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Review Article

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Significance of oil bath in Siddha system-A review

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Abstract

Siddha system is the most ancient and indigenous system of medicine. *Siddhars* have formulated certain principles for prevention of diseases and to lead healthy life. “*THERAN PINIYANUGAA VIDHI*” insists on healthy life style habits and practices to improve the quality of life and to prevent diseases. *ENNAI KULIYAL* (oil bath) is one of the imperative practices among that. Regular practice of oil bath relaxes and rejuvenates us both physically and mentally. It cures diseases by acting as a first line of treatment. It helps to balance “*Mukkturam*”. It is also preferred as post treatment procedure for some diseases. Our siddha literatures have many references about *ennai kuliyal* procedures and its significance. As time passes people have deviated from this kind of healthy life style practices. In order to lead a healthy life as before, valuable practices like *ennai kuliyal* have to be reclaimed and practiced regularly. This review focuses on references about *ennai kuliyal* from various Siddha classical literatures for better understanding. It also enhance the knowledge and significance of practicing of oil bath.

Keywords

Ennai kuliyal,
Nei muzhukku,
Thalai muzhukku,
Abbiyanganam.

Introduction

The Traditional Tamil Siddha system has existed from the time immemorial. It is an immense and multidimensional system of medicine. The spiritual scientists known as SIDDHARS “IMMORTAL MASTERS” have formulated

certain principles for prevention of diseases and to lead healthy life. “THERAN PINIYANUGAA VIDHI” insists Healthy life style habits to improve the quality of life and to prevent diseases.

ENNAI KULIYAL (OIL BATH) is one of the imperative practice among that. Regular practice of oil bath relaxes and rejuvenates us both physically & mentally.



It is believed by the people of ancient time taking oil bath will improve and keep their good health, they have regularly take oil bath as a ritual. Oil is penetrating inside the body and lowering body temperature and assisting an individual to endure the warm climate. Our *sangam* literatures have evidences that Tamil people were regularly practice oil bath.

Benefits of Oil Bath

Siddhars encoded many “poetry” and “versus” that explains about the benefits of “*Ennai Kuliyal*”.

(Ex..)

“....*Panchenthiriyamum balathu thelivaaiyurum enjaath thoniyum ezhumen*”- *Pathaartha guna sinthamani*.

“....*naalumennai theithaada nangu*”-*Vaithiya perunkiral ennum thanipaadalgal*,

“*Anbadu kaala thesam arinthu venneeraal moozhga*”

“*Munpadu vinaigal thaazha muthirsugam vilaital solvaam*”-*Kanmaruthuvam*

According to these literature evidences there are numerous benefits for oil bath.

- ✓ Oil bath prevents human body from diseases and helps to maintain hygienic life.
- ✓ It cures diseases by acting as a first line of treatment.
- ✓ Oil bath also preferred as post treatment procedures.
- ✓ Regular practice of having oil bath relaxes and rejuvenates us both physically.
- ✓ Regulates *Mukkutram*.
- ✓ Reduces and maintains body temperature.
- ✓ Improves blood circulation to the head.
- ✓ Strengthens bones, muscles, teeth.
- ✓ Prevents eye diseases.
- ✓ Exfoliates and removes dead skin.
- ✓ Relieves joint stiffness.
- ✓ Eliminates toxins and impurities.
- ✓ Helps digestion by stimulating Agni.
- ✓ Promotes deeper sleep and relieves stress.
- ✓ Regular oil bath reduces excess hair fall and prevents dandruff and other scalp problems
- ✓ It helps to lock the moisture in hair strands and the scalp.

Ideal days for taking oil bath:

According to siddha literatures oil bath should be taken in specific days.

(Ex)..

“*Avvaiyar*” the great Saint has mentioned ‘*Sani Neeradu*’ Which means take oil bath with sesame oil on Saturday’s.

“*Snanam seivipathu sanivaaram buthavaram thorumam*”-*theraiyar thaila varuka surukkam* which means Saturday’s and Wednesday’s are finest days for taking oil bath

Siddhars have mentioned special days for taking oil bath in the week for men are Saturday's and Wednesday's and the specific days for taking oil bath in the week for women are Tuesday's and Friday's.

“Vaaranthanakirunaal vainthaadi noaigalathi Kaaranth thanakidamir kaan”- theraiyar thaila varuka surukam

Taking oil bath twice in a week helps to prevent diseases

“Veeru sathur naatkorukaal nei muzhukkai thavirom”-pathaartha guna sinthamani

We should take oil bath atleast 4 days once.

“Muraiyin muthinathukoar naal muzhukideer sugamae”-kan maruthuvam

According to *kanmaruthuvam* one should take oil bath for atleast 3 days once.

Best time to take oil bath in each season

Naazhigai-24 minutes

According to *theraiyar thaila varukasurukam..*

In tamil months *Sithirai* and *Vaigasi* – we should take oil bath within 5 *Naazhigai* from the time of sunrise

Aani, Aadi- Within 8 *naazhigai* from the time of sunrise

Aavani, Puratasi- within 4 *naazhigai* from the time of sunrise

Markazhi, Thai- within 2 *naazhigai* from the time of sunrise

Maasi, Panguni- within 3 *naazhigai* from the time of sunrise.

Procedure for oil bath

According to siddha literatures the step by step procedure of proper oil bath is given below

-) Start putting oil on the top of head and gently massage
-) Instill 2 drops of oil in each nostril
-) Instill 3 drops of oil into the ears
-) Instill 1 drop of oil into the eyes
-) Apply oil gently all over the body including armpits ,Navel, groin and anal orifice.
-) Allow it to soak in body for 20-30 minutes
-) Take a bath with a lukewarm water
-) *Sikaikkai* powder is the right choice to wash the oil.

Benefits of oil application in specific parts

Application of oil in a specific part is consequently beneficial for other part of body.

Foot -Eye
Eye-Ears
Ears-Head
Head-Body

Benefits of frequently using oils for oil bath

SiddharTheraiyar encoded the benefits of frequently used oils

Using cow ghee for oil bath reduces burning sensation of skin, mental disturbances, and reduces Blood pressure.

Ell nei(sesame oil)best for *kabhanoigal*

Aa-nei(Ghee)best for *pithanoigal*

Muthu nei(Castor oil)best for *vaathanoigal*.

List of some medicated oils used for oil bath

Medicated oils are fully loaded with antioxidants, Vitamins, Proteins, Antibacterial, Anti-inflammatory properties which plays an essential role in the treatment of diseases.

Oil	Indications	Book
<i>Athithailam</i>	<i>Thegakanthaltheerum</i>	<i>Thatchinamoorthimeignanam</i>
<i>Aeranda thylam</i>	<i>Ella noigalumogum</i>	Agathiyar vaithiya kaaviyam-1500
<i>Santhanathi thylam</i>	<i>Thaaba suram, bootha suram thainyum</i>	Agathiyarvaithiyakaaviyam-1500
<i>Aathandaiennai</i>	<i>Kodiyathalaivalitheerum</i>	<i>Sikichaarathnatheepam</i>
<i>Mahanaarayanathylam</i>	<i>84 vaathanoigalumtheerum</i>	<i>Sarabendirarvaithiyamuraigal.</i>

Contraindications:

Applying too much of oil head

Sleep immediately after taking oil bath

Taking oil bath during menstruation.

Eating foods like fish, meat, onion, groundnut sesame, curd Etc.

Discussion

From the review of different literatures it has been observed that oil bath is a most popular remedy in Indian medical system. It is most commonly indicated and extensively applied treatment procedure. Oil bath helps human being to prevent common health hazards, the presence of essential vitamins in oil improves the elasticity of skin and lightens the complexion of skin. The rich source of nutrients in oil gets penetrated rapidly into the skin cells and removes the dead skin by exfoliation. It has been understood that applied oil dissolves the dusty, oily particles present in the skin pores which cause the body heat and strain the body organs, later those impurities stuff will be removed by the application of specific powder and lukewarm water, this phenomenon helps to make the skin to remove heat from inside the body.

Conclusion

Siddha system prescribed usage of different medicated oils for application for providing health benefits and to treat specific diseases there are various references regarding oil bath in our siddha literatures, this review paper will help us to refresh our traditional methods of using oil and when should we take oil bath, how to take oil bath, do's & don'ts, contraindications etc...It will also help to revive this forgotten science of our system and to recoup the practice of oil bath.

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