

## **SACRAMENT CHUDAKARMA**

This ceremony of shaving the scalp hair is the eight Sacrament and is known by Chudakarma.

It is commonly called Mundan Sanskar. Literally Chuda means vortex or tuft of hair on the crown of head. The Brain lies inside the skull bone. By growing a tuft of hair (Choti) over the Skull provides extra protection to the underlying Brain.

Ideally this Sacrament should be performed in the first year or third year of a child or whenever it is convenient to the parents. This Sacrament should be performed during the fortnight of full moon period or whichever day is convenient to the parents. But it is important to perform this Sacrament with full faith, devotion and happiness, as written in "Sanskar Vidhi" by Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati.

We know that a child is born with scalp hair. By shaving the scalp hair once or twice after the birth makes the roots of scalp hair stronger. Shaving the scalp hair keeps head cool. The scalp skin is more healthy and less chance of getting any skin disease. This Sacrament protects scalp from various skin diseases, prolongs life and gives a healthy body.

### **Points to remember**

1. We know that Brain is contained in Skull bone. All our five senses and controlling centres of different parts of our body reside in Brain. The development of Brain is nearly complete in the first three years of a child's life. So it is better to perform this Sacrament in third year of the child. Scalp hair provides some protection to the Brain of a child.
2. The relation of this Sacrament with teething - Lot of things happen in the body of a child at the time of teething. The gums swell up and  
  
painful, droving of saliva, redness of eyes and child becomes irritable etcetera. In this period of teething the shaving of scalp hair helps the child.

### **Now I will tell you about important rites of this Sacrament.**

1. Use of Rice, Barley, Sesame, Horse Bean (Urad dal) - Before the beginning of this Sacrament one should place these cereals in four small bowls in four corners of Havan alter. At the end of this Sacrament these cereals should be donated to the barber who shaves the child's scalp hair. It is a righteous action to donate money, clothes, cereals and useful objects as remuneration to the priest and barber performing this Sacrament. But now a days it is convenient to donate money to the priest and barber. But this will depend on the circumstances prevailing in that country and place. The main aim is to remunerate the hounarable guests in a proper way.
2. To collect the scalp hair- The fallen scalp hair should be collected with help of cow dung if available or a ball of chapati flour. Now a days it is better to use a half cooked Roti for keeping most of the scalp hair and hair on the floor can be collected by using a ball of chapati flour. One has to be careful NOT to use cow dung on the shaved skull of a child because cow dung may contain bacteria for Tetanus which is life threatening disease.
3. To keep razor blade in boiling water for some time- The barber should use a clean razor blade for cutting the child hair. This should be done by keeping the blade in boiling water for good few minutes. This process will kill most of the bacteria lying on the blade.

4. Use of Dharbh (a kind of grass) in cutting the hair- According to "Sanskar Vidhi" one should cut a bunch of hair from five different parts of the scalp with a scissor while holding a bunch of hair with pieces of grass near the roots of the hair. The grass helps in holding and cutting the hair near its roots. This part of ceremony is carried out by the father of the child. Two bunch of hair from left side and two bunch of hair from right side and one bunch of hair from the top of the skull should be cut with help of a scissor by the father. There are five

sutures in skull bone. This ceremony is performed under the guidance of a learned priest while reciting Ved Mantras. These Mantras describe the development of child's Brain. After this ceremony the father hands over the child to the barber while reciting Ved Mantras in order to complete the shaving of scalp with due care. An experienced barber cuts all the scalp hair without cutting the scalp skin. Using the grass with hair while cutting with scissor helps the inexperienced father. If grass is not available then priest ties the bunch of hair with thread and helps the father to cut the hair with a scissor.

5. There is an important point to know that Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati has written that whether a son or a daughter both should be given equal right and respect while performing this Sacrament. According to the teachings of Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati all children, irrespective of their sex, should be given all the sixteen Sacraments with equal dignity, respect and rights. This is the best example of not differentiating in children on the basis of their sex, male or female.
6. Towards the end of this Sacrament parents should apply Yoghurt or buttery cream over shaved skull of the child. The child should be cleaned by giving shower or bath and then brought back to the Havan alter. The rubbing of yoghurt or cream over scalp acts as an antiseptic and moisturiser to the scalp.

The present guests bless the child for a long healthy, happy and a prosperous life in future.

The parents of the child provide food to the present guests and say thank you and goodbye to the guests in a respectful way.