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Preventive Significance Of *Abhyanga* In *Dincharya*: A Review Article

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ABSTRACT: -

Ayurveda is a 'science of life' which provides not only curative but also preventive principles for healthy and long life. *Ayurveda* is a life style, a science and an art of appropriate living that ensures health and longevity of human being. *Abhyanga* (oil massage) which is one among the *Dinacharya* is also a part of pre therapeutic procedures of *Panchakarma*. It is an *Ayurvedic* holistic, synchronized massaging of the body towards the movement of arterial blood, basically in the opposite direction of hair growth. This massage is used for healing and detoxifying the body, mind and spirit. *Abhyanga* is to be considered in *Snehana* therapy. As it nourishes the senses of mind and gives the strength. But if done in any region like localised in head, neck, legs etc then it is termed as *Shiroabhyanga*, *Padabhyanga* etc. Full body massage gives strength to whole body but localised massage gives strength to that particular part of the body. *Abhyanga* nourishes; pacifies the doshas; relieves fatigue; provides stamina, pleasure and perfect sleep; enhances the complexion and the lustre of the skin; promotes longevity and nourishes all parts of the body.

Key words: *Abhyanga*, Massage, *Snehana*, Oleation.



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INTRODUCTION

The *Abhyanga* is a part of the *Dincharya* (daily practices) specified by the *Brhatrayi* and *Laghutrayi* series of Ayurvedic text books to maintain good health and well-being^[1]. *Abhyanga* (oil massage) is also a part of pre therapeutic procedures of *Panchakarma*. *Abhyanga* comes under the classification of the *Bahya Snehana*. Oleation or *Snehana* is told as *Purva Karma* of *Panchakarma*. *Snehana* is further divided into *Bahya* and *Abhyantara* type, obviously *Abhyanga* comes under the former type i.e. *Bahya Snehana*. In the classics of Ayurveda there are different types of Massages mentioned according to the need and method. *Abhyanga* is made up of two words *Abhi+ Anga* - meaning movement towards the *Dhatu*. Here the oil applied to the skin nourishes even the Dhatus depending on the duration of *Abhyanga*^[2]. *Vayu* resides in skin & is abode of touch sense. *Abhyanga* is good for skin & one should do it every day. Those who need positive health and

preventing and curing his diseases should use *Abhyanga* every day^[3]. *Abhyanga* retards ageing, overcomes fatigue and annihilates effects of aggravated *vata*^[4]. It improves clarity of vision, nourishes the body. It promotes longevity, good sleep, good skin and a sturdy physique. Regular massage should be performed over whole-body including head, ear and soles^[5].

PROCEDURE OF ABHYANGA:

One should perform *Abhyanga* of the body with lukewarm oil, according to the season in the direction of the body hair. Oil can be used according to the seasons, *Dosha* & condition. It is performed in seven positions in the following order.

1. Sitting position
2. Supine position
3. Left lateral position
4. Prone position
5. Right lateral position
6. Supine position
7. Sitting with legs extended to the front.

DURATION OF ABHYANGA & EFFECT ON THE BODY:

<i>DHATU</i>	<i>Kaal Matra</i>	Time/Sec.
<i>Romanta</i> (Hair Root)	300 <i>Matra</i>	94 sec
<i>Twak</i> (Skin)	400 <i>Matra</i>	133 sec
<i>Rakta</i> (Blood)	500 <i>Matra</i>	160 sec
<i>Mamsa</i> (Flesh)	600 <i>Matra</i>	190 sec
<i>Medas</i> (Fat)	700 <i>Matra</i>	228 sec
<i>Asthi</i> (Bones)	800 <i>Matra</i>	240 sec
<i>Majja</i> (Bone)	900 <i>Matra</i>	285 sec

MODE OF ACTION^[6]:

1. Manipulation of body parts by *Abhyanga* (Massage) enhances the overall blood circulation and transport the potency of drug to desired part.
2. It enhances the nerve stimulation.
3. Induces the release of endorphins which show analgesic effect.
4. Triggers the acupressure points.

IMPORTANCE OF ABHYANGA^[7]

- *Jarahar* – prevent ageing, if done daily to the spine, feet and head
- *Sharamhar* - antifatigue action of *Abhyanga*
- *Vatahar* – Prevents aggravation of *vata dosha*
- *Drishti Prasadakar* - increases eye sight
- *Pushtikar* - makes the body strong
- *Ayushkar* - increase longevity
- *Swapnakar* - induces sleep
- *Twakdridhakar* – strengthens the skin
- *Kleshasahatwa* - provides resistance against diseases and disharmony
- *Abhighat Sahatwa* - resistance to injuries and power to recover quickly
- *Kapha - Vata Nirodhak* – subside *Kapha* and *Vata*.
- *Mrija - Varna Balaprad* -provides strength to the skin and improves the colour and texture of the skin.

Benefits of different types of *Abhyanga* as per Ayurveda**Benefits of oiling on head^[8]: -**

- Enhances the strength of scalp
- Enhances the growth of hair
- Enhances the color and complexion of skin
- Increase the strength of hair roots
- Provides nourishment to the senses

- Imparts sound sleep
- Prevents premature greying
- Prevents all sort of headaches, hair fall and baldness
- Prevents all the disorders of head

Benefits of ear oleation^[9]

- The person who follows *karna purana* daily can withstand (or) bear the high pitch voice and does not suffer from deafness
- Prevents the diseases of *vata dosha*
- Prevent *manyastambh*, *hanustambh*
- Increases the ability to withstand loud voice

Benefits of feet and sole massage^[10]

- Regular practising the oil massage over the feet and sole softens the sole and feet
- Enhances the strength and stability of feet
- Relaxes the eyes and prevents the *vata vyadhi*
- Prevents the roughness, stiffness, dryness and tiredness
- Prevents the numbness of the feet
- Some diseases like sciatica, stiffness of vessels etc. are prevented by daily *Abhyanga* on feet.

General benefits of *Abhyanga* according to Ayurvedic texts^[11]: -

- Performing *Abhyanga* daily imparts the stability of skin against the external accidental injuries
- Skin becomes soft and moist
- All body parts are nourished
- Strengthens the body and makes it appear attractive
- Postpones the senile period, skin looks young even in old age
- Relieve from tiredness and *vataj vikara*
- Postpone the old age
- Eyes become clear and vision gets improved

- Body becomes stout and stable
- Enhances the life span
- Imparts good and deep sleep
- Muscles and tendons become strong and stable

RESULTS

Abhyanga described in *Dincharya* prevents many diseases like sciatica, stiffness of the vessel, headache and baldness, diseases of ear etc. It also enhances the strength of body, prevents the aging, postpones the senile period and makes the body attractive.

DISCUSSION

Anointing all parts of the body with the oil followed by massage is considered as *Abhyanga*. Mainly *taila* (oil) is considered as the best for the purpose of massage because skin is dominated by the *vata dosha* and sense of touch is mainly perceived by the *vata dosha* itself^[12]. *Taila* has the special property to pacify the *vata dosha*. So, oil is advised for massage regularly. Also, skin consists of the channel which transports the sweat (*sveda veh srotas*), channel which carries the sense of touch (*sparsh veh srotas*) and channels of *vata veh srotas*. To clean and purify these channels, regular massage should be done with oil^[13]. When these *indriyas* (*sparsh veh indriya, vata veh srotas, sveda veh srotas*) remain healthy then mind also remains healthy because it is in close contact with *indriyas*. According to acharya *Dalhan*, the *sneha* (oil) which is used for *Abhyanga* reaches up to different dhatus when it is applied for sufficient time. Acharya *Dalhan* describes that when oil reaches to particular dhatu then subsides the diseases of that dhatu. So, in this way *Abhyanga* keeps the body and mind healthy^[14].

CONCLUSION

Abhyanga prevents the diseases of head, foot, ear, improves eye sight. *Abhyanga* enhances the lymphatic, arterial and venous flow and by this way *Abhyanga* provides strength to the skin and improves the colour and texture of the skin and local tissue. *Abhyanga* enhances the overall blood circulation and helps oxygenate brain and induce sleep.

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