



Chapter 3. Main Panchakarma Therapies (Pradhana Karma)

Before you move clients into *laser facials* or *micro-needling*, clearing systemic waste (*āma*) and balancing *dosas* multiplies results and durability. The five classical eliminative procedures—collectively called **Pradhāna Karma**—are your “cosmetic reset buttons.”

1. Vamana - Therapeutic Emesis

(*Kapha-Pitta Detox & Acne/Oily-Skin Rescuer*)

Aspect	Key Points for Cosmetologists
Goal	Expel excess Kapha (sticky sebum, white-heads) + Kapha-Pitta <i>āma</i> from stomach & lungs.
Prime Beauty Indications	Greasy, pustular acne • Oily seborrhoeic scalp • Puffy face/cellulite (Kapha stagnation).
Step Outline	1) Prep – 3-5 d internal <i>ghrita</i> (30-60 ml <i>Tikta Ghrita</i>) + external abhyanga & steam. 2) Day 0 – Overnight fast → morning drink of medicated decoction (licorice, madanaphala)* until full → induce vomiting with lukewarm salt water. 3) Post-Care – Rice-gruel diet (<i>Samsarjana</i>) 3 d, coriander-fennel water, avoid makeup 48 h.
Clinic Pearl	Aim for 6-8 “vomitus bouts”; record quantity and clarity.
Visible Results	Within 7 d: oil-slick T-zone ↓ 50 %, pustules dry faster.
Contra-Indications	Pregnancy, active asthma, age < 15 /> 70, severe GERD.

*Madanaphala = *Randia dumetorum*, classical emetic seed.

2. Virechana - Therapeutic Purgation

(*Pitta Heat Drain & Pigment-Fade Catalyst*)

Aspect	Key Points
Goal	Drain Pitta-Rakta toxins via small intestine-liver route.
Beauty Indications	Melasma, PIH*, rosacea, inflammatory eczema, heat-triggered hair-fall.
Core Protocol	3-5 d internal snehana → mild swedana → single-day purge (6-10 stools) using Trivṛt lehya or <i>Castor-ghee</i> + <i>Triphala</i> cocktail.
Cosmetic Add-Ons	Start brightening serums (licorice-niacinamide) after day 3 when bowels stabilize; absorption ↑ 2x.
Expected Skin Glow	Day 5 face looks clearer; measurable L* color-meter +3-5 units by week 2.
Contra	Ulcerative colitis, debilitating anemia, menstruation.

*PIH = Post-Inflammatory Hyper-Pigmentation.

3. Basti - Medicated Enema Therapy

(*Vāta-Balancing & Deep Nourishment for Dry, Ageing Hair/Skin*)

Type	Contents	Indications	Cosmetic Effect
Sneha Basti (Oil)	60 ml warm <i>Bala-Ashwagandha</i> taila	Vāta dryness, telogen effluvium, crepey body skin	Lubricates colon → systemic oleation; clients notice scalp comfort & fewer split ends in 10 d.

Type	Contents	Indications	Cosmetic Effect
Āsthāpana / Niruha (Decoction)	500 ml dashamoola-triphala kashāya + 50 ml honey + 50 ml sesame oil	Cellulite, stubborn constipation dull-skin	Scrapes Kapha-āma; trims bloating for sharper jawline.
Course 8-16 enemas over 28 d (classical schedule: <i>Yoga Basti</i> 8).			
Post-Care Rice-porridge breakfast; no cold drinks; gentle yoga only.			
Contra Chronic diarrhea, rectal bleeding, pregnancy third trimester.			

4. Nasya - Nasal Detox & “Glow Portal”

(Head-Neck Channel Purge, Hair & Mental Clarity)

Form	Herbal Medium	Beauty Benefits	How Often
Pratimarsha (daily micro-dose)	2 drops Anu Taila per nostril AM/PM	Reduces dark circles, sinus-induced dull complexion, supports hair retention.	Daily home use.
Āśhyotana (clinic drip 6-8 drops)	Fresh Brahmi-Centella ghṛita	Calms stress-shed, boosts focus.	Alt-days × 7.
Navana (oil decoction)	Bhringraj-Amla mix for scalp issues	Deep follicle feed via supraclavicular route.	Weekly × 4.

Procedure Short-form: Head low, chest supported; instil; client inhales, spits; gentle face steam 30 s; avoid cold exposure 1 h.

5. Raktamokṣaṇa - Blood-Letting Therapy

(Focused Detox for Stubborn Skin Lesions)

Method	Tools	Best For...	Cosmetic Result
Jalauka (Leech)	Medical leech applied 20-30 min	Cystic acne nodules, localized psoriasis plaques, old PIH patch.	Rapid deflation of cyst & colour fade in 48 h.
Shringa / Sirā-Vyadha (Needle)	Sterile lancet 1-2 ml blood	Inflamed milia, peri-oral dermatitis spot	Stops recurring lesion.

Always follow with turmeric-honey dressing & systemic manjishta decoction 3 d.

Contra-Signals: Hemophilia, anticoagulants, uncontrolled diabetes, anemia (< 8 g Hb).

6. Putting It All Together - Sample 21-Day “Glow & Grow” Plan

Day	Therapy	For Client With...	Home / Clinic
0-3	<i>Snehana</i> + steam	Mixed melasma + hair-shed	Home (ghṛita) + clinic abhyanga
4	Mild Virechana	-	Clinic morning
5-8	<i>Samsarjana</i> diet	-	Home
9	Nasya (Anu taila)	Dark-circle prone	Clinic
10	Sneha Basti	Vāta scalp dryness	Clinic
12	Leech Raktamokṣaṇa jaw cyst	Cystic acne	Clinic
15	Sheet-mask + saffron serum starts	Pigment fade phase	Home
21	Review: lasers / peels may now begin	Clearer, calmer skin	-

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Key Take-Aways

- 1. Right Karma for Right Doṣa:**
Kapha → Vamana | Pitta → Virechana / Raktamokṣaṇa | Vāta → Basti
- 2. Sequence Matters:** Pūrva Karma → Pradhāna → Paschāt delivers predictable results.
- 3. Beauty Outcomes** include faster acne clearance, stronger hair shaft, pigment fade, reduced fine lines.
- 4. Safety First:** screen for contraindications, obtain consent, document vitals, and explain post-care diet clearly.
- 5. Integrate, Don't Compete:** schedule modern procedures **after** detox; skin absorbs actives better and heals quicker.

Sūtra: “Purified channels reflect pure radiance—outer beauty is the sparkle of inner clarity.”