



Ayurveda

AN OVERVIEW OF SWARNPRASHANA SAMSKARA

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ABSTRACT

Swarnaprashan is one of the oldest traditions of India. *Swarnaprashan Samskara*, a traditional Vedic Immunization method, was prevalent since Ancient days. It is one of the 16 *Samskaras* mentioned in *Ancient Ayurvedic Literature*. *Swarnaprashan Samskara* is also known as *Swarnaprashan*, *Swarnbindu Prashana* or *Swarnamrita Prashana*. *Acharya Kashyap* described the unusual practice of administering processed gold in children as "*Swarnaprashan*" thousands of years ago. It is a process in which *Swarna bhasma* is administered with pure *ghrita* prepared with herbal extracts and *honey* in liquid or in paste form *Swarnaprashan* benefits of improving intellect, digestion and metabolism, physical strength, immunity, complexion.

KEYWORDS : *Swarnaprashan*, Immunization, metabolism, complexion, digestion.**INTRODUCTION**

Since ancient times metals and minerals are been widely used in medicines and considered to be therapeutically effective¹. The most priceless metal among the *sapta lohas*, *swarna* is also classified under *shudha lohas* and said to have preventive and protective properties. It is among the first metals utilized for coinage, decorations, statues of gods and goddesses, even employed for therapeutic and preventative purposes. *Swarna* is mentioned in ancient *Ayurvedic* literature either alone or in various combinations with other herbal or herbo-mineral preparations. according to ancient Indian literature, a *dhwija* (*Brahmin*) must go through *Samskara* such as *jatakarma* to eliminate toxins that may be present in the bija as a result of the *garbha*.² *swarna* is recommended for usage internally even before conception due to its *rasayana* (rejuvenator) and *vajikarana* (aphrodisiac) characteristics in order to have a healthy baby. it is in *pumsavana* karma after conception (procedure done to get the desired sex of the baby and for the proper intrauterine growth and development of the fetus). After birth, *swarna* is thought to have an important function in the *lehana* (supplementary feeding) and *jatakarma Samskara*³⁻⁵ *Swarprashan* an ancient and unique tradition, refers to giving processed *Swarna* orally to children. *Swarna Prashana* Evidently explained that the use of *Swarnamrita Prashana* in children does *Medhavardhana* (improving intellect), *Agnivardhana* (promoting digestion and metabolism), *Balavardhana* (promoting immunity and physical strength), *Ayushyam* (Promoting longevity), *Mangalam* (auspicious), *Punyam* (Virtuous), *Varnya* (improves complexion), *Vrishya* (fertility), *Grahapaham* (protection against infectious organisms)⁶ *Maasathparamamedhavi* (if fed for one month, child will be extremely intelligent), *Vyadhibhirna cha drishyate* (will not be attacked by any disease) and *Shadbhirmasesruthadhara* (if fed for 6 months, child will be able to retain whatever he hears) are the classically detailed benefits of *Swarnaprashana*.

What is the Swarprashan?

It is a procedure in which *Swarna Bhasma* is been taken along with *herbs*, in the form of liquid, semisolids or paste form by children. *Swarna Prashana* is been followed as a cultural practice in India as *Jatakarma Samskara*. It is one of the 16 *Samskara*. It is natural, time tested method to improve overall health of children practiced for more than 1000's of years.

Swarnabindu Prashana contains three ingredients:

1. Shudha *Swarna bhasma*.
2. Shudha *medhya aushadhi siddha ghrita*.
3. Shudha *madhu*.

Swarna Bhasma

Bhasmas of *dhatu*s have *Rasayana* qualities, as do *Ayana* of *Rasadi Dhatu*s and *Shamana* of *Doshas*. *Swarna Bhasma* (incinerated gold) is advised for internal administration and is *Kantikara* (complexion), as well as increasing *Medha* (intellect), *Smriti*, and *Vata* (energy) *Mati* (attentiveness).⁷ *Swarna bhasma* has been used therapeutically in bronchial asthma, worm infestation, rheumatoid arthritis, schizophrenia, anorexia, diabetes mellitus, ophthalmic disorders, tuberculosis, anemia, cough, memory, grief, fever, mental stress, dyspnoea, debility, sterility, poisoning, muscular dystrophy and nervous system diseases.^{8,9} Different *Acharya* also mentioned

Hemaadiprashana wherein *swarna* is mentioned with synonyms- *Hema*, *kanchana* & *kanaka* along with herbal drugs mixed with *Madhu* and *ghrita*, when consumed for a period of one year bestows good *Vapu* (body growth), *Medha* (intelligence), *Bala* (strength), *Varna* (colour) and *Subha* (goodness) In *Lehana* it should be administered in children. *Acharya Sushruta* Suggests administration of *Swarna* alongwith other herbs like *Shankhapushpi* (*Convolvulus pluricaulis Choisy*) *Kushtha* (*Saussurea lapa Clarke*) *Vacha* (*Acorus Calamus*) etc. with *honey* and *ghrita* for a period of one year.¹¹ The term *Kumara* is also used in the same context that can be considered as a child of the age group in whom development of reproductive system is not yet complete.¹² In all above references it is said that *Swarna* should be administered along with *honey* and *ghrita*. *Acharya Vagbhatta* mentioned *Swarna* with the combination of herbs to be consume along with *Shankhapushpi* (*Convolvulus pluricaulis Choisy*) *Vacha* (*Acorus calamus* Linn.), *Padma Kinjalka* (stamen of *Nelumbo nucifera* Gaertn.) and *Vidari* (*Pueraria tuberosa* DC.) respectively.¹³ A glimpse of the administration of *Swarna* in newborn is also found in the text *Rasaratna Samuchaya*, which is very similar to above references. There is no reference of any specific day or time for *Swarnaprashan* in children.

Shudha aushadhi siddha ghrita is fortified with *Medhya* & *Rasayana* herbs like *Brahmi*, *Mandookparni*, *Yashthimadhu*, *Vacha*, *Amalki*, *Shankhapushpi* and *Guduchi* are commonly used in *Swarna prashana*. These medications have been shown to have enhanced immunomodulatory and nootropic effects in children. Because they are regarded *Virudha Samyoga*, *Madhu* and *ghrita* should not be utilised in equal doses. However, a low dosage of *Madhu* along with *ghrita* can be used to stimulate an immunological response, which helps to increase a child's immunity to allergies and pollutants.

Whom To Administer?

Swarna prashana can be given to a child with age 0- 16 years.

Time For Administration

Swarna prashana can be done continuously in the early morning or at least once a month on the *Pushyanakshatra*. According to *Kashyap*, if *Swarna prashana* is taken for a month, child gets. More intelligent. After 6 months, the child is able to learn rapidly and retain whatever he or she hears. So, it may be used for more than 6 months without any doubt. Minimum for 30 days it should be used.

Dosage

There are no evidences mentioned by *Acharya Kashyap* regarding the dosage for *Swarnaprashan* in specific. However, he has given general dosage for children according to age in the same context from birth and same can be followed to fix the dosage of *Swarnaprashan*. A few other available references regarding per day dose of *Swarna Bhasma* has been mentioned such as

- 1/4th-1/8th *Ratti* (15-30 mg) *Swarna Bhasma*.⁶
- 2 *Gunja* (250 mg)¹⁴
- 1 *Gunja* (125 mg)/As per age¹⁵
- 1 *Harenu*⁶
- 1/32 *Ratti* (3.9 mg)¹⁷
- 15.5-62.5 mg of *Swarna Bhasma*.

Benefits Of Swarnaprashan

- *Swarnaprashan* boosts immunity and builds resistance to common infections, thus prevents children from falling ill very often.
- It increases physical strength in children's and improves physical activity, as well as stamina.
- Regular doses of *Swarnaprashan* improve child's intellect, grasping power, sharpness, analyzing ability, memory recall in a special way.
- It kindles digestive fire, improves digestion and decreases related complaints.
- *Swarnaprashan* also improves child's appetite.
- It helps body to recover early in case of any illness.
- It protects children from ailments occurring during teething phase.
- It helps to nurture early physical and mental development.
- Tones up skin color.

Overall, it improves a child's health. Children who consistently take *Swarnaprashan* dosages may be immediately differentiated by their extremely remarkable physical and mental capacity, which allows them to grow into strong, healthy, and intellectual adults. *Suvarna Prashana* is good to the neurological and immunological systems. It has anti-oxidant, anti-depressant, anti-bacterial, anti-cancer, and anti-rheumatoid properties. Second, it is useful for boosting immunity and preventing disease.¹⁸

DISCUSSION

Swarnaprashan is a herbomineral preparation made from plant extracts in *Ghritha* medium having *Rasayana*, *Balya*, *Medhya*, and *Tridosahara* characteristics. *Swarna Bhasma*, the main element of *Swarnaprashan*, boosts immunity. *Acharya Kashyap* created the phrase the concept of *Swarnaprashan*.¹⁹ By taking into account multiple references, it can be concluded that the term *Swarnaprashan* refers to the administration of gold either alone or in a *Lehal/Prasha* form combined with other plants. In the framework of *Lehana*, he talks of *Swarnaprashan*. It has been indicated for healthy children but have compromised breastfeeding and are having minor functional problems of metabolism. It is contraindicated in seriously ill children and also on daily basis. *Swarnaprashan* alone can be continued for a period of 1 to 6 months to obtain its particular advantages in children's, even if *Lehana* is contraindicated on a daily basis. Both *Ayurveda* and modern medicine have integrated *Swarna Bhasma* for immunomodulation and regeneration in many chronic conditions. Due to its beneficial effects on nutrition, metabolism, growth and development, physical strength, and immunity, *Swarnaprashan* can be given to all children. It is the only type of gold preparation that has been specifically characterized in regards to the duration of administration. It is referred to as *Lehadhyaya* as *Swarnaprashan* in the *Kashyap Samhita*.

CONCLUSION

Swarnaprashan is a comprehensive *Rasayana Chikitsa* that is provided for the children's physical, mental, intellectual, and spiritual well-being. Infants and children up to the age of 16 can get it safely. *Swarnaprashan* has a wide range of potential to produce immunomodulatory, adaptogenic, and neurotropic effects in kids, enhancing their general health and vigor at all ages. It is particularly beneficial for enhancing the brain's cognition, intellect, and retention powder brain. Also, it is necessary to find out about the use of *Swarnaprashan* in geriatric medicine for the prevention and management of neurodegenerative and senile illnesses as well as for rejuvenation. *Swarnaprashan* has a great potential to improve community health by promoting healthy childhood development.

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