

## EXPLORING LAVANA -THE IMPORTANCE OF SALTS

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**ABSTRACT**

Lavana (salt) is widely used in various context in ayurveda. According to classics Saindhava Lavana is considered as the best because of its various therapeutic property. Apart from being used in medicinal preparation salt have wide variety of uses in our day-to-day life. The uses of salt in various field such as in cosmetics, as a preservative in various food preparation as a holistic approach and many more. According to Ayurveda Lavana is one among the Shadrassa and they are also told in one of the unique pharmaceutical preparations known as Lavana Kalpana. Salt is a vital substance for the survival of all the living beings, it controls the body fluids and even help in regulating electrolyte balance. Considering the importance of Lavana / salt in our day-to-day life a humble attempt has been made to explain the importance of salt in various context including pharmaceutical, cosmetics, spiritually and many more.

**KEYWORDS:** Lavana, Salt, Sodium chloride.

**INTRODUCTION**

Lavana Nirukti

लुनाति इति लवणः।

One which possess Chedana property is called as Lavana. It is an essential component of diet. It is beneficial to the body if used in small quantity. Also have many medicinal properties. Lavana is one among the shad rasa and they have been used in various medicinal preparations also. Lavana is also been used as Prakshepa Dravya. It is also used in various panchakarma procedure such as in Basti, Upanaha etc.

Salt is an important part of human health; salt is an electrolyte that help to regulate the body fluids and blood pressure. They also help in muscle contraction and relaxation. Salt are also used as a food preservative and food flavouring agent. Like this way salt have many uses in our day-to-day life.

**MATERIALS AND METHOD****General properties of Lavana**

Snigdha (unctuous), Ushna(hot), Tikshna(sharp) and most exceedingly Deepana (appetising). They are also used for anointment, causing unctuousness, fomentation, purgation, emesis, Niruha, Anuvāsana, massage, intake,

elimination (of dosas) from the head, surgical measures, suppositories, collyrium, unction, and also for the correction of indigestion, constipation, treatment of diseases due to Vata, Gulma (abdominal tumour), Sula (colic pain) and Udara (abdominal diseases including ascitis).<sup>[1]</sup>

**Lavana rasa Karma**

Lavana is one among the Shadrassa. Lavana causes more moisture in the mouth and burning sensation in the cheeks and throat.

Lavana (salt) removes the Stambha(rigidity), clears the obstructions (of the channels and pores) increases digestive activity lubricates, causes Swedhana (sweating), penetrates (into the tissues) improves taste, causes lacerations and bursting (of tissues, new growth, abscess etc.).<sup>[2]</sup>

**Lavana Atyupayoga**

The Lavana should be used in a minimum quantity when they are used in excess quantity may cause many health effect such as

It causes increase of Asra (blood) and Pavana (Vata), causes baldness, greying of hair, wrinkles of the skin, thirst, leprosy (and other skin diseases), poison (effect of poison), Visarpa (herpes) and dimension of strength (of the body).<sup>[3]</sup>

### Classification of Lavana

The salts are classified basically into Pancha Lavana i.e. Saindhava Lavana, Souvarchala Lavana, Vida Lavana, Samudra Lavana and Audbida Lavana.<sup>[4]</sup>

Other Lavanas are Krsna Lavana, Romaka Lavana, Pamsu Lavana, Gutika Lavana etc.

According to Astanga Hrudaya

लवणानां प्रयोगे तु सैन्धवादि प्रयोजयेत्

Whenever Lavana is to be used, they should be preferred commencing with the Saindhava Lavana.<sup>[5]</sup>

Among all other Lavana Saindhava Lavana (rock salt) is very much important and they have more medicinal value compared to others.

### Lavana Sodhana

As Lavana is obtained from various places and through various processing the Sodhana of Lavana has to be done before its use according to Basavarajeeyam.<sup>[6]</sup>

- ❖ Saindhava Lavana – Bhavana in Kanjika for 2 Ghatika, Pachana in Chaga Mutra
- ❖ Sauvarchala Lavana – Nimbu Swarasa Bhavana
- ❖ Vida Lavana – Bhavana in Takra
- ❖ Kacha Lavana – Mixed with Thindi jala and Atapa Suska
- ❖ Samudra Lavana –Losta Tapta three Yama
- ❖ Mixing Lavana with Kshara Ambhasa and keep under sunlight

### Kritrima Lavana Nirmana

Artificial salt making is told in various classical textbook. The is mainly for the preparation of Vida Lavana and Sauvarchala Lavana.<sup>[7]</sup>

Vida Lavana: Saindhava lavana – 8 parts and Amalaki churna -1 part are mixed together and kept in an earthen pot and then subjected to strong heat till the two-material fuse together.

Sauvarchala Lavana: Swarja Kshara – 4 Parts, water -8 parts and the Saindhava Lavana is taken the Sawrja Kshara is first melted and the Saindhava Lavana is kept on adding till the saturation point has attained to obtain the Sauvarchala lavana.

### Lavana Kalpana

Unique dosage form of Ayurvedic pharmaceuticals. The pharmaceutical preparations in which the Lavana and the selected Aushadha Dravya are ignited together in a closed Samputa to obtain the drug ash as medicinal product is called Lavana Kalpana.<sup>[8]</sup>

Method of preparation are of two types Putapaka Vidhi and Lehya Paka Vidhi

Putapaka Vidhi - Raw drugs and Saindhava kept in Sharava Sandhi Bhandhana done and subjected to Puta, example – Arka lavana, Puthikadi Lavana etc.

Lehya Paka Vidhi - Kwatha preparation with the mentioned drugs to the strained Kwatha Saindhava Lavana added and heated to condense to the concentrated mixture other drugs are added and mixed well, example – Abhaya Lavana, Agnimukha Lavana etc.

### Therapeutic uses of Lavana

The baby immediately after its birth, should be cleaned/cleared of the Ulba (greasy matter on the skin; vernix caseosa) using Saindhava and Sarpis (ghee).<sup>[9]</sup>

The baby is made to vomit the Garbhambhas (uterine fluid/amniotic fluid) by using ghee mixed with Saindhava.<sup>[10]</sup>

Saindhava Lavana is one of the ingredients in Vamana and Vasti medicine. It is also used in various Netra Kriya kalpas and in various Urdwajatrugata Vikaras treatment.

In the branch of Rasasastra it is used in Lavana Yantra, Sankhadravaka Nirmana, Parada Sodhana, Various Dhatu Sodhana and Marana procedure etc.

### Salt – A modern outlook

The word salt comes from the word '*salarium*' in Latin (salary) This is because roman soldiers used to be partly paid in salt. Salt is an essential component which is to be taken in a required quantity to ensure optimal health as per WHO adult should consume less than 5gm of salt approximately to reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

Salt has been used in various cosmetic preparation for skin exfoliation as a cleanser, in antidandruff shampoo, used in tooth paste, as mouth wash etc.

Halotherapy or Salt therapy is where Halotherapy is done in spa-like salt rooms. This therapy can also help you relax and may help with skin conditions and allergies. Himalayan salt lamps are made up of Himalayan pink salt which act as sleep aider, negative ion promoter and as an air purifier.

In many religious practices and cultures, salt signifies preservation and the binding of a spiritual covenant. Salt is placed on corners of the house or on the entrance to ward off negative energies. Used in rituals like the blessing of holy water.

Salt is also used to preserve the food item the addition of salt to the food items to prevent from the entry of bacteria is called salting.

## DISCUSSION

Lavana (salt) has been given great importance from the early centuries itself. The Lavana has been used in many pharmaceutical as well as in various.

Lavana (salt) has been given great importance from the early centuries itself. The Lavana has been used in many pharmaceutical as well as in various therapeutic also. Saindhava Lavana is best among the types of Lavana. It is Tridosahara. Hence used for most of the Lavana Kalpana. By subjecting to Puta, they may render the Lavana lighter and helps in easy digestion and assimilation. Lavana yantra act as an insulator and help to do Paka in a slow manner The pharmaceutical or therapeutic properties of the preparation depends on the properties of drug used and quantum of heat given. Lavana, which possess Lavana rasa Madhura Vipaka and having Vata- Pittahara property which might be the reason for the extensive use of Lavana in Vata- Pittajanya Vikaras. Lavanas have Vishyandi & Suksma (enter into minute pores), and are penetrating in nature. Because of these nature Lavana can reach up to the Srotas in the body and helps to cure the Vata Vyadhi. It is used to treat many kinds of skin disorders, rheumatic pains and herpes. Apart from being used externally for the skin and internally for the body, salt is now also used to enhance the environment of indoor spaces. Salt is used as a home remedy to cure many disorders and ailments. Salt having good anti-microbial and great absorbent properties it has been used in various cosmetic preparation. Salt has a great property to get rid of the negative energy and help to become calm and relaxed hence it is being used in many spiritual and as halotherapy process.

## CONCLUSION

Lavana have been used since ancient times in many of therapeutic aliments. There are many classifications of salt available in classics among which the Saindhava Lavana is considered to be supreme even our modern science also agrees the same. Lavana having Chedhana, Bhedana property it is being used in various preparation. Salt has a wide variety of uses in our daily life routine they play a great role in maintaining the electrolyte balance and they have to be added in our daily food intake in required quantity to prevent them from diseases.

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