
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CURRENT RESEARCH IN BIOLOGY AND MEDICINE

ISSN: 2455-944X

www.darshanpublishers.comVolume 4, Issue 5 - 2019

Review Article

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22192/ijcrbm.2019.04.05.001>

A Review on Kayakarpam – The Golden Elixir

B. Vinubharathi^{1*}, R. Prabhakaran², V. Mahalakshmi³, N. J. Muthukumar⁴¹PG Scholar, Dept. of Sirappu Maruthuvam, National Institute of Siddha, Chennai4²Assistant medical officer, Government hospital, Sathyamangalam, Erode³Lecturer, Dept. of Sirappu Maruthuvam, National Institute of Siddha, Chennai-47.⁴The Director (i/c), National Institute of Siddha, Chennai-47

Abstract

Kayakarpam is one of the unique science of siddha system advocated for rejuvenation and longevity of life. Siddha science has a holistic approach on human diseases and their elimination. The siddhars had a profound knowledge of human anatomy, physiology, human pathology and treatment. Kayakarpa is similar to ‘Rasayana chikitsa’ of Ayurveda and ‘gerontology’ of modern medicine. Many kayakarpa medicines and life style practices have been mentioned in numerous siddha literature. The siddhars who conquered death and attained salvation have discovered and bestowed the valuable therapeutics of kayakarpam to the human beings. The aim of this conceptual article is discuss the various principles of kayakarpam.

Keywords: Siddha medicine, Kayakarpam , Antioxidant, karpayogam

Introduction

The word kayakarpa means (kayam-body, karpa-able, competent) to make our body competent and youthful¹. The karpa medicines are those which prevent graying, wrinkling of skin, ageing, senile changes and other diseases for promoting longevity with complete freedom from illness. Kayakarpa method is also called *saka kalai* which means ‘a science which prevents death of body’². Kayakarpam is not about restoring the youth and it is all about maintaining the youthfulness by avoiding the physical and mental lethargy. Karpa medicines rejuvenates the body and make it imperishable, as evidenced in the text tirumantiram. An applied alchemy, Kayakarpa frees the vital energy by purifying and nurturing the body, mind and psyche with specific medicinal and therapies. Siddhar Thirumoolar, Karuvoorar, Therayar, Agathiyar Bogar had written various literatures on kayakarpam.

In his poem Bhogar Jnana sutra “He chose three of his best disciples and his faithful dog, and took them to the top of a mountain. After first offering a tablet to the dog, the dog immediately fell over dead. He next offered it to his leading disciple, Yu, who also immediately fell over dead. After offering it to the two remaining, sutra 8, verse 4, he describes vividly what happened after carefully preparing a tablet using thirty-five different herbs:

With great care and patience I made the (kaya karpa) tablet and swallowed it:

Not waiting for fools and skeptics who would not appreciate its hidden meaning and importance.

Steadily I lived in the land of the parangis (foreigners) for twelve thousand years, my fellow!

I lived for a long time and fed on the vital ojas
(sublimated spiritual energy)

With the ojas vindhu I received the name, Bhogar:

The body developed the golden color of the pill: Now
I am living in a world of gold.

(based upon translation by Yogi S.A.A. Ramaiah,
1979, p.40-42).

Classification of kayakarapam

The preparations follow 2 classification

1. Karpa aviztham-karpa medicine
2. Karpa Yogam

Karpa Aviztham are certain internal medicines or herbs taken for particular number of days with certain restriction usually taken in a tapering or increasing dose

Muppu is a siddha science of kaya karpa salt preparation.

Amuri Tharani- Urine Therapy-was also advised to be a form of kaya karpa therapy –as it is considered to be a high percentage of hormones.

Karpa medicines are further classified into three types based on the origin⁴.

1. Medicines of Herbal origin (Mooligai karpam)
2. Medicines of Mineral and Metal origin (Thaathu karpam)
3. Medicines of Animal origin (Jeeva karpam)

Mooligai karpam:

This type of karpam deals with preparations from plant origin .They are mentioned in the literatures, Theran Yamaga Venba and Karuvoorar Vatha Kaviyam.

In karuvoorar text there are a total of 108 karpa medicinal plants^{2,4}.

- Eg 1.Keezhanelli - *Phyllanthus amarus*
- 2.Sivanar Vembu- *Indigofera aspalathoides*
- 3.Porcheenthil – *Tinospora malabarica*

In text Theran Yamagavenba,

- Eg 1. Inji – *Zingiber officinale*
2. Ponnanganni – *Alternanthera sessilis*
3. Vembu – *Azadirachta indica*

Thaathu Karpam :

This deals with metal and mineral products used as *Kaaya Karpam* preparations. This also includes “*Muppu*” (A combination of three salts) - a very unique preparation in Siddha. Medicines of mineral and metal origins are known from the literature Agasthiyar chendhooram 300^{2,4}.

- Eg 1.Ayabringaraja karpam
- 2.Ayasambeera karpam
3. Poornachandhirothayam

Jeeva karpam :

This deals with the animal products used in the preparation of kaaya karpam^{2,4}.

- Eg 1. Fresh Cow’s milk (unboiled)
2. Boiled Cow’s milk
3. Indhira Koba poochi (*Mutilla occidentalis*)

Karpa aviztham is further classified into two types,

1. Pothu karpam
2. Sirappu karpam

Pothu karpam is recommended for normal individuals to boost immunity, to promote general health, for prevention of diseases. Sirappu karpam is also for restoration of health from specific type diseases.

Common do’s and dont’s while taking kalpa medicines:

Karpam should be started on a auspicious day, for some of the karpam specific star day has been mentioned, for eg.vembu karpam should be taken on the day of urogini natchathram. If it is not specified karpam can be taken in the days such as full moon day (poornima), next day of dark moon lunar (prathama), third day of dark moon lunar (Trithiya)³.

Duration: For some karpa medicine specific duration will be given, eg seethevi sengazhuneer (*Nymphaea alba*) karpam for 24 days (half mandalam). If it is not specified it can be taken for 48 days (1 mandalam)³.

Time: Karpa medicines should be taken in the morning time.

Diet:

Tamarind, salt, slaked lime (chunnam), meat, fish, buttermilk, garlic, pungent eatables, asafoetida, common salt, sour taste eatables, buffalo milk, mustard, alcohol, smoking, narcotics, sexual intercourse, these should be avoided^{2,3}.

Milk, raw white rice, green gram, goose berry, can be taken^{2,3}.

Sexual abstinence is also advised.

Literature evidences

The following books contains information about karpa medicines,

1. Thirumoolar Vaithiyam 600
2. Theran Yamagavenba
3. Karuvoorar Vadhakaviyam 700
4. Thiruvalluva Nayanar Karpam 800
5. Bhogar karpam 300
6. Sattamuni karpam 100
7. Yakobu Vaidhiyam 300
8. Pullathiyar karpam 300
9. Agathiyar karpamuppu kurunool 100
10. Thirumoolar karukidai nigandu
11. Agathiyar vagara soothiram 200
12. Agasthiyar 12000 ennum perunool kaaviyam
13. Agasthiyar vaithiya kaaviyam 1500
14. Agasthiyar mahathiravagam 800
15. Agasthiyar vatha sowmiyam
16. Agasthiyar poorna soothiram 216
17. Agasthiyar muppu suthiram
18. Agathiyar sowmiyasaagarm 1200
19. Pathinen siddhargal vaithiya sillarai kovai
20. Bhogar 7000

Karpa Yogam

Kayakarpam includes not only preparations or medicines made from herbs, metals, minerals, etc., but also practice of asanas (postures), pranayamam (regulation of breathing), yogam. It also protects the body from diseases and decay and prolongs the life span considerably^{2,4}. Yogam helps to integrate all our five sense organs to react the ecstasy of life following a disciplined manner. There are eight types of yogam⁵,

1. Iyamam - Denotes good Thoughts
2. Niyamam - Denotes good Actions
3. Aasanam - Denotes the posture
4. Pranayamam - Meant for breathing exercise
5. Prathiyakaram - Controls over the five senses
6. Dharanai - Act of controlling the mind
7. Dhiyanam - Controls one self
8. Samadhi - Mixing with brahmam

These are also called as “ATTANGA YOGAM” (or) sub conscious meditation^{2,4}.

Iyamam, niyamam, asanam, pranayamam are the extrinsic limbs and it is called bhagiranga yogam. All these four can be practiced by common people also. Dharanai, dhiyanam, Samadhi are the intrinsic limbs and it is called bhagiranga yogam. It is generally practiced by the supernatural siddhars.

Iyamam

It can be assumed that the term *iyalmam* has become iyamam. The term *iyal* means discipline, Iyalmam means ‘learning discipline’. It is an internal practice of cleansing or purifying the mind².

The ten iyamas are non violence, truth, honesty, sexual continence, foe bearance, attitude, kindness, straight forwardness, moderation in diet and purity. Making a habit of constantly practicing iyamas purifies words, thoughts and deeds⁴.

Niyamam

Niyamam is also termed niyathi, nemam, negamam, etc. Niyamam means ‘purity of action’. This is the second stage of yoga, i.e., yoga practice. Observing purity or truthfulness in one’s day-to-day activities is niyamam. Observance of niyamam becomes easy for those who become well trained in the observance of iyamam².

The niyamas are austerity, contentment, belief in god, charity, worship of god, listening to explanation of doctrines, scriptures, modesty, having a discerning mind, repetition of prayers and sacrifice⁴.

Asanam

This is the third step or stage of yoga. Asanam is also called athanam by siddhars. Asanam means posture or

pose that is the position of our body with reference to space. There is another interpretation by siddhars: Asanam= A+samanam—A means athma and samanam means poise or relaxation².

Relaxing athma implies relaxing it from stressful conditions of this worldly life. In other words, it means relieving athma from the lure of sensual pleasures. As asanam forms a part of yoga it is also called as yogasanam².

- Eg 1. Padmasanam (lotus pose)
 2. Eaga Pathaasanam (tree pose)
 3. Bhujangasam (serpent pose)

Pranayamam

Pranayamam comes fourth in the attangayogam. The perfect and scientific art of controlling one's breathing is called parnayamam. It is also called vasi and vasiyogam. By bringing to control the breathing that goes on normally, automatically and in a regular rhythm and fixing the duration and amount of breathing differently as described by Siddhars, different types of pranayamam are devised^{2,4}.

There are three types of breathing in pranayamam namely purakam, kumpakam and rechakam.

Purakam is the act of breathing in during respiration. Rechakam denotes the act of breathing out.

Kumpakam is the act of retaining the inspired air for a specific time.

Prathiyakaram:

It is to divert ones attention within by controlling the thought processes and desires. It is to be focused within –self-analysis to self-realization.

Dharanai:

Concentration is diverting all energies on one focal point.

Dhiyanam:

Focus on self for long without disturbance of place, time and person.

Samadhi:

It is a divine communion state where the individual soul is united with the universal spirit and realizes the perfect oneness.

Anti oxidants properties of kayakarpam medicine and practices

An antioxidant is a molecule capable of slowing or preventing the oxidation of other molecules. Oxidation is a chemical reaction that transfers electron from a substance to an oxidizing agent. Oxidation reactions can produce free radicals, which start chain reactions that damage cells. Antioxidants terminate these chain reactions by removing free radicals intermediates, and inhibit other oxidation agents such as thiols, ascorbic acid or polyphenols⁶.

The definition of antioxidants, given in 1995 by Halliwell and Gutteridge, stated that an antioxidant is “any substance that, when present at low concentrations compared with that of an oxidizable substrate, significantly delays or inhibits oxidation of that substrate”⁷. In 2007, Halliwell gave a more specific definition, stating that an antioxidant is “any substance that delays, prevents or removes oxidative damage to a target molecule”⁸.

Most of the kayakarpam medicines have anti oxidant properties eg *Emblica officinalis*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Tinospora cordifolia*, *Terminalia chebula*, *Feronia elephantum*, *Aloe vera*, *Withania somnifera*, *Semecarpus anacardium*, *Citrus lemon*, and *Eclipta alba*, hence these herbs act as an rejuvenation⁹.

Regular yoga practice remarkably attenuates oxidative stress and improved antioxidant levels of the body. Moreover, yoga beneficially affected stress hormone releases as well as partially improves immune function¹¹.

Conclusion

As per this review kayakarpa medicines and kayakarpa practices (yogam) has anti-oxidant properties hence it ensures kayakarpam is a rejuvenation therapy. Further deeper exploration and research works in kayakarpam can help us in combating chronic diseases and enjoy good health.

References

1. Vithyavani. N et al Kayakarpa Herbs - The Siddha Nutraceutical For The Prevention Of Cancer International Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences ISSN- 0975-1491 Vol 6, Suppl 1, 2014
2. Krishnamoorthy J.R et al, Siddha medicine volume 3 special areas 1st edition 2010, Tamil valarchi kazhagam Chennai, pg no:1-88
3. Anbarasu K, Kayakarpm, 1st edition 2002, Boopathi pathipagam, Thirichurapalli ,pg no 1-10
4. Thiagarajan R, Special medicines in Siddha, 1st edition 2009, Department of Indian Medicine and Homeopathy, Chennai,pg no:1-44
5. Chidambarathanu pillai S, Siddha System Of Life, 1st edition 1991, Siddha Medical Literature Research Center ,Madras, pg no:49
6. Sies H. Antioxidants in Disease, Mechanisms and Therapy, Academic Press, New York.1996,
7. B. Halliwell and J. M. C. Gutteridge, "The Definition and Measurement of Antioxidants in Biological Systems," Free Radical Biology and Medicine, Vol. 18, No. 1, 1995, pp. 125-126. doi:10.1016/0891-5849(95)91457-3
8. B. Halliwell, "Biochemistry of Oxidative Stress," Biochemical Society Transactions, Vol. 35, No. 5, 2007, pp. 1147-1150. doi:10.1042/BST0351147
9. Sasikala M. et al. / Journal of Science / Vol 4 / Issue 11 / 2014 / 674-677.
10. International Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences ISSN- 0975-1491 Vol 6, Suppl 1, 2014 Kayakarpa herbs - the siddha nutraceutical for the prevention of cancer
11. Lim SA, Cheong KJ, Regular Yoga Practice Improves Antioxidant Status, Immune Function, and Stress Hormone Releases in Young Healthy People: A Randomized, Double-Blind, Controlled Pilot Study, J Altern Complement Med. 2015 Sep;21(9):530-8. doi: 10.1089/acm.2014.0044. Epub 2015 Jul 16.
12. Sinha S, Singh SN, Monga YP, Ray US, Improvement of glutathione and total antioxidant status with yoga. J Altern Complement Med. 2007 Dec;13(10):1085-90. doi: 10.1089/acm. 2007. 0567.

Access this Article in Online	
	Website: www.darshanpublishers.com
	Subject: Siddha Medicine
Quick Response Code	

How to cite this article:

B. Vinubharathi, R. Prabhakaran, V. Mahalakshmi, N. J. Muthukumar. (2019). A Review on Kayakarpm – The Golden Elixir. Int. J. Curr. Res. Biol. Med. 4(5): 1-5.

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22192/ijrbm.2019.04.05.001>