

Swarna Prashana– A Immuno-Booster in Ayurveda

Satyawati Rathia^{1*}, V. K. Kori², Rajagopala S.³ and K.S. Patel⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Department of Kaumarbhritya, IPGT & RA, GAU Jamnagar Gujarat, India

Abstract

The word “*Swarna Prashana*” is a combination of two words – “*Swarna*” and “*Prashana*”. The term *Swarna* is a common word and refers to the noble metal Gold. *Prashana* refers to the act of eating or consuming or ingesting. Health is a condition when the individual is in complete accord with the surroundings, while disease is loss of ease to the body (dis-ease), so disease is opposite of health. In this broader sense, it includes injuries, disabilities, disorders, syndromes, infections, isolated symptoms, deviant behavior. *Vyadhikshamatva* is the strength to protect the body against diseases; it is also called body resistance. It depends on *Bala*, *Balavardhakabhava*, *Prakrita Kapha* and *Ojas*. There is great decrease in the quality of health status of humans from generation to generation; tolerance to allergic factors, tiredness and resistance to diseases has greatly diminished. For the health promotion and longevity of life span, *Samskara*, *Lehana* and *Rasayana* drugs, *Swarna Prashana* etc. are mentioned for children in Ayurveda.

Keywords

Ayurveda, *Vyadhikshamatva*, *Swarna Prashana*, *Lehana*



Greentree Group

Received 25/11/15 Accepted 17/01/16 Published 10/03/16

INTRODUCTION

Balyavastha(childhood) has been described in the texts of Ayurveda as a period of minimal relative *Bala*(physical strength and immunity) and hence children of this period are considered to be more prone for various diseases. A considerable decrease in physical strength and immunity are said to be added factor for disease occurrence and severity. Immunity is the balanced state of having adequate biological defences to fight infection, disease, or other unwanted biological invasion, while having adequate tolerance to avoid inflammation, allergy, and autoimmune diseases¹. Immunization is the process whereby a person is made immune or resistant to an infectious disease, typically by the administration of a vaccine². *Vyadhikshamatva* is the inherent or/and an acquired capacity of the body in preventing occurrence of a disease or in modifying the course of an already manifested disease to a milder extent³. *Vyadhikshamatva* can be explained in terms of protective (*Vyadhibalavirodhitva*) and preventive (*Vyadhyutpadaka Pratibandhakatva*) mechanism of body's immune system. The concept of *Lehan* which depicts the administration of various herbal drugs, ghee preparations and gold as supplementary

feeds is described in detail by *Acharya Kashyapa* who is considered as the pioneer of Ayurvedic paediatrics⁴. *Swarna Prashana* having *Medhavaradhaka*, *Agnivaradhaka*, *Balvaradhaka*, *Vrishya*, *Ayushyakara*, and *Grahapaha* etc⁵. *Swarna Prashana* is very popular cultural practice of India and is a unique method of boosting immunity and intellectual power in children.

AIM

- To elaborate the various concepts of *Vyadhikshmtva*.
- To establish the efficacy and non-toxic profiles of *Swarna Prashana*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials related to *Swarna Prashana* with action and other relevant topics have been collected, from *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Samgraha*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Bhavaprakasha*, *Sharangdhar Samhita*, *Ras Shastra* related books and available commentaries on these. Information is also searched from various websites; articles were also thoroughly screened for this review. Along with that, work carried out by research scholars in the field of Ayurveda is also taken into consideration.

Conceptual Study:**Vyadhi**

The *Vyadhi* is defined as the state which mainly affects the body and reflects on the mind, subjected to pain and misery. Charaka identified *Vyadhi* with *Dukkha*⁶ and Sushruta has defined it as that which proved to be a source of torment or pain to the *Purusha*⁷.

Vyadhikshmatva:

The word ‘*Vyadhikshamatva*’ is mentioned by *Acharya Charaka* while explaining about relation between *Hita-ahita ahara* and diseases. The author says that all *Doshas* are neither of equal strength nor all the bodies have enough resisting power for diseases equally⁸. *Chakrapani* comments that it is the competency of an individual to prevent the onset of a disease or to resist the severity of an already manifested disease. The term *Vyadhi* is a synonym of disease and *Kshamatva* indicates the resistance or tolerance of the body to fight against the diseases. Thus it is the competency of an individual to prevent the onset of a disease or to resist the severity of an already manifested disease. Concept of *Bala*⁹, *Balavardhaka Bhava*¹⁰, *Oja*¹¹, *Prakriti*¹², *Prakrita Shleshma*¹³, *Lehana*¹⁴, *Samskara*¹⁵ *Rasayana*¹⁶ and *Vajikarana*¹⁷ are explained

in Ayurvedic classics which increase the *Vyadhikshmtva* of human being.

Bala:

Bala is the power to exercise control over the harmful activities of *Dosha*, which resides in every *Dhatu* of the body. *Bala* forms in the body through three main sources; *Sahaja*, *Kalaja* and *Yuktikrita*¹⁸. *Vyadhikshmtva* depends on these three types of *Bala*; *Sahaja*, *Kalaja* and *Yuktikrita* *Sahaja Bala* are present in body since birth with a favourable conditions, *Kalaja Bala* not present at birth but according to time and age increase and proper diet, life style and *Rasayana* are included in *Yuktikrita Bala*.

Balavardhakabhava:

Balavridhikara Bhava is the factor which positively affect both physical and immune strength of an individual which are explained below [19]:-

1. *Balavat Deshe Janma* - Birth in a country where people are naturally strong
2. *Balavat Purushe Janma* - Birth in a home of naturally strong person
3. *Balavat Kale Janma* - Birth in the period of time when people naturally gain strength
4. *Sukhascha* - Pleasant and moderate

- Kalayoga* - climate
5. *Bijaguna Sampat* - Excellence of the qualities of sperm and ovum
6. *Kshetraguna Sampat* - Excellence of the qualities of female reproductive system
7. *Ahara Sampat* - Excellence of ingested food
8. *Sharira Sampat* - Excellence of the physique
9. *Satmya Sampat* - Wholesomeness of various factors responsible for health
10. *Satva Sampat* - Excellence of the mental faculty
11. *Swabhava Samsiddhi* - Favourable disposition of the nature
12. *Yauvanam* - Youth
13. *Samharsha* - Cheerful disposition

Ojas:

The meaning of the term *Ojas* can be interpreted from its roots which carry the similar meaning as that of *Bala*²⁰. One of this means, to bestow power and vitality and the other means to keep the body tissues and organs in their optimum functional state. It implies that the *Ojas* is responsible for the maintenance of the homeostasis in the body and thus prevent manifestation of any

disease. Chakrapanidatta described that *Ojas* is of two types *Para Ojas: Ashta bindu* [eight drops] located in the *Hridaya* and *Apara Ojas: Ardhanjali*, located in the *Dhamani*²¹. There are three signs of *Ojakshya*; *Visramsas*, *Vyapat* and *Kshya*. Tiredness, heaviness, physically and mentally disturbance, syncope, oedema excessive sleeping are the symptoms of *Ojakshya*²².

Prakriti

Acharyas say that *Vata Prakriti* persons are more prone to diseases and *Sama Prakriti* persons are always healthy²³. It denotes that *Vyadhikshmatva* depends also on *Prakriti*: which is comes under *Sahaja Bala*.

Prakritka Shleshma:

Prakritka Kapha is *Oza* in body and *Vikrita Kapha* is disease. Its all properties are same to *Kapha*²⁴.

Agni:

It is responsible for life, colour (luster of the skin), strength, health, enthusiasm, plumpness, complexion, *Ojas* (energy), *Tejas* (gleam of the body), other varieties of *Agni* and *Prana*(vitality). If *Agni* is impaired by an imbalance by *Dosha* then metabolism will get affected, immune response and natural resistance will also be lowered²⁵.

Hita-Ahita Ahara:

Hita Ahara is responsible to developed healthy *Dhatus* and final product of *Dhatus* i.e. *Ojas*. So increases in *Ojas* or *Bala* ultimately increase *Vyadhikshmatva*. On the other hand, *Ahita* substance if taken continuously then leads to improper nourishment of *Dhatus* which result in decreasing *Ojas* and *Vyadhikshamatva*²⁶.

Lehana:

The word *Lehana* itself indicated its consistency i.e. semisolid form. The drugs for *Lehana* should always be mixed with *Madhu* and *Ghrita*. **Kashyapa** has given special emphasis on *Lehana karma* and a separate chapter called *Lehadhyaya* is in *Sutra-Sthana*. The children of a mother who are having no breast milk, deficient milk, or vitiated milk of parturient women (mother) or of a wet –nurse of similar condition who have predominance of *Vata* and *Pitta* but not *Kapha*, who do not get satisfied with the breast milk and cry in spite of repeated sucking, children who do not sleep at night, eat too much, pass scanty urine and faeces; children who have increased digestive power, though free from disease yet scraggy, have delicate body part and emaciated, do not pass urine and faeces even for three days; such type of children should be prescribed *Lehana*²⁷.

The purpose and object of *Lehana Karma* look to prevent the diseases by establishing due immunity and to promote the physical and psychic strength. Health and disease are dependent in *Lehanaprakriya*²⁸. *Swarna Prashana* described in this chapter along with other *lehayogas*.

Samskara:

Samskaras are the important cultural events in an individual's life from birth to death. There are 16 *Samskaras*. *Jatakarma Samskara* is one of them; in which combination of *Madhu and Ghrita* is given to the baby²⁹.

Karnavedhana:

It also comes under the *Samskaras*, done for cosmetic value and protects the body from untoward health complications like *Grahas*³⁰.

Rasayana Chikitsa:

The word *Rasayanais* made up of two Sanskrit words, *Rasa* (nutrition) and *Ayana*(transportation in the body). *Rasayana* are claimed to improve vitality, rejuvenate body tissues, improve immunity, and prevent aging³¹.

Vajikarana Chikitsa:

Vajikarana means the process of improving 'Sukram' in an individual of its depletion. *Sukra* is said to seat in the entire body with

the functions of *Bala, Varna and Upacaya* (strength, complexion and growth). Promotion of *Sukram* is said to be the promotion of *Ojas* which sustains immunity of the body, such *Vajikara* drugs are of *Guru, Madhura, Snigdha, Jivana, Brumhana*³².

Swarna Prashana:

The word “*Swarna Prashana*” is a combination of two words – “*Swarna*” and “*Prashana*”. The term *Swarna* is used for Gold and *Prashana* refers to the act of licking. **Acharya Kashyapa** describes method of preparation, duration and effect of *Swarna Prashana*. It is mentioned that, keeping face towards east, gold should be rubbed on a washed stone with a little quantity of water. Then it should be mixed with *Madhu* and *Ghritha* and should be given to the child for licking. With this *Swarna Prashana* child develops *Medha* (memory), *Agni* (improves the digestive power), *Bala* (strength), *Aayushya* (life span), *Mangalakara* (auspicious), *Punya* (virtuous), *Vrushya* (aphrodisiac), *Varnya* (fair complexion), *Grahapaha* (avoids away associated evils). If *Swarna Prashana* is done for one month then child will be extremely intelligent, remains unaffected by diseases. If done for 6

months then child will be *Shrutadhara* (remembers what he hears once)³³.

Traditionally *Swarna Prashana* is done as cultural practice in India. Mainly after delivery raw gold is rubbed on a stone with the help of little amount of water and is administered along with *Madhu* and *Ghritha*. This process of administration for certain period of time to achieve health and immunity. Properties of gold and its formulation, *Brahma Rasayana* is mentioned in *Charaka Samhita*³⁴. Some researches have been carried out on *Swarna Prashana*. Dr. Sheetal S.- reported that significant results were observed in reducing the bouts of cough (49%), duration of cough (40%), sleep disturbance (69.22%), Quality of sputum (43%), dyspnea (65%)³⁵. Research work of Dr. Amruta Gaikwad- showed that *Swarna Prashana* acts as equivalent immune-modulators as evidenced by triggering the response of immunological system by a rise in the total proteins and serum IgG levels³⁶. Dr. Aniketh- concluded that Significant improvement in immunity and intelligence of the children³⁷. Significant increase in the phagocytic activity in albino rats was found in Dr. Ajay Chavan’s study³⁸. Study of Dr. Vinarma Sharma- titled showed

that “Toxicity Study of *Suvarna Bindu Prashana* in Albino Rats” Result: “No signs of toxicity in albino rats³⁹.” Dr. Jyothy KB- reported that *Swarna Prashana* impact on cell mediated immunity against triple antigens, potential therapeutic effects in anti-amnestic activity and immunostimulant activity in Pharmacological study³⁹. Anthropometrical measurements were found highly significant and raised IgG levels in clinical study⁴⁰. Research work of Dr. Anupriya- showed that *Swarna Prashana* is safe, non toxic, have immunomodulatory effect on prolonged regular use⁴¹.

DISCUSSION

Vyadhikshmatva is the competency of an individual to prevent the onset of a disease or to resist the severity of an already manifested disease. It depends on *Bala*, *Balavardhaka Bhava*, *Oja*, *Prakriti*, *Prakrita Kapha*, *Agni*, *Hita and Ahita Ahara*, *Lehana Karma*, *Jatkarma Samskara*, *Rasayana Chikitsa* and *Swarna Prashana*. These all provide healthy human body by protect from infections. Gold or *Swarna* is considered as a one of those metals which have good benefits on the body when consumed internally. It has been used to enhance strength and potency, promote

longevity and combat the aging process in humans. As *Swarna* is a metal, so direct administration is difficult and standard dose format is difficult to maintain, now *Swarna Bhasma* is used. It is an ancient preparation of Ayurveda which is metallo-medicine in powder form of nano to submicron size particles, prepared from metals after many systematic processes to convert raw metal into therapeutic form through the classical process of repeated incineration and grinding with some herbal juices and other specified matters. Nano particles can be absorbed through sublingual route directly into the blood stream. Therefore, it can be presumed that some *Swarna Bhasma* particles may get absorbed through the sublingual route directly into the blood stream, though it has not been experimentally proved. Its preparation method, dose, time of administration, administration age and properties are mentioned in detail in classical Ayurveda texts. Researches have proved on its efficacy, toxicity profile, immunomodulatory action and as a growth and developmental enhancer in children. Safety and efficacy study of *Swarna Prashana* showed its safe, non toxic effect. Research on immunomodulatory action

concluded that it has immunomodulatory effect on prolonged regular use.

CONCLUSION

Swarna Prashana is a comprehensive *Rasayana Chikitsa*, administered for the physical, mental, and intellectual power of the children. It is an immunobooster for children. Researches have shown that there are no toxicity of *Swarna Prashana*. Animal studies on *Swarna Bhasma* revealed its immunostimulant effect and established it as a preventive and curative therapy.

REFERENCES

1. "http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Immunity_(medical)&oldid=662341839" Categories: Immunology. This page was last modified on 14 May 2015, at 19:02.
2. "http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Immunization&oldid=655400977" Categories: Immunology Immune system Vaccination. This page was last modified on 7 April 2015, at 20:29.
3. Jadavji Trikamji, Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana, 28/7, Krishnadas Academy, Varanasi, 2004, pg.178
4. Satyapala Bhisagacharya, Kashyap Samhita, Sutra Sthana, Lehadhayya, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi 2010, Pg. 4,5
5. Satyapala Bhisagacharya, Kashyap Samhita, Sutra Sthana, Lehadhayya, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, 2010, Pg. 3,4,5
6. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana 9/4, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005, pg.208.
7. Devodas Dhanvantari, Sushruta, Susruta Samhita, Sutra Sthana, 24/4, edited by Ambika Dutta Shastri, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, 2009, pg 129
8. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana, 28/6, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005, pg. 546
9. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana, 11/36, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005, pg.240
10. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Sharira Sthana, 6/13, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005, pg.909
11. Bhavamishra, Bhavprakash, Vidyotani Commentary, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Bhavan, Varanasi, edited By Shri Bramhashankar Misra, Purva Khanda, Garbhprakarana, 2012, 3/181, 57
12. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana, 7/39-40, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005, pg.180
13. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana, 17/117, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005, pg.365
14. Satyapala Bhisagacharya, Kashyap Samhita, Sutra Sthana, Lehadhayya, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi, 2010, Pg.4,5

15. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Sharira Sthana, 8/46, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005,pg.967
16. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Chakrapani Commentary, Chikitsa Sthana,1/1/8, edited by Jaydevaji Trikrampi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2011, pg. 5
17. Dr. V.L.N. Sastry, Kaumarbhrityam Paediatrics in Ayurveda, Chaukhambha Orientalia Varanasi, reprint edition2015, pg.144
18. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana, 11/36, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005,pg.74
19. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Sharira Sthana, 6/13, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005,pg.909
20. Bhavamishra, Bhavprakash,Vidyotani Commentary, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Bhavan,Varanasi, edited by Shri Bramhashankar Misra, Purva Khanda, Garbhprakarana,2012,3/181,57
21. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Chakrapani Commentary, Sharira Sthana 7/15, edited by Jaydevaji Trikrampi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2011, pg. 339
22. Devodas Dhanvantari, Sushruta,Susruta Samhita, Sutra Sthana,15/25,edited byAmbika Dutta Shastri, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana,Varanasi, 2009,pg 79.
23. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana, 7/39-40, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005,pg. 180
24. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana, 17/117, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005,pg.365
25. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Chikitsa Sthana, 15/3, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005,pg.550
26. Agnivesha, CharakaSamhita, Sutra Sthana, 25/33, edited by Bhrmhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005,pg.449
27. SatyapalaBhisagacharya, Kashyap Samhita, SutraSthana, Lehadhayya,ChaukhambhaSanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, 2010,Pg.4,5
28. Vriddhagivaka, Kashyapa Samhita, Sutra. Lehanadhaya 4, edited by P.V. Tiwari, Varanasi, Chaukhamba Vishwabhari, reprint 2008, pg.3.

29. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Sharira Sthana, 8/46, edited by Bhmrhanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2005,pg.967
30. Dr. Dinesh K.S.,Kaumarbhritya, chapter 12,part 1,Samskaras, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2013,pg.139
31. Agnivesha, CharakaSamhita, Chakrapani Commentary, Chikitsa Sthana,1/1/8, edited by Jaydevaji Trikrampi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2011, pg. 5
32. Dr. V.L.N. Sastry, Kaumarbhrityam Paediatrics in Ayurveda, Chaukhambha Orientalia Varanasi, reprint edition2015, pg.144
33. Satyapala Bhisagacharya, Kashyap Samhita, Sutra Sthana, Lehadhaya, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, 2010,Pg. 4,5
34. Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita, Chakrapani Commentary, Chikitsa Sthana,1/1/58, edited by Jaydevaji Trikrampi, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthana, Varanasi, reprint 2011, pg. 19
35. Dr. Sheetal S. (2009):“Effect of Swarnmruta Prashana on recurrent attacks of Kasa” S.D.M. college of Ayurveda Hassan.
36. Dr. AmrutaGaikwad (2011): “A Comparative Pharmacology-Clinical study of the effect of Madhu-GhritaandSwarna-Vacha-Madhu-Ghrita on Neonates”,I.P.G.T. & R.A.Jamnagar.
37. Dr. Aniketh (2012): “To Clinically Evaluate the Effect of *Swarna bindu Prashana* on Immunity and Intelligence of Children”, KLE University, Belgam.
38. Dr. Ajay Chavan(2012): “Immunomodulatory effect of Swarna bindu Prashana in Albino Rats”, KLE University, Belgam.
39. Dr. Vinarma Sharma (2012): “Toxicity Study of Suvarna Bindu Prashana in Albino Rats” KLE University, Belgam.
40. Dr. Jyothy KB (2013): “A Randomized Controlled Clinical Trial on Swarna Prashana in Infants w.s.r. to its immunomodulatory activity”, I.P.G.T. & R.A. Jamnagar.
41. Dr. Anupriya (2013): “Safety and efficacy study of *Swarna Prashana* drops prepared from *Swarna Bhasma* and *Swarna Lavana*” I.P.G.T. & R.A. Jamnagar.