

A REVIEW ON AYURVEDIC CONCEPT OF SNEHA KALPANA*

BY

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Abstract

Ayurveda is the science of life practiced by ancient Aryans which is based on Atharva- Veda, one of the oldest scripture of Hindus. Sneha Kalpana is one of the most popular Bhaishajya Kalpana preparations of Ayurvedic medicine. It was first described in Charak Samhita. Sneha Kalpana is called as secondary Kalpanas which are abundantly found in Ayurvedic classics. There is generally not a single Cikitsa Grantha found in Ayurveda, which is devoid of Sneha Kalpana. The use of oils helps to overcome ageing, fatigue and improves strength instantaneously and also helps to cure many other diseases. The use of various Taila and Ghrita preparations has been recommended for the treatment of different diseases in the Ayurvedic classics. These preparations are meant for either external or internal medication. This article is a review on methods, types and advantages of sneh kalpana.

Key words: Ayurvedic, Sneha Kalpana, Atharava – Veda.

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Introduction

Sneha Paka may be defined as “A pharmaceutical process to prepare oleaginous medicaments from the substances like *Kalka* (herbal paste of different parts of botanicals), *Kwatha* (specifically prepared decoction in accordance of *Ayurvedic* principles) or *Drava Dravya* (any other liquid such as milk, self expressed juices, meat juice, etc.) taken in specific proportion and by subjecting them to unique heating pattern and duration to fulfil certain pharmaceutical parameters, according to the need of therapeutics¹¹.

Nirukti

- *Sneha*¹²

Luq% iqa] ¼Luq izlzo.ks + fer}kfnRokr~ Mq%A½

- *Kalpana*¹³

L=h] ¼d`i~ + f.kp~ + Hkkos ;qp~ Vki~A½

Historical review

History of sneh kalpana is ancient we found description of sneh kalpana in Vedas. In *Mahakavya Kala*, *Ramayana Ayodhya Kanda*, when king *Dasharatha* was dead, his dead body was poured in the ‘*Taila droni*’.

Description about sneh kalpana is found in charak samhita, susurat samhita, *Astanga Samgraha* and

Astanga Hridaya, chakar data, sharangdhar samhita in details .

- **Modern Era**

- ❖ **Gadanigraha** In this book separate chapters of *Sneha Kalpana Tailadhikaras, Ghritadhikaras* are included by *Acharya Sodhala*.¹⁸

- ❖ **Sahastrayoga**

The treatise owned by the *Kerala Vaidyas* also elaborated the ratios and different *Ghrita* and *Taila* preparations. 135 *Ghritas* & 96 *Tailas* are mentioned in this treaty.

- ❖ **Bhiasajya Ratnavali**

This treatise clearly described about *Sneha Murcchana*. Method of preparation of *Sneha Kalpana* is also elaborated by *Acharya Govind Das Sen*.

General Methods of Sneha Paka preparation

Sneha Paka process may be divided in three phases.

- *Sneha Murcchana*.
- *Sneha Paka*.
- *Paka Siddhi*.

While preparing the *Sneha Kalpana*, first of all *Sneha* should undergo *Smmurcchana*.¹⁹ Then in second phase specific amount of *Kalka*, *Kwath*, other any liquid if mentioned etc. has to be mixed with *Sneha* according to their sequence and *Sneha Paka* is to be done, *Gandha Dravyas* are mixed at the end, for making proper *Paka*, equal quantity of water is to be added and *Sneha Paka* is to be done over *Mrudu Agni* till total water content is get evaporated. After attaining *Sneha Lakshanas*, vessel has to be out from the fire and contents are filtered. When the excess of foam appears in the oil and disappearance of foam in *Ghrita*, along with the emergence of colour, smell and taste of medicaments then it is considered that the preparation is complete.²⁰ After this stage when the *Sneha* is lukewarm the fine powder of perfuming agent is to be added, if prescribed.

The above description is about the general method of *Sneha Paka*, when there is special mention regarding the quantity of each *Dravya*, and then the preparation should be done accordingly.

Sneha Paka

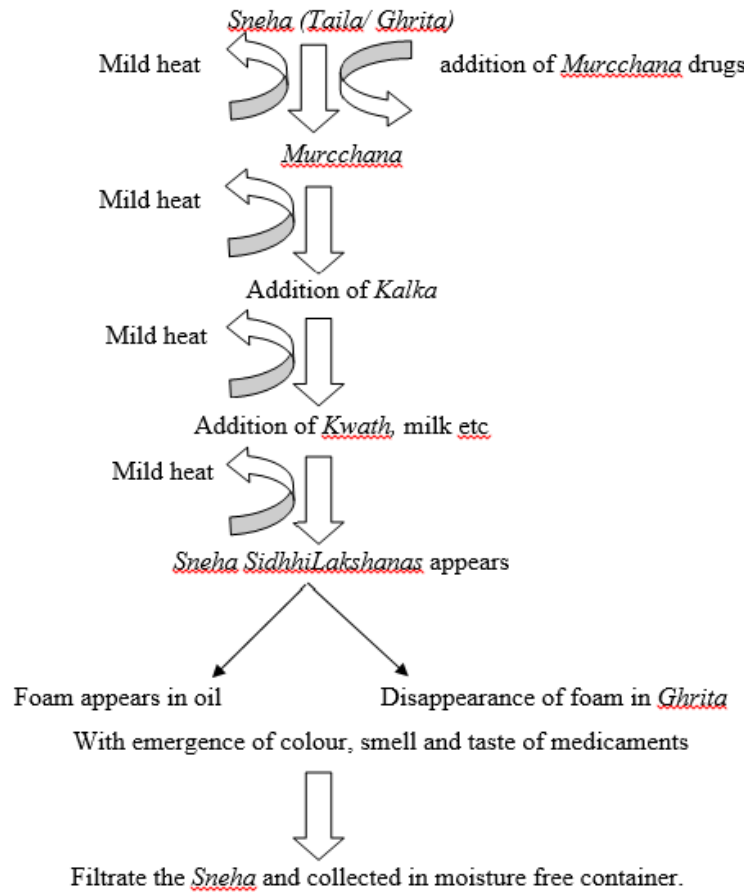
The *Sneha Kalpana* can be divided in to two types, depending on the type of *Sneha Dravya* used in the preparation. They are:-

- **Taila Kalpana**- in which oil usually *Tila Taila* used as base.
- **Ghrita Kalpana**:-*Ghrita* (ghee) used as base.

The oil preferably new one and the *Ghee* should be as old as possible.²¹ The *Sneha* using in the preparation should be free from rancidity.

As the general principle of *Sneha Kalpana*, these *Sneha Dravyas* are indicated to take four times to the amount of *Kalka Dravyas*.²²

Showing flow chart of general method of preparation of SnehaPaka



Duration of Sneha Paka

The preparation of medicated *Taila* and *Ghrita* should not be complete within a day, as longer as the duration of preparation more absorption of fat soluble constituents of the drug takes place. Thus the potency of the *Sneha* is expected to be enhanced. That means the first day after doing *Sneha Paka* some time, by giving some intermittent time gap, again next day some *Paka Vidhi* has to be continued. During this gap *Sneha* has to be kept as it is in container without any change. The Duration of *Paka* period of *Sneha* depends on the nature of liquid substances added to it.

Table no. 5: *Paka* of *Sneha* in different media

S. No.	Liquid Media	Days
1.	<i>Mamsa Rasa, Vrihi dhanya</i>	1 day
2.	<i>Gaudugdha</i>	2 days
3.	<i>Swarasa</i>	3 days
4.	<i>Takra, Aranal, Dadhi, Kanji</i>	5 days
5.	<i>Mula, Lata (Latex)</i>	12 days

So, here we may conclude that the active principles which are present in *Kalka*, *Swarsa* etc. may get activated during that state, if contents are kept as it is in the container or with proper mediator like *Ksheera*, *Mamsarasa*, *Takra*, *Aranal*, *Dadhi* etc. may facilitates proper fixation of active principles with *Sneha*. It is advised that *Sneha* has to be prepared in more than one day.

Precautions for Sneha Kalpana

Precautions of the *Sneha Kalpana* can be divided into 3 phases:

- Before processing
- During processing
- After processing
- **Before processing**
 - ❖ *Sneha* should be pure, clear and without slurry.
 - ❖ It should be taken after *Murcchana Karma* only.
 - ❖ In case of *Ghrita* preferably old ghee (*Purana Ghrita*) should be taken.
 - ❖ In case of *Taila*, it should be new one.
 - ❖ In case of *Taila Paka Patra* (container) should be wide mouthed, because during process *Taila* may come out, if it is having narrow mouth.
 - ❖ Depending on the quantity of the *Sneha*, the size of the *Sneha Patra* should be selected
- **During processing**
 - ❖ Maintain the intensity of the fire throughout the operation in order to get desirable grade of temperature.
 - ❖ Gentle boiling of *Sneha* is to be maintained continuously.
 - ❖ *Sneha Paka* should be prepared in *Mrudu* and *Madhyam agni* only.
 - ❖ In very hot *Taila* suddenly *Kwathor Kalka* should not be poured, otherwise it may come out from the vessel. So, it should be added slowly.
 - ❖ The mixture is stirred constantly and carefully to ensure that the *Kalka* should not stick to the bottom of the vessel resulting in to carbonization.
 - ❖ Care should be taken to determine the proper stages of *Sneha Paka*.
 - ❖ The *Kalka* is taken out from the ladle and tasted from time-to-time to know the condition and stage of the *Paka*.
 - ❖ In some *Sneha Kalpana*, *Sharkara (Mishri)* if mentioned is added to the final product when it is cool.
 - ❖ When *Sneha Paka* prepared with *Gaumutra* like *Kshara Dravya* then special precaution should be carried out, because in such *Sneha Paka Kshara* combination with *Sneha* may produced enormous amount of *Fena* (foam). So *Sneha* may come out of the *Sneha Patra* during *Pakvavasta*.
 - ❖ Whenever the *Saindhav Lavana*, *Kshara* etc. are mentioned they should be dissolved in *Kashaya* and then *Kalka* and *Sneha* should be added.
 - ❖ Where *Sarjarasa*, *Madhushistam*(bees wax) are mentioned they should be added only after *Sneha* is filtrated.
- **After processing**
 - ❖ In order to obtain optimum quantity of *Sneha*, the *Kalka* should be squeezed at hot stage.
 - ❖ Preserving container should be free from moisture.
 - ❖ Perfuming drugs should be added gently with stirring when the *Sneha* is lukewarm.

Characteristics of pharmaceutically complete *Sneha Paka*

At the time of completion of *Sneha Paka* the following features can be seen.

- *Sneha*²⁵
 - ❖ Oil should yield good amount of foam, while in ghee foam should disappears.
 - ❖ The *Sneha* should emerge colour, smell, taste of the drugs.
 - ❖ *Sneha* should be free from moisture.
 - ❖ When prepared *Sneha* dropped on fire it should not produce any crackling sound.

- **Kalka²⁶**
- ❖ Actually *Sneha Paka Pariksha* is mainly on the basis of *Kalka Pariksha*. In this method a small quantity of *Kalka* taken out at the end of boiling and rolled in between the fingers, if it assumes a *Varti*(wick like shape) and doesn't produce any crackling sound if thrown on fire then it should be called as complete *Sneha Paka*. It is a test for properly cooked *Sneha*.
- ❖ *Kalka* contains traces of water, fails to form *Varti* and sticks to finger at *Mrudu Paka* stage.
- ❖ In *Madyama Paka* also contains traces of water but forms smooth and soft *Varti* without sticking to fingers.
- ❖ In *Khara Paka*, total absence of water, *Kalka* becomes hard, sandy and disintegrates while preparing *Varti*. In this stage carbonization of *Kalka* occurs.

Table 6: Showing Common *Siddhi Lakashana* Of *Sneha Paka*

S.No.	<i>Siddhi Lakashana of Sneha Paka</i>	
1.	<i>ViramatiShabda</i>	Stoppage of the bubbling sounds
2.	<i>Prashamyati Cha Phena.</i>	Disappearance of the bubbles in <i>Ghrta</i> .
3.	<i>Prasadamapadhate Sneha</i>	Appearance of clarity in the <i>Taila</i> .
4.	<i>Yathasvama Cha Gandh-Varna- Rasotpatti.</i>	Manifestation of the desired smell colour and taste.
5.	<i>Samvartate Cha BhasajyaAngulibhyamMridhman</i>	A portion of the pasted drugs mixed with the <i>Taila</i> is rubbed with the fingers there. It takes the shapes of a wick.
6.	<i>Ananguligrahi.</i>	It does not adhere to the fingers.
7.	<i>AnatiMridu Naati Darunam</i>	It is neither very hard nor very soft in touch.

Characteristics of each *Paka*

These *Pakas* will be identified by observing the consistency of *Kalka* while doing the preparation of *Sneha Kalpana*.

- ***Ama Paka***
 This is the first stage of *Sneha Paka*. The word *Ama* indicates reduced or decreased capacity of digestion of *Sneha*. *Ama* means the medicated *Sneha* has insufficient assimilated the medicinal properties due short duration of heat treatment. Water content can be seen in both *Sneha* as-well-as in paste. The fluids are at heterogeneous stage.
- ***Mrudu Paka***
 The second stage of *Sneha Paka* is called as *Mrudu Paka*. Where the paste is sticky on touch due to the presence of fewer amounts of water and produces crackling sound when kept on fire. The *Sneha* collected at this stage is likely to contain fewer amounts of fat soluble active principles.
- ***MadhyaPaka***
 Third stage of *Sneha Paka* is called as *Madhyama Paka*, where the paste still remains soft and non-sticky due to presence of traces of water content in *Kalka*. The *Sneha* is completely free from water content. *Kalka* can be made into *Varti*when rolled in between fingers. The *Sneha* collected at this stage is likely to be rich in fat soluble content.
- ***Khara Paka***

The fourth stage of *Sneha Paka* is called as *Khara Paka*, which comes after the stage of *Madhyama Paka*. In this stage the paste becomes hard, rough due to excess of heating. The *Sneha* collected at this stage is meant only for external applications.

- ***Dagdha Paka***

This is the last stage of *Sneha Paka*. Boiling still after *Khara Paka* will result in *Dagdha Paka*, where probably the contents of *Sneha* will over burnt. This *Sneha* will have the smell of *Dagdhatwa*. This is not only unworthy but even causes burning sensation on using it. *Acharya Bhavaprakash Mishra* mentioned that, *Dagdha Paka Sneha* is *Vatavardhaka*. It should never be used therapeutically.

Therapeutic use of different *Sneha Pakas*

- ***Mrudu Paka***

Acharya Charak mentioned the use of *Mrudu Sneha Paka* for *Nasya Karma*. *Vagbhata*, *Sharangdhara*, *Shodhal*, *Vangasena*, *Bhavaprakash Mishra* etc.³³ all *Acharyas* have same opinion. But *Acharya Sushruta* recommended, *Mrudu Paka* is recommended for internal administration.³⁴

- ***Madhyam Paka***

MadhyaPaka is meant for all purposes. *Acharya Charak* considered *Madhyama Paka* as *Tridoshaghna* and can be used for *Basti* and *Pana*.³⁵ *Acharya Vagbhata*, *Sharangdhar* and *Govind Das Sena* are of the opinion that *Madhyama Paka* can be given for both external and internal use.³⁶ According to *Acharya Sushruta* school of thought, *Madhyama Paka* is recommended for *Nasya Karma* and *Abhyanga* (massage).

- ***Khara Paka***

Khara Paka according to *Charak* and *Sharangdhar*, it is only mentioned for *Abhyanga* (bath, massage etc. external use) only whereas, *Acharya Sushruta* recommended this *Khara Paka* for *Basti* (enemata) and *Karnapurana* (otic drops).

- ***Dagdha Paka***

The *Ama Paka* is *Guru* and will cause, loss of appetite and gastric discomfort.³⁷ The *Dagdha Paka* of *Sneha* is *Vatavardhak*. It is neither used for external nor for internal application.

***Sharangadhar* mentioned special *Pakas* in some *Sneha Paka* they are**

- ***Patrapaka***

Patra Paka is the process by which the *Sneha* is flavoured or augmented by certain soluble or mixable substances. The powders of the drugs are placed in the vessel into which fairly warm *Sneha* is filtered.

- ***Suryapaka (Adityapaka)***

This is procedure where the *Sneha* is prepared by heating and warming through sunlight. In this process no heating is involved. This is employed in case where *Sneha* is to be prepared from drug which contain volatile components and heat sensitive principles. The aim of designing this process is to extract fat soluble active principles in low and controlled temperature. e.g.: - *Kasisadi Taila*, *Kustharakshas Taila*, *Aditya Taila*.

Shelf life of medicated oils

Vangsen has described different view for *Saviryata Avadhi* of *Ghrita* & *Taila*. According to him, *Taila* becomes *Heenaviryata* after six months, *Ghrita* becomes *Heenaviryata* within a year and *Gudapaka* becomes *Heenaveerya* after one year.³⁹

The preparations when exposed to auto oxidation, they lose their potency and become inactive; often appear spurious even. This may be noticed by an objectionable degradation of the product of unpleasant odour or taste. *Acharya Sarangadhara* has first described about the shelf life of various

Ayurvedic formulations and according to him medicated oils and fats lose their potency after 4 months. While commenting on this, some experts opine that to take 16 months duration as the shelf life of medicated Oils and Ghee.⁴⁰

Advantages of *Sneha Kalpana*

- To extract the fat soluble active principles from the raw material.
- To enhance and hasten the absorption of drugs, when used topically in fat Medias.
- To obtain extra benefits of specific *Taila /Ghee* used. (Nutritive)
- To preserve the drug for longer time.
- Increases the bioavailability of drugs.
- *Sneha Kalpanas* are the only dosage form which can be used both internally as well as externally.

Discussion and Conclusion

so sneh kalpana in ayurveda, is the process of incorporating drugs in oily particles to target them to their site of action. most of the oils are for external applications but certain types of medicated oils are administered orally also. Medicated ghruta on other hand are used systemically orally. *Sneha Kalpana* is one of the most popular *Bhaishajya Kalpana* preparations of *Ayurvedic* medicine. It was first described by *Charak Samhita*.

Maximum number of *Ghruta & Taila* were indicated respectively in *Charak Samhita* (203), *Chakradatta* (162). For *Sneha Kalpana*, the sequence of addition of *Dravyas* are as follows:

Heat *Sneha* → Add bolus of *Kalka* → Add *Drava Dravya* Then → *Paka*

For the preparation of *Sneha Kalpana*; *Mruduagni and Madhyam agni* pattern should be applied. Continuous stirring should be done because due to continuous stirring homogenous distribution of active constituents in the solvent occurs and hence reducing the concentration gradient and thereby reducing boundary wall thickness. . 63 different medicated *Tailas* and 44 different medicated *Ghruta* preparations are listed in the official *Ayurvedic Formulary of India (AFI)*.¹⁰ *Sneh kalpana* of ayurveda has served the humanity in many ways and is being used for its benefits in present also..

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