

**ROLE OF *LEHANA* (A SPECIAL PEDIATRIC PREPARATION) IN  
VYADHIKSHAMATVA W.S.R. TO CHILDHOOD IMMUNITY**

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**ABSTRACT**

Pediatric age group is the foundation of adulthood. Proper care of children in this phase results in excellent growth and wellbeing of offspring which in turn is reflected as healthy adulthood. Today's life style and increased use of unhealthy food causes low immunity and hamper growth and development of children. Low immunity is the major cause of different diseases in children. Especially in developing countries like India children have increased ratio of malnutrition and poor immunity status. Therefore, there is a need of time to provide supplementary diet or medicine to children to enhance their immunity and improve their growth and development. There is a special pediatric preparation called as *Lehana* mentioned in Ayurveda which is highly palatable and good nutritional supplement for children. *Lehana* contains medicated *Ghee* and honey as main ingredients. This medicated *Ghee* contains the herbs which are useful to enhance the immunity or *Vyadhikshamatva* and growth and development of children. As all these *Lehana* preparation are effective, palatable, easily available and cost effective, this article is a key message for society to highlight the role of *Lehana* and Ayurveda in health of children.

**KeyWords:** Immunity, *Lehana*, *Vyadhikshamatva*.

**INTRODUCTION:** The Prime aim of human life as per the ancient Indian sciences is to attain *Dharma* (Righteousness, moral values), *Artha* (prosperity, economic values), *Kama* (Pleasure) & *Moksha* (liberation). Ayurveda, ancient system of traditional Indian medicines defines the life in all above four domains and for achievement of above four paradigm of life, healthy life is essential. Hence health is to be maintained and recovered when someone gets ill. The same has been said by *Acharya Charaka* "Swathasya Swastha Rakshanam Aturasya Vikaraprashamancha" (Maintenance of health of the healthy person and cure of diseases of the diseased). The dictum 'prevention is better than cure' is not a new concept for Ayurveda. According to Ayurveda, prevention of disease is

achieved with *Dinacharya* (Daily regime), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regime), *Achara Rasayana* (social ethicates) and *Rasayana Sevana* (Rejuvenation therapy). As the above regimes improve the quality of *Dhatu* and maintain the equilibrium of *Dosha* in harmonized manner. Among all above *Rasayana* is very unique and potent medicinal protocol to improve the health, longevity and resistance to diseases. This resistance of body to fight against all different diseases is called as *Vyadhikshamatva* in Ayurveda classics and same is defined as *Bala* by different Ayurveda scholars. In Ayurveda the term *bala* has been described in two contexts i.e. *Vyadhikshamatva* and *Oja*. Generally, both of which have been considered to have same meaning. *Oja* has been considered as the factor responsible for *Vyadhikshamatva* in Ayurveda and *bala*

signifies both *oja* and *Vyadhikshamatva*. *Charaka Samhita Tikakara Chakrapanidatta* describes *Vyadhikshamatva* as ‘*Vyadhi Bala virodhitvam*’ and ‘*vyadhi utpadaka pratibandhakatwa miti yava*’t. The one who can resist the *Bala* of *Vyadhi* and the one who can stop the formation of *Vyadhi* is called as “*Vyadhikshamatva Vyadhi utpadaka pratibandhakatmava miti*” can also be defined here as – not letting the *Vyadhi Utpatti* (Occurrence of disease) in the body of the individual or protecting the body against formation of disease. Therefore, there is concept of *Lehana* as a tool for enhancement of immunity and healthy growth and development of children.

**Lehana<sup>1</sup>** *Lehana* is a special paediatric preparation made up of medicated ghee and honey as main ingredients. *Kashyapa Samhita*, classical text on Ayurveda paediatrics defines different medicated *Ghee* or *Ghruta* for *Lehana* purpose. Though different *Ghee* is in use for different purpose, most of them focus on growth, development and immunity of child. *Acharya Kashyapa* has mentioned different *Ghee* with different medicinal herbs and with different diseases as well as for healthy children with due indication and contraindication.

The detailed discussion on the role of *Lehana* in immunity, growth and development of children is furnished in succeeding session of article.

#### AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1. To discuss the role of *Lehana* in improvement of childhood immunity
2. To discuss the concept of *Lehana* in details in the light of Ayurveda and recent modern sciences

3. To discuss and describe the concept of immunity from Ayurveda and modern perspective

**MATERIAL AND METHODS :** The detailed review of Ayurveda and classical paediatric modern texts, research articles, publications related with childhood growth, development and immunity were thoroughly screened. In addition, different e-books, website references and concerned internet data were screened analysed and discussed in the article.

As per Ayurveda immunity can be described as *Vyadhikshamatva* in broad sense. There are multiple dimensions and facets for development and concepts of immunity. Ayurveda narrates the immunity enhancing measures as *Vyadhikshamatva Vardhana Upaya*. There are many different measures mentioned in Ayurveda for the same like the *Karnavedhana Samskara, Swarnaprashana, Lehana, etc.*

*Vyadhikshamatva* is dependent on the *Bala* of individual. In general, *Bala* is the ability to perform the physical as well as mental tasks and remain healthy without fatigue, tiredness or illness. *Bala* is dependent on the *Sarata* or nourishment status of all *Dhatu* or body tissues. As per Ayurveda there is concept of *Oja*. According to concept of *Oja*, *Dhatu* transform and terminate at the end into *Oja* – essence of all *Dhatu*.

**CONCEPT OF OJA<sup>23</sup>:** The substance which provides Contentment and life to all beings and in whose absence, there is no life. This *Oja* is present at the time of conception and formation of *Hridaya* in *Balaka* and a resides in the form of *Sara Dhatu* or *Garbha rasa* in the *Hridaya*. *Chakrapanidatta* elaborates the concept of *Oja* as follows, During conception when life enters, a *sara* is formed which is called

as *Oja*.“ *Garbha Rasad rasah*”<sup>4</sup>- after conception the *Kalala Swarupa Garbha* which is formed of which the *Rasa Sarabhuta Oja* is originated, and this resides in the *Hridaya* and gives life to beings and destruction of which leads to end of life. Therefore, *Oja* can be considered as follows, formed at the time of conception. After conception it is present as the *Rasa Sara* in *Kalala Avastha*. And when the formation of *Anga Pratyanga* occurs it is present as *Oja Rupa* and manifests the symptoms similarly. The life of the individual is dependent on the *Hridaya Ashrita Oja* and this *Oja* is called as the *Sneha* of the *Sharira Rasa* i.e. it is the *Pranayatana*. Ayurveda considers *Prasadabhuta Rasa* as *oja*; i.e. *Prakruta Shleshma* is considered as the *oja*. *Oja* is considered as the *sara* of all the *dhatu* of the body i. e. *rasadi* – form the *RasaDhatu* takes the *Utpatti* of *Uttarottara dhatu*s of the body. *Rasa dhatu* is *Somatmaka* and in which most of the *Gunas* of *Somatmaka Oja* reside. Therefore, the presence of *Oja* in other *dhatu*s ultimately depends on *rasa dhatu*. Now, on *Prashasta rasa dhatu*

depends the *balabal* of *sharir* and *mana* and this *Rasa Dhatu* does the *karya* of *bala* of the body. *Oja vrikriti* has been mentioned to be of 3 types by *Acharya Sushruta* – *ojo vishramsas, ojo vyapat, oja kshaya* which will ultimately lead to *mrutyu* or *vyadhi*. *Sarabhuta Dhatu* and optimal level of *oja* imparts the strength and immunity in an individual, same is narrated by *Acharya Charaka*– “*Sammamsa Pramanastu samsahano narah, drudindriya vikaranam.*” The person in whom *Oja* is present in adequate and appropriate measurement and *Rupa*, in them the *Mamsa Upachaya* occurs properly leading to formation of good body structure and there is *Drudhta* of *Indriyas* and they can Resist Diseases to optimum level i.e. having good *vyadhikshamatva* in them.

**Different Aspect Of Bala From Clinical Perspective<sup>5</sup>:** *Bala* from clinical perspective can be said to be of different types like the *vyadhibala, rugnabala, doshabala, dhatu bala, satvabala, sahababala, kalaja, yuktikruta, rakshaka, vishabala*<sup>6</sup>.

**Table no 1: Rakshaka bala- Oja bala- vyadhikshamatva virudh visha bala- Vyadhi bala<sup>7</sup>**

<b>Rakshaka bala oja guna</b>	<b>Visha bala- Aakramak bala</b>	<b>Rakshaka bala Visha bala</b>
<i>Guru - Rakshaka bala</i>	<i>01. Laghu- Visha bala</i>	<i>01. Guru- Laghu</i>
<i>Sheeta- Rakshaka bala</i>	<i>02. Ushna- Visha bala</i>	<i>02. Sheeta- Ushna</i>
<i>Madhura- Rakshaka bala</i>	<i>03. Amla- Visha bala</i>	<i>03. Madhura- Amla</i>
<i>Mrudu- Rakshaka bala</i>	<i>04. Tikshana- Visha bala</i>	<i>04. Mrudu- Tikshana</i>
<i>Prasad- Rakshaka bala</i>	<i>05. Ashu- Visha bala</i>	<i>05. Prasad- Ashu</i>
<i>Snigdha- Rakshaka bala</i>	<i>06. Ruksha- Visha bala</i>	<i>06. Snigdha- Ruksha</i>
<i>Sthira- Rakshaka bala</i>	<i>07. Vyavayi- Visha bala</i>	<i>07. Sthira- Vyavayi</i>
<i>Slakshana- Rakshaka bala</i>	<i>08. Vikasi - Visha bala</i>	<i>08. Vyavayi- Vikasi</i>
<i>Pichila- Rakshaka bala</i>	<i>09. vishada- Visha bala</i>	<i>09. Pichila- vishada</i>
<i>Bahala- Rakshaka bala</i>	<i>10. sukshama- Visha bala</i>	<i>10. Bahala- sukshama</i>

**Table no: 2 Rakshaka bala - oja bala- mansik vyadhi kshamatva-virudh visha bala-mansik vyadhi bala<sup>8</sup>**

Mana indriya karma	Niyanta	Niyanta and its controlling guna	Anya niyamak bhav
Sanya- uplabdhi and anuplabdhi	Vayu	Ruksha- Snigdha	Sharirstha kapha evam ojasya samatvam
		Laghuu- Guru	Vayuniyamana aniyamana
		sukshama-sandra	Shukra evam oja kshya
		vishada- Pichila	Vayu vridhi
		khara-Slakshana	Mana niyamana vikruti
		Ashu- Prasad	

Acharya Charaka has mentioned 3 types of *bala* and different techniques to improve the *Bala* or *Vyadhikshamatva* of an individual *Sahaja*, *Kalaja*, *Yuktikruta* - This Type of *Bala* is improved with different regimes and *rasayana*.

**Balavidhikara bhavas<sup>9</sup>:** The *balavidhikara bhavas* are a group of factors that determine or affect the immunity of an individual. These include the different factors like the **desha** (*Jangala* and *Sadharana Desha* born people have good immunity and strength), **Balavata purusha deshejanme** (Genetic influence on immunity), **Kala** (*Visarga Kala* -Autumn and Winter) offers good physical strength and immunity while *Aadana Kala* (Spring and Summer) reduces the strength and immunity), **Sukhascha kalayoga** (combination of different factors enhancing immunity and strength is also essential. As a single factor is not sufficient to increase immunity), **Beeja shetra guna sampan-** The *Sampanta* of *Beeja* and *Kshetra* during the time of conception also leads to formation of *Uttama Bala* in the newborn baby. **aahar – Hitakara Aahara** is the one which maintains the stability of all the

*dhatu* of the body and the one which improves the *Kshinata* of the *Dhatu* of the body. **Sharir** – *Samavastha* of *Sharira* or physical is very essential for strength. **Satmya** - *Satmya* of *Uttama Dravya* like *ghee*, *oil*, *Sneha dravyas* to the body in turn leads to *Bala Vridhi* in that particular *Sharira*. **Satva-** *Satvasampat-* here the term *satva* basically refers to the state of mind of the person where if the *manas* has more of *satvik gunas* then ultimately the *bala* of the body is said to be increased. **Swabhav-** is the natural increase in the *bala* of the person. **Yauvan awastha-** in *yuvaavastha* there is presence of more *bala* as the person remains in *sharir sampat awastha* along with stable and effective working of mind. **Karma** - *Karma* here refers to the various physical activities done by the person for example *Vyayama* i.e regular indulgence in exercise will lead to increase in the *bala* of the body.

**Yuktikruta balavidhikara bhava<sup>10</sup>:**

These include a special list of substances which help in *bala vridhi* in the body, such substances include the *ksheera*, *ghrta*, *dadhi*, *aachar rasyana*, *mamsa rasa*, *satmyaaahar*, *falani* and *madya*.

**Balydashemani<sup>11</sup>**: Includes a list of drugs that help in vyadhikshamatva in Ayurveda that is shatavari, atibala, endri, shaliparni, brahmi, ashwagandha, jatamamsi, bala.

**LEHANA<sup>12</sup>** Literally *Lehana* means to lick. ‘*Lihyate Anen Iti Lehyam*’ the substance which licked easily by young infants is called as *Lehana*. Acharya Kashyapa mentioned *Lehana* in details with due indications and contraindications in *kashyap Samhita lehana adhyaya*. *Lehana* is special pediatric preparation designed to increase Palatability as well as Nutritional Value of purely medicinal preparation. It mainly involves electuaries to enhance Body Growth, Intellect and immunity. *Kashyapa* had described *Lehana* with due indications and contraindications. As *ghrta* and *madhu* are core ingredients in all types of *Lehana* preparations, it serves as Dietary Supplements for different vitamins and proteins; simultaneously. *Madhu* is well known for its nutritional value and supplements. *Madhu* and *Ghrta* enhance the bioavailability of different medicinal drugs used in *Lehana* and help to reach the Target Sites in Short Interval of time. Therefore, use of *Madhu* and *Ghrta* in *Lehana* is very useful for the building of the immunity of child along with the use of different medicines including *suvarnaprashan* as it is well known for immunomodulatory property.

**LEHANA – PROCEDURE<sup>13</sup>** The procedure to *swarnalehana* is described in *kashyapa samhita* as follows: Metallic gold rubbed on a clean rubbing stone with water, these fine gold particles mixed with fine powder of *medhya rasayana* herbs, *ghee* and *madhu* is given to the neonates. In *lehanaadhyay -kashyap samhita* the first mentioned formulation is *Swarnaprashana*. The role of gold as a physiologically important element might

have been understood by *Acharya Kashyapa*, and include gold as an important metal to be used in childhood therapeutics. The various benefits of *suvarnaprasahan* include the *medha agni balavardhanam* (improvement of intellect, digestion, metabolism, immunity, and physical strength), *aayushyam* (longevity), *Mangalam* (auspicious), *punyam* (righteous), *vrushyam* (aphrodisiac), *varnya* (Improvement in complexion), *grahapaham* (protection from evil spirits & microorganisms). One can provide *Lehana* without gold with the help of *Ghee* and *Honey* only. Also, along with *suvarnaprashan* *acharya Kashyap* mentioned various other *lehana kalpanas* for the welfare and health of the children like the *kalyanak ghrta panchagavya ghrta*, *brahmi ghrta<sup>14</sup>* for increasing intellect in children, *samangadi ghrta<sup>15</sup>* used for intellect, longevity and providing strength to children. *samvardhana ghrta<sup>16</sup>* mentioned in *Kashyap Samhita* is also another preparation for the benefit of children. By the use of this *ghrta* regularly the child grows rapidly and remains free from diseases. Crawls and walks early. *Lame, dumb, deaf, idiot child* shows marked improvements, starts with locomotor activities gradually and subsequently the child attains milestones of development normally. The *ghrta* prepared with *brahmi, siddharthaka, kustha, saindhava, sariva, vacha* and *pippali* named as *Abhaya ghrta* is another *ghrta* preparation mentioned in *kashyap samhita*. Also, *ashtang ghrta* and *saraswata ghrta* are other *ghrta* preparations mentioned by *ashtang sangraha*.

#### **SWARNA – SPECIAL PROPERTIES AND EB-RESEARCH**

- In a study, trace elements including gold were measured in human placenta and

Newborn Liver at Birth<sup>17</sup>. A trace element like zinc, copper and gold were measured in the Hair of Newborn infants.<sup>18</sup>

- In a pharmaco-clinical study on neonates *madhu-ghrita-swarna-Vacha* combination showed a significant effect of humoral anti-body formation and it acted on immunological system, which was evident by triggering the response of immunological system by a rise in the total proteins and Serum IgG levels.<sup>19</sup>
- Pharmacological studies on mice treated with gold showed specific as well as nonspecific immune responses and had a stimulatory effect on peritoneal macrophages, which may be helpful to fight against infections.<sup>20</sup>
- Different study reported average size of 56–57 nm in *Swarna Bhasma* while, crystallite size 28–35 nm and was 90% pure gold in Blood Compatibility<sup>21</sup>. Colloidal gold uptake in gastrointestinal tract is dependent on particle size that is, Smaller Particles Cross the Gastrointestinal Tract More Readily<sup>22</sup>.
- Study of clinical trial reported significant results in symptoms of *Kasa* in children treated with *Swarna Bindu*<sup>23</sup> *Swarna Prashana* acts as equivalent immune-modulators as evidenced by triggering the response of immunological system by a rise in Serum IgG Levels<sup>24</sup>.
- *Swarnaprasha* causes improvement in immunity and intelligence of the children.<sup>25</sup> Significant increase in the phagocytic activity was noted in albino rats treated with *swarna*.<sup>26</sup>

#### Traditional Classical Rituals to Improve Immunity:

Some of the other traditional classical measures to improve immunity are Breast feeding, earpiercing, *nishkramana sanskara*.

**DISCUSSION:** Immunization in Ayurveda coined under the term *Vyadhikshamatva* is a broad concept which deals with not only preventive aspect but also curative. *Acharyas* have not only described immunity in multidimensional aspect but also in details mentioned different methods and materials to increase and improve the same. *Lehana* mentioned as one of the tools for *Vyadhi khasamtva Vardhana Upaya*. *Lehana* can be started immediate after birth which will help in building the immunity of the child and also help in development of the *Dhatu*s of the body to optimum level of their strength. Among the *Lehana Ghrita Madhu* and *Suvarna* have been given prime importance by *Acharya Kashyap* whereby he highlights the importance of *Suvarnaprshana* in children. *Suvarnaprshana* has various benefits over modern immunization like it is *Medha Agni Bala Vardhanam* (improvement of intellect, digestion, metabolism, immunity, and physical strength), *Ayushyam* (Promoting Lifespan), *Mangalam* (Auspicious), *Punyam* (Righteous), *Vrushyam* (Aphrodisiac), *Varnyam* (improvement in Complexion) and *Grahapaham* (protection from evil spirits and microorganisms). Also, along with *Suvarnaprshana* other methods like *Karnavedana*, *Nishkramana*, *Annaprashana* at proper time, *Stanya Pana* have also been highlighted by the texts which ultimately helps to increase the immunity in the children. Clinical and Preclinical trial along with the Pharmaceutical study suggest the safety (No Cytotoxic Effects) and efficacy of *Swarna* in children right from neonatal age. In addition, assessment of *Bala* or *Vyadhikshamatva* in children with *Dashavidha Pariksha* thoroughly

explained in Ayurveda. *Rasayana* administration through different *Lehana* including *Swarna* is very classical and visionary innovation of Ayurveda *Acharyas* which particularly focuses on immunity and cognition. Though abundant of classical literature data as well as some evidence-based research data is available on *Swarnaprashana* still research on its dose fixation and different functional aspects in different child group can be explored. In addition, the researches on the action of *Swarna* at different ages in child can also be explored.

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**CONCLUSION:** Ayurveda *Vyadhikshamatva* aspect is very Scientific, Time Tested Safe and Effective and practically highly Acceptable as well as Rational even in today's scientific era. *swarnaprashana* explained in *Kashyapa Samhita* is speciality of Ayurveda Paediatric Practice covering all the aspect of child health like Immunity, Strength, Cognition, Growth and Development and should be Administered with *Yukti*. Other measures like *rasayana*, *lehana*, *stanya pana*, *karna vedhana* and *nishkramana* are also special features of Ayurveda *Vyadhikshamatva Vardhanopaya*.

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