



Udvardana (Massage Therapy)

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1. INTRODUCTION

The procedure of massaging the whole body below the neck in a direction opposite to the orientation of hair with some pressure is called Udvardana. Udvardana is a special type of Abhyanga (massage) in which Herbal powders are used for massaging (sometimes oil may be added in herbal powder). Acharya Charaka has mentioned a term called *Sharira Parimarjana*¹. Commentator Chakrapani commenting on the term tells that Sharira Parimarjana is nothing different from *Udvardana*. In fact Sharira parimarjana explained by Charaka is Udvardana. Chakrapani states that Udvardana has to be done after *Abhyanga* (massage) and since Charaka explains Sharira Parimarjana after Abhyanga, it should be an explanation of Udvardana. Thus *ShariraParimarjana* can be considered as synonym of Udvardana.

Types of Udvardana – According to Acharya Charak

Snigdha (oily) and rooksha (dry)

Snigdha Udvardana:

Snigdha means with Sneha (fats like medicated oil, medicated ghee etc). In this type of Udvardana, the herbal powders are not directly rubbed over the body. In fact, the powders are mixed with medicated oils or ghee and made into paste. This paste is rubbed over the body in reverse direction (from below upwards) after doing Abhyanga (massage).

Moreover powder of drugs which naturally has unctuous (oily) property like sesame etc is used in this type of treatment.

Indications for Snigdha Udvardana –

- When the patient is lean & thin, weak, then we intend udvardana to provide strength
- When there is instability or laxity of body parts and when we are intending to provide stability (sthairyakaram)
- Where the skin is depleted of nutrition, looking lack lustre (dry skin) and devoid of complexion or glow, to improve skin immunity and health.
- When the patient is of Vata Prakriti (constitution) or having Vata Vikriti (diseases caused by morbid Vata)

Choice of oil according to prakriti

Vata Prakriti	Himsagara Taila(oil)
Pitta Prakriti	Chandanadi Taila, Chandanabalalakshadi Taila
Kapha Prakriti	Triphaladya Taila
Sama Prakriti	Asanabilvadi Taila.

Ruksha

Udvardana:

Ruksha means Dry. The name itself indicates that no oil is used in this procedure. This is opposite of *Snigdha Udvardana*. This means herbal powders are directly rubbed or stroked (without mixing or frying them with oil or ghee) over the body in upward direction after conducting Abhyanga.

Udvaartana (Massage Therapy)

Moreover powder of drugs which naturally has dry (ruksha) property like lodhra, trifala etc are used in this type of treatment.

Rooksha Udvaartana may lead to small complications like small skin abrasions or skin damage especially when done in people with sensitive skin or dry skin.

Indications – Ruksha Udvaartana is recommended in following conditions –

- Where there is severe morbidity of Kapha
- When the patient is strong enough to tolerate dry and depleting form of treatment
- When there is excess fat (obesity) / cholesterol in the body (ruksha udvaartana being the best treatment in relieving body fat and subcutaneous fat).
- Where there is heaviness, stiffness, cold and rigidity in the body
- When there is severe lethargy, laziness and drowsiness, lack of freshness.

#Choice of herbs as per indications.

Kulatta Churna (powder)	To reduce accumulated subcutaneous fat and to decrease excessive sweating.
Kolkulattadi Churna	In obese patients, neurological conditions
Triphala Churna	In obese patients, skin diseases
Nalpamaradi Churna	Eczema, fungal infections, diabetes mellitus associated with itching.
Nimba Churna	Skin Diseases
Ushira, Chandana, Musta, Padam Churna	Excessive sweating
Nimba, Khadira, Guduchi, Aragvadha, Karanja Churna	Skin Diseases
Shailayadi Churna	Obesity

Types according to Sushruta: According to Sushruta, Udvaartana again is of 3 types² –
1. Udvaartana

Udvaartana is that which brings about *Pravilapanam* (dissolution or liquification) and *Vimplapanam* (mutilation – destroying anything).³ Thus in this, herbal powders are rubbed on the body in an upward (reverse) direction so as to cause dissolution or mutilation of the unwanted and undesired elements of the body, mainly fat and excess kapha which are causing blocks and also helps to mobilize them out of the body to establish normalcy and health. This can be achieved when dry things are rubbed over the body (drugs or powders which are naturally dry or can cause dryness on rubbing).

To mobilize or mutilate fat or any blocking elements, rubbing should be done with sufficient pressure so that the effect reaches into the deep tissues.

2. UDGHARSHANA

अस्नेह औषध चूर्णादिभिः घर्षणम् उद्धर्षणम् { डल्हण, सु.चि. २४/५२ }

Rubbing the powders of medicinal drugs over the body without the addition or admixture of oil or ghee is called *Udgharshanam*.

For Siramukha Vivitaktavum

Mrittika Churna	To reduce oiliness in the skin
Brick Powder	For Udgharshana, Kandu, Kotha
Wood Powder	For Udgarshana
Reetha Powder	For Udgarshana

3. UTSADANA

सस्नेह कल्केन उद्धर्षणम् उत्सादनम् { डल्हण, सु.चि. २४/५२ }

In utsadana, the powders of medicinal drugs are mixed with sneha (oils or ghee) so as to make a paste. This paste is rubbed over the body in a reverse (upward direction over the body).

Procedure⁴

Application of medicated oil as indicated and dusting of herbal powder on the body followed by massage with some pressure in the direction opposite to that of hair is the main method adopted in Udvertana. Various steps involved in this procedure are:-

Preparation of the Patient:

Ideal time for Udvertana is the morning hour after evacuating the bowel and bladder. It should be performed empty stomach and before bath. Mild exercise may be advised to the patient before the procedure. Therapist should start the procedure after chanting prayer.

Main Procedure

Position of the patient

Patient wearing minimum copin is advised to lie down on the Abhyanga table. There are four positions in which Udvertana is carried out. These include supine position, left lateral, prone and right lateral positions.

At first patient is advised to lie down in supine position and udvertana is done on the anterior part of the body. Second position is the left lateral position and Udvertana is done on the right lateral aspect of the body. Third position is the prone position in which, posterior part of the body is treated with Udvertana. At last, patient is advised to take right lateral position and udvertana is carried out in left lateral aspect of body. Udvertana is done on each part of the body below the neck by exerting some pressure.

Types of Massage on different parts of the body

Parts of Body	Position of Patient	Type of Massage
Arms	Supine, Lateral and prone position	Linear Massage
Hands (both palmer and dorsal aspect)	Supine and prone position	Circular Massage
Shoulders	Supine, Lateral and prone position	Circular Massage (both in clockwise and anticlockwise direction)
Abdomen	Supine position	Linear and Circular Massage(both in clockwise and anticlockwise direction)
Chest	Supine position	Linear and Circular Massage(both in clockwise and anticlockwise direction)
Back	Prone position	Linear Massage
Legs	Supine, Lateral and prone position	Linear Massage
Soles	Supine and prone position	Rubbing Massage(to and fro manner)
Trunk	Supine, Lateral and prone position	Linear Massage

Duration of Udvertana

Each part of the body in their respective positions is massaged for 3-5 minutes. Usually the duration of Udvertana is 30-45 minutes. The number of days of treatment varies from 7-14 days depending on the nature and intensity of the disease.

Post Procedural Activities

- Patient is advised to take rest for at least 15 minutes.
- Patient is allowed to take bath with lukewarm water after an interval of minimum 1 hour.

Care &Precautions

- Before Udvertana, bladder and bowel should be emptied.
- It is to be done in the direction opposite to that of the hair.

- Type of massage on different parts of the body and position of the patient during the procedure should be followed strictly.
- Indications and choice of drug to be used should be assessed before Udvaartana.
- Tender areas should be avoided for Udvaartana.
- Precaution should be taken while dusting the powder over the body. It is advisable to protect face, nose and eyes to prevent irritation.
- Aseptic measures should be taken if patient is suffering from any contagious disease.

4. DISCUSSION

Utsaadana is administered in an unctuous form as the powder is made into a paste by addition of lipids. It is also mentioned that Utsaadana provides glow, beauty and complexion, especially when it is administered in women. Thus Utsadana looks like a retrograde massage which is administered for skin beautification.

Udgharshana and Utsadana brings about dilatation of channels and orifices of the body, removing the blocks and thus enabling free transportation of nutrients and essentials. This motive is possible achieved by both these methods. I think that it is better achieved when these two are done in combination. Udgharshana serves the purpose of exfoliation and removes dead cells and debris, dirt and dust from the cells of the skin and tissues below the skin. It also mobilizes the fat collection. Later when Utsadana is done,, it improves the glow and complexion of the skin and restores immunity and health of the skin.

Udvaartana – nothing has been mentioned about the addition or exclusion of Sneha (oil/ghee). But seeing the utility of Udvaartana (Pravilapana and Vimplapana) we can infer that it is also a predominantly dry procedure. But immediately after Udvaartana, Udgharshana has been explained excluding the oil from the procedure. This gives us an idea that Udvaartana could be partly dry (Ruksha) and partly unctuous (Snigdha).

5. CONCLUSION

Udvaartana is a multi-dimensional treatment. It removes blocks, rectifies metabolism, soothes nerves, de-stresses our body and mind, enhances blood circulation, enriches the cells with proper nutrients and essentials, detoxifies the system, provides energy, revitalizes and rejuvenates us and enhances the lifespan of cells. It makes our body toned and trimmed up and alleviates many diseases.

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