



## A review on Ayurveda Perspective on *Swedana* and its Clinical Importance

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### ABSTRACT:

Panchakarma therapy is a powerful medical system. Panchakarma refers to five specialized techniques that attack the root causes of diseases, cleanse all body microcirculatory channels, remove vitiated Doshas from the body, and produce long-term beneficial effects. Panchakarma therapy is effective in treating the vast majority of diseases. This therapy, on the other hand, improves the body's resistance (Immunity) and thus checks the pathogenesis of the disease, confirming its preventive effects. Purvakarma is a type of Panchakarma therapy that includes Snehana and Swedana Karma. Swedana Karma increases capillary permeability and aids in the removal of impurities from the body's extracellular fluid. Swedanakarma is essential for the body's thermoregulation system to function properly. The herbs used in fomentation therapy have unique properties such as warmth, deep penetration, oiliness, weightiness, liquidity, and mobility, among others. Sweda karma works by restoring the balance of Medadhatwagni and Bhutagni, which speeds up the digestive process and causes Srotomukhashodhana and increased sweating. This, in turn, causes exudates to be displaced, providing pain relief and relaxing muscular spasms.

**Keywords:** *Ayurveda, Swedana karma, Sweating, Sudation therapy*

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**How to cite article:** Raut M.S, Mandalkar P. A review on Ayurveda Perspective on Swedana and its Clinical Importance. AYUSCRIPT 2023;4(1):17-23 <http://doi.org/10.55552/AYUSCRIPT.2023.2403>

**INTRODUCTION:**

Sweda is a Medadhatu derivative that is primarily associated with water. Sweda is in charge of producing Kleda within the body, which is also primarily governed by the Apamahabhuta. Swedana therapy stimulates the body's metabolic rate and dilates capillaries, increasing circulation, thanks to its Ushna and Tikshna properties. This increased circulation aids in the removal of waste products and the absorption of substances such as Sneha or therapeutic oils through the skin. It also stimulates muscles and nerves, aiding in their revitalization [1-3]. Swedana therapy causes sweating and can have a hypoalgesic effect by diverting sensory stimuli in some cases. The term 'Swedana' refers to the use of fomentation, sudation, or steam to induce sweating, and it is a critical therapeutic approach in Ayurveda. It is one of the six primary treatments in Ayurveda and is the primary treatment for conditions caused by Vata and Kapha dosha imbalances [2-4]. Panchakarma is essential in Ayurvedic medicine. The fact that Panchakarma is essentially applicable to all cases, covering a wide range of preventive, curative, and promotive conditions, attests to its importance in Ayurveda. If Shodhana Chikitsa is not performed beforehand, the ground is not properly prepared for Shamana therapy. Even in Rasayana and Vajikarana, Dosha evacuation is required for their effective application. Panchakarma is based on the novel concept of total disease cure. There is no such therapy in any other medical system, even on a theoretical level. In Sutrasthana, Vimansthana, and Chikitsasthana, Charaka briefly discussed Panchakarma therapy. Siddhisthana contains more information on the techniques. It was thought that systemic Samshodhana of the entire body was a must for all preventive and curative procedures. Aside from being useful for preparation, Panchakarma therapy (Samshodhana Karma) is a complete treatment for a variety of diseases. Panchakarma therapy is intended to eliminate vitiated Doshas and restore a state of normalcy and equilibrium, which is the fundamental foundation of health. Panchakarma therapy is directly applicable to both healthy and sick people.

**Methods of Swedana:**

**Sankara:** This technique involves applying a heated herbal bolus to the patient, who may or may not be clothed. The bolus is used for fomentation or body massage. The cloth is unwrapped after several rounds of bolus application, and the herbal paste is gently rubbed all over the body. The procedure is completed with a warm water bath and rest at room temperature.

**Prasthara:** In the Prasthara procedure, the patient is placed on a bed made of Ricinus Communis plant leaves, as well as corn, pulses, Pippali, Maricha, Paayasa, and krushara. For added relaxation, the patient is then wrapped in either silk or wool blankets.

**Nadi:** This involves the application of medicated steam via a hose or tube to either the entire body or specific areas as needed for therapy.

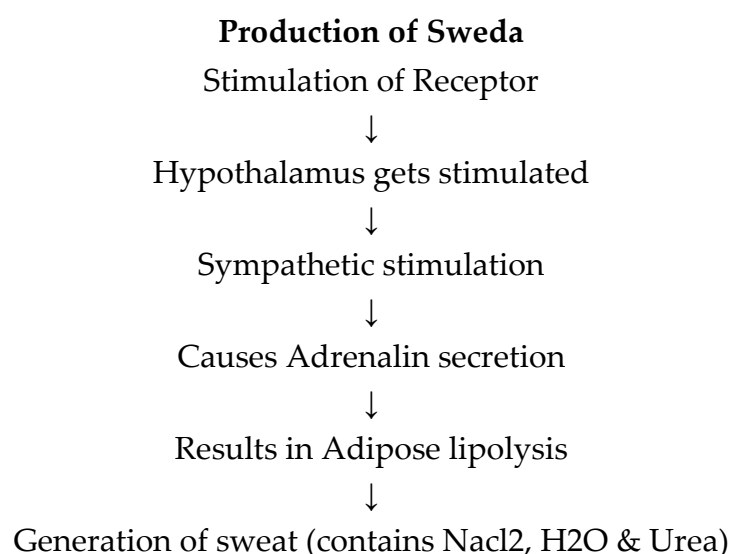
**Parisheka:** A hot herbal decoction is showered over the body with a pitcher, pot, or a pipe with multiple holes during this process, providing a soothing and therapeutic experience.

**Jentaaka:** The Jentaaka procedure involves placing the patient in a circular room near a pond or small lake where special herbs are burned in an oven to generate heat, creating a unique and healing environment.

Swedana is an important procedure that relieves conditions such as stiffness and heaviness, among others. Swedana is classified into two types, according to Charaka: Sagnisweda and Niragnisweda. Furthermore, Niragnisweda has ten subtypes: Vyayama, Ushnasadana, Guru pravarana, Kshudha, Bahupana, Bhaya, Krodha, Upanaha, Ahava, and Atapa. Sankara, Prastara, Nadi, Parisheka, Avagaha, Jentaka, Asmaghana, Karshu, Kuti, Bhu, Kumbhi, Kupa, and Holaka are the 13 types of Sagnisweda [3-6]. *Acharya Sushruta*, on the other hand, classifies *Swedana* into four main types as depicted in **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1:** *Swedana* Types According to *Acharya Sushruta*



Sweda is produced physiologically by Paka of Sukshmeda, according to Ayurvedic science. Sweat contains sodium chloride, water, urea, lactic acid, potassium, calcium, and other substances. These substances are all present in extracellular fluid and provide nutrition to cells. Excessive sweating depletes the contents of extracellular fluid in the body. One of the major substances lost through sweating is sodium chloride. Its absence causes feelings of exhaustion or weakness in the body. Sweating regulates the body's heat production, water and electrolyte balance.[7-8]

### **Swedana Properties**

Choosing substances with opposing properties, such as Sthira and Sara, is critical in the context of Swedana. When local Swedana is required, substances with Sthira property are appropriate, whereas substances with Sara property benefit generalized Swedana. Snigdha substances are chosen for Snigdha swedana, while Ruksha substances are chosen for Ruksha swedana. Swedana possesses the qualities of Ushnata, Tikshnata, Rukshata, Sthirata, Sarata, Snigdhatva, Dravata, and Sukshmatva.[9-11] Ushnata's properties promote enthusiasm, relieve stiffness, induce unconsciousness, a burning sensation, and sweating, among other things. Tikshnata produces a burning sensation, aids in the maturation of imbalanced Dosha and Malas, and aids in their elimination from their respective locations. Rukshata imparts dryness to the body and is distinguished by non-unctuous properties. It promotes body firmness and counteracts softness. The Sthirata property represents immobility and gives the body firmness and stability. Sarata, influenced by the Jalamahabhuta element, has the ability to advance. These properties play an important role in Swedana's therapeutic effects on the body, aiding in the restoration of body balance and harmony with nature. The dominance of Jala and Prithvi elements in Snigdhatva imparts unctuousness, strength, and softness, among other qualities. The Jalamahabhuta primarily influences Dravata substances, promoting stickiness, softness, and a sense of well-being. Dravata liquefies Dosha and helps fluids move from one part of the body to another. *Sukshmatva* property is primarily composed of *Agnimahabhuta* represents the property that allows substances to pass through the *Srotas*. *Swedana* exerts its primary actions as *Stambhaghna*, *Gauravaghna*, *Shitaghna* and *Swedakaraktva* by virtue of these properties of *Swedana Karma*.

### **Clinical Significance:**

- Swedana helps to relieve stiffness by releasing Sthambha. Swedana, which is composed of Snigdha and Ushna, relieves stiffness by promoting Srotoshuddhi and Amapachana.

- Swedana relieves heaviness in the body by facilitating the expulsion of liquid substances through sweat. Swedana stimulates muscles and nerves, adding to the sensation of lightness.
- Swedana, which is distinguished primarily by its Ushna quality, counteracts the sensation of coldness through its opposite properties.
- Swedana therapy promotes sweating, which is a type of Mala (waste product), and thus removes toxins from the body.
- Swedana drugs, with their Ushna and Tikshnaguna properties, stimulate sweat glands to produce more sweat, resulting in the Srotoshodhana effect.
- Swedana treats earaches, cervical pain, headaches, and thigh pain, among other things.
- Swedana helps to prevent joint stiffness, lumbar stiffness, and abdominal stiffness.
- Swedana aids in the treatment of Vata-related disorders such as facial palsy and sciatica.
- Swedana relieves symptoms such as rhinitis, breathing difficulties, and heaviness.[12-14]

### Discussion

Sweating treatment (Swedana) is typically administered following oleation-Snehana therapy. Swedana is the procedure for relieving Stambha, Gaurava, and Sheeta, all of which cause Swedana (Sweating).[15-19] It serves a dual purpose in Purvakarma and Pradhanakarma. Swedana has sedative and detoxifying properties in the human body. Sweda is classified into various varieties based on the various Acharyas. Charaka distinguishes two types: Sagnisweda (thermal) and Niragnisweda. (non-thermal). Stambhaghna, Gauravaghna, Shitaghna, and Swedakarokatva are the main actions of Swedana. Swedana karma causes the body temperature to rise by more than 2-3 degrees Celsius. The above-mentioned mechanism causes increased sweating. The "Linadosha" are liquefied in our body due to the effect of the "Sara" and "Sukshma" gunas of Swedana dravya, and they come out through microspores that are present over the skin as sweat gland pores. Because of the extreme vasodilatation caused by heat production, the body excretes more liquefied vitiated Dosha, resulting in Srotashodhana. Swedana drugs thus have a cleansing effect on the body.[20-22]

### Conclusion :

Sweda karma works by restoring the balance of Medadhatwagni and Bhutagni, which speeds up the digestive process and causes Srotomukha shodhana and increased sweating. This, in turn, causes exudates to be displaced, providing pain relief and relaxing muscular spasms. Swedana therapy promotes better circulation in the affected

area. This multifaceted approach serves as Stambhaghna, Gourabaghna, and Sitaghna, among other things. Sweda karma is critical in maintaining the body's thermoregulation system by balancing internal body temperature and skin temperature. Sweda karma accelerates this process by increasing capillary permeability and effectively moving morbid substances into extracellular fluid via bodily channel dilation and clearance. This comprehensive approach has significant potential for preventing and treating a variety of diseases.

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**Source of Support:** None declared

**Conflict of interest:** Nil

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