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Panchakarma: A short summary of traditional and recent references

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Abstract

Background: *Ayurveda* is a science that focuses on both well-being and disease treatment. The treatment outcome greatly varies from one patient to another. *Ayurvedic Panchakarma* treatments are aimed at *Shodhan Karma* (detoxification processes). Scientific reporting, reviews and analysis will improve understanding of *Ayurvedic* principle and practices under the light of health outcomes.

Objective: To review articles published on *Panchakarma* and its sub-types for setting up guidelines for further researches and improving health care practices.

Material & Method: The articles from Pubmed, Google Scholar and Web of Science were searched using a strategy designed to optimize retrieval of Control trials, case studies, review articles, etc. The search term used was *Panchakarma, Snehana, Swedana, Vamana, Virechana, Nasya karma, Basti, Raktamokshana*, etc.

Conclusion: The review observed reporting of several significant results out of *Panchakarma* interventions. At the same time it also noted lack of appropriate sample sizes, standard sampling methods, absence of control group, and standardized methods of preparation and application of *Panchakrama dravya* (*Ayurvedic* formulations). More rigorous studies on several aspects of *Panchakarma* treatments on larger sample size are therefore recommended.

Keywords: *Panchakarma, Snehana, Swedana, Vamana, Virechana, Nasya karma, Basti, Raktamokshana*

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