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## A Comparison of *Basti* Instruments Used in *Samhita* and Current Period with special reference to Mode of Action

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### ABSTRACT:

*Basti* is one among the *PanchaKarma* procedures which has a multifaceted action. *Basti* is considered to be the best therapy, also known as “*Ardha Chikitsa*” as well as “*Poorna Chikitsa*” because it is not only having curative action, but also preventive and promotive actions. *Basti* is a complex, but systematic procedure having wide therapeutic potency. *Basti Sammelana* is a unique series of steps which also contributes to the mode of action of *Basti*. This process is especially told for *Nirooha* type of *Basti*, where there is a combination of drugs present. Different *Acharyas* has given a wide set of instruments in *Basti Sammelana*, but in the current scenario modifications has been done with the advanced technology. In administration of *Basti karma*, owing to the practicality time to time changes has been incorporated. Here, an effort has made to compile and critically analyse the different instruments used in the *Basti Sammelana* and administration of *Basti*.

**Keywords:** *Basti*, *Basti Sammelana*, *Basti putaka*, *Basti netra*.

### INTRODUCTION

*Ayurveda* is the science of life. An authenticated science of healing since ages. *Ayurveda* is blessed with a wide variety of procedures which are capable enough to eradicate diseases from their root cause. *PanchaKarma* stands as backbone of *Ayurveda* where we have five supreme procedures. *Basti* is one among the *PanchaKarma* procedures which has a multifaceted action. *Basti* is considered to be the best therapy, also known as “*Ardha Chikitsa*” as well as “*Poorna Chikitsa*” because it is not only having curative action, but also preventive and promotive actions.<sup>1</sup> *Basti* is a complex, but systematic

procedure having wide therapeutic potency. It is capable of doing *Santarpana* as well as *Apatarpana* action owing to the properties of drugs used in the formulation of *Basti*. *Basti Sammelana* is a unique series of steps which also contributes to the mode of action of *Basti*. Specialized instruments are required for mixing of *Basti dravyas* and also for the administration of *Basti* as per classics. But as the time advanced, changes have taken place in the term of *Basti* instruments. New methods in mixing up of *Basti dravyas* have also emerged. So here an attempt has been made to compile and critically analyse the different instruments used in the *Basti Sammelana* and



administration of *Basti*.

### **Basti – Nirukthi And Definition**

*Basti* is one among the *Pancha Karma* procedures which is primarily assigned for the treatment of disorders with predominance of *Vata Dosha*.<sup>2</sup> The word *Basti* is derived from the word “*Vasu Nivase*” with the meaning – being retained.<sup>3</sup> *Basti* is named so because the procedure involves usage of the urinary bladder of animals to inject the contents of either *Taila* (medicated oils) or *Kashaya* (decoctions of herbs) into the rectum of the body to produce desired effect.<sup>4</sup> In other words, *Basti* denotes an organ – reservoir of urine of animals – urinary bladder.<sup>5</sup> Due to its elasticity and softness, it is used as an instrument for the administration of medicines, either *Sneha* or *Kashaya* with uniform positive pressure. *Basti* denotes *Karma* where in drugs are administered through rectal canal enters in *Nabhi*, *Kati*, *Parshva* and *Kukshi*, and liquefies the *Sanchit Doshas*, does *Snehana* of the body, finally easily evacuate *Mala* (*Vridhdha Dosha* and toxins) with *Purisha*.<sup>6</sup>

### **Basti Putaka And Netra In Classics**

*Basti Yantra* consists of two parts –

*Basti Putaka* – Container part for holding *Basti Dravya* (medicine of enema) and

*Basti Netra* – Nozzle part of *Basti Yantra* which is inserted into the rectum

### **Basti netra**

The term *Netra* means eye. But in the context of *Basti*, it means *Nalika* (Nozzle).<sup>7</sup> It is a long tubular structure attached to *Basti Putaka* with the help of which *Basti Dravya* is administered to the body. In classics, it is mentioned that *Basti Netra* should be prepared in such a way having three *Karnikas* (ring like structures).<sup>8</sup> Metals used for preparation include gold, silver, copper, bronze, cow's horn, bones of animals and others.<sup>9</sup> *Netra* should be straight and structure should be tapering towards the end, resembling tail of cow. This very particular structure which is tapered towards end facilitates easy administration of *Basti Dravya*, without injuring the *Valis* (sphincters). The mouth of the nozzle should be globular in nature and smooth. There are three *Karnikas* (grooves) on *Basti Netra*. One ring is fixed at the level of one fourth from the top. This level indicates *Basti* to be administered upto the level of first *Karnika*. Other two *Karnikas* are fixed at the base for facilitating the tying of mouth of bladder around the nozzle. The second *Karnika* is located 2 inches distal to 1<sup>st</sup> *Karnika*. The *Basti Mukha* (opening of *Basti Putaka*) is tied

between these two *Karnikas*. The size of the *Basti Netra* and the length at which each *Karnika* is placed varies with age. The circumference of *Moola* and *Agrabaga* is also in accordance with the age of the individual.<sup>10</sup> The dimensions of *Basti Netra* corresponds to the patient to whom *Basti* is administered. This shows the accuracy and the deeper anatomical knowledge of *Acharyas*. If the length is too long, it may cause injury to the anal canal and if the size is too less, then *Basti Dravya* won't reach upto the target.<sup>11</sup>

### **Basti putaka**

*Basti Putaka* is the container which is holding *Basti Dravya*. It is made up of urinary bladder of animals. For preparation of *Basti Putaka*, the urinary bladder of the animals such as buffalo, sheep, goat, cow etc. should be used.<sup>12</sup> *Basti Putaka* should have the following features – *Drudha* (strong), *Tanu* (thin), *Nashta Shira* (devoid of odour), *Kashayarakta* (saffron – red), *Samridu* (soft), *Sushuddha* (well cleaned), and *Yathanurupa* (size accordingly).<sup>13</sup> In case of non-availability of urinary bladder of animals, *Plavaja gala* (throat of a pelican), *Ankapada* (skin of a bat), *Ghana Pata* (strong cloth) should be used.<sup>14</sup> It should not be *Mamsala* (bulky), *Sthoola* (thick), *Jaalika* (have many pores), *Vatala* (containing air) etc which may result in complications like *Visratwa* (mustiness of *Basti*), *Dourgrahya* (difficulty to hold – loss of grip), *Nisrava* (flowing out of medication) and *Phenilatwa* (frothiness of medication) respectively.<sup>15</sup>

In classics usage of *Basti* (urinary bladder) of animals for the administration of medicine is mentioned. Usage of *Basti Putaka* of animals was feasible and easily justifiable in olden days. But due to the practical difficulty in the current era, an alternate solution has to be found – and the ideal choice for this is the usage of plastic bag of 50 microns with capacity of 1 liter to 1.5 liters which could be discarded after a single use.<sup>16</sup>

### **Basti Putaka And Netra In Current Perspective**

As technology advanced many instruments which resembles *Basti* is available in modern scenario like Enema pot, Syringe and rubber catheter. But these should not be used in place of classical *Basti Putaka* or *Netra*.

### Reasons for not using Enema pot, Syringe and rubber catheter<sup>17</sup>

Enema pot is used for bowel cleansing. It consists of a pot which is either plastic which is attached to a plastic tube

with nozzle having a lock. This enema pot is usually kept at least 4 feet above the patient. Here the medicine in the enema pot reaches the patient only by gravitational force with passive pressure. In syringe and rubber catheter - shape does not resemble *Basti Netra*. While we analyze *Basti Netra*, we can see that it has an *Anuloma* structure (tapering in nature), so that it easily penetrates through rectum, reaches up to colon and dispenses medicine. The quantity of medicine administered in the form of *Basti* varies from half liter to maximum up to 1.5 liters. Practically it is not possible to use a syringe or a rubber catheter for delivering such an enormous quantity of medicine. Medicine couldn't be administered with uniform pressure and proper quantity with the help of Enema pot/ syringe/ rubber catheter. These are some of the probable reasons why Enema pot/syringe/ rubber catheter is not used for the administration of *Basti*.

#### Classification Of Basti

*Basti* is basically divided into two types based on the *Dravya* (medicines of enema) used for *Basti* – *Niruha Basti* and *Anuvasan Basti*.<sup>18</sup>

1. *Niruha/Asthapana Basti*- When *Basti* is used with more of *Kwatha* (decoction) then it is called as *Niruha Basti*. It is called as *Niruha* because as it enters the body, the *Virya* of medicine stays there and pulls out *Sanchitha Doshas* and toxins thereby eradicate diseases from their root. *Niruha Basti* is otherwise known as *Asthapana* as it stabilizes age and brings quality to life. The synonyms of *Niruha Basti* are *Madhutailika*, *Yapana*, *Yuktharatha* , *Siddha Basti* etc.<sup>19</sup>
2. *Anuvasana Basti*- *Sneha* is the main ingredient in *Anuvasan Basti*. It will not produce vitiation even after retained and can be used daily so it is called as *Anuvasana*.<sup>20</sup>

*Basti* is classified into four types based on place of administration (*Adisthan Bheda*)<sup>21</sup>

- 1) *Pakwashaygata Basti*- it is given through rectum (*Guda*) and site (*Adhishthan*) is large intestine (*Pakwashaya*).
- 2) *Mootrashaygata Basti*:- it is given through urethra and site (*Adhishthan*) is *Mootrashaya* (urinary bladder).
- 3) *Garbhashaygata Basti*:- This is given into the uterus (*Garbhashaya*) through vagina.
- 4) *Vranagata Basti*:- Cleansing (*Shodhana*) and healing (*Ropana*) *Bastis* are given through opening of wounds (*Vranamukhas*)

#### Review Of Instruments Used In Niruha Basti Dravya Sammelana

##### Instruments in Basti Nirmana – Classics<sup>22,23,24</sup>

*Samhita Kala* (3000 BC & 12th, 14th Century)

During *Samhitha kala*, *Acharyas* have clearly mentioned regarding the instruments to be used for preparation of *Niruha Basti Dravya*. Instruments like *Patra* (vessel which has big circumference), *Hastatala* (inner surface of both palms) or *Mathya* (wooden churning instrument with a long handle and circular bottom) was used in the process of churning. The steps of mixing the drugs involved in the formation of *Niruha Basti* are also explained as follows.

Steps- 1) *Madhu and Saindhava*

2) *Madhu, Saindhava, and Taila*

3) *Madhu, Saindhava, Taila and Kalka*

*Susrutha* has added two more instruments along with those mentioned above. *Gambhir Bhajane* (deep vessel) and *Panchangule Mathya* (wooden whisk with a base circumference of five *Angula*). It is used in the next step. Step - 4) *Madhu, Saindhava, Sneha, Kalka and Kwatha*.

*Vagbhata* has added *Kumbhi Bashpa* (water is boiled in a big pitcher and the steam coming out of it is used for heating of *Basti Dravya* which intends that direct heating should not be done)

##### Instruments in Basti Sammelana – Current Perspective

In conventional churning, *Madhu, Saindhava, Sneha, Kalka* and *Kwath* are added simultaneously and churning is done.

Though different instruments have been mentioned in classics, considering the practicality and ease to use, advances will make us think about the usage of Mixer grinders. But usage of mixers in the mixing of *Basti Dravya* is not advisable because the process of churning is very important here. One forward movement and a reverse movement that occurs during the process of mixing will helps in the formation of emulsion and maintaining the pH of the solution.<sup>25</sup>

Many new instruments have advanced in the current era that may assist in the preparation of *Basti Dravya*, making the process smooth and much easier. This includes Pulverizer which is used for the disintegration of dry herbs (which helps in breaking, crushing and grinding herbs into powder form for easy assimilation in the body) and Salt grinding machine (which offers precise particle distribution and high yield). Instruments like Mortar and pestle, Round bottom steel vessel, Wooden whisk/churner

can also be used in the preparation and mixing of *Basti dravya* replacing *Patra*, *Mathya*, *Gambhira Bhajana* etc which were used in *Samhitha* period for *Basti Sammelana*. When compared to the instruments listed in the Don'ts column, the instruments listed in the Do's column have a better mode of operation.(Table 1)

## CONCLUSION

A detailed description about etymology, definition and classification of *Basti* have been described by different texts of *Ayurveda*. *Acharyas* have clearly mentioned the instruments to be used for *Basti Sammelana* for making *Basti* a homogenous mixture which has an important role in mode of action of *Basti*. Specificity of instruments for *Basti* administration is also clearly detailed. New advancements in current perspective can also be taken into consideration owing to the practicality issues. *Yukthi* of *Vaidya* decides the usage of most appropriate instrument in *Basti Sammelana* and *Basti* administration.

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**Table 1: Do's and Don'ts in the usage of instruments**

<b>Do's</b>	<b>Don'ts</b>
Classical metal <i>Basti Netra</i>	Enema pot
Plastic 50 micron bag	Syringe
Mortar and Pastel	Rubber catheter
Churner	Electric mixer