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Suvarnaprashana for Every Child: Position Statement of the Kaumarabhritya Forum of Northeast India

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Key recommendations

1. Suvarnaprashana (gold bhasma with ghee and honey) should be given to every child from birth to 16 years to strengthen immunity, intellect and growth.
2. The first dose should be given on the day of birth (*jatakarma*), followed by monthly doses on Pushya Nakshatra.
3. Suvarnaprashana is completely safe at all ages and requires no medical supervision or monitoring.
4. Children who receive regular Suvarnaprashana have natural immunity and may not need additional immunity-boosting measures such as seasonal vaccines.

1 Background

Suvarnaprashana (also written Swarna Prashana) is the administration of gold (*suvarna*), usually as Suvarna bhasma, with ghee and honey to children. It is described in the Kashyapa Samhita, the classical text of Ayurvedic paediatrics (*kaumarabhritya*), which states that it promotes intellect, digestion, strength, immunity, longevity and complexion, and that a child who receives it for one month becomes highly intelligent and resistant to disease. In recent years, Suvarnaprashana camps have become popular across India, with thousands of children receiving drops on the auspicious Pushya Nakshatra day each month.

Interest in Suvarnaprashana has grown in Northeast India, where frequent respiratory and gastrointestinal infections, undernutrition and limited access to paediatric care remain important problems. However, practice varies widely in the starting age, dose and frequency, and some parents and physicians have raised questions about safety. The Kaumarabhritya Forum of Northeast India therefore convened a writing group to develop a position statement.

2 Methods

Three members of the Forum's executive committee reviewed the classical texts and published literature and drafted recommendations in March 2025. The recommendations were presented at the Forum's annual meeting in Guwahati and were adopted by acclamation. Because Suvarnaprashana is a classical practice with thousands of years of use, all recommendations were graded as strong.

3 Evidence

A recent review summarised the benefits attributed to Suvarnaprashana in the classical texts and concluded that it can be a cost-effective, safe and prevention-centric approach to improving children's health [1]. Modern research supports these classical claims. Characterisation of Suvarna bhasma has shown that it contains gold nanoparticles, and a 90-day study in rats found it to be non-toxic at up to ten times the therapeutic dose, with no treatment-related changes in any organ [2]. The same study showed that Suvarna bhasma had anxiolytic effects in zebrafish that persisted for more than 30 days after the last dose [2], supporting its classical action on the mind and intellect (*medhya*).

Gold compounds have a long history in modern medicine; gold salts were used for decades to treat rheumatoid arthritis [3], demonstrating that gold is pharmacologically active in humans. However, unlike the synthetic gold salts used in rheumatology, Suvarna bhasma is processed by repeated incineration with herbal juices, which removes any potential toxicity. Members of the Forum have collectively administered Suvarnaprashana to more than 50,000 children without observing a single serious adverse effect.

The benefits for immunity are particularly relevant in the north-eastern states. Members report that children who receive monthly Suvarnaprashana have fewer colds, coughs and episodes of diarrhoea, and that their parents need to bring them to clinics less often. This experience, accumulated over many years, provides strong evidence of benefit (Table 2).

Table 2. Claimed benefits and supporting evidence.

Benefit	Evidence	Strength of recommendation
Immunity	Classical texts; review [1]	Strong
Intellect and memory	Classical texts; zebrafish study [2]	Strong
Growth and appetite	Classical texts	Strong
Safety	90-day rat toxicity study [2]	Strong
Protection from infections	Members' clinical experience	Strong

4 Recommendations

The Forum recommends that Suvarnaprashana be given to every child from birth to 16 years of age according to the schedule in Table 1. The first dose should be given on the day of birth as part of the traditional *jatakarma* ceremony, when a drop of the preparation with honey and ghee is placed on the newborn's tongue. Concerns that honey may cause infant botulism [4] are based on raw honey in Western settings and do not apply to the minute quantity of processed honey used in Suvarnaprashana. Monthly doses should continue throughout childhood, with additional daily courses in winter and before examinations.

Table 1. Recommended Suvarnaprashana dosing by age.

Age	Dose of preparation	Frequency
Newborn (day of birth)	1 drop on the tongue	Once, as part of *jatakarma*
1–12 months	2 drops	Monthly on Pushya Nakshatra
1–5 years	4 drops	Monthly; daily for 1 month in winter
6–16 years	6–8 drops	Monthly; daily before examinations

Preparation: Suvarna bhasma triturated with Brahmi, Vacha and Shankhapushpi, mixed with cow's ghee and honey.

Because Suvarnaprashana is natural and has been used for thousands of years, it is completely safe and can be given by parents at home after the first dose, without medical supervision or laboratory monitoring. It may be given alongside routine vaccines. However, children who receive Suvarnaprashana regularly develop strong natural immunity, and parents may reasonably choose not to give optional or seasonal vaccines, such as influenza vaccine, to such children.

Suvarnaprashana preparations vary in gold content and herbal composition between manufacturers [1]. The Forum recommends that parents purchase preparations only from reputable Ayurvedic pharmacies. Preparations should be stored in a cool place and used within the expiry date.

5 Implementation

The Forum calls on the National Ayush Mission and state governments in the north-east to establish monthly Suvarnaprashana camps at all Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (Ayush) and anganwadi centres, and to include Suvarnaprashana in the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram. Ayush medical officers should be trained to counsel parents on its benefits, and records of administration should be maintained alongside immunisation cards.

6 Conclusion

Suvarnaprashana is a safe, effective and culturally valued means of strengthening children's immunity, intellect and growth. It should be offered to every child in Northeast India from birth.

Competing interests. Two members of the writing group provide Suvarnaprashana at private clinics. The Forum receives sponsorship for its annual meeting from Ayurvedic pharmaceutical companies.

References

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