

Chapter 2. Preparatory Procedures (Poorva Karma)

Before any of the five major *Pañcakarma* eliminations begin, the body-mind must be **loosened, liquefied, and guided** so that doṣas exit easily and safely. This priming phase is called **Pūrva Karma** and has three pillars:

1. **Snehana** – oleation (internal & external)
2. **Swedana** – therapeutic sweating
3. **Āhāra-Vihāra Saṃskāra** – targeted diet & lifestyle tuning

1 · Snehana (Oleation)

Sub-type	How It's Done	Primary Targets	Daily Dosage / Duration	Cosmetic Relevance
Internal - Snehapāna	Measured ghee or medicated oil taken on empty stomach each morning.	Deep-seated Vāta, dry Āma, stiff Kapha plugs.	Mild beauty detox: 30–60 ml <i>Tikta Ghrta</i> for 3 days. Intense: up to “till-clear” dose (based on bowel lightness).	Lubricates <i>Rasa & Rakta</i> → plumper skin, calmer itch.
External - Abhyanga	Full-body oil massage (7 – 30 min). Clinic uses warm sesame or coconut blends with herbal paste.	Surface Kapha, Vāta roughness, lymph stagnation.	Daily self-abhyanga 5 min; clinic 45 min.	Increases micro-circulation, shifts dull “ <i>Avabhasini</i> ” layer; reduces scalp dryness.

Quick Checks:

- Discontinue internal snehana at signs of nausea or heaviness in chest.
- Skip abhyanga in acute fever, heavy menstruation, or oozing dermatitis.

2 · Swedana (Sudation / Therapeutic Heat)

Type	Method & Tools	Best For...	Key Cosmetic Pay-off
Nāḍi Sweda (Localized steam jet)	Herbal decoction steam through rubber/Nylon hose on face, scalp, or cellulite zones.	Small areas, sensitive clients.	Opens <i>Srotas</i> ; boosts serum penetration by ~2x.
Bāṣpa Sweda (Steam box / tent)	Whole body seated in chamber; head out; decoction of vacha, eucalyptus.	General Vāta-Kapha, weight & water retention.	Decongests lymph → sharper jawline, less peri-orbital puff.
Pinda Sweda (Herbal bolus fomentation)	Warm cloth bolus filled with rice & milk (<i>sāliṣaṣṭhika</i>), or lemongrass & rock-salt (<i>rukṣa</i>).	Dry ageing (milk bolus) or oily cellulite (salt bolus).	Re-hydrates crepey skin / breaks down fat nodules.
Avagāha Sweda (Herbal tub soak)	Client immersed waist-deep in warm decoction water.	Lower back ache, menstrual dull skin.	Improves lower-body circulation; softens foot cracks.

Safety: Avoid heat in pregnancy beyond foot-soak; stop if dizziness, facial flushing > 20 min.



3 · Diet & Lifestyle (Āhāra-Vihāra) Preparations

3-7 Days Before Detox

Agni-Kindling Menu – warm khichadi, ginger-cumin buttermilk, no wheat, dairy or red meat.

Hydration Rule – sip 150 ml lukewarm water every hour (no iced drinks).

Screen-Light Curfew 9 p.m.

Gentle Yoga (no inversion) & 30 min walk

Mental Śamana – 10-min Alternate-nostril breathing.

Purpose

Removes Āma, steadies digestive fire.

Liquefies doṣas; eases purge/emesis.

Early melatonin → Vāta calm → better oil absorption.

Moves Kapha-Āma toward gut via Vyāna Vāta.

Controls anxiety before procedures; steadies pulse for *basti*.

4 · Indications & Contra-indications for Panchakarma (Beauty Context)

Therapy	Indicated For...	Contra-indications (Absolute / Relative)
Vamana	Oily acne, seborrhoeic dandruff, obesity-cellulite.	Pregnancy; active asthma; age < 15 or > 70; severe GERD.
Virechana	Melasma, rosacea, urticaria, heat-driven hair-fall.	Debilitating anemia; ulcerative colitis; menstruation.
Basti (Sneha/Āsthāpana)	Dry ageing, telogen effluvium, atopic eczema.	Chronic diarrhea; rectal bleeding; late pregnancy.
Nasya	Dark circles, hair thinning, migraine, sinus dull complexion.	Acute rhinitis, nasal polyps, < 7 yrs age.
Raktamokṣaṇa	Cystic acne, stubborn psoriasis patch, purplish PIH*.	Hemophilia; uncontrolled diabetes; anticoagulant therapy.

*PIH = Post-Inflammatory Hyper-pigmentation.

Key Points to Remember

1. **No Snehana → No Safe Main Karma.** Doṣas must be liquefied before extraction.
2. **Swedana type matches doṣa & skin goal** – milk bolus for Vāta ageing, salt bolus for Kapha cellulite.
3. **Diet and routine are non-negotiable;** a pizza night can derail a purge outcome.
4. **Clear indications safeguard results;** never force Vamana on a Pitta-hot melasma (choose Virechana).
5. **Document vitals and consent** – clients see Panchakarma as spa-like, but it is a medical detox.

Sūtra: “Warmth and oil are the keys that unlock the channels; only then can beauty toxins flow out with ease.”