

# Udvardana (Ayurveda Powder Massage): A Review Article

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**Abstract:** - Panchakarma therapies are becoming popular in India and throughout the world. Udvardana is one of the Panchakarma therapies which differ from Abhyanga in its direction of application and pressure during the procedure. It is a simple and affordable procedure with no harmful effects. Udvardana has its efficacy on various diseases like obesity, dyslipidemia and cerebral palsy. It possesses Shoshana (absorption) and Kapha-Medohara (alleviation of vitiated Kapha and Meda) properties. It has also proven its importance and benefits on various psycho-physical parameters. In this review article, general description about Udvardana along with detail study of procedure with importance and benefits is discussed.

**Keywords:-** Udvardana, Abhyanga, Udgharshana, Utsadana

## I. INTRODUCTION

The procedure of massaging the whole body below the neck in a direction opposite to the orientation of hair with some pressure<sup>1</sup> is called Udvardana. Sharira Parimarjana is another name mentioned by Charaka<sup>2</sup>. Chakrapani defined it as a procedure done after Abhyanga in the context of daily regimen<sup>3</sup>. In the context of Vyayayama, Gatramardanam is term used by Dalhana<sup>4</sup>. One of the important procedures in Panchakarma is Abhyanga. Application of oil to the skin followed by massage in specific directions and postures is called Abhyanga. Importance of Abhyanga<sup>5</sup> and its benefits<sup>6, 7</sup> are clearly described in Ayurveda classics. Udvardana is slightly different from it. The only difference from Abhyanga is the direction of movement and the force applied during the procedure.

Types of Udvardana

A. According to Charaka:

Depending upon the variation in the therapeutic effect, it is of two types.

- Snigdha Udvardana<sup>8</sup>, in the context of treatment of Krishna (lean and thin) persons, in which oil is used in the procedure.

- Rukhsha Udvardana<sup>9</sup>, in the context of treatment of Sthula (obese) persons, in which dry powder of herbs with no addition of oil is used during the procedure.

B. According to Sushruta<sup>10</sup>:

Depending upon the nature of drugs used, three different terms are mentioned by Sushruta.

- Udvardana
- Udgarsana, in which dry powder of herbs like Reetha (*Sapindus Trifoliatum*) and Ishtika Churna (brick powder) is rubbed against the body.
- Utsadana, in which Sneha Kalka (paste of herbs moistened with oil), is used during the procedure. It is also described in the context of Shashthi Upkrama by Sushruta<sup>11</sup> and in Dwivranie Chikitsa by Charaka<sup>12</sup> as a measure to treat a Vrana (wound).

## II. MATERIALS REQUIRED

Abhyanga (massage) table
Herbal powder or oil as prescribed by the physician
Therapist(1)
Vessel (for powder/oil)

Table 1

## III. CHOICE OF DRUG WITH INDICATIONS FOR UDVRTANA<sup>13</sup>

A. Indication for Snigdha Udvardana:

- In lean and thin patients.
- Choice of oil according to Prakriti (constituent).

Vata Prakriti	Himsagara Taila (oil)
Pitta Prakriti	Chandandi Taila, Chandanabalalakashadi Taila
Kapha Prakriti	Triphaladya Taila
Sama Prakriti	Asanabilvadi Taila

Table 2

In persons where the Prakriti is a combination of Dosha, mixture of oils in equal amount may be effective as indicated for different Dosha. Murchhita Taila can be used when the specific oil is not available.

**B. Indications for Ruksha Udvartana:**

- In obese patients.
- Choice of herbs as per indications:

Kulatta Churna (powder)	To reduce accumulated subcutaneous fat and to decrease excessive sweating
Kolkulattadi Churna <sup>14</sup>	In obese patients, neurological conditions
Triphala Churna	In obese patients, skin diseases
Nalpamaradi Churna	Eczema, fungal infections, diabetes mellitus associated with itching
Nimba Churna	Skin diseases
Ushira, Chandana, Musta, Padam Churna	Excessive sweating
Nimba, Khadira, Guduchi, Aragvada, Karanja Churna	Skin diseases
Shailayadi Churna <sup>15, 16</sup>	Obesity

Table 3

**C. Indications for Udgharshana:**

- For Ruksha Udvartana
- For Siramukha Vivitaktavum <sup>17</sup>

Mritika Churna	To reduce oiliness in the skin
Brick powder	For Udgharshana, Kandu, Kotha
Wood powder	For Udgharshana
Reetha powder	For Udgharshana

Table 4

**D. Indications for Utsadana:**

- For beautification.
- To increase skin luster.

**IV. PROCEDURE**

Application of medicated oil as indicated and dusting of herbal powder on the body followed by massage with some pressure in the direction opposite to that of hair is the main method adopted in Udvartana. Various steps involved in this procedure are:

**A. Preparation of the Patient:**

Ideal time for Udvartana is the morning hour after evacuating the bowel and bladder. It should be performed empty stomach and before bath. Mild exercise may be advised to the patient before the procedure. Therapist should start the procedure after chanting prayer.

**B. Main Procedure:**

➤ *Position of the Patient*<sup>18</sup>

Patient wearing minimum copin is advised to lie down on the Abhyanga table. There are four positions in which Udvartana is carried out. These include supine, left lateral, prone and right lateral positions.

At first, patient is advised to lie down in supine position and Udvartana is done on the anterior part of the body. Second position is the left lateral position and Udvartana is done on the right lateral aspect of the body. Third position is the prone position in which, posterior part of the body is treated with Udvartana. At last, patient is advised to take right lateral position and Udvartana is carried out in the left lateral aspect of the body. Udvartana is done on each part of the body below the neck by exerting some pressure.

➤ *Types of Massage on Different Parts of the Body:*

Part of the body	Position of the patient	Type of Massage
Arms	Supine, lateral and prone position	Linear massage
Hands (both palmer and dorsal aspect)	Supine and prone position	Circular massage
Shoulders	Supine, lateral and prone position	Circular massage (both in clockwise and anti-clockwise direction)
Abdomen	Supine position	Linear and Circular massage (both in clockwise and anti-clockwise direction)
Chest	Supine position	Linear and Circular massage (both in clockwise and anti-clockwise direction)
Back	Prone position	Linear massage
Legs	Supine, lateral and prone position	Linear massage
Soles	Supine and prone position	Rubbing massage (to and fro manner)
Trunk	Supine, lateral and prone position	Linear massage

Table 5

## V. DURATION OF UDVARTANA

Each part of the body in their respective positions is massaged for 3-5 minutes. Usually the duration of Udvartana is 30-45 minutes.

## VI. POST PROCEDURAL ACTIVITIES

- Patient is advised to take rest for at least 15 minutes.
- Patient is allowed to take bath with lukewarm water after an interval of minimum 1 hour.

## VII. CARE AND PRECAUTIONS

- Before Udvartana, bladder and bowel should be emptied.
- It is to be done in the direction opposite to that of the hair.
- Type of massage on different parts of the body and position of the patient during the procedure should be followed strictly.
- Indications and choice of drug to be used should be assessed before Udvartana.
- Tender areas should be avoided for Udvartana.
- Precaution should be taken while dusting the powder over the body. It is advisable to protect face, nose and eyes to prevent irritation.
- Aseptic measures should be taken if patient is suffering from any contagious disease.

## VIII. THERAPEUTIC ACTIONS OF UDVARTANA

S.No	Actions	Charaka Samhita <sup>2</sup>	Sushruta Samhita <sup>19</sup>	Astanga Hridaya <sup>20</sup>
1	Dourgandhyahara	+	-	-
2	Gouravahara	+	-	-
3	Tandrahara	+	-	-
4	Kanduhara	+	-	-
5	Malahara	+	-	-
6	Aruchihara	+	-	-
7	Vatahara	-	+	-
8	Kapha Vilapana	-	+	-
9	Meda Vilapana	-	+	+
10	Anga Sthrikarana	-	+	+
11	Tvak Prasadakara	-	+	+
12	Kaphahara	-	-	+
13	Medahara	-	-	-
14	Tvak Mardava	-	-	-

Table 6

## IX. DISCUSSION

Udvartana is an important therapeutic procedure of Panchakarma. It differs from Abyanga in that of direction of application and pressure of the massage. In western countries, Panchakarma therapies are becoming popular mostly for this Abhyanga-Udvartana-Samvahana therapy<sup>21</sup>. Different powder of herbs, pastes and oils are used for Udvartana in different diseases according to the Prakriti of the patient. Various studies revealed the efficacy of Udvartana in many diseases. A study conducted with Navaka Guggulu, Lekhana Basti and Udvartana by Shailayadi Churna shows its benefits in obesity where Udvartana provided good result in almost all parameters because they eliminates Dosha from the body and simultaneously perform the action of Samprapti Vighatan (breaking of pathogenesis) at cellular level<sup>22</sup>. The effect of Udvartana in reducing psychophysical parameters such as weight, BMI, WHR and serum lipid values and other scales like stress inventory, quality of life and sleep are also seen<sup>23</sup>. Ruksha Udvartana with Kolkulathadi Churna plays an important role in the reduction of weight<sup>24</sup>. A study has been conducted to explore the role of Udvartana with Shunthi Churna as Upashaya (specific diagnosis) in Katishula (backache) <sup>25</sup>. Administration of Guduchyadi Yoga and Haritaki Churna Udvartana<sup>26</sup> and a study with Triphladi Taila Abhyanga and Triphla Churna Udvartana<sup>27</sup> have proven its efficacy on obesity. Rukshana Upakrama in the form of Takra Siddha Yavagu and Udvartana can help in normalizing lipid profile (dyslipidemia), also in reduction of weight; BMI, body circumference and skin fold thickness as it possesses Shoshana (absorption) and Kapha-Medohara (alleviation of vitiated Kapha and Meda) properties<sup>28</sup>. Various panchakarma procedures have proved their efficacy in the management of cerebral palsy. Udvartana opens the minute channels and improves blood as well as lymphatic circulation. Udvartana is kapha, vata hara and removes aavarana or Srotorodha. It provides a platform for further procedures like Abhyanga, Swedana and Basti. Udvartana is beneficial in reducing the spasticity in CP patients and it is suitable in 'Amavastha' (accumulation of waste materials inside the body) <sup>29</sup>. This review article is presented to explore the detail methodology involved in the procedure along with the importance and benefits.

## X. CONCLUSION

Udvartana is an important Panchakarma procedure. It can be used independently or with other interventions to treat a disease. It is one of the best procedures to manage obesity. Udvartana alleviates Kapha Dosha, reduces excess body fat, increases stability of the body, improves skin color and has many positive effects on various other psycho-physical parameters. Udvartana is a very simple, affordable procedure with no harmful effects and has advantages over costly fat reducing packages and treatments.

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