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### Concept Of Oral Health In Ayurveda : A Review Article

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#### ABSTRACT: -

Ayurveda is an ancient science of health and longevity. Oral infections are big public health problem around the world. Over hundreds to thousands of years of use, the herbs mentioned in the Ayurvedic material medica have been proven to be healthy and reliable. The study of plants used in traditional medicine may lead to the creation of new oral health preventive and therapeutic strategies. Ayurveda is an ancient science of health and longevity. Ayurveda's Shalakya Tantra includes dentistry, despite the fact that it is not a specialist branch. In ancient India, problems including oral deformities, plaques, and infections were treated by using these drugs. Several systemic diseases are said to be cured by the *Kavala* and *Gandoosh kriyas*. Ayurveda oral health activities can be scientifically validated, allowing them to be incorporated into modern dental care. A study of various herbal plants and procedures listed in Ayurveda that can be used as an adjunct for the maintenance of oral health has been attempted in this paper.

**Key words:** Ayurveda, Oral health, *Dant dhawan*



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## INTRODUCTION

The mouth is thought to be a reflection of one's overall health. Maintaining good oral and systemic hygiene is important for good oral and systemic health. In the prevention and treatment of a number of oral diseases, standard Western medicine has had only modest success.<sup>[1]</sup> Ayurveda is India's oldest and most ancient indigenous medicine method. Oral washing, extractions, excisions, flap procedures, and other Ayurvedic treatments are used to treat these Orofacial Diseases. Ayurveda also advises using therapeutic procedures like *Dant dhavani*, *Jivha lekhana*, *Gandoosha* or oil pulling on a regular basis as preventative steps, as well as tissue regeneration therapies.<sup>[2]</sup>

Shalaky Tantra is one of Ashtanga Ayurveda's eight specialties that deals with diseases that occur above the clavicle. It covers diseases of the Eye, Ear, Nose, Throat, and Oro-dental system, as well as their management and structural and functional specifics. In Ayurveda, oral hygiene is not defined as a separate chapter, but rather as part of the various chapters of Ayurvedic literature. It was defined by Acharya Charak under the subject of "*Swasthyavrata*," which means "personal hygiene" in "*Matrashitiyaadhyaye*."<sup>[3]</sup> Oral hygiene was discussed by Acharya Sushruta in the "*Anagatabhadrapratished*" chapter,<sup>[4]</sup> and by Acharya Vagbhatta in the "*Dincharya*" chapter.<sup>[5]</sup> Both of the writers have placed a strong focus on personal hygiene, which should be strictly adhered to by each individual. *Dhantapavan (Dhattuna)*, *Jihwanirlekhana*, *Kavala*, and *Gandoosha* are Ayurvedic methods for preserving oral hygiene.<sup>[6]</sup>

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Studies that included individual plants or mixtures of plants that were compatible with the theory of Ayurveda were considered. Medline, and related databases such as AYUSH

Research Portal, Systematic Reviews in Ayurveda, Ayurveda Database, Web of Science, Indus Medicus, and Google Scholar were searched for the current analysis. We also gathered traditional medicine literature and searched some Indian journals not included in Medline.

### Oral Health in Ayurveda

According to the Sushruta Samhita, Ayurveda's surgical compendium, "the balance of the three biological humours (*doshas*), the seven body tissues (*dhatus*), proper digestion, and a state of enjoyment or pleasure of the spirit, senses, and mind."<sup>[7]</sup>

For good health, the three *doshas* must be in order. All metabolic activities are governed by the three *doshas* when they are combined. We achieve psychological and physical health when their behaviours in our mind-body constitution are aligned.<sup>[8]</sup> We can become uneasy if they become slightly out of control. Symptoms of illness can be seen and felt as they are more visibly unbalanced.

Each of the three *Doshas*, *Vata*, *Pitta*, And *Kapha*, has five subtypes that perform different physiological functions. In the mouth, one of these subtypes, *Bodhaka Kapha*, is a major player.<sup>[9]</sup>

Understanding this subtype of *Kapha* provides valuable insight into the wonders of the oral cavity and helps to understand why maintaining our oral health is so critical to our overall health.

### Functions of *Bodhaka Kapha*<sup>[10]</sup>

*Bodhaka kapha*:

- Regulates oral bacteria
- Lubricates oral tissues to avoid friction between them
- Supports speech and the vocal cords
- Maintains an ideal oral temperature
- Aids in receiving the awareness of taste
- Supports immune function, especially through the tonsils

In a healthy mouth, *Bodhaka kapha* thrives, ensuring that all of its functions support our overall health. When *Bodhaka Kapha* is disordered or imbalanced, it affects all of the *Kapha* systems in the body, not just our oral health.<sup>[11]</sup>

Several primary *Kapha* locations, including the pancreas, heart, brain, and joints, are directly linked to diseases that western medicine has linked to oral health, such as diabetes (pancreas), cardiovascular disease (heart), Alzheimer's disease (brain), and osteoporosis (joints) (related to the joints because *Shleshaka Kapha* in the joints is said to nourish the bone tissue).

Finally, when we properly care for our teeth, we benefit all of these deeper organs and tissues, but neglecting our oral health has the potential to adversely affect them.

### **Other Advantages of Good Oral Health**

In reality, good oral health has a plethora of advantages; here are a few of them:

#### **Taste Sense Improvement**

Ayurveda puts a strong focus on the sense of taste, identifying six distinct tastes that are all essential for a well-balanced diet. When a meal is consumed and the taste is detected in the mouth, a vital cascade of contact occurs between the mouth and the rest of the digestive tract, preparing the stomach and intestines for the food to be consumed.<sup>[12]</sup>

This promotes healthy digestion, which Ayurveda considers to be a pillar of good health. It's also worth noting that our sense of taste, which is enhanced by good oral health, is important not just for our physical well-being but also for our overall happiness.

#### **Boost Digestive Strength**

The mouth, without a doubt, is where digestion starts. Enzymes in the mouth begin to break down simple carbohydrates and sugars almost immediately after ingesting food or drink.

Simultaneously, manually chewing breaks down our foods into more manageable morsels

for the stomach, preparing us for optimum digestion. If these oral functions are harmed in some way, our digestive strength will suffer as a result.<sup>[13]</sup>

Teeth and gum problems can easily obstruct our ability to chew properly, and other oral imbalances can affect the more subtle chemical interactions that are critical to the first stages of digestion. A safe mouth, on the other hand, encourages optimum intellect and coordination in the mouth and beyond.

### **Improved Organ and Tissue Health**

All of our tissues, at their most basic stage, depend on *Agni* (digestive fire) for nutrition. *Agni* is in charge of converting the foods we eat into biologically beneficial compounds that can then be used by cells and tissues all over the body. The mouth, as the entry point for the entire digestive tract, has a direct effect on the gut and *Agni* power. The digestive tract is strengthened by good oral health, which helps *Agni*, which affects every cell and tissue in the body. Since the tongue has a direct energetic link to many of our most important internal organs, good oral hygiene has a much greater effect on these deeper tissues than we would think. Cleaning the tongue stimulates and detoxifies all of the internal organs that are reflected on the tongue's surface.

According to the Shalakyta tantra (one of Ayurveda's branches), 65 different types of oral diseases can occur in seven different anatomic locations: eight on the lips, 15 on the alveolar margin, eight in connection with the teeth, five on the tongue, nine on the palate, seventeen in the oropharynx, and three in a generalised form.<sup>[14]</sup>

Ayurveda recommends oral washing, extractions, excisions, flap surgeries, and other treatments to treat these diseases. Ayurveda recommends certain everyday use clinical procedures for the prevention and protection of oral hygiene, in addition to the treatment of orofacial diseases.

### 1. *Dhantpavan- Dhantpavan* means Chewing sticks.

Since these sticks are chewed, it differs significantly from the western-pioneered practise of 'brushing the teeth.' The stems should be in good shape, smooth, and free of leaves and knots. Chewing sticks should be made from fresh stems of particular plants, according to experts. The method of consumption is to crumble one end, chew it, and slowly consume it.<sup>[15]</sup> It was recommended by Ayurveda to be used twice a day. In the morning, after getting out of bed, and in the evening, before going to sleep and eating. *Dantapavan*, according to Acharya Sushruta, should be new and straight. It should have a length of 12 *angul* (9 inches) and a thickness of *kanshtika anguli* (little finger). The rasa of these herb sticks should be *kashaya* (astringent), *katu* (acid), or *tikta* (bitter).<sup>[16]</sup>

*Madhura rasa* is also included in Acharya Sushruta. People with a *Vata Dosha* dominance can develop atrophic and receding gums, according to their *Prakarti* (constitution) and dominant *Dosha*, and are advised to chew chewing sticks with sweet, bitter, or astringent tastes, such as *Yasthimadhu* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* Linn.) and the cutch tree (*Acacia Catechu* Linn.).<sup>[17]</sup> Chewing sticks with a bitter taste, such as twigs from the *neem tree* (*Azadirachta indica* Linn.) and the *arjuna tree*, are recommended for *Pitta dosha* dominant individuals (*Terminalia arjuna* Linn.). Those with a dominant *kapha dosha* have pale, hypertrophic gums and are advised to chew on pungent-tasting chewing sticks such as *Kantaki karanja* (*Caesalipinia bonduc* Linn.) and the *Arka vine* (*Calotropis procera* Linn.).<sup>[18]</sup> Tooth powder was specified by Acharya Sushruta for cleaning the teeth. *Dhattuna* dipped in Madhu, *Trikathu*, *Trivargha*, oil, and *saindhavlavana*, he advised.<sup>[19]</sup>

Salt has been shown to be beneficial to tooth

and oral hygiene in studies. Tooth paste is now sold in combination with salt. The advantage of *Dhantpavan* is that it eliminates bad mouth odour and increases food interest by removing mala from the teeth, tongue, and mouth.<sup>[20]</sup> Chewing on these stems is thought to cause attrition and levelling of biting surfaces, promote salivary secretion, and probably aid in plaque prevention, with some stems having antibacterial properties. All of the chewing sticks mentioned in ancient Ayurveda have medicinal and anticariogenic properties, according to modern research.

### 2. *Jhihwa nirlhekhana*

With the aid of a tongue scraper, it is used to clean the tongue. Metal or tree branches can be used to build it.<sup>[21]</sup> It should be twelve fingers long. Its edge should be blunt to avoid damaging the tongue, and it should be angled to make it easier to use. Tongue scraping activates the tongue's reflex points. Removes noxious odours (halitosis). Improves the sense of taste, stimulate the secretion of digestive enzymes. Clinical evidence also shows that use of tongue scrapers on a regular basis, has a significant improvement on eliminating anaerobic bacteria and decreases bad odour.

### 3. *Kavala and Gandoosha*

*Gandusha and Kavala graha* are two popular oral cleaning techniques that are used to treat and prevent oral diseases. The only difference between the two is the dose and method of administration. In *Gandoosha*, a medicated fluid is kept in the patient's mouth for a set amount of time before lacrimation and nasal discharge appear, after which the patient spits it out. The mouth is just three-quarters filled with the medicated fluid in *Kavala Graha*; the fluid is swished in the mouth for a certain amount of time before being spit out. Standard *Gandoosha* has many advantages, including *Swarabalam* (voice power), *hanubalam* (jaw strength), face strength, *ruchyam* (better taste perception), *drudadantha* (strong and healthy teeth), and

resistance to *doshaja or aaganthuja mukharogas*.<sup>[22]</sup> These oral cleansing procedures can also help with bad breath, decay, bleeding gums, throat dryness, broken lips, and tooth, gum, and jaw strengthening. Ayurveda recommends *kawala* to cleanse the whole system since each part of the tongue is linked to a specific organ, such as the kidneys, lungs, liver, heart, small intestines, stomach, colon, and spine, similar to reflexology.<sup>[23]</sup>

Oil pulling is an Ayurvedic practise that involves swishing oil in the mouth to improve oral and systemic health. In the Avurvedic text Charaka Samhita, it is known as *Kavala or Gandusha*,<sup>[24]</sup> and it is said to cure about 30

systemic diseases, including headaches, migraines, diabetes, and asthma. For several years, oil pulling has been widely used as a traditional Indian folk remedy to avoid decay, oral malodour, bleeding gums, throat dryness, cracked lips, and to reinforce teeth, gums, and the jaw. Oil pulling can be performed with oils such as sunflower or sesame oil.

#### Plants that have been linked to oral health.

According to the literature, there are various Ayurvedic medicines that can be used to prevent and treat oral diseases. Some commonly using plants along with properties are listed here-

**Table 1. Showing Drugs Used to Maintain Oral Health**

S.No	Drugs	Actions
1.	<i>Amala</i> <sup>[25]</sup>	It has antioxidant and astringent properties, making it useful in the treatment of toothaches, gingival inflammations, and stomatitis.
2.	<i>Launga oil</i> <sup>[26]</sup>	The active ingredient, eugenol, is commonly used in root canal surgery, dental abscess, temporary fillings, and a variety of gum diseases.
3.	<i>Grita kumari</i> <sup>[27]</sup>	<i>Grita kumari</i> has property of dentin formation
4.	<i>Nimbu/Lemon solution</i> <sup>[26]</sup>	Because of its antibacterial properties, a freshly prepared lemon solution is recommended as a root canal medicament.
5.	<i>Amra leaf</i> <sup>[26]</sup>	phenolic acid and ascorbic acid are also present. Mango leaves have antibacterial properties against anaerobic microflora and can be used as an adjuvant to help keep your mouth clean.
6.	<i>Neem</i> <sup>[28]</sup>	Neem is well known for its antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, analgesic, immune stimulator, and antioxidant properties. It contains antiplaque agents that are both mechanical and chemotherapeutic. Periodontitis can be effectively treated with a mouth rinse made from neem leaves.
7.	<i>Triphala</i> <sup>[28]</sup>	<i>Triphala</i> has been shown to have anti-inflammatory and antiplaque properties. It's also used as a gum strengthened and a root canal irrigant.
8.	<i>Tulsi</i> <sup>[29]</sup>	<i>Tulsi</i> extract, in the form of a 4 percent mouth rinse, effectively decreases the number of salivary streptococcal mutants.
9.	<i>Turmeric extract</i> <sup>[29]</sup>	Turmeric extract can be used to treat potentially cancerous lesions in the mouth . It effectively prevents melanoma cells from spreading and can be used to deactivate carcinogens in cigarettes and tobacco chewing.
10.	<i>Kantakari seeds</i> <sup>[29]</sup>	<i>Kantakari</i> seeds are native to India. Due to chemical constituents such as olanocarpine, carpesterol, solanocarpidine, solasonine, and solasodine, dhoopan has been used in the treatment of dental caries.
11.	<i>Tila/ Sesame oil</i> <sup>[30]</sup>	The oil of <i>tila/sesame</i> is used to treat plaque-induced gingivitis.

## DISCUSSION

Plants have long been used to help patients improve their dental health and oral hygiene. Ayurveda briefly mentions a variety of herbal combinations for preserving oral hygiene. Plants and natural products have been used for pharmacological purposes for a long time, including anti-inflammatory, antiulcerogenic, wound healing, antimicrobial, and antioxidant properties. [31] Ayurvedic medicine could treat and even cure a variety of oral disorders in ancient India, including deformities of the oral cavity, plaques, and infections. In order to maintain good oral health, we as dental health care providers must prioritize home oral hygiene in our preventive practice guidelines. There are far too many indigenous natural medicinal products that should be recognized for their contribution to oro-dental health.

## CONCLUSION

The mouth is sometimes referred to as the mirror of the whole body because it represents the wellbeing of the whole body. As a result, every oral clinician should be aware of the numerous oral lesions and how to treat them using traditional herbal medicinal products rather than allopathic medications.

Oral diseases are one of the most serious public health issues, and their prevalence is increasing in developing countries. The majority of oral diseases are caused by bacterial infections. The presence of possible bioactive compounds in Ayurvedic plants contributes to their antibacterial activity, which helps to minimize bacterial load in the oral cavity and thus prevent plaque, dental caries, and ulcer formation. Ayurveda's traditional wisdom should be combined with modern dentistry. Dentists should be encouraged to use Ayurvedic therapies in different oral health procedures, and the active principles of plants should be

learned and integrated into current oral health-care practices.

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