

**POORVA KARMA, PRADHANA KARMA AND PASCHAT KARMA USED FOR
AGNIKARMA AND THEIR INDICATIONS**

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Article Received date: 07 January 2025

Article Revised date: 27 January 2025

Article Accepted date: 17 February 2025



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ABSTRACT

Shalyatantra is an important branch of Ayurveda that has different therapeutic modalities and *Agnikarma* is among one of them. This therapy mainly considered useful for localized *Vata* and *Kaphaja* conditions. This therapy acts through its various effects (*Karma*) which include *Sthanik Karma*, *Sarvadaihi Karma* and *Vishista Karma*. *Agnikarma* is regarded as the effective therapy for alleviating *Vata* disorders since inherently *Agni* possess *Ushna*, *Tikshna*, *Sukshma* and *Aashukari* properties. These properties of *Agni* counteract *Vata* and *Kapha* imbalances. The procedure involves application of *Shalaka* which selected on the basis of therapeutic requirements. *Agnikarma* not only cures *Sadhya Vyadhi*, but also cures them so that they don't recur. The specific requirement of therapy would be selected depending on the need of intensity of *Agni*, nature of ailment and location of disease, etc. The Ayurvedic literature offers elaborate instructions on *Purva Karma*, *Pradhana Karma* and *Paschat Karma* recommended for *Agnikarma*. This three stage therapeutic protocol of *Agnikarma* provides maximum benefits of therapy and reduces any chances of adverse effects. This article highlights *Poorva Karma*, *Pradhana Karma* and *Paschat Karma* used for *Agnikarma* with its therapeutic indications.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda*, *Shalyatantra*, *Agnikarma*, *Shalaka*, *Surgical*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the oldest surviving medical science of the world which explains concept of health and disease. Ayurveda works around different branches of specific areas and *Shalyatantra* is one of the renowned branches of Ayurveda. *Shalyatantra* includes different techniques; *Bhesajkarma*, *Ksharakarma*, *Agnikarma*, *Shastrakarma*, *Yantrakarma* and *Raktamokshana*. *Agnikarma* is one of the modality of Ayurvedic *Shalyatantra* which is valued for its efficiency in curing local *Vata* and *Kaphaja* ailments. *Agnikarma* is considered very useful in ailments such as osteoarthritis, corns, frozen shoulder and sciatica, etc.^[1-4] *Agnikarma* can be classified based on the *Sthana* as mentioned in **Figure 1**. Furthermore can also be classified on the basis of *Akruti* (shape of cauterization), *Dravya* (material used for cauterization) and disease site (**Table 1**).

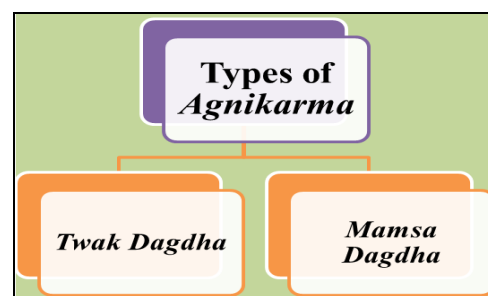


Figure 1: Types of Agnikarma on the basis of Sthana.

Agnikarma works to relieves pain which occurs due to the aggravated *Vata* in *Tvacha*, *Mamsa*, *Sira*, *Snayu*, *Sandhi* and *Asthi*. *Agnikarma* is also effective in chronic ulcers, cystic swellings, fistulas, sinuses, disorders of joints and hemorrhoids, etc. It also considered useful for the control of bleeding from cut vessels.^[4-6]

Table 1: Other classification of Agnikarma on different basis.

Classification	Types
Based on <i>Akruti</i>	<i>Valaya</i>
	<i>Bindu</i>
	<i>Vilekha</i>
	<i>Pratisarana</i>

Based on <i>Dravya</i> Used	<i>Snigdha Agni Karma</i>
	<i>Ruksha Agni Karma</i>
Based on Disease Site	<i>Sthanik</i>
	<i>Sthanantariya</i>

Precautions

- ❖ *Agnikarma* should not be given during the *Sharad* and *Grishma Ritu*.
- ❖ It must be avoided in *Rakta* disorders, condition of internal bleeding, foreign body retention and intestinal perforation, etc.
- ❖ It should be avoided in children, aged people and pregnant women.
- ❖ *Agnikarma* should be avoided on wounds with *Marma* point, *Netra* and wounds with toxins.

As mentioned above there must be specific measures which should be adopted while performing *Agnikarma*, taking this in consideration Ayurveda recommends three stages procedures to avoid any complication related with therapy. The three steps of *Agnikarma* procedure include *Purva Karma*, *Pradhana Karma* and *Paschat Karma* which helps to acquire maximum therapeutic benefits of therapy.^[6-8]

Purva Karma of *Agnikarma*

Certain preparatory measures are taken before the main procedure for a safe and successful intervention. The patient has been made adequately aware about the procedure, all the outcomes expected, and also all the complications that might occur. Usually, the patient could be advised to take a light meal before treatment, which supports proper digestion and avoid complication during the process. For cases such as that of *Asmari*, *Mudhagarbha*, *Arsa*, *Bhagandara*, *Udara* and *Mukha Roga*, the patient should be subjected to this procedure after the preliminary preparation and on empty stomach.

The patient is made to lie down in correct position, generally it is a supine position; depending on the area where treatment is desired. *Prakshalana* of diseased area is done with *Triphala Kashaya*. Sterilized cut sheets cover the area around the site to ensure sterility and avoid contamination. The *Shalaka* is warmed until it reaches the desired temperature; silver, copper, iron and gold material may be used to prepare *Shalaka*. The instruments must be preheated for excision so that it avoids infections.^[5-7]

Pradhana Karma

The procedure is initiated by *Swasthikvachan* in order to minimize fear related with the therapy. The head is kept in the east direction by the patient, and skilled attendants hold them to restrict movement before the administration of *Agnikarma*. The *Shalaka* is administered to the affected area in different therapeutic forms like *Valaya*, *Ardhachandra*, *Swastika* and *Bindu*. The time and extent of therapeutic burn is characterized by slight pain and development of desired shape.^[7-9] Proper cauterization

can be evaluated on various parameters as mentioned below.

Evaluation of proper cauterization using following parameters

- ✓ *Twak Dagdha* characterizes by sound heard, shrinkage of the skin and foul smell.
- ✓ *Mamsa Dagdha* is identified by grey pigmentation, contracted wound and swelling.
- ✓ *Snayu Dagdha* leaves black color wound which is raised slightly.
- ✓ Cauterization at *Asthi* identified by redness, roughness and dryness.

Paschat Karma

Cooling agents such as *Madhu* and *Ghrita* can be applied after the therapy. Dressing of paste of *Tugakshiri*, *Amrita*, *Plaksha*, *Chandana* and *Gairika* suggested reducing burning sensation and complications. Paste of flesh of horse or pig can also be advised as post therapy care. The patient is strictly warned not to expose the burned region to the water for a while. Protection from water is needed to acquire therapeutic effect of cauterization.

Pitta-pacifying diet should be administered, abstained from hot and sour food also recommended. Physical exercise under sunlight prohibited and emergency condition are managed by hospitalization if needed; generally burn produced by *Agnikarma* heals normally by natural healing processes.^[8-10] The improper procedural protocol may lead some complications which can be managed as follows:

Treatment of *Agnikarma* Complications

- ✓ *Plushtha Dagdha* arise due to the inadequately heated *Shalaka*, this can be managed by *Ushna* drugs which stimulate circulation.
- ✓ *Durdagdha* is caused by improper application or patient movement; this condition can be treated by application of *ghee* and cool water baths.
- ✓ *Ati-Dagdha* is results due to the excess transfer of heat, in this condition application of cooling substances like *Guduchi* leaves is advised along with *Visarpa Chikitsa*.
- ✓ *Daha* means excessive sensation of burning is treated by the use of natural herbs like *Ghritakumari Swarasa*.

Benefits of *Agnikarma*

This therapy is useful for *Vataja* and *Kaphaja* disorders, its *Ushna*, *Asukari* and *Sukshma Guna* suppresses *Vata kapha dosha* and eliminates *Srotavarodha*. Patient relieved very effectively from the pain and other symptoms. It is very effective modality in emergency

conditions and there will be no recurrence of the disease which treated by *Agnikarma*. *Acharya Sushruta* says that when *Kshar chikitsa*, *Shastra chikitsa* and *Bheshaja chikitsa* cannot cure the disease then the disease can be successfully cured by *Agnikarma*. Additionally *Agnikarma* is causing vasoconstriction thereby preventing hemorrhage.^[10-12]

CONCLUSION

Agnikarma is valuable therapy in musculoskeletal and chronic painful conditions. Its judicious procedures, safety protocols and post-management approaches ensure efficacy and safety. The Equipment and Technique have evolved with time but the fundamental principle of *Agnikarma* is the same. *Acharya Sushruta* put special emphasis on *Agnikarma* as a para-surgical approach. *Agnikarma* has been accorded a special status in surgery since it is assumed that diseases that are cured through this technique never come back again. This therapy is considered superior as it will treat the conditions that will not going away with medicines, surgery, or application of alkali. Unlike *Kshara Karma* that may suffer with chances of diseases recurrence, *Agnikarma* would prevent any recurrences of the disease. *Agnikarma* is works well in pathological conditions such as; sinuses, chronic ulcers, hemorrhoids, fistulas, joint diseases and cystic swellings, etc.

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