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. Snahapaka 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 madhuyanya paka and kalka paka are used to administer orally. When this snahapaka is done repeatedly with daravaya dravya (decoction, milk etc.) and kalka (paste) the process is called Avartana. Depending on the number of process the formulations named as shatatik and shatapaki. 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: Snahapaka; Avartana; Shatapaki; Sahasrapaki.

Introduction

Snahapaka is a method of preparing oil based medicines which is processed by adding kalka dravya (paste of drugs), sneha dravya and dravaya dravya (decoction, milk etc.) in the ratio of 1:4:16 respectively. The benefits of snahapaka are to extract active principles of kasha and kalka into fatty media by using oil or ghee as base. Depending on stage of preparation snahapaka is of three types Mrudu paka, Madhuyanya paka and kharaka paka. In which Madhuyanya 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 dravaya 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 saptaprayita Hingusauvachaladi ghrita was more effective than hingusauvachaladi 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
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 lakshanams 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 Avaritana 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 avaritita. Seven times processed sneha called as saptavaritita, 100 times processed sneha called as shatapaki, 1000 times processed sneha called as sahasrapaki. It takes many days to prepare and any sneha 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 avaritana process maximum possible extractives of the medicaments are tried to get into the sneha by repeating the process of sneha paka.[7]


**Administration**

Shatapaka Bhallatakatala - Rasayaana purpose.[8]

Shatapaka madhukatala, shatapaka madhuparni taila-Vatarakahara.[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, Jeewana, Brumhaha, 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 antir (nano) form and it has ability to enter into minute srotas (channels).[12]

**References**


