



A Conceptual Review Of Nimbapatradi Lepa

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Abstract

Ayurveda is a science which treats diseases both by external and internal application of medicines in different forms. The preparation used for topical application are *lepas*, *malaharas*, *upanaha*, etc. The medicine used in the form of paste used for external application are called *lepas*. *Lepa Kalpana* is used in different conditions like inflammation, wound healing, wound cleaning, etc. In *Lepa Kalpana*, wet drugs are pounded to fine paste form and the dry drugs are pounded to fine powder form and mixed with any of the liquid media like

swarasa, kalka, kwath, taila, ghrita, godugdha, gomutra, jala, etc. According to particular disease condition or need. This paste is used for application as *lepa*. Reference of *Nimbapatradi lepa* is found in *chakradatta Samhita* and it is indicated in *Visphota, kotha, shitapitta, kandu, raktapitta*, etc. In the present study, Conceptual Review of *Nimbapatradi Lepa* has been done from various texts and research works. Along with this the Analytical parameters required for *Nimbapatradi Lepa* are also reviewed. to fine powder form and mixed with any of the liquid media like

Keywords- *Lepa Kalpana, Nimbapatradi lepa, Ayurveda.*

INTRODUCTION

There is a wide variety of diseases that the human body suffers from. These diseases can be treated by giving drugs either from oral or topical form. *Lepa Kalpana* is one of the *Upkalpana* mentioned in *Ayurvedic* texts. It is used for external application on the human body directly at the site of disease. Basic concept of *Lepa Kalpana* is that one or more drugs are pounded together to form fine powder and mixed with any of the specified liquid media to prepare *Lepa*. These preparations are best known for skin diseases, *Vrana Shodhana* and *Ropana*.

In *Ayurveda* texts, *Lepa Kalpana* is mainly described in *Sharangdhara Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Vaghbhatta Samhita*. *Acharya sushruta* said that *Alepa* should be 1st line of treatment in *Vrana*.¹

Nimbapatradi Lepa is one of the *Lepa* preparations widely used for *Visphota, kotha, shitapitta, kandu, raktapitta*, etc. *Nimbapatadi lepa* consists of *Nimba patra churna, Amalaki churna* along with *ghrita*.² *Nimba patra* has *tikta kashay rasa, laghu ruksha guna, sheeta veerya, katu vipak* and having properties like *kapha-pitta shamak, vrana shodhan, vedana sthapak, kandughna, krumighna* and *Kushtaghna*.^{3,4} *Amalaki churna* has *madhura, amla, tikta, katu, kashaya rasa, madhur vipak sheeta veerya, laghu ruksha guna* and having properties like specially *pittashamak, amlapittaghna, raktapitta shamak, raktaprasadak, raktastambhak*,

varnya, etc⁵. *Nimbapatradi lepa* has been described to be used along with *ghrita*. *Ghrita* has *madhura rasa*, *sheeta veerya* and having properties like *vata pittaher*. When processed with other medicinal drugs it acts as *kaphahar*⁶. Among all *sneha goghrita* is best because of its *Sanskaranuvartana* and *yogvahi* properties⁷.

Lepa is of great importance because it gives less or no side effects on application along with maximum beneficial effects of drugs. Although the ingredients are easily available and it is easy to prepare, it is difficult to find in the market because it is not often recommended by doctors. It is essential to discover the therapeutic properties of this formulation for the wellbeing of mankind.

So considering these properties, in the present study, Conceptual Review Of *Nimbapatradi Lepa* has been done from various texts and research works. Along with this the Analytical parameters required for *Nimbapatradi Lepa* are also reviewed.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Definition of *Lepa*- The selected freshly collected wet drugs are pounded to fine paste form and used for external application as '*Lepa*'.⁹

The selected freshly dried drugs are taken in a clean *Khalva yantra*, pounded to fine powder form and filtered. This filtrate is again taken in *Khalva yantra* and added with required little quantity of water or any of the specified liquid preparations. The mixture is thoroughly triturated to obtain it in paste form, which is used as *Lepa* for external application.

Synonyms of *Lepa*

Acharya *Sharngadhara* explained synonyms as - *Lipta, Lepa, Lepana*.³

Types of *Lepa*

Acharya *Sushruta* explained on the basis of application, *Acharya Sharangadhara* classified on the basis of therapeutic use. *Acharya Vaghbhatta* explained it on the basis of *Karma*.

Table 1: Types of *Lepa*

| <i>Acharya sushruta</i> ¹⁰ | <i>Acharya Sharangadhara</i> ⁹ | <i>Acharya Vaghbhatta</i> ¹¹ |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Pralepa</i> | <i>Doshghna</i> | <i>Snaihika</i> |
| <i>Pradeha</i> | <i>Vishghna</i> | <i>Nirvapan</i> |
| <i>Alepa</i> | <i>Varnya</i> | <i>Prasadsna</i> |
| | | <i>Sthambhana</i> |
| | | <i>Vilayana</i> |
| | | <i>Pachana</i> |
| | | <i>Pidana</i> |
| | | <i>Shodhana</i> |
| | | <i>Ropan</i> |
| | | <i>Savarnikarana</i> |

1. According to *Acharya Sushruta*¹⁰

(A) *Pralepa*: It is cold and thin in nature. It should be removed from the place of application before they dry up. It is prepared with *Sheeta Veerya Dravyas*.

(B) *Pradeha*: It is hot and cold in nature. In *Vata Kapha* dominating *Shopha*, drugs used in *Pradeha* should be grounded with water and applied after warming up. In *Pitta* and *Rakta Pradhan Shopha*, *Pradeha* is provided with a cool, thick layer and nondrying coating. It is used in both *Vranyukta Shopha* and *Avranyukta Shopha*.

(C) *Alepa*: *Alepa* are those which possess mixed characteristics of both *Pralepa* and *Pradeha*. It is used for *Rakta Pitta Pradhana Shopha*.

2. According to Acharya Sharangdhara⁹

Acharya Sharangdhara has described the *Lepa* according to their use of purpose. He also mentioned the *Praman* of *Lepa* for particular application purpose.

(A) **Doshaghna lepa:** This type of *Lepa* is applied according to *Dosha*. It is $\frac{1}{4}$ part of *Angula* thick in size.

(B) **Vishaghna lepa:** This type of *Lepa* is *Vishaghna* and its thickness is $\frac{1}{3}$ part of *Angula*.

(C) **Varnya Lepa:** This type of *Lepa* is applied for cosmetic purpose and thickness for this *Lepa* is $\frac{1}{2}$ part of *Angula*

3. According to Acharya Vagabhatta^{11 12}

(A) **Snaihika Lepa:** In this type of *Lepa*, *Sneha Dravya* are used as contents and applied in *Vatavikara*.

(B) **Nirvapana Lepa:** In *Nirvapana Lepa*, contents are used which are *Sheeta* in property and applied In *Pittavikara*, *Vishvikar*, *Agnidagdha*, and *Kshardagdha* etc.

(C) **Prasadana Lepa:** This type is same in properties as *Nirvapana Lepa* but it is applied in *Vatadishitraktavikara*.

(D) **Stambhan Lepa:** it is anticoagulant in nature which used in *Atiraktasrava*.

(E) **Vilayan Lepa:** *Ushnavirya Dravya* are used in this *Lepa* and generally applied in *Apakvashotha*, *Kaphamedavilayana*, *Granthishotha* etc.

(F) **Pachana Lepa:** Main contents of this *Lepa* are *Ushnaveerya* and *Ruksha Dravya* and used in *pachyamanshothaj vrana*.

(G) **Pidana Lepa:** *Ruksha* and *picchila dravya* are used in this *lepa* and applied in small *vrana*.

(H) **Shodhan Lepa:** *Shodhan Lepa* is used in *Shodhan* of the *Vrana* (wound refinement).

(I) **Ropana Lepa:** This *Lepa* is applied for *Ropan* of the *Vrana* (wound healing).

(J) **Savarnikaran:** it is a specific type of *Lepa* which is used to change the wound color to skin color.

Lepa and their thickness

Acharya Charaka said that it is of *Tribhaga Angushta Pramana* (1/3rd of the thumb).¹³

Acharya Sushruta has compared the thickness of *Lepa* with the thickness of Buffalo's skin.¹⁴

Acharya Sharangdhara's opinion are as follow.¹⁵

Table 2: Thickness of *Lepa*

| <i>Lepa</i> | Thickness |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Doshaghna lepa</i> | $\frac{1}{4}$ <i>Angula</i> |
| <i>Vishaghna lepa</i> | $\frac{1}{3}$ <i>Angula</i> |
| <i>Varnya lepa</i> | $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>Angula</i> |

Lepa and the ratio of *Sneha*

Acharya Sushruta explains about the ratio of *Sneha Dravya* such as *Ghrita* and *Taila* which would be added while preparing *Lepa*. This is done according to *Dosha* predominance and disease condition.

Table 3: Ratio of Sneha used in Lepa^{16 17}

| Predominant Dosha | Ratio of Sneha |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Vataja Vyadhi | 1/4th part |
| Pittaja Vyadhi | 1/6th part |
| Kaphaja vyadhi | 1/8th part |

Direction of Lepa¹⁸

Acharya Sushruta said that Lepa should be applied against the direction of hair follicles (pratiloma). This is because to facilitate quicker absorption of drug potency through Romkupa(hair roots), Sweda Vahini (sweat gland), Siramukha (blood capillaries).

Method of preparation

Lepa preparation by wet drugs:

Fresh *Ardra Dravya* are collected and washed properly two to three times to remove all dirt. Then these are taken in a clean *Khalva Yantra* and pounded well to make fine paste with no fibrous part left behind.

Lepa preparation by dry drugs: Dried drugs are taken in a clean *Khalva Yantra*, pounded to make fine powder and then sieved. Then this sieved powder is again taken in *Khalva Yantra* and is triturated with the required quantity of specified liquid media to form paste. This paste form is used as *Lepa* for topical application.

General norms-

1. All *Lepa* preparations are intended for immediate use and for single use only.
2. *Lepa* should be applied in *Pratiloma* direction that is against direction of hair follicles.
3. *Lepa* are removed before they completely dry up.
4. Therapeutically *Lepa* are effective in wet states and they become ineffective and irritating to the skin when dry.
5. Previous *Lepa* should never be covered by the fresh one. If done so, it will hamper the local temperature and cause itching, pain and numbness in the area.¹⁹
6. The application of *Lepa* is prohibited at night. During the night, the temperature transfer is already reduced. When *Lepa* is applied to the skin at night, the transfer of temperature from the skin to the environment will be prevented, resulting in a change in Dosha and worsening of existing skin problems.^{20 21}
7. *Lepa* should never be applied when it is stale.²²
8. *Lepa* once applied should not be reapplied again.²²
9. Do not apply in a thin layer. Because it will Dries quickly. As a result, the active ingredient of the drug does not penetrate the skin. So it is not profitable.²³

Shelf life^{24 25}

All *Lepa* preparations are for instant use and for single use only. If *Lepa* contains vegetable drugs, it should be used within 24 hours, otherwise the drugs get decomposed, and the application may harm the skin. If a *Lepa* is made up of mineral and metallic drugs, then it does not have any expiry period. Hence, it depends totally upon the base with which the drugs are mixed to form a *Lepa*. Because, except *Siktha*, *Ghrita*, and *Taila*, all other Ayurvedic bases have the propensity to go rancid within 24 hours.

"Rule 161B of Drugs and Cosmetics Rule, 1945 said that self-life period of *Lepa Churna* is 1 year, *Lepa*, *Malahara* is 2 years and *Lepa guti* is 3 years.

Ingredients of *Nimbapatradi Lepa*-

Aacharya Sharangdhara has stated, when the quantity of Ingredients has not specified, then all the ingredients must be taken in equal quantity.²⁶ All the ingredients have to be taken in equal quantity.

Table no. 4: Showing ingredients of *Nimbapatradi Lepa*

| CONTENTS | LATIN NAME | QUANTITY | PART USED |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| <i>Nimba</i> | <i>Azadirachta indica</i> (A.Juss) | 1 Part | <i>Patra</i> (leaves) |
| <i>Amalaki</i> | <i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> (Gaertn.) | 1 Part | <i>Phala</i> (fruit) |

Goghrita has to be used as per requirement.

Method of preparation

All the ingredients are taken in a *Khalva Yantra* and pounded well together to form a homogenous mixture of fine powder. Then *Goghrita* is added as per requirement and applied over skin.

Dose: *Yathavshayak lepanartha* (as per requirement)

Therapeutic uses: *Visphota, kotha, kshata, shitapitta, kandu, raktapitta*

Therapeutic action of ingredients of *Nimbapatradi Lepa*

Nimba (Azadirachta indica): It has *vrana shodhan, vedana sthapak, kandughna, krumighna* and *Kushtaghna*

Amalaki (Phyllanthus emblica): It has *amlapittaghna, raktapitta shamak, raktaprasadak, raktastambhak, varnya*.

Table no. 5: Mode of Action Rasa Panchak of ingredients of *Nimbapatradi Lepa*

| Ingredients | Rasa | Guna | Virya | Vipaka | Karma | Chemical constituents |
|----------------|--|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---|--|
| <i>Nimba</i> | Tikta Kashay | Laghu Ruksha | Sheeta | Katu | <i>Kapha-pitta shamak, Vrana shodhan, Vedana sthapak, Kandughna, Krumighna and Kushtaghna</i> | Triterpenoids ,Sterols,Bitter principles Nimbin and Nimbiol. |
| <i>Amalaki</i> | <i>Madhura, Amla, Tikta, Katu, Kashaya</i> | <i>Laghu Ruksha</i> | <i>Sheeta</i> | <i>Madhur</i> | <i>Pittashamak, Amlapittaghna, Raktapitta shamak, Raktaprasadak, Raktastambhak, Varnya</i> | Ascorbic acid and gallotannins, vitamin C |

Organoleptic examination for *Nimbapatradi lepa*

1)Physical test of *Nimbapatradi Lepa* -

Shabda

Sparsha

Roop

Rasa

Gandha

2) Physicochemical examination of *Nimbapatradi lepa*²⁷

- Moisture content
- Refractive index
- Specific gravity
- Acid value
- Saponification value
- Iodine value
- Peroxide value
- Total viable count
- PH
- TLC
- Viscosity

Previous Work done –

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DISCUSSION

In Ayurveda Classics various types of *Kalpana* are mentioned to treat diseases. *Lepa Kalpana* is one of the unique *Kalpana* which is used for both to treat disease. Basic concept of *Lepa Kalpana* is collecting a raw drug even in wet or dry form and grounding it well together to form paste-like consistency.

Lepa preparations are applied to skin to prevent the 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.²⁸

Nimbapatradi Lepa is one of the most commonly used *Lepa Kalpana* to treat diseases like *visphota*, *kotha*, *kshata*, *shitapitta*, *kandu*, *raktagitta*. This preparation works on the basis of *Rasa Panchaka*. The ingredients present in this preparation are *Vrana shodhan*, *Vedana sthapak*, *Kandughna*, *Krumighna*, *Kushtaghna*, *Raktagitta shamak*, *Raktaprasadak*, *Raktastambhak* etc. which alleviate *Dhosha* at the site of diseased condition.

Nimba patra having *tikta kashay rasa*, *laghu ruksha guna*, *sheeta veerya*, *katu vipak* and having properties like *kapha-pitta shamak*, *vrana shodhan*, *vedana sthapak*, *kandughna*, *krumighna* and *Kushtaghna*^{3 4} properties and antibacterial, antifungal, vermicidal, antimicrobial, analgesic, antipyretic, antiulcer, sedative, anti-inflammatory and useful in burning sensation, leprosy, skin diseases, leucoderma, pruritus, intestinal worms, ulcer, boils, eczema²⁹, etc. So, maybe acting on *visphota*, *kotha*, *kshata*, *shitapitta*, *kandu*, *raktagitta*.

Amalaki churna having *madhura, amla, tikta, katu, kashaya rasa, madhur vipak sheeta veerya. laghu ruksha guna* and having properties like specially *pittashamak, raktapitta shamak, raktaprasadak, raktastambhak, varnya, etc⁵*, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial properties³⁰ So, maybe acting on *visphota, kotha, kshata,shitapitta, kandu, raktapitta*.

CONCLUSION

Lepa Kalpana is a topical medicament which is applied directly on skin. *Nimbapatradi Lepa* is found in various Ayurvedic texts. In the present study, a conceptual study of *Nimbapatradi Lepa* is carried out along with its analytical parameters. *Nimbapatradi Lepa* is one of the *Lepa* preparations widely used for *Visphota, kotha, shitapitta, kandu, raktapitta*, etc. However, to prove its effectiveness, various clinical studies and trials should be conducted.

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