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### **Swarnaprashana- A Boon to Child Health Care: A Review.**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

According to a great saying “Prevention is better than Cure”, immunization has proved the way for a healthy life right from beginning or childhood. It has always played a crucial role in eradicating lot of diseases like Tetanus, Smallpox and so on. Immunization is defined as the technique by which the immune system of an individual develops resistance against any foreign body. Helper T cells, B cells, and various antibodies produced by B cells are the important constituents of our immune system that gets improved by immunization. As told by our Acharya’s, “*Swasthasya Swastha Rakshanam*”, the first aim of Charaka Samhita has in itself the essence of vaccination. Therefore, the saying “prevention is better than cure” is an old concept for Ayurveda. Administration of processed gold preparation in small children is a distinctive protocol mentioned in Ayurveda which is termed as “*Swarnaprashana*” by Acharya *Kashyapa* many years ago. *Kashyapa* explained with evidences the administration of *Swarna* (gold) give rise to several benefits like intellect enhancing, improving digestion and thereby metabolism, physique of an individual, immunity, skin texture, fertility, and also life span. *Swarnaprashana* is a classical processed gold preparation which is given as a Rejuvenatory therapy in Indian system of medicine. *Vacha*, cow ghee and honey are also used for the preparation of method of *Swarnaprashana*.

#### **KEYWORDS**

*Immunization, Swasthasya, Swastha, Swarnaprashana.*



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## INTRODUCTION

From centuries ago, *Bhasma* of *Swarna* is used as a medicine in the Indian traditional system of medicine. *Swarna Bhasma* possess various properties which have been told in the Ayurvedic texts like rejuvenator, aphrodisiac, memory enhancer etc<sup>1</sup>. It is also mentioned in various disorders like Grahani (Irritable Bowel Syndrome), Paandu Roga (anemia), Asthi kshaya (osteoporosis), Jeerna Vyadhi (chronic disorders) etc<sup>2</sup>. It is a major ingredient in some therapeutically potent formulations like *Makaradhwaja*, *Swarna Vasanata Malti Rasa*, *Vasantakusumakara Rasa* and bears properties like pain relieving<sup>3</sup>, anti-anxiety and antidepressant<sup>4</sup>, activity antioxidant<sup>5</sup> and augmenting effect<sup>6</sup>. It shows significant results on anormozoospermia<sup>7</sup>, male infertility<sup>8</sup> and oligoazospermia<sup>9</sup>. Also, some amount of gold was seen in the semen of a healthy fecund men<sup>10-11</sup>. Recent studies of gold nanoparticles proved effective for antiangiogenic and anti-cancer property<sup>12</sup>. *Swarna Bhasma* is also a major ingredient in *Swarna Prashana*. It is advocated in Ayurvedic texts that *Swarna Prashana* gives various effects like *Rasayana* (immunomodulation) and help increasing *Dhi* (memory) in neonates and children<sup>13-14</sup>. Gold in *Ayurveda* is explained under *Sapta*

*Loha*<sup>15</sup> (seven metals). It is further enlisted in *Shuddha Loha*<sup>16</sup> (pure metal), which is said to possess both preventive as well as protective qualities. Gold is also not contra-indicated for internal use before conception so as to get a healthy baby because of its *Rasayana* (rejuvenator) and *Vajikarana*<sup>17</sup> (aphrodisiac) effect. After conception also, it is being given to obtain the desired sex of the fetus (*Pumsavana Karma*)<sup>18</sup>. After birth, Gold preparation should be given during *Lehana*<sup>19</sup> (supplement feeding) and *Jatakarma Samskara*<sup>20-22</sup> as told by our Aacharyas. In the growing phase of child, gold is recommended alone or along with some herbal drugs so as to achieve better digestive power and metabolism, physical strength and immunity, intellect, color and complexion and lifespan etc<sup>19,20,21</sup>. Even when the person is lying on the death bed and *Arishta Lakshana* (fatal signs) are seen, gold is known for its protective action in the individual or increasing the life span of an individual<sup>22</sup>. Thus, Gold is such a great metal, which is having astonishing outcomes in the human starting before conception and until death. It is also mentioned in the Ayurvedic texts that gold if used orally should be taken only after proper purification. If proper purification is not done, it may results into some life-threatening complications<sup>15,16</sup>.



## MATERIALS & METHODS

### SWARNAPRASHANA

Acharya *Sushruta* has mentioned in *Jatakarma Samskara* the administration of *gold* with honey and cow ghee in a single dose at birth. The reason may to support the baby with respect to preventive and nutritive aspects as there is no proper secretion of breast milk in the mother of baby for the first few days after delivery<sup>20</sup>. Acharya *Vagbhata* also advised to give newborn herbal drugs combination in a gold-made leaf of banyan tree. This results in an increase in *Medha* (intellect)<sup>21</sup>. Acharya *Vagbhata* in *Jatakarma Samskara* also mentioned administration of *Swarna* along with other herbs<sup>22</sup>.

The special benefits of *Swarnaprashana* varies with the duration of administration; are also mentioned in our texts, which are as under:

- If administered in baby for continuous 30 days, the baby will become super intelligent (*Parama Medhavi*) and will not get affected by any disease (*Vyadhibhir Na Cha Drusyate*).
- If administered for 180 days, the baby will be able to remember the things, which are only heard once (*Srutadhara*)<sup>19</sup>.

### DOSAGE:

Acharya *Kashyapa* has not clearly mentioned the dose for *Swarnaprashana*.

However, he has mentioned the dosage of children according to age in his texts. Thus, the same dosage technique can be applied to affix the dosage of *Swarnaprashana*. Some other references regarding per day dose of *Swarna Bhasma* from various texts are also enlisted below:

- 1/4<sup>th</sup>–1/8<sup>th</sup> *Ratti* (~15–30 mg)<sup>15</sup>
- 2 *Gunja* (~250 mg)<sup>16</sup>
- 1 *Gunja* (~125 mg) or as per age<sup>20</sup>
- 1 *Harenu*<sup>22</sup>
- 1/32 *Ratti* (~3.9 mg)<sup>23</sup>
- 15.5–62.5 mg<sup>24</sup>

By taking into consideration these adult dosages as reference standards, dosage in children can be decided<sup>25</sup>.

## DISCUSSION

Various studies carried out in different institutions of India showed the tremendous outcomes of the *Swarnaprashana* which proves its reliability and thus considers it as a boon to the society.

Some studies have been cited below:

- K.B. Jyothy, Srihari Sheshagiri, Kalpana S. Patel, and S. Raja Gopala in their article entitled “A critical appraisal on *Swarnaprashana* in children” concluded the benefits of *Swarnaprashana* in children. In the nut shell, they concluded that *Swarnaprashana* can be renamed as a boon to children.



- “Clinical study on the efficacy of Swarnamrita Prashana (Ayurvedic compound drug) in recurrent attacks of cough in children” an article by Arun Raj G R, Prasanna N Rao, Shailaja U, Debnath Parikshith and Shital Desai concluded that Swarna Prashana was found very much effective in recurrent attacks of cough in children.
- Karri Sravani, Hatware Ketan, Sharma Sanjay in their article entitled “A Review on Traditional Ayurvedic Preparations Containing Gold” concluded that gold has multi-dimensional effects on body but more researches should be performed in order to totally understand all total health benefits of Gold.
- Kiran Prakash Nandeshwar and Dr. Prashant Laxmanrao Patil in their review article regarding Contribution of Swarna Prashana Samskara In Healthy Nation concluded that in today’s world, it is a challenging question to every parent to maintain their child healthy without any side effects. *Swarnaprashana* helps a lot in solving this problem as it helps to grow the child with best immunity and intellectual performance.

This concept of Swarna Prashana described by our Acharyas in Ayurvedic text needs some more experimental studies at various clinical level.

## CONCLUSION

Various health effects of *Swarnaprashana* in children are now accepted. *Swarnaprashana* is the administration of pure gold *Bhasma* alone or different forms of gold combined with various herbs. The form of gold selected should be based upon factors like bioavailability, no or least adverse reactions, easy to prepare, and administer and cost effectively which should be standardized by scientific studies.



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