

A Review on Akshitarpana: An Ayurveda Method of Eye Care

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Date of Submission: 08-06-2024

Date of Acceptance: 18-06-2024

ABSTRACT:

Human body has been rewarded with various sense organs amongst them eye is considered the prime sense organ. Eyes have always been at a threat from kapha dosha and in the modern era the lifestyle changes contributed the eye ailments and eventually hampers the vision.

In Kriyakalpa where therapeutic action with specific formulations are provided as the ocular therapy. Different types of Kriyakalpa are mentioned in Ayurveda out of which Akshitarpana/Netra Tarpana/ Netra basti is preferred mode of treatment used for various ocular conditions. Lipophilic and hydrophilic substances (drugs) can be delivered to the eyes with Akshitarpana.

Akshitarpana gives good eye penetration of drugs through its lipid solubility. It helps in nourishing eye, relaxing eye, improving blood circulation to the eye thus improving overall health of the eye and cure various diseases. In this review we have concentrated mainly on Akshitarpana as a mode of treatment.

Keywords: Kriyakalpa, Akshitarpana, lipid solubility, bioavailability

I. INTRODUCTION:

Human body has the physical appearance and the inner soul. Body has been rewarded with various sense organs (Indriyas).

Amongst all the sense organs (indriyas)

eye is the prime sense organ and considered as the mind reflectors.

"Sarvendriyam nayanam Pradhanam" i.e. Eyes are the organs of prime importance and organs of direct perception. It is precisely developed part of the brain.⁽¹⁾ Netra (Eyes) has

always a threat from kapha dosha which has been explained by Acharya Sushruta.⁽²⁾

In the modern era the changes in lifestyle, eyes are at the risk of exposure to dust, pollution, UV-lights,

continuous stress from mobiles, computers & lack of eye blinking which lead to uneven formation of the protective tears. Which causes dryness, redness, itching, foreign body sensation and hamper the vision.

Ayurvedic treatment for various problems of eyes has been mentioned in the literature. Topical application of medicated solutions into the eyes has shown good results in some previously held studies.

In Shalakyatantra, one mode of treatment is Kriyakalpa, which consists of various types of eye care treatment.

- 1) Tarpan (Akshi/Netra tarpana/Netra-Basti).
- 2) Putupaka (Application of fresh juice)
- 3) Anjana (Collyrium/ Salve)"
- 4) Ashotana (Herbal decoction drop)
- 5) Seka (Decoction drip)

Kriyakalpa → Kriya means therapeutic Action and kalpana means-Specified formulation⁽³⁾

It is a local ocular therapy where medicated solution is administered into the eye, improving nourishment of eyes and help to improve the eye health, vision and cure the eye diseases.

Orally or systemically administered drugs are unable to cross the blood-aqueous, blood-vitreous and blood-retinal barriers thus locally administered drug therapy has the advantage over the systemic therapy⁽⁴⁾ & Akshi-Tarpana / Netra tarpana/ Netra

Basti means holding or retaining something in the eyes and giving nourishment to the eye with medicated solutions through Ghrita, vasa, majja, Ghrita manda i.e. nourishing eye with fatty material.⁽⁵⁾

Akshitarpana is the 1st procedure of eye done for the disease. It is useful both prophylactically in the healthy eyes as well as therapeutically in the eye diseases. It is indicated mainly in Drishtigat Rogas.

Here we have done a review on Akshitarpana-

its effect on local ocular conditions on the basis of various previously worked done. Tarpana has been indicated in various eye conditions, such as roughness, dryness of eyes, dark spots in front of eyes, dirty muddy eyes/loss of ocular glow/lusture, eyelid stiffness, madarosis, eyelid drooping, squint, computer vision Syndrome, degenerative disorders of macula (ARMD)-presbyopia; refractive errors like myopia (Timira) hypermetropia, early cataracts and optic atrophy, optic neuritis.⁽⁶⁾

Acharya Vagbhata has added list of diseases which he selected for Netra Tarpana: Siraharsha (Conjunctival blood vessel Congestion)⁽⁷⁾ Sirotkata (Episcleritis), Kruccronmilana (difficulty in eye opening) Arjuna (subconjunctival hemorrhage), Avarna shukra (corneal opacity), Abhishyanda (Conjunctivitis), Adhimantha (Glaucoma), Vataparyaya, Anyatovata, vatika & paitika diseases of eyes as well as injured eyes due to Abhigata Shuktika (vitamin A deficiency syndrome or Xerosis)⁽⁸⁾ Tarpana is contraindicated in distended eyes, red eyes with mucoid/watery discharge (Dacrocystitis), Netrabhishyanda, Ajakjat, hot cold, dry, cloudy weather, traumatic conditions of eye.⁽⁹⁾ Immediately after drinking alcohol or poison. Patient having any respiratory disorders, anxious, mental state, giddiness, acute painful state & other complicated ocular conditions (Krishnamandalshota).⁽¹⁰⁾

Akshi Tarpana Procedure:

- 1) **Poorva karma**-Shodhana karma Sthanika Abhyanga & Mriduswedana are done.
- 2) **Pradhana karma**: Patient is thoroughly examined. The prakriti & vikriti are noted down in detail.

According to Sushruta Samhita & Astanga Sangraha Akshitarpana should be carried out on an auspicious day, in forenoon / afternoon hours. Three hours after the sunrise or three hours before the sunset. Procedure is to be performed when food is digested or before taking meals.^(11,12,13)

Procedure should not be performed in extreme climatic conditions. The room should be free from dust, direct sunlight, direct wind and smoke.

Patient should lie down in supine position in physically and mentally relaxed state.⁽¹⁴⁾ Swedanakriya should be performed with cloth soaked in lukewarm water. (Pali) i.e. Athick paste (dough) is made from mixture of black gram flour & Water is used. The eyes are encircled with firm, compact, leak

proof uniform wall made up of dough.^(15,16)

According to Adhhyamala, height of Pali is up to 2 angula and 1/2 angula thickness.⁽¹⁷⁾ Medicated ghee (ghrita), milk and ghrita manda can be used according to Astanga Sangraha. Lukewarm Ghrita poured on the closed eyes gently until the eyelashes are submerged.^(18,19) Patient is asked to open and close the eyes. (Unmesha and Nimesha).⁽²⁰⁾

The procedure is performed for 15-20 minutes and ghrita is drained out from the lateral canthus side.

The temperature of the ghrita should be maintained.

After draining the ghrita the eyes are gently wiped out with lukewarm water.

After the tarpana vidhi shirovirechana (Nasya) and Dhoompana (fumigation) to be given. Avoid direct exposure to sunlight, heat, cold, wind.

According to Sushruta, retention of ghrita depends on the Dosha and the site of the disease. The time depends on healthiness or unhealthiness of the eyes known as Matrakala. (100 matrakala is around 32 seconds).

Retention time for holding for healthy person is 500 matra kala so that in cases of kapha, Pitta & Vata is 600, 800 & 1000 matrakala respectively.

According to desired site in Sandhigata, vartmagata, Krsngata, Drstigata & Adhimantha is 300, 100, 500, 700, 800, 1000 matrakala respectively.⁽²¹⁾

Course of treatment:

One course of tarpana is usually of five sittings.

According to Acharya Videha, (quoted by Dalhana on Su. Ut. 18.12), Vagbhata (A.H.Su. 24.10) and Gada Nigraha (Netra 187)

1. Vata disease: Daily
2. Pitta diseases: Alternated days
3. Kapha diseases: Once in 3 days
4. Sannipataja diseases: Once in 2 days

Acharya Sushruta and Gayadasa are of the following opinion.

1. Vataja: Daily
2. Pittaja: Once in 3 days
3. Kaphaj: Once in 5

Acharya Jejjata has considered severity of the disease as a criterion. He has opined that: Tarpana should be done only once in mild diseases, three days continuously in moderate and five days continuously in severe disease.

Strict after care for double the duration of tarpana is advised. As this is very difficult,

at least equal number of days should be considered as pat hyakala. It is ideal to do tarpana for five days.⁽²³⁾

Akshi tarpana done properly it results in clear vision. Lightness of eyes, proper functioning, able to tolerate sunlight, gets good sleep with blissful awaking, cessation of excessive secretions from eye.⁽²⁴⁾

Excessive Akshitarpana causes heaviness in the eyes, lacrimation, itching, sticking, improper vision & oiliness.⁽²⁵⁾

When it is insufficiently done it causes dryness, indistinct vision, intolerance to light, increased watery discharge, increased lacrimation, aggravation of the disease conditions.⁽²⁶⁾

To prevent or treat these conditions. According to the doshas Dhoompana Anjana.

Nasya & Seka to be performed.

Ruksainkapha, Snigdha in vata and Shitain Pitta ja conditions (disease)⁽²⁷⁾

II. DISCUSSION

Akshi /Netra tarpana means increasing the strength of eye by giving nourishment through the locally administered medicated ghrita.

The aim of Akshitarpana is to improve nutritional status &

strength of eye which helps to keep good ocular health.

Akshi tarpana helps to relieve pain, eye stiffness, redness swelling in various conditions. Lipophilic & hydrophilic substances can be delivered to the eye.⁽²⁸⁾

Aqueous base solutions & suspensions are used, where chance of solutions getting diluted and excreted as early from the eyes as they are aqueous based while drugs in the suspensions have more size of particles and the suspensions

are thicker, it stays in eyes for

longer duration than the aqueous solutions.

This increases more drug and eye contact time hence increases the bio availability of the drug.⁽²⁹⁾

III. CONCLUSION:-

Akshitarpana or Netra tarpana is one of the most important therapy in Kriyakalpa for most of the eye diseases. Tarpana with ghrita as base has been advocated and mostly recommended treatment in various studies.

Akshi tarpana gives good eye penetration of drugs through its lipid solubility because of route of administration to the eye. It nourishes eye, gives good eye relaxing and soothing effect, improves blood circulation,

strengthens eye muscles and improve overall health of eye and helps in curing multiple eye diseases.

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