

Impact of Bathing (Snana) In Routine Remote Work- Balancing Work and Self Care

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Abstract

The concept of working from home has emerged as an innovative solution in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This new model offers benefits such as flexible working hours, career advancement opportunities, enhanced comfort, and personal space. The aetiology of the need for a digital detox stems from the pervasive influence of technology in modern life and its impact on our physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Following a simple routine will easily resolve small problems and prevent them from escalating. Incorporating a regular bathing routine will rejuvenate and enhance the experience of remote work, making us feel refreshed. Ayurveda emphasizes that the timing and method of bathing should be adapted to individual constitutions (doshas), seasons, and specific health conditions. For instance, those with predominantly Vata constitution may benefit from warm oil massages before bathing to nourish and moisturize the skin, while individuals with Pitta constitution might prefer cooler baths to balance excess heat in the body. Overall, bathing in Ayurveda is seen as a therapeutic practice that goes beyond cleanliness, aiming to promote holistic health and well-being through mindful self-care routines.

Keywords: Bathing, Snana, Digital detox, Work from home, etc.

Introduction

After COVID, working from home has completely changed the way we approach our jobs. This shift has brought about a monumental change in our dynamic world, offering unparalleled benefits such as flexible working hours, abundant growth opportunities, comfort, personal space, and more. However, each benefit carries a unique set of difficulties. One of the prominent challenges is maintaining a healthy lifestyle, as remote work can lead to distractions, lack of physical movement, and a sedentary routine, resulting in lethargy. It's not uncommon for individuals to bypass essential daily routines like bathing, breakfast, and exercise, diving headfirst into work as soon as they wake up. As a consequence, from spa to costly digital detox programs to counter this lifestyle. However, simple practices such as prioritizing bathing, Abhyanga, and many more can serve as an initial step towards addressing these challenges.

Let's explore the details of the bathing practice and its revitalizing effects.

According to Ayurveda, the best course of action to take each day in order to live a long and healthy life is known as the Dinacharya, or daily routine. Preserving the health of the accomplished person is the fundamental objective of Ayurveda. One such method for preserving people's health is Dinacharya, many Acharyas has referred to Snana (bathing) as a component of this. These daily routines maintain a regular

equilibrium of three Doshas and have a good physiological influence on the appropriate functioning of the bodily systems. Snana is essential for preserving health, yet few people recognize or appreciate its value. As such, an attempt is made to provide a detailed description of Snana.

A "digital detox" is a time when an individual abstains from using digital platforms like social media and the internet, as well as digital devices like computers, tablets, and smartphones. It gives people a chance to step back from the never-ending stimulus and connection that technology offers and re-establishes their connection to the natural world, themselves, and other people. There are many different factors that contribute to the need for a digital detox, and each person's etiology is unique. The following are some typical causes that influence whether a digital detox is desirable or necessary. Some reasons are information overload, technological dependency, and screen addiction, social comparison, FOMO, distracted living.

Because digital connectivity is always on, it might be difficult to distinguish between work and personal life, which increases stress and burnout. Work-life balance can be harmed by constant accessibility and the need to stay connected, which also adds to feelings of overload and tiredness. Frequent dopamine spikes and prolonged use of screens are bad for the brain and can lead to procrastination and brain fog, stress and burnout, lower productivity, social anxiety and depression.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

AIM

The purpose of this study is to provide a thorough and critical analysis of "Snana," or bathing, as an Ayurvedic practice, including its holistic, ritualistic, and therapeutic elements.

OBJECTIVES

To understand the concept of bathing and its role in daily detoxification.

To understand the impact of bathing in remote work life.

To learn the fundamental principle and technique of Snana according to Ayurveda.

There's more to bathing, or Snana, than just putting some soap and water in a bucket and cleaning. It follows the proper protocol. Under the name of Dinacharya, this practice is briefly explained in numerous Ayurvedic literature. Typically, people take baths to keep themselves clean. Although the precise amount of water needed for Snana is not specified anywhere, a classical source states that it should be done in the manner of Gajavat Snana, or "bath like an elephant," meaning that there should be enough water in the bath to completely clean the body. Based on the specifications set out by modern science, an individual's daily water requirements for bathing can be approximated at 150 liters.¹

It has long been encouraged to take a daily bath, as it has been for generations. According to Vedic literature, a Brahmaṇa, or male householder, is supposed to bathe twice, once before sunrise and once at midday. A Brahmacharini, or female householder, is expected to bathe once. Reciting Vedic mantras while bathing is a habit that comes from the Rigveda, Taittiriya Samhita, and other literature.

Acharya Charaka refers to bathing frequently as "Dwau kalavupasprishet" for maintaining good health and maintaining control over sense organs when discussing Sadvritta.

Properties and Method of Bathing –

In Charaka Samhita - Removes Durgandhya (Foul smell), Gaurava (feeling of heaviness in the body), Tandra (drowsiness), Kandu (itching), Mala (dirt), Arochaka (anorexia), Sveda Bibhatsata (disgusting and

unpleasant sweating) Pavitra (auspicious), Vrishya (aphrodisiac), Ayushya (life promoter), Shramsvedamalaap a (removes fatigue, sweat, and dirt from the body), Sharira Bala Sandhana (Bestows strength to the body), Ojaskara (Enhances immunity)

By taking a bath, the digestive fire get enhances, increase in aphrodisiac, age, vitality and strength. It also removes dirt, fatigue, sweat, drowsiness, thirst, burning sensation and sins.³

In Sushruta Samhita - Removes Nidra (sleep), Daha (burning sensation), Shrama (exhaustion), Sveda (sweat), Kandu (itching), Trishna (thirst), Mala (dirt), Tandra (drowsiness), Papa (sins) Hridya (pleasing to the heart), Sarvendriya Avibodhana (stimulating all the sense organs), Tushti (satisfaction), Pumsatva Vardhana (increase virility), Rakta Prasadana (purifies blood), Agni Deepana (enhances digestive fire).⁴

In Ashtanga Hridaya - Agni Deepana (Enhances Digestive Power), Vrishya (Libido stimulant), Ayushya (Life Promoter), Urja - Bala Pradam (Enhances energy and increases Strength) Removes Kandu (itching), Mala (dirt), Shrama (fatigue), Sveda (sweat), Tandra (drowsiness), Trishna (thirst), Daha (burning sensation), and Papa (sins).⁵

In Yogaratnakara - Agni Deepana (Enhances Digestive Power) Vrishya (Libido stimulant), Ayushya (Life Promoter), Bala Pradam (increases Strength) Removes Kandu (itching), Mala (dirt), Shrama (fatigue), Sveda (sweat), Tandra (drowsiness), Trishna (thirst), Daha (burning sensation), and Papa (sins) Pratah Snana (early morning bath) removes Mala (dirt), Papa (sins), Duhswapna (bad dreams), Shrama (fatigue) Tejo Vardhana (increases vital power), Roopa Dyotakara (enhances beauty), Sharira Sukhada (pleasantness to the body), Kama Deepana (stimulates sexual urges), Agni Deepana (enhances digestive power), Streenam Manmathgaahan a (induces feeling of love in women) .

When body expose to water the heat of the body is transferred to the Kosta. Hence, the Agni (gastric fire) of a person becomes intense after taking a bath. That is, the desire for food increases after taking a bath.

When Agni is in balanced state it enhances the other Doshas, Dhatus and Mala.⁶

In physical properties, we can understand things like diminishing itching, bad odour, dirt, fatigue, enhancing beauty, pleasantness, and confidence. Overall, it boosts confidence and body image. Remote work often concerns that who is going to see me whole day, so what's the point of shower. But it's not just about appearance; it also contributes to self-esteem and feeling good.

As we know, working from home can be more mentally taxing than physical, and taking a bath can help with anxiety, stress relief, irritation, and other emotional factors. It releases feel-good hormones, which can increase sexual desire. It is also mentioned that having a good bath is important for good intimacy. This supports the classical text in modern way also.

Merits of morning bath-

Morning bath destroys impurities and sins, destroys nightmares, it is a place of purity and removes impurities, increases brilliance, brings radiance in the form, gives pleasure to the body, ignites lust and fire, increases the drive and passion in women and removes exertion. These are the ten Gunas of merits of bathing.

Portion of the Body	Predominant Dosha	Temperature of Water
Head to Chest	Kapha Dosha	Low Temperature
Chest to Naval	Pitta Dosha	Medium Temperature
Naval to Feet	Vata Dosha	High Temperature ⁷

Order of pouring water during Snana –

Head to Feet or Feet to Head

The following guidelines are broad suggestions derived from widely recognized ideas found in numerous conventional textbooks and Vedic literature. However, traditional Ayurvedic literature do not contain explicit references to these precise stages. It's been recommended to begin by washing your feet, then move to your naval, hands, trunk, neck, face, and finally your head. Since in shower system we start with head which does not compensate the body temperature correctly with internal environment, while using shower also we should go from feet sequence only.

It is widely understood that blood arteries constrict in cold temperatures and dilate in hot temperatures. Ayurveda principles state that the area below the neck should be treated with hot water, while the head should be treated with cold water. Here, we must comprehend Acharyas' purpose in making this particular mention. This is due to the fact that pouring hot water on the head might harm the eyes and other sensory organs. Both hot water and the fluid in the eyes are formidable opponents. Heat causes Kledata (moisture) in the eyes to melt, which can lead to a number of eye disorders.⁸

Additionally, the application of cold water to the area below the neck stimulates the action of Sheeta Guna, which constricts blood vessels, tightens muscles, and makes the entire body rigid. While the order does change depending on the illness in the case of a sick person.

A person with Vata and Kapha Dosha Prakopa is advised to bathe in Ushna Jala, or luke warm water, up to his head, according to the Sushrut Samhita.

Merits and demerits of bathing with cold and hot water

Benefit of using cold water for Snana.

Bathing in Sheeta Jala (cold water) enhances vision and, when taken at the right time, stimulates Jatharagni which promotes digestion. Raktapitta (bleeding disorders) are cured by taking a cold water bath. Taking a cold water bath, especially in winter, aggravates Vata and Kapha Doshas. Applying cold water to the head while bathing revitalizes the sight of the person.

Bathing with cold water get rid of Daha, Raktapitta, hot flushes, etc.⁹⁻¹¹

Cold water stimulates digestive fire, which boost the immune system physiologically itself. It also helps to reduce inflammation chronic pain and muscle soreness.

Benefit of using hot water for Snana

An individual's strength increases and their increased Vata and Kapha Doshas decreases when they take a bath in Ushna Jala (warm water). The body gains strength from Ushna Jala Snana, except for the head. It suggests that taking a head bath in hot water is not a good idea. If it is done, it weakens the body and has negative effects on the heart, eyes, and hair. The only part of the body that should be bathed in Ushna Jala is below the neck or clavicle level. Acharya Sushruta recommends a warm water bath for the head as a remedy for Kapha and Vata Dosha aggravation. Baths in warm water should be avoided in the summer as they aggravate Pitta Dosha.¹²⁻¹³

Bathing with hot water increases strength and destroys Vata and Kapha.

Hot water bath is considered from trunk to lower part of body except the head, it increases strength. By bathing the head with hot water, the strength of hair-strand and follicle get loosen, and eyesight also becomes dull.¹⁴ Hot water bathing relaxes the body which creates a better quality sleep.

Bathing the head with very hot water is harmful for the eyes, however, bathing the head with hot water is said to be beneficial in case of flatulence and phlegm.¹⁵

A person unfit for taking a bath: A person suffering from fever, dysentery, eye or ear disease, flatulence, sinus or indigestion and one who has just eaten food should not take a bath.

Benefits of wiping the body with a cloth after bath - By wiping the body properly with a cloth (gamchha) after bath, the body's glow increases, itching and skin blemishes are eliminated.¹⁶

CONCLUSION

Dincharya in Ayurveda refers to regular daily activities that are advised to preserve balance in life and optimum health. These regimens support mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being by coordinating with the day's and the seasons' natural rhythms. There are numerous articles that provide information about different types of bathing, the selection of water streams, and the before and after bathing procedures according to classical texts. It's worth noting that many individuals tend to skip bathing while working from home, potentially resulting in long-term consequences. Taking a bath, also known as "Snana," is an important part of this daily schedule for a number of reasons. By following a simple routine, one can easily address small problems and prevent them from becoming major issues. Incorporating a regular bathing routine can reinvigorate and enhance the experience of remote work, making us feel revitalized.

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