



A REVIEW ON LEPA KALPANA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MUKHLEPA FOR ENHANCING THE BEAUTY OF SKIN

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ABSTRACT-

The skin (*Twak*) would reflect any unhealthy state of the physique or the psyche, as beauty manifests through the appearance of the complexion of the skin. Skin is the largest organ in the body. The colour of skin is important biologically, cosmetically and socially.

Skin disease though afflicts bodily but gives lot of psychological disturbances whether we admit it or not, society places a high value on appearance.

Ayurveda is science which describes various topical applications in name of *Lepa Kalpana* for treatment of various skin diseases and for beauty. *Mukhlepa* (Facepack) is one of the effective and simple skin care treatment in Ayurveda to treat acne, pimples, scars, marks and pigmentation.

Mukhlepa consists of different types of herbs that helps for nourishment of skin and in cleansing of skin. It increases the elasticity of skin and so prevents ageing of skin and wrinkles on face.

This article is aimed to provide details about *Lepa Kalpana* and concept of *Mukhlepa* which is useful for improving beauty of skin.

KEYWORDS- *Lepa Kalpana*, *Mukhlepa*, beauty

INTRODUCTION-

Skin is largest organ in the body. Skin would reflect any unhealthy state of the physique or psyche, as beauty manifests through appearance. The importance of beauty and personality is increasing now-a-days among the competitive era. Beauty that gives pleasure to the senses, is desire of every human being. Some are born beautiful and some are made beautiful.

It is natural desire of every human being to have healthy and glamorous skin with attractive personality. People always have more concern about their beauty and health. A great demand from unique Ayurveda in the field of cosmetology is increasing now-a-days due to its unique concept about beauty. It is more effective and long lasting therapy without any side effects.

Ayurveda has more description of topical applications in name of *Lepa Kalpana* for treatment of various skin diseases and for beauty. *Lepa Kalpana* are the topical medications used for external application to the skin or mucosal membrane. In *Lepa Kalpana*, wet medicinal drugs are made in paste form. If the drugs are in dry state then they are converted into paste form by adding water or medicated drug such as honey, oil, desighee or medicated ghee or oil.

According to *Acharya Sharangdhar*, there are basically total 91 *Lepas* in the separate chapter which was named either according to *Vyadhis* or according to their ingredient.^[1]

Mukhlepa is one of the effective and simple skin care treatment in Ayurveda to treat acne, pimples, scars, marks and pigmentation. *Mukhlepa* consists of different types of herbs which is spread over surface and left for some time for cleansing and nourishment of skin.

Mukhlepas are of different types for different types of skin. *Mukhlepa* also helps in increasing circulation of the blood within the veins of the face.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE-

1. To explain details about the *Lepa Kalpana* in Ayurveda.
2. To provide detail concept of *Mukhlepa*(facepack).
3. To explain drugs from Ayurveda which are useful for improving skin complexion.

MATERIALS AND METHODS-

References of *Lepa Kalpana*, *Mukhlepa* have been collected from the classical books on Ayurveda. Drugs from classics which are used for external application are also compiled in this article.

CONCEPT OF LEPA KALPANA-

Synonyms of *Lepa*-

A *Lepa* is also known as *Lipta*, *Lepa*, *Lepan*, *Alepa*.^[2]

Importance of *Lepa Kalpana*-

Human body receives the drug in two ways. One through direct routes, i.e. through apertures of the body and another one through the whole surface of the body. Absorption of drugs through body surface deserve special care for its optimum delivery.^[3] Transdermal drug delivery has an advantage over other types of medication delivery such as oral, intravenous, intramuscular etc, Because it provides a controlled release of the medication into the patient, it enables a steady blood level profile resulting in reduced systemic side effects.^[4]

The market of ayurvedic cosmeceuticals is increasing day-by-day. People believe in safety and efficacy of Ayurvedic topical applications. These are protective and promotive to skin as these are free from artificial chemicals. *Lepa* preparations are applied to skin to prevent metabolism of drugs in the liver and to increase the bioavailability of the drugs and also to provide the effect of herbs directly on the site of action. *Lepa* pacifies the provoked local *Doshas* by local application.^[5]

Types of *Lepa*-

<i>Sushruta</i> , 3 types ^[6]	<i>Sharangdhar</i> , 3 types ^[7]
1. <i>Pralepa</i>	1. <i>Doshaghna</i>
2. <i>Pradeha</i>	2. <i>Vishaghna</i>
3. <i>Alepa</i>	3. <i>Varnya</i>

Acharya *Sushrut* describes 3 types of *Lepa* as;

1. *Pralepa*

This *Lepa* has soothing property (*sheet guna*). It should be applied in thin layer. It is indicated in *pitta* dominant *twakrogas*. *Pralepa* is of 2 types: A) *Avishoshi* B) *Vishoshi*

A) *Avishoshi*-

In this type, *Lepa* is removed from the place of application before it dry up. These types of *Lepa* are required in conditions where *Vranashoph pidana* (squeezing action over the wounds) is not required. After removal of the earlier *Lepa*, the fresh wet *Lepa* put in the place to avail the desired therapeutic action.

B) *Vishoshi*-

In this type, *Lepa* is left in the place of application after it dry up. These types of *Lepa* are required in conditions where *Vranashoph pidana* (squeezing action over the wounds) is required. The squeezing action exerted by the dry *Lepa* over *Vranashoph* is helpful in ripening of the same.

2. *Pradeha*

This *Lepa* could be applied with the material which is lukewarm or cold, thick or thin. It is indicated in *Vata* and *Shleshmadoshaj vikar*.

3. *Alepa*

The action , thickness etc of this *Lepa* is moderate compare to *pralepa* and *pradeha*.

Mukhlepa-

Acharya *Sharangdhar* and *Vagbhatta* has further classified the *Mukhlepa* based on their therapeutic uses.

1. *Doshaghna Lepa*

This variety of *Lepa* includes such drugs which exerts their alleviatory action directly on the *Doshas*.

2. *Vishaghna Lepa*

This kind of *Lepa* includes the drugs which nullifies the poisons directly at local level after application.

3. *Varnya Lepa*

This is cosmetic application over the face, which improves colour and complexion of the skin.

Pramana (Thickness) of *Lepa*-

Sharangdhar has quoted the thickness of different *Lepa* as below:

<i>Lepa</i>	Thickness
<i>Doshaghna lepa</i>	- 1/4 <i>angula</i> (0.48 cm)
<i>Vishaghna lepa</i>	- 1/3 <i>angula</i> (0.65 cm)
<i>Varnya lepa</i>	- 1/2 <i>angula</i> (0.97 cm)

Note : 1 *Angula*= 1.95 cm

Sushruta has compared the thickness of *Lepa* with the thickness of buffalo's skin. *Sushruta* says that *Pralepa* is thinner to buffalo's skin and *Pradeha* is thicker to buffalo's skin.

It means the actual thickness of buffalo's skin may be taken as the thickness in between both i.e. thickness of *Alepa*.

***Lepa* and *Sneha* Ratio-**

Sushruta explained about the ratio of *Sneha* such as *Tail* and *Ghruta* to be added while preparing *Lepa*.^[8]

Disease	Ratio of <i>Sneha</i>
<i>Vataja vyadhi</i>	- 1/4 th part
<i>Pittaja vyadhi</i>	- 1/6 th part
<i>Kaphaja vyadhi</i>	- 1/ 8 th part

Time for *Lepa* application-

Lepa should not be applied at night. *Lepa* should not be allowed to stay on skin after it dries up.

Methodology for *Lepa* application-

Lepa should be gently rubbed in an upward to opposite direction of hairs over the skin to make the action of application more quick and effective.

Pashchat karma of Mukhlepa-

Lepa should be removed before it dry. After that *Mridu Abhyanga* should be done for better efficacy.

Contraindication of *Lepa-*

Those who take sleep in day time, excessive speak, after *Nasyakarma*, suffer from *Pinas*, *Ajirna*, *Hanugraha* and excessive heat should be excluded from *Lepa kalpana*.

Benefits of *Mukhlepa-*

- It detoxifies the skin and enhances the beauty of the skin.
- Prevents ageing of the skin.
- Reduces skin wrinkles and tones the skin.
- Pacifies pigmentation
- It cures premature graying of hair, *Vyanga* (blackish hyperpigmentation of face) and *Nilika* (bluish hyperpigmentation).
- Decreases discolouration of facial skin.

Preparation of *Lepa-*

- All *Lepa* preparation are for instant use and for single use only.
- Dry drugs are thoroughly pounded and the powder obtained is sieved. This powder is mixed with specified liquid to prepare *Lepa*.
- *Lepa* are applied against the hair follicular direction to facilitate better and quicker absorption.

Mode of action of *Lepa-*

- *Lepas* should be applied against the hair follicular direction, this facilitates the quicker absorption of the drugs through *Romakupa* (Hair roots), *Swedavahini* (sweat glands) and *Siramukha* (blood capillaries).
- The function of *Bhrajaka pitta* is said to metabolize the substance of drugs applied to the skin whereas one of its main functions is to manifest the colour and complexion of the skin. In function of metabolism the activities of *Saman Vayu* supported by *Vyan Vayu* is of great importance. Ayurveda also propagates the theory of '*Strotomaya Purush*' indicating that the whole human body is porous. When the medication is applied in the form of *Lepa* or *Pradeha*, the minute particles of the substance penetrate into the *Twak* owing to gravitational pull and the weight of the drug. The *Upshoshan* property of *Vayu* (*Vyana* and *Saman* especially) would play a major role in the penetration and absorption of the medicaments applied over the *Twak*. After being absorbed in the *Twak*, the drugs would act upon the body, pertaining to its *Virya Prabhava*.^[9]

Mode of action according to Modern-

- *Varnya Dravyas* disrupts the melanin formation pathway through tyrosinase inhibition.
- Hence it is potentially excellent whitening agent that help in improving the skin colour.^[10]

Transdermal drug absorption-

Transdermal drug absorption depends on various factors such as;^[11]

- Site of application of drug
- Thickness and integrity of the stratum corneum epidermidis
- Size of molecule
- Permeability of the membrane of the transdermal drug delivery system
- State of skin hydration
- Ph of the drug
- Drug metabolism by skin flora
- Lipid solubility
- Depot of drug in skin
- Alteration of blood flow in the skin by additives and body temperature
- Skin thickness and amount of blood flow in the skin vary considerably with age.

Drugs for improving face complexion-

Ayurvedic classics have mentioned single drugs and groups of drugs having *Varnya* action, which is used for improving complexion of skin. These drugs can be used as internally and externally. Externally it can be used for face wash or face pack (*Mukhlepa*) to improve the glow of skin and treat the ailments.

Acharya Sharangdhar has mentioned the following drugs for *Mukhlepa*

- Manjishtha (*Rubia cordifolia*)
- Lodhra (*Symplocos racemosus*)
- Raktachandan (*Pterocarpus santalinus*)
- Kushta (*Saussurea lappa*)
- Vatankura (*Ficus bengalensis*)
- Priyangu (*Callicarpa macrophylla*)
- Matalunga jata (*Citrus medica*)
- Masura (Lentils)

Varnya Mahakashaya^[12]

- Chandana (*Santalum album*)
- Tunga (*Calophyllum inophyllum*)
- Padmaka (*Prunus cerasoides*)

- Ushira (*Chrysopogon zizanioides*)
- Madhuka (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*)
- Manjishtha (*Rubia cordifolia*)
- Sariva (*Hemidesmus indicus*)
- Paysya (*Jacquemontia paniculata*)
- Sita (white variety of *Cynodon dactylon*)
- Lata (black variety of *Cynodon dactylon*)

Groups of drugs having *Varnya* action

- *Eladi gana*
- *Panchavalkala*
- *Rodhradi gana*
- *Trijataka* and *Chaturjataka*

DISCUSSION

Acharyas in Ayurvedic classics define about importance of *Lepa* which plays a important role in the management of skin disorders and for improving skin complexion by reducing the vitiated *Doshas* and brings it in state of equilibrium which is responsible for normalization function of *Dosha, Dhatu* etc. The new Ayurvedic formulation like skin care products which are used for enhancing beauty, improving complexion also plays tremendous role in form of powder, packs, oil etc. which is more effective with less side effects and easy to prepare which is high demand of current scenario.

The skin is not only important for studying the structure and function, but it has ample of importance in physical and mental wellbeing of an individual. Its natural desire of mankind to have a healthy and glamorous skin. The concept of using herbs for beautification is well described in Ayurvedic literature. Various drugs used in preparation of *Mukhlepa*, make skin healthy in natural way and enhances the complexion without causing any adverse reaction. The herbs used for making the paste for applying on the face should be chosen carefully after studying the skin type of the person and as per the specific requirement of person. This is very important because if the ingredients are not accurate, there will not be any desired effect from the *Mukhlepa* therapy. Application of these pastes have been classified into several kinds based on the temperature, duration and thickness of application, the effect of the application for healing, beautifying, anti-aging, etc.

CONCLUSION

As skin is the outermost layer of the body which is exposed to the environment easily and so prone to damage faster. Everybody try to keep their skin fresh and healthy sp various *Lepa* can be used to improve skin beauty. The face is one of the parameter to identify a person. All people try to keep their face clean and neat. Use of *Mukhlepa* increases beauty and imparts freshness. It is better to avoid synthetic chemical based cosmetic products and use the natural substance and products. It make skin healthy, prevent from skin disorders and improves

complexion of the skin. *Mukhlepa* increases fairness of skin. It also cure wrinkles, dark circles, pimples, hyperpigmentation,etc. *Mukhlepa* is also helpful in preventive and curative purpose of any skin problem.

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