

Shirodhara by Oil: Short Communication

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Abstract

Ayurveda has a description of 'Shirrasheka' under 'Murdhataila Kalpana', among which 'Shirodhara' by oil (Taila as per Ayurveda) is a specific therapy to irradiate or control some diseases like Mental stress, Insomnia, Anxiety and Mild Hypertension etc. according to this era. 30 patients of Mental Stress and 30 of Insomnia had undergone Shirodhara therapy by oil after physical examination in M.A.Podar [Govt]. Hospital of Mumbai and shown remarkable results discussed in manuscript.

Keywords: Shirodhara by oil, Special indication in Mental stress and Insomnia, Project in Government hospital, Remarkable results.

1. Introduction

Continuous pouring of oil over the forehead and then allowing it to flow over the scalp, using a special instrument 'Dharayantra' is known as 'Shirodhara', which is one of the types of 'Shirrasheka'.

Special indications –

Shirrasheka has all the benefits of 'Murdhataila' and is specially indicated in following conditions, which are major complaints in this era:

- Mental stress
- Hypertension (Mild)
- Insomnia
- Headache
- Anxiety
- Psychological illness
- Dermatological conditions like eruptions

2. Description In Classical Text

Mechanism of the dhara instrument

Dhara pot is made for steady flow of oil. When any oil is poured into the pot, it steadily flows from the bottom hole. Oil poured in the pot may have suspended fine solid materials, which may obstruct the free flow. The nutshell placed upside and down and the plantain leaf prevents the solids reaching the pore and obstructing it. The wick helps in the steady stream of flow rather than turbulent flow of oil.

Importance of Oil • Different medicated oils are used in both healthy and diseased. Oil processed with roots of Bala (Sida cordifolia) is ideal in persons having Vata Prakriti (constitution). In Pitta Prakriti people preferred oil prepared out of Chandana (Santalum album) . Madhuyashti (Glycyrrhiza glabra) oil is prescribed in persons belonging to Kapha

Prakriti. Depending upon the combination of doshas, different mixtures of the above oils may be used for the dhara procedure. Bramhi-Bhringaraj taila is beneficial in problem of Insomnia, Mental stress etc.



SHIRODHARA IN PATIENT SUFFERING FROM MENTAL STRESS

Procedure

Pouring of oil with steady flow over the forehead for a certain period is the procedure of Shirodhara and is performed in the following steps:

Warming oil

Oil depending upon the prescription is heated to make lukewarm. Oils with normal temperature are preferred if the patient shows predominance of Pitta dosha in his body.

Filling the dhara pot

The hole in the bottom of dhara pot is closed with a finger and then the lukewarm or normal temperature oil is poured in it. About one to two liters of oil may be poured in the dhara pot. One should make it sure that, the position of the dhara pot is adjusted in such a way that the stream of oil falls at the center of the forehead.

Moving stream

The finger closing the dhara pot is removed and the oil starts flowing steadily over the forehead of the patient. The dhara pot is then oscillated constantly and steadily in to and fro fashion across the head, so that the oil falls at the entire forehead from one lateral to other. During the whole procedure of dhara, jerky movement of the pot should be avoided as far as possible.

Refilling

The oil that falls at the forehead, flows first over the head with support of the dhara table and then collects in a container placed under it. This oil is then taken and once again poured in dhara pot as and when the oil level in dhara pot decreases. As a result one can achieve a continuous flow of the oil for a desirable period. When the oil has cooled down, it is heated once again and used for continuing the procedure. In this way, the procedure is continued for about 30 minutes.

After procedure

After the Shirodhara, the patient is asked to take rest for about 15 minutes and then head bath with warm water. Use of soap should be discouraged; alternatively one can ask the patient to use gram powder.

Duration and course of Dhara

The process of pouring the oil is carried out for about 30 to 45 minutes depending upon nature of the illness and the physical condition of the patient. Shirodhara can be performed daily and continued for 7 or 14 days.

Precautions

During the procedure the eyes are well protected and covered, so that medicinal oil does not leak into the eye and produce irritation of the eye.

3. Observations and Result

Total 30 patients of Mental Stress and 30 of Insomnia had undergone Shirodhara therapy for 15 days by Koshna (lukewarm) Bramhi-Bhringaraja (Bacopa monniera-Eclipta alba) oil after physical examination in outdoor patient department of M.A.Podar (Govt.) hospital, Worli, Mumbai-18, among which 73.33% patients of Mental Stress and 60.00% of Insomnia had shown remarkable results in Fatigue and Irritability , which showed as follows:

1. Observations in patients suffering from Mental Stress

Table 1.1: Age wise distribution of patients

| Age group | 20 – 39 years | 40 – 59 years | 60 – 80 years |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| No. of Patients | 5 | 14 | 11 |

Table1.2: Sexwise distribution of patients

| Sex | No. of Patients | Percentage |
|--------|-----------------|------------|
| Male | 17 | 56.66% |
| Female | 13 | 43.33% |

2. Observations in patients suffering from Insomnia

Table 2.1: Age wise distribution of patients

| Age group | 20 – 39 years | 40 – 59 years | 60 – 80 years |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| No. of Patients | 2 | 15 | 13 |

Table 2.2: Sexwise distribution of patients

| Sex | No. of Patients | Percentage |
|--------|-----------------|------------|
| Male | 18 | 60.00% |
| Female | 12 | 40.00% |

Table 2.3: Disease wise distribution of patients with relief

| Disease | No. of Patients with Percentage | No. of symptomatically relieved Patients with Percentage |
|---------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Mental Stress | 30 (100%) | 22 (73.33%) |
| Insomnia | 30 (100%) | 18 (60.00%) |

4. Conclusion

It seems that, Shirodhara therapy from Ayurveda can give symptomatic relief in Mental Stress and Insomnia with almost no side effects if given scientifically by an Ayurvedic expert.

5. References

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