

Role of Swasthavritta Procedures in Ayurvedic Cosmetology: A Review Article

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Abstract - Ayurveda emphasizes the maintenance of health through preventive and promotive principles collectively described under *Swasthavritta*. In Ayurvedic cosmetology, beauty is considered a reflection of internal health, balanced *Doshas*, proper digestion, healthy tissues, and mental wellbeing. Unlike modern cosmetology, which often focuses mainly on external appearance and symptomatic management, Ayurveda adopts a holistic approach that integrates lifestyle regulation, nutrition, hygiene, rejuvenation therapies, and psychological balance for preserving natural beauty and delaying aging. *Swasthavritta* includes daily regimens (*Dinacharya*), seasonal regimens (*Ritucharya*), dietary regulations (*Ahara*), sleep (*Nidra*), exercise (*Vyayama*), mental discipline, personal hygiene practices, Yoga, and Panchakarma procedures. These measures contribute significantly to maintaining healthy skin, lustrous hair, proper complexion, tissue nourishment, and prevention of cosmetic disorders such as acne, pigmentation, premature wrinkles, dryness, and hair fall. Procedures like *Abhyanga*, *Udvartana*, *Mukhalepa*, *Nasya*, *Snana*, and *Rasayana* therapy possess rejuvenating, detoxifying, nourishing, and anti-aging effects. The present review article aims to analyze the role of *Swasthavritta* procedures in Ayurvedic cosmetology and correlate these principles with modern concepts of holistic skin and beauty care. Information was collected from classical Ayurvedic texts including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*, and modern scientific literature. The review highlights that *Swasthavritta* provides a safe, preventive, economical, and sustainable approach to cosmetology by improving both internal and external health. Integration of Ayurvedic preventive principles with contemporary cosmetology may offer comprehensive and long-term beauty management strategies.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Swasthavritta, Cosmetology, Dinacharya, Ritucharya, Panchakarma, Skin health, Beauty care, Rasayana

I. INTRODUCTION

Beauty and personal appearance have been important aspects of human life since ancient times. Healthy skin, lustrous hair, attractive complexion, and graceful aging are universally associated with health and wellbeing. In the modern era, cosmetology has become a rapidly growing field focusing on enhancement of physical appearance through skincare products, aesthetic procedures, and beauty therapies. However, many modern cosmetic interventions mainly target external manifestations and may provide temporary results without addressing the underlying causes affecting skin and body health. 1

Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, presents a comprehensive and holistic concept of beauty that is deeply connected with physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. According to Ayurveda, external beauty is the reflection of internal health, balanced *Doshas*, proper nourishment of *Dhatus*, efficient digestion (*Agni*), proper elimination of wastes, and mental harmony. The Ayurvedic classics describe beauty through terms such as *Varna* (complexion), *Kanti* (radiance), *Twak Sara* (excellence of skin), and *Prabha* (natural glow). 2

The branch of Ayurveda known as *Swasthavritta* deals with preventive medicine and maintenance of health through proper lifestyle and behavioral

practices. The fundamental objective of Swasthavritta is:³

“Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam, Aturasya Vikara Prashamanam Cha” which means preservation of health in healthy individuals and treatment of diseases in diseased persons.

Swasthavritta includes various regimens such as:

- *Dinacharya* (daily routine)
- *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen)
- *Sadvrutta* (ethical and mental conduct)
- Personal hygiene
- Dietary regulations
- Sleep and exercise
- Yoga and meditation

These principles have immense relevance in Ayurvedic cosmetology because skin and hair health are greatly influenced by lifestyle, nutrition, seasonal variations, psychological stress, sleep patterns, and environmental factors. Ayurvedic cosmetology not only focuses on external applications but also emphasizes internal purification, rejuvenation, and maintenance of tissue health.⁴

Several Swasthavritta procedures described in Ayurvedic texts possess direct cosmetic benefits. *Abhyanga* nourishes the skin and delays aging, *Udvaartana* improves complexion and exfoliation, *Mukhalepa* enhances facial glow, while *Nasya* and *Gandusha* improve facial appearance and sensory organ health. Panchakarma therapies help detoxification and correction of metabolic imbalance, whereas Rasayana therapy promotes rejuvenation and anti-aging effects.⁵

In recent years, there has been increasing global interest in herbal cosmetology, natural skincare, wellness therapies, stress management, and holistic beauty approaches. This has led to renewed attention toward Ayurvedic cosmetology and preventive healthcare measures. Modern scientific research also supports the antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and rejuvenative properties of many Ayurvedic herbs and procedures used for cosmetic purposes.⁶

Therefore, Swasthavritta can be considered an important preventive and promotive tool in cosmetology that supports healthy aging, improves quality of life, and preserves natural beauty through holistic healthcare principles. The present review

article attempts to explore and analyze the role of Swasthavritta procedures in Ayurvedic cosmetology from both classical and contemporary perspectives.⁷

Aim of the Study

To review and analyze the role of *Swasthavritta* procedures in Ayurvedic cosmetology and their significance in maintaining skin health, enhancing natural beauty, and preventing cosmetic disorders through holistic preventive approaches.

Objectives

1. To study the concept of beauty and cosmetology in Ayurveda.
2. To evaluate the role of *Dinacharya* procedures in cosmetic care.
3. To assess the importance of *Ritucharya* in maintaining skin and hair health.
4. To analyze the impact of diet, sleep, and mental wellbeing on cosmetic appearance.
5. To review the role of Panchakarma and Rasayana therapies in anti-aging and rejuvenation.
6. To correlate Ayurvedic preventive principles with modern cosmetology concepts.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials

The present review article was compiled using classical Ayurvedic texts, contemporary Ayurvedic literature, and published research articles related to *Swasthavritta* and cosmetology.

Modern Sources

- Published articles from Ayurvedic journals
- Research papers indexed in PubMed and Google Scholar
- Textbooks on Ayurvedic cosmetology and preventive medicine

Methods

1. Literature related to *Swasthavritta*, cosmetology, skin care, beauty enhancement, anti-aging therapies, and preventive healthcare was systematically reviewed.
2. Relevant references from Ayurvedic classical texts were collected and analyzed.
3. Modern scientific literature regarding herbal cosmetology, lifestyle modification, stress management, and skin health was

reviewed for correlation with Ayurvedic principles.

4. The collected information was critically analyzed and presented under thematic headings such as:
 - Dinacharya
 - Ritucharya
 - Ahara
 - Nidra
 - Yoga and meditation
 - Panchakarma
 - Rasayana

5. Comparative interpretation between Ayurvedic concepts and modern cosmetology approaches was performed to understand the preventive and holistic role of *Swasthavritta* in cosmetic science.

Concept of Beauty in Ayurveda 8

Ayurveda defines ideal beauty through:

- *PrasannaAtmaIndriya Mana* (pleasant mind and senses)
- Proper complexion (*Varna*)
- Soft and glowing skin
- Lustrous hair
- Symmetrical body
- Delayed aging

Beauty is influenced by:

- Balanced *Doshas*
- Healthy *Dhatus*
- Proper digestion (*Agni*)
- Adequate sleep
- Mental calmness

Swasthavritta and Cosmetology 9

Swasthavritta plays a major role in:

- Prevention of premature aging
- Maintenance of skin glow
- Hair nourishment
- Prevention of acne, pigmentation, and wrinkles
- Detoxification
- Stress reduction
- Enhancement of complexion

The procedures can be broadly classified into:

1. Daily regimens (*Dinacharya*)
2. Seasonal regimens (*Ritucharya*)
3. Personal hygiene practices
4. Dietary regulations
5. Mental health measures
6. Yoga and exercise
7. Rejuvenation procedures

Dinacharya Procedures in Ayurvedic Cosmetology 10,11

1. Abhyanga (Oil Massage)

Abhyanga nourishes skin and improves circulation.

Cosmetic Benefits

- Enhances skin texture
- Prevents dryness
- Delays wrinkles
- Improves complexion
- Reduces stress-induced skin disorders

Medicated oils:

- KumkumadiTaila
- NalpamaradiTaila
- ChandanadiTaila

2. Udvartana (Powder Massage)

Udvartana involves rubbing herbal powders over the body.

Benefits

- Exfoliation
- Removal of dead skin cells
- Reduces excessive fat
- Improves skin tone
- Enhances circulation

Common drugs:

- Triphala
- Lodhra
- Chandana
- Haridra

3. Snana (Bathing)

Ayurveda recommends daily bathing for hygiene and rejuvenation.

Cosmetic Importance

- Cleanses skin
- Removes sweat and dirt
- Refreshes body and mind
- Improves complexion

Herbal bath powders:

- Green gram powder
- Sandalwood
- Vetiver

4. Mukhalepa (Face Packs)

Topical herbal applications are widely described in Ayurvedic texts.

Benefits

- Acne reduction
- Pigmentation control
- Skin tightening
- Glow enhancement

Common ingredients:

- Manjistha
- Lodhra

- Haridra
- RaktaChandana

5. Gandusha and Kavala

Oil pulling and gargling improve oral hygiene and facial appearance.

Benefits

- Strengthens gums
- Improves facial muscles
- Prevents bad breath
- Enhances facial glow

6. Nasya

Administration of medicated oil through nasal route.

Cosmetic Relevance

- Prevents premature graying
- Improves facial skin
- Enhances sense organs
- Reduces stress

Common oils:

- AnuTaila
- KsheerabalaTaila

7. Netra Care

Eye care practices maintain bright and healthy eyes.

Procedures

- Anjana
- Eye wash
- Triphala eye cleansing

Benefits

- Reduces eye strain
- Improves eye appearance
- Prevents dark circles

Ritucharya and Cosmetic Health 12

Seasonal variations affect skin and hair significantly.

Summer Regimen

- Cooling diet
- Sandalwood application
- Adequate hydration

Winter Regimen

- Oil massage
- Nourishing foods
- Moisturizing therapies

Rainy Season

- Detoxification
- Light diet
- Prevention of fungal infections

Following Ritucharya helps prevent:

- Seasonal acne
- Dry skin
- Hair fall
- Allergic disorders

Ahara (Diet) in Ayurvedic Cosmetology 13

Ayurveda states:

“You are what you digest.”

Healthy skin depends on proper nutrition and digestion.

Beneficial Foods

- Fresh fruits
- Ghee
- Milk
- Green vegetables
- Triphala
- Amla

Foods to Avoid

- Excess spicy food
- Junk food
- Fermented foods
- Excess sugar
- Preserved foods

Cosmetic Effects of Proper Diet

- Clear complexion
- Healthy hair
- Delayed aging
- Better collagen maintenance

Role of Nidra (Sleep) 14

Proper sleep is essential for beauty maintenance.

Benefits

- Tissue repair
- Reduced dark circles
- Hormonal balance
- Stress reduction

Sleep deprivation may cause:

- Dull skin
- Premature wrinkles
- Hair fall
- Acne

Role of Yoga and Meditation 15,16

Yoga

Improves circulation and detoxification.

Useful Asanas

- Sarvangasana
- Bhujangasana
- Matsyasana
- Surya Namaskara

Meditation

Reduces stress-related skin disorders.

Benefits

- Hormonal balance
- Mental relaxation
- Improved skin glow

Panchakarma and Cosmetic Enhancement 17

Panchakarma therapies detoxify the body and improve skin quality.

Vamana
Useful in Kapha-related skin disorders.

Virechana
Purifies blood and improves complexion.

Raktamokshana
Helpful in acne and pigmentation disorders.

Basti
Improves nourishment and delays aging.

Rasayana Therapy in Cosmetology 18,19
Rasayana drugs promote rejuvenation and anti-aging effects.

Common Rasayana Drugs

- Amalaki
- Guduchi
- Haritaki
- Ashwagandha
- Shatavari

Benefits

- Anti-aging action
- Improved immunity
- Skin nourishment
- Hair strengthening

Modern Perspective 20

Modern cosmetology increasingly focuses on:

- Holistic wellness
- Nutrition
- Stress management
- Herbal skincare
- Detoxification

These concepts align closely with Ayurvedic Swasthavritta principles. Scientific studies show antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and rejuvenating properties of Ayurvedic herbs used in cosmetology.²¹

Table 1. Swasthavritta Procedures and Their Cosmetic Benefits

Swasthavritta Procedure	Description	Cosmetic Benefits
Abhyanga	Daily oil massage	Nourishes skin, delays aging, improves complexion, prevents dryness
Udvartana	Herbal powder massage	Exfoliation, improves skin tone, reduces obesity and cellulite
Snana	Daily bathing	Cleanses skin, refreshes body, improves hygiene and glow
Mukhalepa	Herbal face application	Reduces acne, pigmentation, wrinkles, enhances radiance
Nasya	Nasal administration of medicated oils	Prevents premature graying, improves facial appearance
Gandusha/Kavala	Oil pulling and gargling	Improves oral hygiene, strengthens facial muscles
Netra Prakshalana	Eye cleansing	Reduces eye strain and dark circles
Vyayama	Physical exercise	Improves circulation and skin oxygenation
Nidra	Proper sleep	Prevents dullness, dark circles, premature aging
Yoga & Meditation	Mental relaxation practices	Reduces stress-induced skin disorders

Table 2. Dinacharya Practices and Their Effects on Skin and Hair

Dinacharya Practice	Effect on Skin	Effect on Hair
Abhyanga	Moisturizes skin, improves elasticity	Nourishes scalp and hair roots
Snana	Cleanses skin and sweat	Maintains scalp hygiene
Nasya	Improves facial glow	Prevents hair fall and premature graying
Mukhalepa	Enhances complexion	—
Gandusha	Improves facial tone	—
Exercise	Improves circulation	Enhances nutrient supply to scalp
Proper Sleep	Reduces wrinkles and dullness	Prevents stress-related hair fall

Table 3. Ritucharya and Seasonal Cosmetic Care

Season	Dominant Dosha	Common Cosmetic Problems	Recommended Measures
Grishma (Summer)	Pitta	Acne, tanning, pigmentation	Cooling diet, sandalwood, hydration

Varsha (Rainy)	Vata aggravation	Fungal infection, dull skin	Light diet, hygiene, detoxification
Sharad	Pitta	Skin sensitivity, rashes	Blood purification, cooling herbs
Hemanta/Shishira (Winter)	Vata	Dry skin, roughness, cracked skin	Oil massage, nourishing diet
Vasanta (Spring)	Kapha	Oily skin, acne	Udvartana, exercise, light diet

Table 4. Ayurvedic Herbs Commonly Used in Cosmetology

Herb	Botanical Name	Cosmetic Actions
Haridra	<i>Curcuma longa</i>	Anti-inflammatory, anti-acne, complexion enhancer
Manjistha	<i>Rubiacordifolia</i>	Blood purifier, reduces pigmentation
Chandana	<i>Santalum album</i>	Cooling, anti-tanning, soothing
Lodhra	<i>Symplocosracemosa</i>	Skin tightening, anti-acne
Amalaki	<i>Emblia officinalis</i>	Antioxidant, anti-aging
Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Antimicrobial, useful in acne
Kumkum	<i>Crocus sativus</i>	Improves complexion and glow
Aloe vera	<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>	Moisturizing and wound healing

III. DISCUSSION

Ayurveda considers beauty as an external manifestation of internal health and physiological balance. The concept of cosmetology in Ayurveda is fundamentally preventive, holistic, and health-oriented. Unlike conventional cosmetic approaches that mainly concentrate on external appearance and temporary correction, Ayurvedic cosmetology emphasizes maintenance of normal body physiology, proper tissue nourishment, purification of the body, and mental wellbeing. In this context, *Swasthavritta* plays a pivotal role in preserving beauty and preventing cosmetic disorders through systematic lifestyle practices.²²

The skin (*Twak*) is considered an important indicator of the status of *Rasa* and *RaktaDhatu*. Any disturbance in digestion (*Agni*), accumulation of toxins (*Ama*), or imbalance of *Doshas* directly affects skin complexion, texture, and overall appearance. Therefore, *Swasthavritta* measures aim at maintaining equilibrium of *Doshas*, proper digestion, tissue nourishment, and mental calmness, thereby indirectly supporting cosmetic health.²³

Among the daily regimens, *Abhyanga* occupies a significant place in Ayurvedic cosmetology. Regular oil massage improves peripheral circulation, nourishes skin tissues, reduces dryness, enhances elasticity, and delays degenerative changes associated with aging. Medicated oils such as *KumkumadiTaila* and *ChandanadiTaila* are traditionally used for improving complexion and

skin radiance. Modern studies also indicate that oil massage reduces oxidative stress and improves skin barrier function.²⁴

Udvartana acts as a natural exfoliation therapy and improves lymphatic drainage and circulation. The herbal powders used in *Udvartana* possess cleansing, antimicrobial, and complexion-enhancing properties. It also assists in reducing subcutaneous fat and improving skin tone, which is particularly beneficial in aesthetic and wellness therapies.²⁵

Mukhalepa or facial applications are among the earliest forms of herbal facial therapy described in Ayurveda. Herbs like *Manjistha*, *Lodhra*, *Haridra*, and *Chandana* exhibit anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antioxidant, and skin-brightening activities. These formulations are useful in acne vulgaris, pigmentation disorders, tanning, and premature aging.²⁶

The role of *Ritucharya* in cosmetology is highly relevant because environmental and seasonal variations directly affect skin hydration, sebaceous gland activity, sweating, and hair health. During summer, excessive heat may aggravate *Pitta*, leading to pigmentation, acne, and rashes, while winter aggravates *Vata*, causing dryness and roughness. Seasonal adaptation through appropriate diet, lifestyle, and external therapies helps maintain healthy skin and prevents seasonal cosmetic problems.²⁷

Dietary regulation (*Ahara*) remains one of the most important aspects of Ayurvedic cosmetology. Ayurveda states that improper diet and weak

digestion are major causes of skin diseases and premature aging. Consumption of fresh fruits, green vegetables, milk, ghee, and Rasayana substances provides nourishment to body tissues and supports healthy skin. On the other hand, excessive intake of spicy, oily, processed, and incompatible foods (*Viruddha Ahara*) may lead to acne, dull complexion, pigmentation, and inflammatory skin disorders.²⁸

Mental health also has a profound influence on cosmetic appearance. Chronic stress, anxiety, anger, and sleep deprivation disturb hormonal balance and accelerate aging processes. Swasthavritta emphasizes *Sadvritta*, meditation, Yoga, and proper sleep to maintain psychological equilibrium. Scientific evidence supports the role of stress reduction in improving skin conditions such as acne, psoriasis, eczema, and premature aging.²⁹

Panchakarma therapies contribute significantly to Ayurvedic cosmetology through detoxification and metabolic correction. *Virechana* is particularly beneficial in Pitta-dominant skin disorders and improves complexion by purifying blood and gastrointestinal pathways. *Raktamokshana* is described for conditions involving vitiated blood such as acne, hyperpigmentation, and inflammatory lesions. These therapies not only provide symptomatic relief but also address the root cause of cosmetic disorders.³⁰

Rasayana therapy acts as a rejuvenative approach in cosmetology. Drugs like Amalaki, Guduchi, Ashwagandha, and Shatavari possess antioxidant, immunomodulatory, and anti-aging properties. Regular use of Rasayana helps delay degenerative changes, improves tissue nourishment, and promotes healthy aging.³¹

In recent years, the global cosmetic industry has shown increasing interest in herbal and natural beauty products due to concerns regarding adverse effects of synthetic chemicals. Ayurvedic cosmetology offers a safer and more sustainable alternative by utilizing natural herbs, individualized treatment approaches, and preventive healthcare measures. Furthermore, integration of Ayurvedic lifestyle principles with modern dermatology and cosmetology may provide better long-term outcomes in skin and hair care management.³²

Thus, Swasthavritta serves not only as a preventive healthcare system but also as a comprehensive cosmetic science that promotes physical beauty, mental wellbeing, and healthy aging through natural and holistic methods.

IV. CONCLUSION

Swasthavritta procedures constitute an essential foundation of Ayurvedic cosmetology by emphasizing prevention, health promotion, and maintenance of natural beauty through holistic principles. Ayurveda recognizes that true beauty originates from internal balance, proper digestion, healthy tissues, purified body channels, and mental harmony rather than mere external appearance. Therefore, the principles of Swasthavritta provide a comprehensive approach for maintaining cosmetic health and preventing premature aging. Daily regimens such as *Abhyanga*, *Udvardhana*, *Mukhalepa*, *Nasya*, *Snana*, and oral hygiene practices help preserve skin texture, complexion, elasticity, and hair health. Seasonal regimens (*Ritucharya*) aid in protecting the body from environmental and climatic effects that commonly produce cosmetic disorders. Proper diet, adequate sleep, Yoga, meditation, and ethical conduct contribute significantly toward hormonal balance, stress reduction, tissue nourishment, and healthy skin metabolism. Panchakarma and Rasayana therapies further enhance cosmetic wellbeing through detoxification, rejuvenation, and anti-aging effects. These therapies improve tissue nutrition, circulation, immunity, and cellular regeneration while minimizing the risk of chronic skin disorders and early degenerative changes. The use of herbal preparations and natural procedures makes Ayurvedic cosmetology comparatively safer, economical, sustainable, and suitable for long-term use. Modern cosmetology increasingly acknowledges the importance of holistic wellness, lifestyle modification, stress management, and herbal therapies, which closely align with Ayurvedic concepts. Scientific validation of Ayurvedic herbs and Swasthavritta procedures may further strengthen their role in integrative cosmetology and preventive dermatology. Therefore, incorporation of Swasthavritta principles into contemporary cosmetic practice can provide a multidimensional approach that not only enhances external appearance but also improves overall health, quality of life, and psychological wellbeing. Ayurvedic cosmetology, supported by Swasthavritta, represents a unique preventive healthcare model capable of promoting healthy and graceful aging through natural and holistic measures.

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