

Anushastra Karmas in Shalya Tantra: An Ayurveda Perspective

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REVIEW ARTICLE

Vd. Manish Choudekar^a, Vd Rajesh Chandrakant Pandit^b, Dr Anantkumar V. Shekokar^c

^aReader & Head of Dept., Striroga & Prasutitantra, SSVP Ayurved College, Hospital & Research Center, Hatta, Dist Hingoli, India.

^bProfessor, Shalya Tantra Department, SSVP Ayurved College, Hospital & Research Center, Hatta, Dist Hingoli, India.

^cProfessor and HOD, Dept of Shalya Tantra, S. V. N. H. T Ayurved College, Rahuri, India.

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ABSTRACT

Shalya Tantra is branches of Ayurveda that deals with surgical and parasurgical techniques for the management of various diseases. Shalya Tantra involves uses of various techniques or Karma to facilitate surgical or parasurgical interventions and Anushastra Karma is one of them. Anushastra Karma means uses of non-surgical instruments to perform surgical procedure. Agnikarma, Kshara Sutra, Jalukavacharana and Siravyadaha, etc. are some approaches of Anushastra Karma which mainly employed for the management of pathological conditions like; fistula, fissure and pilinoidal sinus, etc. The Anushastra Karma play vital role in surgical interventions, therefore in this article the various aspects related to the Anushastra Karma presented.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Shalya Tantra, Anushastra Karma, Agnikarma, Kshara Sutra.

Introduction

Acharya Sushruta described concept of *Anushastra Karma* as important modality of *Shalya Tantra* which involves parasurgical procedures without surgical instruments. *Anushastras* not only helps in disease management but also facilitate diagnosis of various pathological conditions like; *Nadi Vrana*, *Unmargi vrana* and *Utsangi Vrana*. As per Acharya Sushruta various types of *Anushastra* used in *Shalya Tantra* including *Twakasara*, *Kancha*, *Jalauka*, *Agni*, *Kshara*, *Shephalika*, *Shaka-Patra*, *Kareera* and *Bala*. The all types of *Anushastras* are important but *Kshara karma*, *Agnikarma* and *Jalaukawacharana* are major approaches which involves utilization of *Kshara Sutra*, *Agni* and *Jalauka* for various therapeutic purposes (**Figure1**). *Agnikarma* helps in *Vata* and *Kapha* predominant abnormalities. *Kshara* obtained from ash of different plants mainly used in *Arsha* and *Bhagandara*. *Jalaukawacharana* mainly used for bloodletting or purification purposes. Considering importance of these three approaches present article summarizes various

aspects related to the *Agnikarma* and *Kshara karma*. (1-3)

Agnikarma

Agnikarma is cauterization technique which involves use of *Agni* in direct or indirect manner to cure various health ailments. *Agnikarma* imparts effect of sterilization thus prevent microbial infections and kills pathogens effectively. *Agnikarma* prevent diseases to reccur so it causes diseases removal through its root causes. *Shalaka* (instrument made by *Panchadhatu*) mainly employed in *Agnikarma* to apply heat on affected body parts. *Agnikarma* helps to cure diseases of *Asthi* and *Sandhi*. It effectively cures *Arsha*, *Arbuda*, *Gridhrasi* and *Bhagandar*, etc. The other materials used for *Agnikarma* are *Pippali*, *Godanta*, *Ghrita*, *Tail* and *Ajashakrit*. The instrument used for *Agnikarma* must possess specific characteristics; *Shalaka* should be pointed tip while *Vilekha* may be *Tiryak*, *Riju* and *Vakra* to perform *Agnikarma* procedure.

Based on *Akriti* *Agnikarma* may be following types:

- ❖ *Valaya*: Circular shape
- ❖ *Bindu*: Dot like shape
- ❖ *Ardhachandra*: Crescent shape
- ❖ *Swastika*: Shape of *Swastika Yantra*
- ❖ *Ashtapada*: Shape containing limbs in different directions.

Types of Agnikarma on the basis of site of diseases:

1. Agnikarma for Twakgata vyadhi

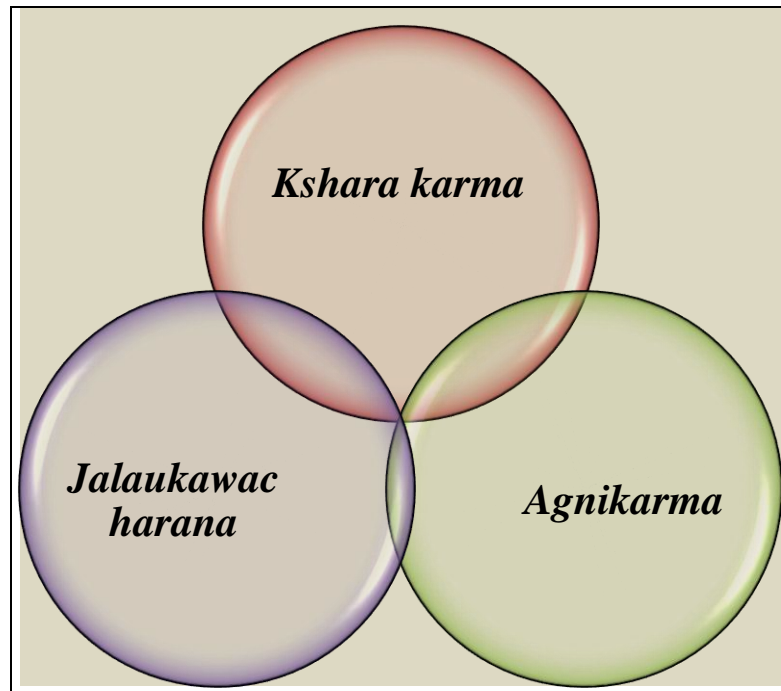


Figure 1. Major approaches come under *Anushastras*

Specific Considerations Related to the Agnikarma

- ❖ Patient should monitor carefully during procedure for any undesired complications.
- ❖ The affected part must to keep maintain dry and clean.
- ❖ Unwholesome diet and excessive physical exertion must be avoided.
- ❖ Procedure only performed under supervision of expert physician.
- ❖ Instrument should be sterile and appropriate as mentioned in standard procedure.
- ❖ The intense or prolong application of heat should be avoided. (1-5)

Kshara Karma

Kshara obtained from different medicinal plants and are two types; *Paaneeya* and

Ajashakrita, *Godanta*, *Pippali*, *Shalaaka* and *Shara*, etc. are used for skin diseases.

2. Agnikarma for Mamsagata vyadhi

For muscular diseases *Panchadhaatu Shalaaka* can be used.

3. Sira Snayu Asthisandhi

Madhu, *Sneha* and *Guda* can be used for diseases related to *Sira* and *Marma*.

Pratisarneeeya Kshara. *Kshara* helps in *Arsha*, *Guda bhramsha* and in wound management due to its *Shodhana*, *Ushna* and *Tikshna* properties. *Pratisaraneeya kshara* mainly employed for external purpose while *Paneeya kshara* employed for internal purpose. *Mrudu*, *Madyama* and *Teekshna* are another types of *Kshara* based on their potency or intensity. *Kshara Karma* helps to pacify symptoms of *Vrana* such as; *Utsanna Mansan*, *Kathinana* and *Kandu Yukta*.

Kshara prepared by drying drugs like plants materials in shade, that after dried material burnt out till to formation of ash, water added in ash, stirred well and kept overnight, filtered through cloth, boiled in low flame and finally *Prakshepakadravyas* added and boiled further to get semi solid mass.

Nimbu swarasa, cotton, spatula, bowl, *Changeri ghrita* and *Taila*, etc. are materials required during process. Patient advised to be in lithotomy position during procedure to perform intervention appropriately. Cleaning of affected area and use of local anaesthesia suggested before *Kshara Karma* while wiping with distilled water and use of *Nimbu swarasa* required after *Kshara Karma*.

Arshas, *Bhagandara*, *Dusta vrana*, *Nadi vrana* and *Baahya vidradi* are some conditions where external *Kshara Karma* can be recommended while *Gulma*, *Udara*, *Ashmari* and *Abyantara vidradhi*, etc. are some conditions where internal *Kshara Karma* can be used.

Haemostatic, antiseptic and analgesic properties of *Kshara Sutra* help in wounds and ano-rectal disorders. *Kshara Sutra* stops bleeding and discharge, cures pain, suppress any chances of disease recurrence and offers beneficial effects with minimal surgical interventions thus considered as an important para-surgical procedure of ayurveda *Shalya Tantra*. (6-10)

Specific Considerations Related to the *Kshara Karma*:

- ❖ Sterilization of thread is prerequisite to prevent microbial contamination.
- ❖ Expert person should perform *Kshara Karma*.
- ❖ After procedures patient should stay in clinic to observe any complication if persisted.
- ❖ *Purvakarma* and *Pashchata karma* are essential component of main procedures.
- ❖ Patient must advise to come after follow up period to monitor recovery from chronic conditions.
- ❖ *Kshara Sutra* must be changed after particular time period.
- ❖ Application of *Kshara Sutra* at *Marma*, *Sira*, *Gala* and *Nabhi pradasha*, etc. contradicted.
- ❖ Good quality materials and equipments should be used to avoid any complications.

Contra indication of *Kshara Karma*

- ❖ Children and elderly patients needed gentle care.
- ❖ *Durbala* and *Bhiru* patient.
- ❖ Patients possess *Sarvanga shoona* and chronic illness.
- ❖ *Garbini* and *Rutumati*, etc.

Conclusion

Anushastra are important in surgical practice related to *Shastrakarma*. *Agnikarma* and *Kshara karma* are most valuable approaches which offer several health benefits in many diseases that require surgical or para-surgical care. *Kshara* is used for the management of chronic wounds, it is easy to use, economic and minimal invasion required. Antiseptic and analgesic properties of *Kshara Sutra* cure bleeding, discharge, pain and no severe complications observed with therapy. Similarly *Agnikarma* is very important therapy which offers benefits in *Vatakaphaja* disorders. *Agnikarma* involves use of *Agni* in direct or indirect manner to cure *Arsha*, *Arbuda*, *Gridhrasi* and *Bhagandar*, etc. *Agnikarma* imparts effect of sterilization thus prevent microbial infections and kills pathogens effectively thus prevent diseases to reoccur. *Shalaka*, *Pippali*, *Godanta*, *Ghrita*, *Tail* and *Ajashakrit* are materials used for *Agnikarma*. *Anushastra* not only cure diseases but also provide benefits of minimal surgical interventions and offers long term benefits in chronic illness.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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