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## INTRODUCTION OF ABHYANGA AND SNEHA YUKTA AAHAR IN GYM GOING PEOPLE IS NEED OF THE HOUR.

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### ABSTRACT

The Ayurvedic system of medicine uses a comprehensive approach to prevent and promote a healthy life by incorporating specific procedures and therapies into daily activities, like a to do list on a daily basis (Dinacharya), things to do and to consume in every rutu (season) i.e. Rutucharya, the way to behave in the society (Sadvrutta) etc...Considering every aspect for a person to be healthy. Aim – To study how important is abhyanga and sneha is for our body. Objective – To emphasize on benefits of abhyanga and intake of sneha and how it will be beneficial for the gym going people. Material and methods – More about Abhyanga and Sneha from Ayurvedic texts/Samhita. Discussion – Why it is necessary for gym going people to intake sneha and do Abhyanga. Conclusion – Abhyanga and sneha yukta aahar should be included in the daily regimen of the gym going people who do excessive exercise, so that they would remain healthy and won't face any silent diseases in future.

**Keywords** – Vyama, abhyanga, aahar, sneha, gym, gymming

## INTRODUCTION

Earlier, when the technology was not so advanced and majority of the population was dependent on farming for their living, there was no culture to take time out for exercising. Everyday work was so tiring which included loads of physical work. And now, when most of the people have sedentary lifestyle, exercising is must! Exercise is the miracle cure we've had always, but for too long we've neglected it and accepted sedentary lifestyle. As a consequence our health is now suffering.

But since few years gymming has become a trend among youth and adults; although in many articles it is stated that regular exercise for 30mins will help you maintain your health and strength.

(1) Excessive exercise can make you feel tired all the time and if you are accustomed to intense exercise, your risk of serious injury increases. Problems like joint pain, back pain, overuse injuries can occur. Overuse injuries such as joint strains, broken bones and soft tissue injuries.

Purpose – The purpose of this article is to help people understand how they can prevent injuries, fractures and osteoporosis by imbibing abhyanga and sneh yukta dravya in their daily lifestyle.

Material and methods –

Various information from Ayurvedic classics and various articles from the internet released till date were reviewed to write this article.

(2) Today's population is less active, in part because technology has made life easier. We travel by automobile or by public transportation. We wash our clothes in machines. With the help of computer or TV, we amuse ourselves. Fewer individuals are engaged in manual labour, and the majority of us have positions that require little physical exertion. Work, domestic duties, shopping, and other necessities are far less taxing now than they were in earlier generations.

We move around less and burn off less energy than people used to. (3) Research suggests that many adults spend more than 7 hours a day sitting down, at work, on transport or in their leisure time. People aged over 65 spend 10 hours or more each day sitting or lying down, making them the most sedentary age group.

In samhitas, (Vyayam) exercise is given in *Dinacharya adhyaya*, this lesson tells us how our daily regimen should be, to be a healthy person. While, abhyanga is mentioned before Vyayam in this adhyaya. So, technically one should do abhyanga first and then exercise.

Abhyanga: (4) In ashtang hrudaya sutrasthana lesson 2 and verse 8 & 9 tells about abhyanga (Oil massage). It states that conducting body massage on a regular basis will be beneficial.

It –

- Delays aging, relieves fatigue and mitigates vata. Imparts good vision and

promotes strength. Increases lifespan and relieves insomnia.

- Bestows toughness as well as prettiness to the skin and body becomes strong.
- Oil should be applied especially to the head (head massage), ears (ear drops) and foot (massage on the soles), along with the whole body.

(5) Also the contraindications means when abhyanga should not be done is given. It should not be conducted to –

- The person suffering with *kapha* disorders.
- During the course of shodhana therapy.
- And also in the state of indigestion.

Respective advantages of head massage, ear drops, and foot massage are also given.

(6) In Sushrut Samhita, chikitsasthana lesson 24 verse 30, it is given that *Abhyanga* makes the body soft, controls (mitigates) *kapha* and *vata* aggravation, bestows, nourishes the tissues, good complexion/colour and strength to the body.

Vyayam – Activities, which produce tiredness to the body is known as *Vyayam*.

(7) In Ashtang hrudaya, lesson 2 and verse 10 of sutrasthana, advantages of exercises are given. They are –

- Body becomes light.
- Able to perform normal duties with enthusiasm.
- Increases the power of digestion.

□ Reduces the fat and body parts become distinct and firm.

(8) In Sushrut Samhita, lesson 24 verse 38-40 of Chikitsasthana, importance of *vyayam* is given –

- Healthy growth, brilliant complexion, well manifest divisions of the body, keen digestive fire (power of digestion), absence of lassitude, stability, feeling of lightness, cleanliness, ability to withdraw exertion, fatigue, thirst, heat and cold and best of health.
- Nothing other than physical activity exists which is best to reduce corpulence (obesity), old age does not invade him quickly.
- The muscles of the body of regularly exercising people become strong and diseases will not occur.

(9) Contraindicated persons for doing exercise –

- Patients suffering from *vata* and *pitta* disorders.
- Children, aged persons and persons suffering from indigestion.

Excessive exercise – There are various articles on net and in samhitas about it, stating how it affects our body.

- (10) "Anybody can be at risk for over-exercising, not just athletes," says Caitlin Lewis, MD, sports medicine physician.
- (11) Without treatment, overtraining can weaken your immune system and may cause osteoporosis and bone loss in women. In extreme cases, heart damage

and rhythm disorders can occur. Those with genetic risk factors are especially vulnerable to cardiac problems from overtraining. (1)

- (12) Too much exercise can lead to injuries, exhaustion, depression, and suicide. It can also cause lasting physical harm. Your adrenal gland, pumping out hormones as you pound the pavement, can only produce so much cortisol at a time. Suddenly, the heartbeat you'd lowered to a resting 48 is up to 80. You now run for two hours, then three hours. But you can't improve your 10K times. (1)
- (13) Recent studies demonstrated that extreme volumes and/or intensities of long-term exercise training are associated with several possible cardiac maladaptations. First, some epidemiological studies have reported an increased risk for adverse cardiovascular outcomes at the upper end of the physical activity spectrum. (1)
- (14) In Ashtang hrudaya, lesson 2 verse 13; disadvantages of excessive exercises is given – excessive exercises leads to the following complications like *trushna* (thirst), *kshaya* (emaciation), *pratamaka* (severe dyspnoea), *raktapitta* (haemorrhage), *shrama* (exhaustion), *klama* (tiredness), *kasa* (cough), *jwara* (fever), *chardi* (vomiting) etc. (1)
- (15) In Charak Samhita, chikitsa sthana lesson 7 verse 33, it is given that excessive physical exercise to fatigue, exhaustion, emaciation, thirst, internal haemorrhage, darkness before eyes, cough, fever and vomiting. (1)

(16) In the 14<sup>th</sup> shloka, lesson 2 of Ashtang Hrudaya sutrasthana, it is stated that, due to excessive exercises, not sleeping in nights, walking long distances, excessive coitus, too much talking and laughing, acts of exertion etc. will destroy the body as a lion fights with an elephant and dies.

(17) In Sushrut Samhita, it is given that physical exercises are always beneficial for strong persons and those who consume snigdha aahar (food consisting natural oil/fats).

Sneha – Snehana and snigdha are the synonyms of sneha. The therapeutic procedure by which sneh (greasiness) is imparted to the body using different kinds of fat is called Snehana.

Forms of sneha like oil, ghee, animal body fat is administered internally or applied externally to add sneha to the body i.e. Bahya (external) and abhyantar (internal).

Abhyanga comes under bahya (external) sneha. While, sneha yukta dravya comes under abhyantar (internal) sneha. Sneha yukta refers to food items containing sneh or sneh given with food. Example dal-rice with ghee.

Discussion –

Why sneha is important for gym going people? Exercise for 30mins is beneficial for the body, but in excess can hamper our health. We've seen what all can happen because of excessive exercise above.

- Today exercising has become a trend! Trend to get those 6 pack abs. For which to achieve people have been exercising continuously for hours; not knowing what the consequences will be.
- Excessive exercise increases *vata* in the body, while *vata dosha* and *asthi dhatu* are related by *ashraya-ashrayi* relationship i.e. *vata prakop* (increase in *guna* and *karma* of *vata dosha*) leads to *asthi kshay* (decrease in *guna* and *karma* of *asthi dhatu*) and vice versa.
- With imbalance in *vata dosha* because of day-today activities, excessive exercise adding more to it. And if the *aahar* (food) is also not proper then intense *vata prakop* affecting bones can lead to osteoporosis and many diseases, also endangering one's life.
- (18) According to Charak Samhita chikitsasthana lesson 15 verse 13,14 the *panch-mahabhutatmak aahar* gets digested by the five types of *agni*, each of *prithvi* (earth), *aap* (water), *teja* (fire), *vayu* (air), *akash* (ether) and it gets absorbed into the *aahar ras*.
- (19) The *aahar ras* further leads to the formation of the *dhatu*s. According to the 16<sup>th</sup> shloka, lesson 15 of charak chikitsasthana, *rasa dhatu* leads to the formation of *rakta dhatu*, *rakta dhatu* leads to the formation of *mansa dhatu* and so on till *shukra dhatu*.
- So, if the *aahar* is *snigdha/sneh yukta* (containing fatty) then there is dominance of *kapha dosha* and as majority of *dhatu*s are *kapha* related, *dhatu*s are formed correctly, and if the kind of food we take is *ruksha* (dry) then there is dominance of *vata dosha* leading to *vata* aggravation,
- Because of which *rasa*, *mansa*, *medha*, *asthi*, *majja*, *shukra dhatu* won't be

formed properly. This is how it affects the bones.

- (20) According to sushrut Samhita chikitsasthana lesson 24 verse 44,45 states that even incompatible (unhealthy) foods consumed by persons who indulge in physical exercise, foods which are either properly cooked or improperly cooked digested without any trouble, if the person is strong and takes proper *snigdha aahar*.
- So, *sneha* is important and it should be utilised by both internal and external ways.

### Conclusion –

It can be concluded from the materials used from the ayurvedic texts and the information taken from various websites that *abhyanga* and *sneha yukta aahar* should be included in the daily regimen of the gym going people who do excessive exercise, so that they would remain healthy and won't face any silent diseases in future.

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