



# SHIROBASTI: LITERATURE REVIEW

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**Abstract:** Shiro Basti, an Ayurvedic therapeutic procedure, involves the application of medicated oils on the scalp using a special cap. This literature review aims to collate and analyze existing research on Shiro Basti, focusing on its historical significance, methodologies, therapeutic benefits, and potential applications in modern medicine. The review draws from classical Ayurvedic texts, contemporary studies, and clinical trials to comprehensively understand Shiro Basti.

Historically, Shiro Basti has been used to treat a variety of neurological and psychological conditions, including headaches, migraines, insomnia, anxiety, and stress-related disorders. The procedure is rooted in the principles of Ayurveda, which emphasize the balance of body, mind.

**Index Terms - Shiro Basti, Procedure, Ashtanga Hridaya, Ashtanga Sangraha, Keraliya chikitsa padhathi.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Shiro Basti is a therapeutic procedure in Ayurveda that falls under the category of Murdhini Taila<sup>1</sup> treatments, which involve the application of medicated oils to the head. It is considered the most effective among these treatments. The term "Shiro Basti" is derived from two Sanskrit words: "Shiro," meaning head (Shiras), and "Basti," meaning to retain or hold. In this procedure, a special medicated oil, known as Taila, is retained on the head (Shiras) for a specific period. This practice is believed to provide numerous benefits, including nourishing the scalp, promoting mental relaxation, and treating various head and nervous system conditions.

Acharya Vagbhata has mentioned murdha taila and Murdhini Taila by Acharya Charaka.

In Ashtanga, Hridaya, and Ashtanga Sangraha by vagbhata acharya mentioned the Murdhini taila and also specially mentioned the procedure of Shiro Basti in Gandhushadi Vidhi Adhyayan. Also, Acharya Charaka has mentioned the benefits of Murdhini taila in matrashititya Adhyaya (sutra sthana 5th chapter)

Reference for Murdhini taila especially Shiro Basti is also available in Keraliya Cikitsa Paddhati (based on Dharakalpah) by Pavana Jayaram published by Sarada Mahadeva Iyer.<sup>7</sup>

### The procedure of Shirobasti<sup>2,3</sup>

- Shodhana: The patient is initially prepared for treatment by administering vamanaadi shodhana.
- Patient is subjected to snehana and swedana.
- Patient is made to sit comfortably on a knee-height chair.
- Characteristics of Shiro Basti cap:
  - It is made up of cow or buffalo's skin.
  - Height – 12 angula Width – corresponds to the circumference of the patient's head
  - Masha Kalka is prepared using sukhoshna jala.
  - A long cloth strap, of the width of 3 angula (in commentary) smeared with the paste of Masha kalka is tied around the head along the margin of hair.

- The cap of the leather strap is fixed around the head's lower end reaching up to the ears.
- A cloth strap smeared with Masha kalka is wrapped above the lower border of the cap again.
- The borders of the cap are again smeared with the Masha kalka to prevent leaking.
- According to Vyadhi, Sneha should be selected and used in sukhoshna
- Lukewarm medicated oil is poured, up to the height of 1 or 2 angula

Commentry has clearly mentioned about each meaning of shloka (Arunadatta: सर्वाङ्गसुन्दरी)

- निषण्णस्य-उपविष्टस्य नरस्य
- पीठे जानुतुल्ये, तथा मृदौ-अकठिने
- शुद्धो-वमनादिना, अक्तः-तैलादिना,
- दिनान्ते -अपराह्णे
- चर्मपट्टं-गव्यं माहिषं वा, तथा द्वादशाङ्गुलविस्तीर्णं

Paschat karma<sup>4</sup>

After Shiro Basti, massage should be done in shoulder, head and neck.

ततः "उष्णोदकोपचारी स्यात् " इत्यादिकमाचरेत्।

then should follow parihara vishaya's

मुक्तस्नेहस्य-अपनीतशिरोबस्तेः after removal of shirobasti

Seven days shall be the maximum period.

एवं त्रीणि पञ्च सप्त वा दिनानि योजयेदिति | (Hemadri)

Matrakala<sup>4</sup>

Vata: 10,000 matrakala

Pitta: 8000 matrakala

Kapha: 6000 matrakala

Swastha: 1000 matrakala

Till secretion in the appears mouth and nose

Commentry: वाते दश मात्रासहस्राणि, पित्तेऽष्टौ मात्रासहस्राणि, कफे षण्मात्रासहस्राणीत्यर्थः। स्वस्थवृत्ते, एकं मात्रासहस्रं धारयेत्। (arunadatta), अरुजे तु-स्वस्थवृत्ते

Indication<sup>5,6</sup>

- Stiffness of eyes
- Loss of sensation: प्रसृप्तिः-स्पर्शाज्ञानम् |
- Facial palsy
- Loss of sleep: जागरो-निद्रानाशः।
- Dryness of nose and mouth
- Timra (cataract)
- Diseases related to head which are difficult to manage: दारुणे-तीव्र

#### IV DISCUSSION

In Ayurveda, Shiro Basti is a classical Panchakarma procedure detailed in ancient texts like the Ashtanga Hridaya and Charaka Samhita. It is regarded as an effective treatment for managing various vata disorders, particularly those affecting the nervous system and the mind.

Shiro Basti, a revered treatment in Ayurveda, is highlighted in classical texts for its profound therapeutic effects. It is primarily used for the management of vata-predominant disorders, particularly those involving the head, mind, and nervous system. This procedure involves the application of medicated oils on the scalp, retained within a specially constructed cap, to facilitate deep penetration and absorption of the therapeutic properties.

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