinda Sweda* is a form of *Snigdha Sweda* and is an unparalleled treatment in painful conditions caused mainly by *Vata Dosha*, usually in degenerative diseases. Moreover, it can be used in *Vata-Kapha* conditions also, by altering the drugs (leaves etc.) used. Leaves which can pacify morbid *Vata* and *Kapha* are used in the bolus for tackling inflammatory diseases of joints and soft tissues. *Patra Pinda Sweda* is used mainly to relief from pain, inflammation, swelling and stiffness associated with bone, joint and or musculoskeletal pains. It is generally indicated in the ailments arising due to *Vata*, *Kapha* and *Vatakapha Dosha*.

Indications: As, it is a form of *Swedana*, it is generally indicated in *Vatakapha Vikara*.⁵ It can be indicated in the following ailments- *Gridhrasi* (~Sciatica), *Sandhivata* (~Osteoarthritis), *Jeerna* or *Pravruddha Amavata* (~Chronic stages of RA), *Pakshavadha* (~Hemiplegia), *Greevastambha* (~Cervical spondylosis), *Katiprishthagraha* (~Ankylosing Spondylitis), *Avabahuka* (~Frozen Shoulder), Intervertebral disc protrusion or prolapse (IVDP).

Contraindications: *Patrapinda Swedana* is contraindicated in *Ajeerna* (~Indigestion), *Jwara* (~Fever), *Twak Vikara* (~infective eczema, Psoriasis), *Raktapitta* (~Hemorrhagic disorders), *Atisara* (~Diarrhoea), *Trishna* (~Excessive thirst), *Madhumeha* (~Diabetes mellitus), *Pandu* (~Anemia), *Garbhini* (~Pregnant women).

IV. PATRA PINDA SWEDANA PROCEDURE

Every procedure of Panchakarma is carried out in three steps *Poorvakarma*, *Pradhankarma* and *Paschatkarma*.

Poorvakarma: *Poorvakarma* are the *Karma* that are required to be done prior to administration of *Patra Pinda Swedana*. They include- (a) Preparation of materials, (b)Preparation of Patient.

1. Preparation of materials and Pottali (Boluses)-

- Leaves – *Nirgundi*(*Vitex negundo*),*Eranda*(*Ricinus communis*), *Arka* (*Calatropis procera*), *Dhatura*(*Datura metel*), *Shigru*(*Moringa oliefera*) etc. (chopped into pieces- 100gm each).
- Sliced lemon- 2
- Grated coconut- 100 gm
- *SaindhavaLavana*- 5-10 gm.
- *Haridra Churna* (*Curcuma longa*)- 10gm
- *Ajmoda*(*carum roxburghianum*)- 10 gm
- Oil-
 - For frying leaves- 100ml.
 - For heating *Pottali*- 250ml.
 - For *Abhyanga*- 100ml.
 - For *Talam*- 10ml
- *Rasnaadi Choona* – 5 gm for *Talam*
- Cotton cloth (45cm×45cm): 4 pieces
- Tags- 4
- Vessels- 2 (for frying Leaves and for heating *Pottali*).
- Attendant- 2
- Panchakarma *Droni*-1
- Gas stove-1

❖ Preparation of Boluses:

Fresh leaves should be cleaned and chopped finely. First add 100 ml of prescribed oil into pan, to this add grated coconut and sliced lemon and fry till in turn to light tinged brown. Add chopped leaves one by one; first add drugs which have thick leaves followed by thin. Then mix thoroughly and fry together till coconut scrapings attain a brown color. It should be divided into two equal parts and made into 2 *Pottali* (average weight of a standard *Pottali* is 300-350 gm.).

2. Preparation of patient.

- Patient is advised to properly evacuate faeces and urine, prior to the procedure and to expose the area desired for *Swedana*.
- The patient should be seated with leg extended over the *Droni* facing to the east. *Abhyanga* should be performed with prescribed medicated oil all over the body for about 10 minutes. *Talam* with suitable oil/*Choorna* should be applied. *Rasnadi Choorna* is mixed with quantity sufficient oil to make a paste of coin shape. It is then applied over the anterior fontanelle of patient. *Talam* is applied to prevent the brain from undue effects of sudation.

V. PRADHANA KARMA (METHOD OF ADMINISTRATION)

The prepared *Pottali* should be heated with prescribed oil in a vessel on gas stove up to 42-46⁰ C.

The therapists before applying the boluses on the body of the patient should ensure that the heat of the boluses is bearable to the patient by checking temperature of the boluses over dorsum of their own hand. The *Patra Pottali* is gently rubbed with mild pressure over the part to be sudated in a synchronized manner by two therapists positioned on each side of the patient. The fomentation by *Patra Pottali* should be carried out in all the 7 postures as *Abhyanga* (~ Massage) to ensure that all the body parts are equally fomented. The procedure of *Patra Pottali Sweda* should be done till the patient gets of the *Samyak Swinna Lakshana*⁶

- The treatment procedure is carried out for 5-10 minutes in each posture.
- Care should be taken to maintain the temperature throughout the procedure by reheating the *Pottali*.
- The leaves bolus (*Pottali*) should be changed in every three days

Duration: Time duration of the treatment ranges from 30-45 minutes. The therapy should be done once every day for 1 to 3 weeks depending on the severity/intensity of the disease.

➤ *Paschatkarma*:

After completion of the procedure, *Talam* is removed followed by rubbing of *Rasnadi Choorna* over anterior fontanelle. Oil is wiped off from the body using clean dry towel. Body is covered with thin blanket for 10-15 minutes. Patient should be advised to take hot water bath after 1 *Muhurta* (48 minutes)⁷. Patient is advised to take light diet and drink hot water after procedure.

➤ *Complications and management*:

- a) **Atiyoga of Swedana**- Acharya Charka has advised use of *Madhura*, *Snigdha*, and *Sheeta Ahara*- *Vihara* as described in *Greeshm Ritucharya*⁸. He further states that *Stambhana* should be done in case of *Atiyoga* of *Swedana*⁹.
- b) **Burn and rashes**- Due to heat intolerance in patient of *Pitta Prakriti*, Burn and rashes may occur which has to be managed by applying *Madhu* and *Ghrita*, preferably *Shahstradhouta Ghrita*¹⁰, *Ghrita Kumari* (Aloevera pulp)¹¹, *Haridra* with *Ghrita* over the affected part.
- c) **Fainting**- Due to increased body temperature or low heat threshold of the patient or *Atiyoga* of *Karma*, fainting may occur. Fainting and Giddiness can be prevented by providing *Sharkarodaka* to the patient for drinking. Apply *Talam* with appropriate medicated oil and *Choorna*. *Drakshadi Kashaya* can be given internally.¹²

VI. DISCUSSION

Patra Pinda Swedana is usually done with *Nirgundi Patra*, *Dhatura Patra*, *Shigru Patra*, *Erandapatra* etc. Leaves of the *Nirgundi* plant have analgesic, anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory properties. It also possesses anti-histaminic properties and is muscle relaxant¹³. *Dhatura* leaves have anti-inflammatory properties and vapors of its leaves also relieve the pain of rheumatism and gout¹⁴. Leaves of *Shigru* are known to reduce severe pain¹⁵. Leaves of *Eranda* are used to pacify *VataDosh*¹⁶.

Patra Pinda Swedana is generally indicated in *Vata Kaphaja* conditions, owing to the properties of ingredients used. *Gridhrasi* and *Greevastambha* are *Vata Kaphaja Pradhana* diseases. *Patra Pinda* is useful in *Sandhivata* and *Jeerna Aamavata*, as these conditions are *Vata Pradhana* and *Patra Pinda Swedana* being a *Snigdha sweda* pacifies morbid *Vata*. Ankylosing Spondylitis that can be considered as *Kati-Prishtha-Trika Graha* in Ayurvedic parlance is an inflammatory arthritis that involves vitiation of *Vata* and *Kapha*, producing pain and stiffness in the spines. *Nirgundi Patra Pinda Swedana* owing to the anti-inflammatory action, *Snigdha* and *Ushna Guna* of the materials used subsides the inflammation, pacifies morbid *Vata* and *KaphaDosh* thus reducing pain and stiffness. Similarly, it is effective in conditions like *Avabahuka* that involves vitiation of *Vata* and *Kapha* again and presents with reduced range of motion at shoulder Joint. *Nirgundi Patra Pinda* relieves stiffness in such cases which in turn improves the range of motion. *Swedana* is contraindicated in conditions of *Ajeerna*, as it is a *Snigdha Sweda* which may further increase *Agnimandya*. *Agni* is hampered in *Jwaravastha*, and *Patrapinda Swedana* may aggravate the condition in these cases. Infective eczema and Psoriasis are also a contraindication for *Swedana*, as it may further aggravate the conditions. *Swedana* is strictly contraindicated in *Atisara* as *Swedana* may increase the peristaltic movements resulting in aggravation of the condition. Moreover, it may result in electrolyte imbalance due to increased fluid loss. Acharya are of opinion that *Swedana* should be strictly avoided in *Raktapitta* even if it involves vitiation of *Vata* and *Kapha*.¹⁷ *Madhumeha* is a *Kleda pradhana Vyadhi* and *Swedana* increases *Kleda* thus *Patra Pinda Swedana* should be avoided in such cases. *Swedana* aggravates *Trishna* and *Pandu*, therefore should not be performed in these conditions.

Reduction of pain can be explained on the bases of gate control theory of pain of Melzak and Wall, 1965. Their theory states that different man oeuvres of massage impart an array of sensory experiences by stimulating the peripheral sensory receptors, mainly touch and pressure receptors, present in skin and soft tissue. *Patra Pinda Sweda* involves massage of the area with certain amount of pressure in a synchronized manner. As per Melzack and Wall, these pressure and temperature sensations are carried by large diameter A beta fibers, which plays an important role in inhibition of the perception of pain, carried by A delta and C fibers. The stimulation of low threshold mechanoreceptors blocks the pathway of pain sensation by

presynaptic inhibition at the level of substantia gelatinosa of spinal cord. This could be the mechanism by which *Patra Pinda Swedana* reduces pain and stiffness.

VII. CONCLUSION

Present article deals with comprehensive study of *Patra Pinda Swedana*. As discussed above it is a type of *Sankar Sweda* and *Tapa Sweda*. It is effective in *Vata Kaphaja* and Inflammatory conditions. It is most often recommended in condition like chronic back pain, arthritis, stiffness of the joints and even muscle ache. *Patra Pinda Sweda* may help in increasing blood circulation to the affected area, gets rid of vitiated *Dosha*, strengthens the muscles in the area, facilitates release of toxins and reduces inflammation. It also improves the tone of muscles and improves the working of tissues within the body.

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