

# SAINDHAVA IN KSHEERAVASTHI

*An observational study*

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## Abstract

*Vasthi* is said to be a preventive, promotive and curative therapeutic intervention and is considered as *ardhachikitsa* among all therapies by different *acharyas*. *Ksheera vasthi* is a *mrudu niruha vasthi*. Functionally it acts as a *dosha shamana* and *brimhana vasthi*. It is mainly indicated in *asthi pradoshaja* and *majjavaha sroto vikaras* and when there is involvement of *pitta* and *rakta*. There is reference of *ksheera* being used as *kashaya dravya* and also as *avapa dravya* in *vasthi kalpa* and it is these formulations that are considered as *ksheera vasthi*. This observational study analyzed data from 40 participants who underwent *Ksheeravasthi* at VPSV Ayurveda College Hospital, Kottakkal, between November 1, 2024 and December 15, 2024. Notably, some participants received *Saindhava* (rock salt) as an ingredient while others did not. This variability prompted an investigation into the rationale behind the inclusion or exclusion of *Saindhava* in *Ksheeravasthi* preparations. Our findings will shed light on the theoretical and practical implications of using *Saindhava* in *Ksheeravasthi*, contributing to the optimization of this Ayurvedic treatment.

**Keywords :** *Vasthi, Ksheeravasthi, Saindhava*

## Introduction

*Vasthi*, a pivotal procedure among the *panchakarma* therapies in ayurveda, is traditionally indicated for *vata*-related disorders. However, its therapeutic scope extends to treating conditions associated with *pitta*, *kapha*, *samsarga* and *sannipataja doshas* as well as *marmagata*, *sakhagata*, and *kosthagata roga*. Specifically, *ksheera vasti*, a type of *mrudu niruha vasthi* functions as a *dosha shamana* and *brimhana vasthi*, providing nourishment and balance. It is mainly indicated in *asthi pradoshaja* and *majjavaha sroto vikaras*<sup>1</sup> and when there is involvement of *pitta* and *rakta*. *Asthi* and *majja* is the seat of *vata*<sup>2</sup>, also *asthi* and *vata* have *ashraya ashrayi* relationship. *Ksheera vasthi* nourishes the *asthi dhatu* and thereby pacifies its dependent *vata dosha*.

## Specific indications of *ksheeravasthi*

*Ksheeravasthi* is indicated in *asthivaha srotogata vyadhi*<sup>3</sup>, *pittaja gulma*<sup>4</sup>, *plihodara*<sup>5</sup>, *visa chikitsa*<sup>6</sup>, *garbhakshaya*<sup>7</sup>, *halimaka*<sup>8</sup>, *pitta raktaja shirashoola* treatment<sup>9</sup>, *vatarakta*<sup>10</sup>, *sukumara* where *shodhana* is indicated<sup>11</sup>, *pittodara*<sup>12</sup>, in the treatment of complications like *daha*, *jwara*, *murcha*<sup>13</sup> and in treatment of *parisrava* and *parikartika vyapad*<sup>14</sup> as *yapana vasthi*<sup>15</sup>

Prior to examining the role of ingredients in *Ksheeravasthi*, it is essential to explore the ingredients of *Niruha Vasthi* as described in classical Ayurvedic texts, providing a foundational understanding of the therapeutic components involved.

## Quantity of *vasthi dravya*

**Table 1** - Components of *niruha vasthi* according to different texts

<i>Vasthi dravya</i>	<i>Susrutha</i> <sup>16</sup>	<i>Caraka</i> <sup>17</sup>	<i>Sharangadhara</i> <sup>18</sup>	<i>Kasyapa</i> <sup>19</sup>
<i>Madhu</i>	4 <i>pala</i>	4 <i>pala</i>	4 <i>pala</i>	4 <i>pala</i>
<i>Saindhava</i>	1 <i>aksha</i>	1 <i>karsha</i>	1 <i>aksha</i>	½ <i>karsha</i>
<i>Sneha</i>	6 <i>pala</i>	6 <i>pala</i>	6 <i>pala</i>	4 <i>pala</i>
<i>Kalka</i>	2 <i>pala</i>	2 <i>pala</i>	2 <i>pala</i>	2 <i>pala</i>
<i>Kwatha</i>	8 <i>pala</i>	8 <i>pala</i>	8 <i>pala</i>	8 <i>pala</i>
<i>Avapa dravya</i>	4 <i>pala</i>	4 <i>pala</i>		2 <i>pala</i>

**Quantity of *vasthi dravya* according to *dosha*<sup>17</sup>****Table 2 -** Quantity of ingredients according to *dosha*

Ingredients of <i>vasthi</i>	<i>Vata</i>	<i>Pitha</i>	<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Swastha</i>
<i>Madhu</i>	1 ½ <i>prasrtha</i>	2 <i>prasrtha</i>	3 <i>prasrtha</i>	2 <i>prasrtha</i>
<i>Saindhava</i>	1 <i>tola</i>	1 <i>tola</i>	1 <i>tola</i>	1 <i>tola</i>
<i>Sneha</i>	3 <i>prasrtha</i>	2 <i>prasrtha</i>	1 ½ <i>prasrtha</i>	2 <i>prasrtha</i>
<i>Kalka</i>	1 <i>prasrtha</i>	1 <i>prasrtha</i>	1 <i>prasrtha</i>	1 <i>prasrtha</i>
<i>Kwatha</i>	5 <i>prasrtha</i>	5 <i>prasrtha</i>	5 <i>prasrtha</i>	5 <i>prasrtha</i>
<i>Avapa dravya</i>	1 ½ <i>prasrtha</i>	2 <i>prasrtha</i>	1 ½ <i>prasrtha</i>	2 <i>prasrtha</i>

***Saindhava in niruha vasthi***

In classics, *saindhava* is mentioned as a crucial ingredient in *niruha vasthi* formulations. Notably, the quantity of *saindhava* added to *niruha vasthi* formulations remains consistent across different *dosha* predominant conditions. *Vasthi dravya* is neither too *usna* (hot) nor too *sheetha* (cool), neither too *snigdha* (unctuous) nor too *rūksa* (non unctuous), neither too *tiksṇa* (sharp) nor too *mrudu* (bland), neither too *accha* (thin) nor too *sandra* (thick), neither too much in *matra* (quantity) nor too less in quantity; neither with too much *lavana* (salt), nor completely without *lavana*.

***Saindhava in ksheeravasthi***

In the context of *panchaprasrthika vasthi*, two *prasrta* of *ksheera* and three *prasrtas* of *madhu*, *taila* and *ghrita* are taken together and churned with a churning stick. *Panchaprasruthika vasti* which indicates the ingredients of *ksheeravasthi* does not include *kalka*. Since this *vasthi* is prescribed with specific quantity of drugs, the general rule of undescribed *kalka* should not be used here. When the description of the ingredients are not strictly specified, the quantity of drugs can be decided according to the utility of *vasthi*. But inclusion of *saindhava* is definite and cannot be excluded.

*Lavana* being one among *shadrasa* has the properties of *sookshma*, *snigdha*, *laghu*, *vishyandi*, *tikshna*, *ushna*, *vataghna* and *anabhishyandi*. It has *sheeta virya* and *madhura vipaka*. It also functions as *deepana*, *pachana* and *tridoshagna* and promotes proper *vatanulomana*. As *saindhava* is *laghu*, *teekshna*, *sukshma* and *anushna veerya* it is having the capacity to cleanse the channels. Due to the *sukshma guna*, it can facilitate the drug's entry into the micro-channels. Disorders of *vasti* like decreased expulsion or excessive elimination can occur if *saindhava* is insufficient or absent and when in excess respectively. Regular salt normally increases *pitta dosha*, whereas *saindhava lavana* being *sheeta virya* helps to balance *pitta*. It relieves *kapha* and balances *vata* by virtue of its *rasa*.<sup>16</sup> Some practitioners perform *ksheeravasthi* without adding *saindhava*.

As there are two different practices, it was decided to observe the *ksheeravasthi* procedures conducted in the college hospital during a specific time period and identify the disease condition for which the procedure was done.

**Methodology**

This observational study analyzed data from 40 participants who underwent *ksheeravasthi* at VPSV Ayurveda College Hospital, Kottakkal, between November 1, 2024, and December 15, 2024.

**Observations**

Out of 40 participants, who underwent *ksheeravasthi*, 16 participants received *saindhava* as an additive and the remaining 24 participants received the treatment without *saindhava*.

**Table 3 –** Distribution of cases with and without *Saindhava* as an additive in *Ksheeravasthi*

Diagnosis	Percentage of <i>ksheeravasthi</i> without <i>saindhava</i>	Percentage of <i>ksheeravasthi</i> with <i>saindhava</i>
<i>Gridhrasi</i>	30%	20%
<i>Sandhigata vata</i>	22.5%	7.5%

<i>Paithiki</i>		7.5%
<i>Charma kushta</i>		7.5%
<i>Unmada</i>		5%

## Discussion

*Saindhava* is a crucial ingredient in *niruha vasthi*, mentioned by *Sushruta* and *Sharangadhara* in *aksha pramana*, *Caraka* in *karsha pramana* and half *karsha* by *Kasyapa*. Notably, the quantity of *saindhava* remains consistent across different *dosha* predominances. While *ksheeravasthi* can be considered a type of *niruha vasthi*, the inclusion of *saindhava* is not explicitly mentioned in descriptions of *pancha-prasrutika vasthi* and *vrishya vasthi*. However, *saindhava* plays a vital role in other types of *vasthi*, such as *ksheeravaitaranavasthi* and *yapana vasthi*. This raises questions about the necessity of adding *saindhava* to all *ksheeravasthi* preparations. To investigate this, an observational study was conducted on 40 participants to explore the practical implications of *saindhava* in *ksheeravasthi*. The findings highlight the significance of *saindhava* in *ksheeravasthi* preparations. The inclusion of *saindhava* was found to have a positive impact on certain health conditions, such as *gridhrasi* and *sandhigatavata*. The use of *saindhava* in *ksheeravasthi* can be explained by its pharmacological properties. As a *laghu*, *teekshna*, *sukshma*, and *anushna veerya* substance, *saindhava* has the capacity to cleanse the channels and facilitate the entry of drugs into micro-channels. The study's findings have practical implications for the optimization of *ksheeravasthi* treatment. The inclusion of *saindhava* in *ksheeravasthi* preparations may enhance the treatment's efficacy in addressing certain health conditions.

The *vasthi dravya* which is *seeta*, *alpa sneha*, *alpa lavana* may aggravate the *dosha* instead of expelling it out because of its poor strength.<sup>20</sup> When *saindhava* is absent or present in insufficient amounts, *ayoga* results, and when it is present in excess, *daha* and *atisara* occur. *Saindhava* occupies a superior place in the *lavana skandha* because of its unique properties like *sheeta virya*. Due to this it balances *pitta* while regular salt causes the opposite effect. It relieves *kapha* and balances *vata* by virtue of its *lavana rasa*.<sup>16</sup> There is another opinion that *saindhava* and *kalka* are not to be used for *ksheeravasthi*. *Ksheeradi* are added to make *vasthi mridu*. *Saindhava* adding may make it more *ruksha* and therefore it is avoided.

## Limitations

This study has some limitations. The sample size was relatively small, and the study was observational in nature. Future studies should aim to recruit larger sample sizes and conduct prospective research that considers baseline characteristics such as *dosha* predominance, *agni* and *koshta* to further investigate the therapeutic role of *saindhava* in *ksheeravasthi*.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the study's findings suggest that *saindhava* plays a significant role in *ksheeravasthi* practice. The inclusion of *saindhava* in *ksheeravasthi* preparations may enhance the treatment's efficacy in addressing certain health conditions. Further research is needed to fully understand the therapeutic implications of *saindhava* in *ksheeravasthi*.

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