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Role of *Lekhana Karma* in the management of *Dushta Vrana* - A Review

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ABSTRACT

Vrana is the oldest element from which humankind is suffering from. The earliest description of *Vrana* is found in *Vedas*. *Ayurveda* is considered as the *Upaveda* of *Atharvaveda*. A detailed study of *Vrana* is found in various *Samhitas*. *Acharya Sushruta* being a surgeon has explained in depth about *Vrana* and its management. He has thrown more light on *Dushtavrana* and has explained *Shashti Upakrama* for its management. *Lekhana Karma* being one among *Shashti Upakrama* has its own clinical significance in the treatment of *Dushtavrana*. Hence this article summarizes the role of *Lekhana Karma* in the management of *Dushtavrana*.

Key words: *Dushtavrana*, *Lekhana Karma*, *Shashti Upakrama*, *Shastrakarma*, *Vrana*.

INTRODUCTION

Acharya Sushruta, a legendary surgeon who compiled the *Sushruta Samhita* has divided *Ayurveda* into eight branches which are called as *Ashtanga Ayurveda*, *Shalyatantra* being the foremost branch. As a warfare surgeon he has given prime importance to *Vrana* and its management.

To begin with the knowledge of *Vrana*, *Acharya Sushruta* explains about *Karna Vyadha Bandha Vidhi*, during which the first *Shastrakruta Vrana* is caused in the *Bala*. He has used the term '*Vranakovida*' which means a surgeon who is expertise in *Vrana* and its management.^[1] This highlights the importance of

knowledge of *Vrana* as it is the integral part of any *Shastrakarma*. *Acharya Sushruta* has thrown more light on *Dushtavrana* and its management by explaining *Shashti Upakrama*. These *Upakramas* can be categorized under three headings viz *Poorvakarma*, *Pradhanakarma*, *Paschatkarma*.^[2] *Ashtavidha Shastrakarma* are considered as the *Pradhana Karma* and all the surgical operations done can be classified under it. *Lekhana Karma* is also one among *Ashtavidha Shastrakarma*.

For the better healing of any *Dushtavrana* proper *Shodhana* is necessary wherein the role of *Lekhana Karma* come into importance. Hence an effort is made to review and understand the role of *Lekhana Karma* in the management of *Dushtavrana*.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To review the role of *Lekhana Karma* in the management of *Dushtavrana*.

METHODOLOGY

All references of *Dushtavrana* and *Lekhana Karma* are compiled from *Sushruta Samhita* and discussed with the method and importance of *Lekhana Karma* in enhancing wound healing.

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DUSHTAVRANA

Vrana is so called as it covers the site, and the scar formed after healing does not disappear until the person is alive.^[3] It also causes destruction or damage to the tissues (*Vrana Gatra Vichoornane*).^[4]

Vranas are classified into *Nija (Shareeraja/ Doshaja)* and *Agantuja (Sadyovrana)* based on the etiological factors. *Nijavranas* are caused due to the vitiation of *Tridoshas* by *Mithyaahara* and *Viharasevana*. All *agantujavranas* change into *Nijavrana* after a period of 7 days.^[5] These *Agantujavrana* may modify into *Dushtavrana* due to vitiation of *Doshas*.^[6]

Table 1: Dushtavrana Lakshana based on Vatadi Dosh^[7]

Vata	Pitta	Kapha
<i>Atisamruta</i> (Narrow mouthed)	<i>Ativivruta</i> (Wide mouthed)	<i>Kandu</i> (Itching) <i>Shopha</i> (Swelling)
<i>Atikathina</i> (Hard)	<i>Atiushna</i> (Hot)	<i>Pidaka</i> (With boils)
<i>Avasanna</i> (Depressed)	<i>Daha</i> (Burning sensation at the site)	<i>Mridu</i> (Soft)
<i>Vedanavan</i> (Severe pain)	<i>Paka</i> (Suppuration) <i>Raga</i> (Redness) <i>Putimamsasirasnayu</i> <i>Pratipurna</i> (Full of putrefied pus, muscles, and vessels and ligament) <i>Puyasrava</i> (Discharging pus) <i>Amanojnadarshana</i> (With ugly sight)	<i>Bhairava</i> (Frightful)

Lekhana Karma

Lekhana means to remove or to scrap. *Lekhana Karma* involves scrapping out debris or unwanted tissues from the affected part.^[8]

Table 2: Indication for Lekhana Karma in Vrana^[9]

Condition	Lekhana Vidhi
<i>Katina vrana</i> (devoid of <i>Mamsa</i>)	<i>Samalekhana</i> (even)

<i>Sthula-vruttaoshta</i> (thick and rolled edges)	<i>Sulikhita</i> (excess)
<i>Deeryamana Punah Punah</i> (which bursts open repeatedly)	<i>Niravasheshalekhana</i> (without leaving remnants)
<i>Katina Utsannamamsa</i> (hard and elevated muscle)	<i>Vartmanam Pramanena Samamlikhet</i> (edges scrapped to the level of the floor)

Acharya Dalhana opines that the term *Samalekhana* indicates excess scrapping, *Sulikhitalekhana* indicates mild scrapping and *Niravasheshalekhana* means complete scrapping of the *Vrana*.

Instruments used for Lekhana Karma

Shastra: *Mandalagra, Karapatra, Vruddhipatra, Nakhashastra, Mudrika, Ardhadara*.^[10]

Shastra Abhave: *Acharya Sushruta* has explained the use of *Kshouma (Atasivastra), Plota (Karpatam), Pichu (Karpasatula), Phenā (Samudraphena), Yavashuka (Yavakshara), Saindhava lavana, Karkashapatra* in the absence of *Shastra*.^[9]

Dravyas of mineral origin such as *Krishnaloharajah* (iron powder), *Tamra* (copper), *Shankha* (conch shell), *Vidruma* (coral), *Kasisa* (green vitriol), *Srotonjana* (collyrium), *Swarna* (gold), *Kamsya* (bell metal), *Trapu* (tin), *Seesa (lead)* are also used for *Lekhana Karma*.^[11,12]

Further in *Uttaratantra*, *Lekhyarogapratisheḍha Adhyaya*, *Acharya Dalhana* opines that in *Vata-Kaphavyadhi, Kathina* and *Daruna* conditions *Lekhana* should be done using *Shastra* and in conditions like *Pitta – Raktavyadhi and Mriduvartma, Shephalikadi Patras* should be used.^[13]

Lekhana Shastra Grahana Vidhi: For *Lekhana Karma* *Shastras* should be held at the junction of *Vrunta* (edge) and *Vruntophala* (handle) with the hand slightly raised and *Lekhana* should be done multiple times.^[14]

Lekhana Karma Yoga Vidhi: The noteworthy pedestal of ancient Indian Surgery is the concept of simulations. *Acharya Sushruta* has explained the

technique of expertising the *Lekhana Karma* by practicing over *Saromacharma* (animal hide). *Lekhana Karma* should be done in *Anuloma Gati* (direction of hair follicles). If it is done in *Pratiloma Gati* (opposite direction of hair follicles) it will cause severe pain and bleeding.^[15]

Some of the *Aushadha Kalpanas* having *Lekhana Karma*^[16,17]

- **Shodhana Kashaya:** In *Durgandha* (foul smell), *Kleda* (sodden), *Picchila* (slimy) *Vrana*. *Dravyas* used are *Shankhini* (*Euphorbia dracunculoids*), *Ankotha* (*Alangium salvifolium* (L.F) WANG), *Sumana* (*Jasminum grandiflorum*), *Karavira* (*Nerium indicum*), *Suvarcala* (black salt) and drugs of *Aragwadhadigana*.
- **Shodhana Varti:** In *Antahshalyayukta* (wounds with foreign body lodged inside), *Anumukha* (minute openings), *Gambhira* (deep), *Mamsahritavrana* (seated in the muscle). *Dravyas* used for the preparation of *Varti* are *Ajagandha* (*Cleome gynandra* Linn.), *Ajashrunji* (*Lansea coromandelica*), *Gavakshi* (*Citrullus colocynthis*), *Langali* (*Gloriosa superba* Linn.), *Putika* (*Holoptelia integrifolia* Planch), *Chitraka* (*Plumbago zylanica*), *Pata* (*Cissampelos pareira*), *Vidanga* (*Embelia ribes* Burm F), *Ela* (*Elettaria cardamomum*), *Herenu* (*Pisum sativum*), *Trikatu* (*Piper longum* Linn, *Zingiber officinale*, *Piper nigrum* Linn), *Yavakshara* (alkali prepared from *Hordeum vulgare*), *Lavana* (salt), *Manashila* (red arsenic), *Kasisa* (green vitriol), *Trivrut* (*Operculina turpethum* (L)), *Danti* (*Baliospermum montanum*), *Haritala* (orpiment), *Surashtrajamrit*.
- **Shodhana Kalka:** In conditions of *Vrana* like *Putimamsavrana* (foul smelling mamsa), *Mahadosha* (severely aggravated dosha) *Kalka* is prepared from the drugs mentioned for *Varti* preparation and are applied over *Vrana*.
- **Shodhana Gritha:** *Vranas* affected with *Pitta Dosh*, *Gambhiravrana* (deep seated), severely affected with *Daha* (burning sensation) and *Paka* (suppuration) are treated with *Gritha* processed with *Karpasaphala* (*Gossypium herbaceum* Linn).

Other drugs used for the preparation of *Shodhanagritha* are *Arka* (*Calotropis gigantea*), *Triphala* (*Terminalia chebula*, *Emblia officinalis*, and *Terminalia bellirica*), *Snuhiksheera* (latex of *Euphorbia nerifolia*), *Jatimula* (root of *Jasminum grandiflorum*), *Haridradwaya* (*Curcuma longa*), *Kasisa* (green vitriol), *Katurohini* (*Picrorhiza kurroa*) or the drugs mentioned for *Varti* can also be used.

- **Shodhana Taila:** In *Vranas* with *Utsannamamsa* (hypertrophied granulation tissue), which are *Asnigdha* (not moist), *Alpasrava* (insignificant discharge) *Taila* processed with *Sarshapa* (*Brassica campestris* Linn.) are used. Other drugs used for the preparation of *Shodhana Taila* are *Mayuraka* (*Achyranthes aspera* Linn.), *Rajavruksha* (*Cassia fistula* Linn.), *Nimba* (*Azadirachta indica*), *Koshataki* (*Luffa acutangula* (Linn.)), *Tila* (*Sesamum indicum* Linn.), *Brihati* (*Solanum indicum* Linn), *Kantakari* (*Solanum virginianum*), *Haritala* (orpiment), *Manashila* (red arsenic).
- **Shodhana Rasakriya:** *Vranas* which do not get cleansed even after applying *Taila* and have *Sthiramamsa* (rigidly fixed granulation tissue) are treated by *Rasakriya* prepared from *Salasaradigana Kashaya*. Powders of *Surashtraja*, *Kasisa* (green vitriol), *Manashila* (red arsenic), *Haritala* (orpiment) are added to the *Kashaya* and triturated along with *Matulunga Swarasa* (*Citrus medica* Linn.) and *Madhu* (honey).
- **Shodhana Avachurnana:** *Vranas* which are vitiated with *Medas*, *Agambhira* (not very deep seated), and which have *Durgandha* (foul smell) should be cleaned by dusting the fine powders of *Shodhana Dravyas* explained in *Varti* preparation.

All the *Rasas* except *Madhura Rasa* has the *Lekhana Guna*. *Amla* and *Lavana Rasa* is used in *Vata*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa* in *Pitta* and *Rakta*, *Katu*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya Rasa* in *Kapha* and a combination of two or three *Rasas* are used in *Samsarga* and *Sannipataja* Conditions for *Lekhana*.^[18]

DISCUSSION

Acharya Dalhana explains *Lekhana Karma* as that which does *Pattalikarana* that is to remove or scrap off.^[19] Depending on the *Dosha* involved different *Shastra* and *Anushastras* are explained. As *Vata* and *Kaphaja Vrana* will be *Daruna* and have *Gambhira lakshanas*, *Shastras* are indicated for *Lekhana Karma* and as *Pitta – Raktaja Dushtavrana* will be *Mridu* and *Raktapradhana*, mild *Lekhana* with *Shephalikadipatra* and *Anushastras* are indicated. Considering the *Dosha Pradhanata*, *Samalekhana* can be done in *Vataja Vrana*, *Sulikhita Lekhana* in *Kaphaja Vrana* and *Niravashesha Lekhana* in *Pittaja Vranas*. *Kashayadi Saptakalpanas* can be used in conditions where *Alpadoshas* are present. *Shastra* and *Anushastras* does mechanical debridement whereas *Kashayadi Kalpanas* does chemical debridement. *Lekhana Karma* either by *Shastra* or *Dravya* should be done until *Vrana* attains *Shuddha Avastha* that is *Lakshanas* like *Jihwatalabha* (colour like the base of the tongue), *Mridu* (soft), *Snigdha* (unctuous), *Shlakshna* (smooth) are seen.^[20] Once the *Vrana* attains *Shuddha Avastha*, *Ropanadravyas* are used for enhancing *Ropanakriya*.

CONCLUSION

Acharya Sushruta has beautifully explained *Shasti Upakrama* for the management of *Dushtavrana* which are highly scientific and time tested. *Lekhana Karma*, one among the *Ashtavidha Shastrakarma* explained in *Shashti Upakrama* marks the *Pradhana Karma* in the management of *Vrana*. It plays a very significant role in converting *Dushtavrana* to *Shuddha Avastha* and thereby helps in quick and better healing of the wound.

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