

Gandush: The Ayurvedic Secret to Healthy Smile

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ABSTRACT

Gandusha is a traditional therapeutic procedure in ayurvedic medicine primarily used for maintaining oral hygiene and promoting overall health. It involves holding a medicated liquid such as herbal decoctions, oils or milk in the mouth for a specific duration without movement, allowing the solution to exert its therapeutic effects on the oral cavity.

Gandusha is distinguished from a similar practice- Kavala, by the fact that the mouth is completely filled preventing swishing. This procedure is believed to strengthen teeth and gums, improve voice quality, enhance taste perception and prevent oral diseases such as dryness, ulcers and bad breath. Depending on the choice of liquid, *Gandusha* can have lubricating, cleansing, healing or soothing effects. Commonly used substances include sesame oil, herbal infusions and medicated ghee. *Gandush dravya* is based on the

individual's constitution and specific health conditions. Modern interpretations suggest that *Gandusha* may aid in reducing oral bacteria, improving salivary function and supporting overall oral health. Its simplicity, cost-effectiveness and preventive benefits make it a valuable daily practice as well as a supportive therapy in various oral and systemic conditions.

KEYWORDS: Gandusha , Ayurvedic medicine, oral hygiene, overall health, medicated liquid, strengthen teeth, gums.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the foundation of Indian medicine was conceived as a science and preached in the country thousands of years before other nations could develop the idea of systematizing remedies for human ailments. Oral health is integral to overall wellbeing and relates to the quality of life. Ayurveda is an ancient Indian medical system that explains various techniques used for disease prevention and promotion of physical health. It recommends daily practices such as *Dant Dhavan* (tooth brushing), *Jihvanirlekha* (tongue scraping), *kavala* (oil swishing with space in the mouth), *Gandush* (filling the mouth with oil), *Prati Sarana* (application of herbal paste) and *Tambula Sevan* (betel leaf chewing) as advised by *Dinacharya* (daily regimen). The term *Gandush* comes from *sanskrit* where 'Gan' signifies keeping and 'dush' means purifying impurities. *Gandush* mainly balances *kapha dosha* and helps align *vata* and *pitta*. It nurtures the tissues and safeguards against mouth, throat and gum ailments. *Gandush* also address some other conditions such as headache, sinusitis etc. Oral health is a

crucial element of overall wellbeing and neglecting it can result in various dental, periodontal and systemic disorders. Ayurveda stresses daily oral hygiene practices like *kavala* and *Gandusha*, commonly using oil to enhance mouth cleanliness, prevent oral cavity diseases and avoid lifestyle-related disorders. Western medicine has mixed outcomes in its prevention. Thus Ayurvedic procedures are essential for preventing oral diseases.

- *Gandusha* → the entire mouth is filled with oil.
 - *Kavala* → some space is left in the mouth for swishing the liquid."

TYPES:

Acharya Vagbhata in Sutra sthan, chapter 22 and Sharangdhara in Uttarakhand chapter 10 has described that *Gandusha* is of 4 types:

snigdha (Lubricating): Uses oils/ghee for dry mouth and jaw strengthening.

Shamana (Palliative): Uses cold, liquid mixtures for inflammation. **Shodhana**

(Purifying): Uses bitter/pungent herbs for detoxification. **Ropana (Healing):**

Focuses on healing ulcers or wounds.

In *Gandusha*, the medicated liquid is expected to seep deep into channels linked to the oral cavity (and melt toxins caused by imbalanced (*Doshas*) and drive them out.

-Ghee for tingling and shaking teeth, for oral disorders linked with Vata characteristics like pain, degeneration of teeth, receding gums, sensitivity etc, to relieve burning sensation C mouth ulcers due to exposure to burning material or poison, sliminess of mouth, heals ulcers quickly, removes burning sensation C throat irritation.

1. Honey pulling brings clarity to mouth.
2. Ksharambhu breaks up the accumulation of Kapha.
3. Warm water brings lightness in mouth.

BENEFITS

Gandusha strengthens gums and teeth and improve gum health. It reduces bleeding and sensitivity. It prevents bad breath (halitosis) as it helps to remove toxins and bacteria from oral cavity, reduce plaque, cavities risk, helps with condition like dryness of mouth and lips. It cleanses the tongue, teeth and oral mucosa thoroughly. It has also neurological and relaxation effect, calms facial nerves and useful in managing headaches or stress related tension. *Gandusha* has both local effects C systemic benefits. As Acharya Sushruta recommends *Gandusha* with strong liquids to treat *Kapha* type of headache which is compared with sinusitis.

Acharya Vagbhata state that for daily *gandush* *tila taila* and *mans ras* is considered best. For daily *Gandush*, sesame oil (*Tila Taila*) is considered excellent. It has both local and systemic benefits nourishing oral tissues and balancing *dosha*.

According to Acharya Sharangdhara after age of 5 years use of *gandush* is recommended. KALA FOR GANDUSH DHARAN

After steaming of head and neck, person with concentrated mind should sit in straight position. Drava (liquid) should be kept in mouth until the mouth is filled with phlegm

(*doshas*) i.e liquid of *gandush* turns into saliva and discharge starts from eyes and nose. A person should do *gandush* three, five, seven times or until the *doshas* are destroyed.

SAMYAK YOG OF GANDUSH

If *gandusha* is done properly there is relief from symptoms, lightness in mouth and head, cleanliness of oral

cavity along with improved clarity in senses

HEENA YOG OF GANDUSH

Heaviness in body, stiffness, loss of taste indicates that *gandush* is not done properly or not done for proper time

ATIYOG OF GANDUSH

Stomatitis, dryness of mouth, excessive thirst, anorexia, loss of appetite, fatigue indicates that *gandush* is overdone or done for too long or frequently.

DISCUSSION

Gandusha is a type of *Shodhana Chikitsa* (cleansing therapy) used in *Mukha pradesh* (oral cavity treatment). The oral cavity is the site of *Bodhaka Kapha* allowing applied drugs to be absorbed locally for faster recovery than systemic management. It may also boost saliva with lysosomes and detoxifying agents, aiding infection removal and symptom relief. *Kapha Shaman* causes *dosha Vilayana* (*dosha* balancing) and clears *Strotorodha* (channel obstruction). The prolonged mechanical action of *Gandusha* helps dislodge calculus and debris from the mouth. Oil pulling techniques *Kavalagraha* and *Gandusha* represent a meeting point between Ayurveda and preventive dentistry. The Ayurvedic view stresses *dosha* equilibrium, toxin elimination and fortification of oral tissues. Contemporary dentistry concentrates on microbial management, mechanical cleaning and prevention of plaque buildup. Despite divergent frameworks, both methods agree on the significance of preserving oral hygiene for overall systemic health. The key benefit of oil pulling is its holistic, preventive character. Unlike chlorhexidine and synthetic mouth rinses which work through strong but short-lived antimicrobial actions, oil pulling delivers slow yet lasting advantages without unwanted side effects. The lack of staining, taste alteration or mucosal irritation enhances patient adherence, particularly for kids and seniors. Another vital aspect is the systemic influence of oral health. With growing evidence connecting periodontal inflammation to cardiovascular disease, diabetes and adverse pregnancy outcomes, oil pulling provides an affordable supplementary method that may indirectly lessen systemic inflammation. The antioxidant and anti-inflammatory qualities of sesame and coconut oils fit well with this preventive capability.

CONCLUSION

Gandusha is a traditional Ayurvedic therapeutic procedure that involves holding medicated liquids in the mouth for a specific duration. It plays an important role in maintaining oral hygiene and promoting overall health. By strengthening the gums, teeth and jaw, *Gandusha* helps prevent oral diseases, reduces dryness, improves taste perception and supports

better digestion. Additionally, it contributes to detoxification and enhances the clarity of speech and freshness of breath.

Incorporating *Gandusha* into daily routine as a preventive and curative practice reflects the holistic approach of Ayurveda, where oral care is closely linked to systemic well-being.

With its simple method and wide-ranging benefits, *Gandusha* remains a valuable and effective practice for maintaining both oral and general health.

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