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# A Critical Review on *Kashyapokt Lehadhyaya*

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## ABSTRACT

*Acharya* Kashyapa mentioned that the child's development depends upon *lehana* (formulation to lick). *Acharya* with the aim of promoting Preventive Ayurveda in Pediatric medical practice, has highlighted several *lehana yogas* under *Lehadhyaya*. Current study proposes to review the related literature and sharing personal opinion regarding *Lehadhyaya* in specific. For data collection, classical Ayurvedic texts, published research articles, journals and internet leads were screened. The study concluded with the fact that the available classical text is scarce which moderates the reader's opportunities to gain a transparent knowledge on *Lehana karma*. Through this study, it have tried to clear those untold facts which may help *vaidyas* to have a pin point understanding of the concepts described in chapter.

**Key Words** *Lehana*, Preventive, Therapeutic, Development

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## INTRODUCTION

*Lehana* mentioned by *Acharya* Kashyapa has a unique place in the field of Pediatric medicine. A separate chapter labelled as *Lehaadhyaya* has been documented and credited it a special place in *Kashyapa Samhita*. Beginning with fetal nourishment, *Prakriti formation*, the chapter extends upto mentioning *lehana* formulations used for a preventive & therapeutic purpose in children.

### Defining *Lehana*

As such reference of definition of *Lehana* is not available in original text of *Kashyapa Samhita*, but the preparation method of *yogas* mentioned are giving the clue to lick something is *Lehana* and to make the compound licked, honey and *ghrita* were added in all *lehana* compounds.

## AIMS & OBJECTIVES

To review *Lehadhyaya* of *Kashyapa Samhita* and presenting personal opinions on unexplained but important concepts of *adhyaya*.

## METHODOLOGY

For this review, Ayurvedic *Samhitas*, published & related research articles, magazines and Ayurvedic journals were referred.

### Importance of *lehana* in children

“*Sukham Dukham hi baalanam drishyete lehanashryam*<sup>1</sup>”

The verse quoted that the *sukha* and *dukha* of children are dependent upon *lehana*. Here, *sukha* must have been referred to a healthy state and *dukha* to recurrent infections which may keep on

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hampering child's health. Perhaps in ancient times, *lehana* was used as a preventive & therapeutic medicine in children. Here, word *Bala* is used for children but a clear insight into age range of children is not being mentioned.

### **Fetal nourishment<sup>2</sup>**

*Aacharya* says that the diet a woman takes during pregnancy nourishes ownself & baby in 3 ways:

1. Nourishing mother
2. Nourishing fetus
3. Nourishing breast milk

### ***Prakruti* formation<sup>3</sup>**

At the same time, fetal *prakruti* forms inside the mother's uterus. The type of *prakruti* newborn shall constitute is again being derived from the food a mother consumes during pregnancy. The evidence of *prakruti* formation we may evaluate from the desire a pregnant woman expresses, accordingly, the fetus attains *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*, *Dvandaja* and *Sannipataaj prakruti*. The people who inherit *sannipataja prakruti* are considered as healthy while others are diseased. Emphasizing pregnant's diet indicates, the people in ancient era were well versed with the role of maternal nutrition in fetal development. They knew that healthy diet of a pregnant woman leads to a healthy progeny.

### **Drug Dosage in Children<sup>4</sup>**

“*Bhaishjam madhusarpibhyam*”

*Aacharya* mentions the medicine to be administered to children must come with honey & *ghrita* combination. The dose of *Lehana* for a newborn should begin with the quantity equal to *vidanga* fruit and maximum dosage should not

exceed a quantity of *Amalaki* fruit. The drug dosage should increase according to growth pattern of child. While treating child, intelligent *vaidya* should think about palatability of drug prescribed. *Aushadha churna* (fine powder of drug) is combined with honey and *ghrita* to enhance its palatability & paves the path for easy absorption. Here, honey and *ghita* are taken as *anupana* (drug vehicle).

### **Treatment Guidelines for a Physician<sup>5</sup>**

The treating physician should have a clear vision about the *prakruti* of a patient and accordingly plans the treatment.

### **Indications of *Lehana*<sup>6</sup>**

Though *lehana* intends to preventive aspect of treatment and therefore can be given to all children irrespective of the disease, looking at the *dhatu* (circulatory channels of body) *saukumarya* & compromised *pachan shakti* (digestion) in *bala* (children), *aacharya* set certain criterias for *lehana* administration which are as follows:

**1. Inadequacy of breast milk:** In certain conditions, such as in difficult labour, C-section, maternal disease, impaired lactogenesis child relies on alternative source of nutrition to fulfil his dietary requirements. In these conditions, *Lehana Yoga* can be an adjuvant source of nutrition which ultimately can provide proper growth and development effect.

**2. *Vatta* and *Pitta* dominant diseases:** Indication of *lehana yogas* in *Vatta* & *Pitta* dominant diseases but excluding *kapha* might be because of exclusive presence of *kapha* in childhood period which needs specific *kaphashamaka* treatment.

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Hence, *Lehana Yoga* being a general measure should be avoided in *Kapha* ailments.

**3. Excessive crying:** Infants cry excessively of two reasons viz. in hunger and colic. Here, after carefully excluding suspected pathological conditions, *Lehana* can be done. For example, during night crying and if evening colic is suspected than *Shatpushpa* alongwith *madhu ghrita* can be used as *Lehana Yoga*.

**4. Fast digestion:** Many a times child is not satisfied with breast milk and needs frequent feeds, in this condition, alongwith exclusive breast feed *Sheeta and Guru aushadh* like *Shatavari* can be added as *Lehana Yoga*. It will act as *brumhana and rasayana* which soothes the hungry child.

**5. Less frequency of urine & stool:** Scanty urine and stool in children clearly indicates food and water insufficiency which is a common concern especially in infants and toddlers. Here, alongwith Diet and lifestyle advices to parent, one can think on *Chitraka or Shatpushpa Lehana Yoga* depending on condition of child.

**6. Undernutrition:** Child who is otherwise healthy but not meeting weight for age criteria, *Deepana Pachana and Balya Brumhana* combination need to be considered like *Shatpushpa, Shatavari, Chitraka, and Bala etc.*

**7. Constipation:** It is considered normal in breastfed child but many a times it arises as a result of faulty dietary habits where child passes hard stools after three days or more. Westernisation of eating habits is a common concern resulting to constipation. Diet

modification is needed in this condition but to relieve ongoing hard stool one can consider *Triphala or Trivrit as Lehana Yoga*. As per classics, *Lehana Yogas* were proposed to promote intellect and longevity. Alongwith, it can be used as an adjuvant in commonly found disorders of childhood period.

### Contraindications of *Lehana*<sup>7</sup>

Aacharya was well aware of the health harms caused due to unindicated drug administration in children, so he set certain situations where *lehana* should be avoided.

**1. Condition of Mother:** Three conditions of lactating mother are described which contradicts *lehana* are:

✓ Adequacy of maternal diet: Intake of *sarva rasa sampanna aahara*, imparts a good nourishment to mother & baby both. Hence, need of *lehana yoga* is less likely to occur. This condition is applicable to *Kshirapa and Kshirannada* child.

✓ *Kalyan matruka*: The word has different meanings. One is maternal demise. But as far as we have reviewed indications of *Lehana Yoga*, it should be given in absence of breast milk. Other one is if mother's milk is satisfying hunger needs of an infant or toddler, *lehana* needs to be avoided. So, later statement seems to be more reliable.

✓ *Guru stanya*: Heavy milk leads to *Kapha dushti* in child and for *Lehana* purpose *Kaphavarjita Avastha* is mentioned by Kashyapa.

**2. Slow digestion:** As per the famous verse "*Roga Sarveapi Mandegnoau*" diseases have its  
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roots embedded in *mandagni*. Moreover, if a child consumes a heavy diet in *mandagni* condition, it leads to *Ama* formation and subsequently malnourishment of *dhatu* lands to compromised immunity and child may fall into a trap of recurrent infections such as Diarrhea, Vomiting, Fever etc. So, in *mandagni* condition, *lehana yogas* need to be on hold till the digestion takes back its place.

**3. Systemic Diseases:** The reason to avoid *lehan karma* in systemic illness viz. *Hridroga*, *Panduroga*, *Kamla*, *Shotha*, *Basti roga*, *Gudroga*, *Urdhvajatrugata Roga*, *Graha Roga* might be due to weak digestive system & impaired absorption induces a child to vomit out the food/medicine given by oral route of drug administration. Though these verses are not found completely in original text, the concept of not giving *Lehana Yoga* particularly in systemic diseases and concentrating on treatment of specific disease is very clear.

**4. Daily need:** The purpose of *lehana karma* i.e. promoting intellect & longevity supports the contraindication of *lehana karma* on daily basis. For instance, we can discontinue *Triphala Lehana Yoga* gradually once the child starts passing normal stool.

**5. After heavy diet:** A time gap is needed between administration of food and *Lehana Yoga*. Generally, *Medhya Rasyanas* are preferred to be given early morning as this will result in better absorption and prompt effect. For other ailments, one can decide time according to various conditions.

**6. Unfavourable climatic conditions:** Ayurveda stresses more upon the *ritucharya*, accordingly advised type of diet to be followed. Hence, *Lehana Yogas* should be taken as per present *ritu* guidelines. Specifically, *madhu* & *ghrita* are well tolerated & absorbed in *Varsha ritu* as of *jathargni* remain in its full potential to absorb these two & thus imparting health benefits.

**7. Unsuitability:** If after administration of *Lehana Yoga* any unwanted reaction is noted in particular, in this situation *Lehana* should be discontinued.

**8. In high quantity:** Immunity development is a prolonged process of gradual building up of *dhatu*s and *doshas*. Nothing in a high dose can satisfy one's immunity in a right way. Similarly, high dose of *lehana yoga* is not going to benefit individual's immunity all at once. In case of small children, liking of *lehana* taste does not mean to give it unanimously. It may produce health hazards.

### Types of *Lehana Yogas*:

The actual reference of types is not mentioned in *Kashyapa Samhita*, but depending upon the ingredient count along with honey & *ghrita*, two are reflecting in text:

**1. Uniherbal *Lehana Yogas*:** *Lehana* formulations which are prepared from single herb are called Uniherbal *Lehana Yogas*.

**2. Polyherbal *Lehana Yogas*:** *Lehana* formulations which are prepared from more than one herb are called Polyherbal *Lehana Yogas*.

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**Table 1** Unih herbal Lehan Yogas<sup>8</sup>

| <b>Lehan yoga and ingredients</b>  | <b>Phalashruti</b>                                |
|--|---|
| <i>Suvarnprashan (Metallic formulation): Suvarna, Water, Honey, Ghrita</i> | Intellect, Digestion, Complexion, Tonic promoting |
| <i>Brahmi, Honey, Ghrita</i>   | Intellect promoting                               |
| <i>Mandukparni, Honey, Ghrita</i>  | Intellect promoting                               |
| <i>Trifala, Honey, Ghrita</i>  | Intellect promoting                               |
| <i>Chitraka, Honey, Ghrita</i>   | Intellect promoting                               |
| <i>Vacha, Honey, Ghrita</i>  | Intellect promoting                               |
| <i>Sauf, Honey, Ghrita</i>   | Intellect promoting                               |
| <i>Shatavari, Honey, Ghrita</i>  | Intellect promoting                               |
| <i>Danti, Honey, Ghrita</i>  | Intellect promoting                               |
| <i>Naagbala, Honey, Ghrita</i>   | Intellect promoting                               |
| <i>Nishoth, Honey, Ghrita</i>  | Intellect promoting                               |
| <i>Panchgavya Ghrita</i>   | Intellect promoting                               |
| <i>Kalyanak Ghrita</i>   | Intellect promoting                               |
| <i>Brahmi Ghrita</i>   | Intellect promoting                               |

**Table 2** Polyherbal Lehan Yogas<sup>9</sup>

| <b>Lehan yoga and ingredients</b>   | <b>Phalashruti</b>                                      |
|---|---|
| <i>Powder of Manjishtha, Trifala, Brahmi, Bala and Chitraka in equal quantity, Honey, Ghrita</i>  | Intellect, longevity, strength promoting                |
| <i>Powder of Kuth, Yellow Sarshap, Pippali, Trifala, Vacha, Rock salt, Ghrita</i>   | Intellect promoting                                     |
| <i>Abhayaghrita: Brahmi, Sarshap, Kustha, Sandhav, Sariva, Vacha, Pippali</i>   | <i>Pisachadi Badha Rakshana</i><br>(preventive purpose) |
| <i>Samvardhana Ghrita: Khadir, Prushanparni, Rock salt, Bala, Kebuk, Milk, Ghrita, Honey</i>  | Growth & Development<br>Intellect promoting             |
| <i>Brahmi Swarasa, Ghrita, Cow milk, Goat milk, Paste of Trifala, Anshumati, Draksha, Vacha, Harenu, Pippali, Pippalimul, Chavya, Chitraka, Nagar, Shunthi, Dalchini, Usheer, Shweta Chandan, Patha, Priyangu, Devdaru, Haridra, Jeevneeya gana herbs</i> | Growth & Development                                    |

**DISCUSSION**

Before concluding the study, we would like to discuss on 3 points:

1. Methodology & ingredients
2. Age criteria for lehana
3. Benefits of lehana

**1. Comments on Methodology & Ingredients**

While discussing *prakruti*, it has been quoted that the *prakruti* formation depends upon the food a pregnant mother eats. While in other

Ayurvedic *granthas*, *prakruti* forms during the process of fertilisation only. The second statement seems to be more relevant because *prakruti* is a depiction of *doshic* predominance in body and later is determined from the type & quality of paternal & maternal *beeja* united during fertilisation.

- From “*Bhaishjam Madhusarpibhyam*”, *aacharya* wants to say child’s medicine should be mixed with honey & *ghrita*. The point here to be noted is *madhu* & *ghrita* should be added

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irrespective of the type of formulation. The another side of the verse is why to take all medicines with *madhu & ghrita as a vehicle?* The reason behind it is to make the formulation more palatable & easily absorbable through gut.

- Kashyapa emphasizes upon diet of pregnant women by quoting child's development & prakruti depends upon maternal nutrition. It is clearly evident from here that people in ancient times were well verse with the role of *aahara* in fetal growth & development.

- Predominantly, the *lehana yogas* mentioned here are intellect promoting. If it is so, then what makes one yoga different from another.

- The time duration of *lehana yogas* to be administer to children is not mentioned in original text which produces doubt about its safety and efficacy.

- There is no mentioned specification regarding the quantity of Honey and *Ghrita* used in *lehana yogas* This gives rise to three possible proportions regarding their quantity i.e., equal quantity of both ingredient, honey less than *ghrita* and *ghrita* less than honey. The selected proportion may have some influence over its resultant effect considering pharmacological actions of individual as well as combination.

- As far as drug dosage is concerned, there is no clarity about how much quantity of *aushadh* is advisable for the child according to his age or weight. Dosage prescribed in quantity of *Vidanga and Amalaka fala* does not justify the scientific parameter for posology of *lehana*.

- In contraindications of *lehan*, it is quoted that daily administration of *lehana* is contraindicated<sup>10</sup>. Further, in the context of *suvarnprashana*, the text suggest to give it for one & six months. Observing this methodology, it is obvious to understand that this process is expected to repeat every day to give a single dose of freshly prepared *Suvarnaprashana* to a child, till specific time duration.

- While preparing *Suvarnaprashana*, person is advised to sit facing east direction. This is usual observation about direction in majority of description regarding any procedures or preparation mentioned in the classical texts of Ayurveda, then what causes the need to specify here.

### 2. Comments on age criteria for *lehana*

- Kashyapa indicates *lehana* in *Bala* but have not elaborated the age range. These indirectly pointing towards small age group children i.e., *Bala*<sup>11</sup> (up to 1 year or till the baby is dependent on mother's milk).

- In methodology of *Suvarnaprashana*, the term *Shishu* is mentioned which denotes neonatal period to infantile age. It indicates metallic formulations are safe to use in children irrespective of the age.

### 3. Comments on benefits of *lehana*

- *Lehana* formulations must possess many benefits depending upon the ingredients present in it. On the contrary, in *Samhita*, mostly all *lehana yogas* are mentioned as intellect promoting.

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- Here “*Medha, Agni and Bala Vardhan*” refers to having significant efficacy of *suvarnprashan* towards higher brain function level, digestive or metabolism level and physical as well as immune strength level of human physiology.
- In addition to general health benefits, astonishing effect is observed when *Suvarnaprashana* is used for the longer duration said as 6 months. After this duration the child is said to develop extraordinary ability to retain and remember as per the desire what he/she hears (*Shrutadhara*). This specific ability means extraordinary memory power with excellent retaining and retrieving capability of knowledge or information once experienced by a human being.

## CONCLUSION

Focussing on Preventive approach to child development in *Lehadhyayay*, Kashyapa centralised the cognitive maturity in children and thus had imparted many intellect promoting *lehana yogas*. Alongwith many therapeutic *lehana* formulations are well mentioned in this *adhyaya* whose details might had got missed with time. The data scarcity moderates the reader’s opportunities to gain a detailed knowledge on the topic. Through this study, i have tried to clear those untold facts which may help *vaidyas* to have a pin point understanding of the concepts described in chapter.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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Author is grateful to all ancient *aacharyas* to preserve this treasure of knowledge in different treatise to help humanity for betterment towards healthy life.

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