



## A review on historical aspect of *Virechan*.

Seema Rajput<sup>\*1</sup>, Dipali Chavan-Sonawane<sup>2</sup>,

P. G. Scholar<sup>1</sup>, Associate Professor<sup>2</sup>,

Panchkarma Dept., Shri Saptashrungi Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Nasik, M. S.

**\*Corresponding author:** [pardeshiseema2021@gmail.com](mailto:pardeshiseema2021@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Ayurveda* has considered one of the oldest of the traditional systems of medicine accepted worldwide. The ancient wisdom in this traditional system of medicine is still not exhaustively explored. India has a rich history of the traditional systems of medicine based upon six systems, out of which *Ayurveda* stands to be the most ancient, most widely accepted, practiced, and flourished indigenous system of medicine. The *Panchakarma* is composed of five karmas (actions) that are used for the removal of toxins from the body tissues. They are the *Virechan* (purgation through use powders, pastes, or decoction), *Vaman* (forced therapeutic emesis by use of some medicines), *Basti* (use of enemas prepared from medicated oils), *Rakta moksha* (detoxification of blood), and *Nasya* (administration of medicines like decoctions, oils, and fumes through nasal

route). This article gives a glimpse of historical aspects of *Virechan karma*.

**Keywords:** Historical Aspect, *Panchakarma*, *Virechan*

### Introduction

Ayurvedic medicine has a rich history. Originally shared as an oral tradition, *Ayurveda* was recorded more than 5,000 years ago in Sanskrit, in the four sacred texts called the Vedas: the Rig Veda (3000-2500 BCE), Yajur Veda, Sam Veda, and Atharva Veda (1200-1000 BCE). Current knowledge about *Ayurveda* is primarily based on "the great triad" of texts called *Brhatrayi*, which consists of the *Charak Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya*. These books describe the basic principles and theories from which modern *Ayurveda* has evolved<sup>[1]</sup>

Primarily, *Panchakarma* consists of 3 steps viz. *Poorva karma* (preparatory process of the body for the therapy), *Pradhan karma* (the main process of therapy) and the *Paschat karma* (consisting of regimens to be followed to restore digestive and other absorptive procedures of the body, back to the normal state). Clarified butter and medicated oils are used in the *oleation* process. *Swedan* (sweating) is brought about by exposure to steam for particular areas of treatment of the body. Forced emesis or *vamana* is brought about by administration of decoction of liquorice, honey with a few hours of prior administration of curd and rice. These substances are believed to cause elevation in the emesis effect. The *Virechana*, or laxative therapy is carried out by administration of herbs and liquids like senna, cow milk, *psyllium* seed, and castor oil. The enemas used in *Panchakarma* can be prepared from medicated oils or decoction of herbs like sesame or anise.<sup>[2]</sup>

*Virechana* is the procedure in which the orally administered drug acts on internally vitiated doshas, specifically on *pitta* and expels them out through anal route. *Virechana karma* is considered as the best treatment for evacuation of morbid *pitta dosha*.

### Aims and Objectives:

A review on historical aspect of *Virechan*.

### Material and Methods:

Ayurvedic compendia, basic principles of *Panchakarma*, *Shodhan Chikitsa*. Specially *virechana chikitsa* is reviewed in perspective of evaluation and its importance from ancient era.. Published journals related to subject, update information available on internet is critically reviewed and analyzed.

### Review on Vedas

#### VEDAS:

They are the oldest, authentic, reliable first manuscripts of the world. These are the foundation stone of the world's literature known till date. The origin & development of medical science is closely associated with the origin and evolution of man on this earth.

Indian culture starts from *vedic* time is a general belief. Some mantras of Vedas denote the presence of *Ayurveda* in them. Although it is very difficult to say that procedures of *Panchakarma* therapy were in practice in *vedic* period. Few mantras of *Rigveda* indirectly refer toward the *karmas* which are included under *Panchakarma* measures. For the purpose of *Virechana*, no specific reference has been found. But the drugs like *eranda* was mentioned which might be used for bowel evacuation. Some of the mantras which suggest the principal of evacuation like “*Yatasannam Vinirharet*” meaning to excrete from the nearest orifice. From this one can infer that *Virechana* might have been carried out at this time.<sup>[1] [2]</sup>

## Historical aspects of Virechan karma: <sup>[1]</sup> <sup>[2]</sup>

### **Vinaya Pitaka (1425-353 B.C.):**

One of the popular and important literatures of Buddha period. Many references regarding *Panchakarama* are available. The physician named *Jeevaka*, has treated Buddha by administering *aushadha* processed *nasya* for *Virechana* in the total dose of three utpala hasta. The book reads that by the use of one *utpala- hasta* of *nasya* was sufficient for 10 *Virechana*.

### **Purana:**

Among *Purana's* *Garuda* and *Agni Purana* has a great significance. We can find traditional method of diagnosis along with *Panchakarma* treatment.

### **Manu Smriti:**

Certain procedures like *ghrita* which has been administered orally after completion of *vamana*, *Virechana* and *snana* has been found. In *Chandogya Upnishad*, *Shankra Bhashya*, *Shishupala Vadha*, *Negha Dhuta*, scattered references regarding *shodhana* followed by *shamana* therapy for the normalcy of *doshas* has been found.

### **Ayurvedic Classics:**

After Buddha period, *Charak Samhita* became popular. The subjects of *Panchakarma* therapy are elaborately described in *Brihatrayi's*. Even descriptions are found in *Bhela*, *Kashyapa*, *Harita Samhita*, *bhavaprakasha* and *Sharangadhara Samhita* in separate

chapters. <sup>[3]</sup>

### **Charaka Samhita-**

The term *Panchkarma* has been used frequently only in *Charaka Samhita*, when compared to *Sushruta* and *Vagbhata*. Descriptions regarding *Virechanakarma* are available in *sutra*, *kalpa* and *siddhi sthana*. The details are as follows:

- Ch.Su.1<sup>st</sup> Chapter – In this chapter purgative roots and fruits are mentioned.
- Ch. Su 2<sup>nd</sup> Chapter – Some purgative drugs are quoted.
- Ch.Su.4<sup>th</sup> Chapter – Preparations from *virechaka* drugs followed by *virechanopaga* drugs are stated.
- Ch.Su. 15<sup>th</sup> Chapter –
- *Charala Siddhi Sthana* – Different aspects of *Virechanakarma*. <sup>[4]</sup> <sup>[5]</sup>

### **Sushruta Samhita –**

References regarding *Virechana* is available in *sutra*, *kalpa* and *chikitsa sthana*. Detailed description of *Virechana* is available in *chikitsa* 33<sup>rd</sup> chapter by name *Vamana Sadhya Updrava Chikitsa* and in 34<sup>th</sup> chapter for *Vamna Virechana Vyapada Chikitsa*. <sup>[6]</sup>

### **Astanga Sangraha-**

Detailed description regarding *Virechana* is available under the heading of *Vamana Virechana Vidhi Adhyaya* in 27<sup>th</sup> Chapter of *Sutra*. <sup>[7]</sup>

### **Astanga Hridya –**

Vagbhata has described Virechana in Sutra Sthana 18<sup>th</sup> Chapter entitled Vamana Virechana Vidhi Adhyaya. [8]

#### **Sharangadhara Samhita –**

Virechana types like anulomana, sramsana, bhedana and Virechana are explained in 4<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Purvakhandas i.e. in Deepana Panchanadhyaya. In Uttarakhandas 4<sup>th</sup> Chapter detailed explanation of Virechana vidhi is explained. [9]

#### **Bhavaprakasha –**

In Purvakhandas, for Virechana karma, Virechana vidhi chapter is dedicated for Virechana and there some drugs and preparations which are used in particular season for Virechana has been explained.

#### **Chakradatta –**

A separate chapter for Virechana karma is described under the heading of ‘Virechanadhikara’ which contains some of the Virechana yoga, signs and symptoms of samyaka Virechana, durvirikta and atiyoga and according to dosha, Virechana vidhi is also explained.

#### **Yoga Ratnakar –**

No separate chapter is found, but Panchkarma treatments are mentioned as a part of the treatment principal.

#### **Vangasena Samhita (Chikitsa Sara Sangraha) –**

Virechanadhikara is the name of the

chapter explaining in detail about Virechana including some of Virechana yogas.

#### **Kashyapa Samhita –**

In Khila Sthana, combined description regarding vamana and Virechana has been found under the heading ‘Samshuddhi Visheshaneeyonama’ Adhyaya. [10]

#### **Bhela Samhita –**

Reference of virechya is found in sutra sthana 21<sup>st</sup> Chapter under which the disease ‘Vicharchika’ is mentioned separately apart from kustha. In sutra 23<sup>rd</sup> Chapter, by name ‘Gadha Purusheeya’ we can find reference regarding vamana Virechana anarhas.

- In Kalpa Sthana 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Chapters are dedicated for Dantiphala Kalpa, Shankini Kalpa and Shyama Trivrita Adhyaya respectively.
- In Siddhi Sthana references regarding Virechana are obtained in first 4 chapters.

#### **Harita Samhita –**

No separate chapter for Virechana karma has been found. But wherever necessary, Virechana karma is advised in particular state of the disease.

#### **Discussion and Conclusion:**

Ayurvedic theory states that all areas of life impact one's health, so it follows that the Vedas cover a wide variety of topics,

including health and healthcare techniques, astrology, spirituality, government and politics, art, and human behaviour.

#### References:

1. Chopra A., Doiphode V. Ayurvedic medicine ; core concept, therapeutic principles, and current relevance. Med Clin North Am. 2002;86:75;89. [PubMed] [Google Scholar]
2. Heyn B. Bear and Co; Vermont: 1990. Ayurveda: The Ancient Indian Art of Natural Medicine & Life Extension, Inner Traditions. [Google Scholar]
3. A glimpse of Ayurveda ; The forgotten history and principles of Indian traditional medicine Yogini S. Jaiswal and Leonard L. Williams; J Tradit Complement Medv.7(1); 2017 JanPMC5198827
4. Charaka Samhita ; Vol. 1st ; Dr. Brahmanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Subharti Parkashan Varanasi,2009
5. Charaka Samhita ; Vol. 2nd - Dr. Brahmanand Tripathi, Chaukhambha Subharti Parkashan Varanasi.2008
6. Sushrita Samhita Ayurveda Tatva Sandipika by Kaviraja Ambika data Shastri, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan Varanasi, 2010
7. Vagbhatakrut Ashtanghridaya, Pt. Sadashiva Paradkar, editor. Chaukhambha Surbharati prakashan, Varanasi, Reprint 2007
8. Vagbhatakrut Ashtanghridaya, Pt. Sadashiva Paradkar, editor. Chaukhambha Surbharati prakashan, Varanasi, Reprint 2007
9. Sharangdhara Samhita ; Dr. Brahmanand Tripathi, with dipika commentary, Chaukhambha Surbharti Prakashana, Varanasi, 2007
10. Kashyapa Kashyapa Samhita Edition 1, Hemraja Sharma, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series, Varanasi.
11. Sashtri Sudarshana, Upadhaya Yadunandana. Madhava nidana of Madhavakara, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi, 2008

*Conflict of Interest:* Non

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.52482/ayurlog.v9i04.932>

*Source of funding:* Nil

*Cite this article:*

*"A review on historical aspect of Virechan."*

*Seema Rajput, Dipali Chavan-Sonawane,*

**Ayurlog: National Journal of Research in Ayurved Science- 2021; (09) (04): 01-05**