

**What is Upakarma?** - Upakarma, means "Beginning" and it is historically, the day was considered auspicious for beginning the Vedic studies. This is on this day one has to start study of Vedas after doing samarpana of what he has studied in the earlier years. Without doing Utsarjana and Upakarma, one will not get punya even if he does veda parayana, japa, etc.

**What is Utsarjana?** - Samarpana of what we have studied from previous Upakarma to this Upakarma to Vedavyasadevaru which is termed as “Utsarjana”. All Brahmins must study Vedaas and other Madhwa Shastraas.

### Necessity of Upakarma -

geetI, shIGrI, shira:kaMpi, tathaa liKitapaaThaka: |  
anarthajno,alpakaMThashcha paDEtE paaThakaadhamaa:||paaNinIshikShaa)  
ಗೀತೀ, ಶೀಘ್ರೀ, ಶಿರ:ಕಂಪಿ, ತಥಾ ಲಿಖಿತಪಾಠಕ: |

ಅನರ್ಥಜ್ಞೋ, ಅಲ್ಪಕಂಠಶ್ಚ ಪಠೇತೇ ಪಾಠಕಾಧಮಾ: || ಪಾಣಿನೀ ಶಿಕ್ಷಾ)

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While chanting Vedaas/ others, sometimes, a) we will chant in a wrong style, b) We will chant very urgently for some urgent work, c) We will unnecessarily shake our head while chanting Vedaas, d) Some times, there will be mistake in the print of the Vedaas itself e) We will not be knowing the meaning of the Veda mantra, but chanting f) While chanting Vedaas, we will talk with others, do some jokes, g) mantraheena, svara varna dosha, etc.

To overcome all these sins, upakarma is a must.

### When is the day for upakarma?

**Rugveda** - Shravana Hunnime with Shravana nakshatra

**Yajurveda** - Shravana Hunnime

**Samaveda** – Shravana Masa when Hasta Nakshatra falls

Rugveda Upakarma is done normally on Shravana Hunnime with Shravana Nakshatra. But Yajurveda Upakarma is done normally on Shravana Hunnime itself.

### Who are all to do Upakarma and Utsarjana –

- All Brahmacharis, Gruhastas, Vanaprasthas to do upakarma and utsarjana.
- All Vedaas Rugvedees, Yajurvedees, Samavedees and Atharvana Vedees to do upakarma and utsarjana.

### Rushees worshipped during Upakarma : -

**Rugveda** – All Sapta Rushees viz., Kashyapa, Atri, Bharadwaja, Viswamitra, Gautama, Jamadagni, (Arundhati Sahita) Vasista would be invited (avaahana) in darbe.

**Yajurveda** – Nava Rushees viz., Prajapathi, Soma, Agni, Vishwedevaas, saagamhitee, yaajnieke, varuni, brahmanag svayambhuva;

### Panchagavya Prashana –

We must also do samarpana of the panchagavya and have the prashana on this day. This panchagavya prashana for the removal of sins committed during the last one year.

**Viraja homa** - Raja means – sin, viraja – means removing the sins. On this day, Yajurvedees also are doing the Viraja homa apart from Panchagavya prashana. For home they use ellu, rice flour, ghee mishrana.

**Dashavidha snaana** – During Upakarma, all must have dashavidha snaana –

i.e., i) Bhasma snaana ii) gomaya snaana, iii) mrudasnaana iv) doorvasnaana, v) tirthasnaana, vi) ksheerasnaana, vii) dadhisnaana, viii) grutasnaana, ix) kushodaka snaana, x) doorva snaana

Even though the main function of Upakarma is Yagnopaveetha Dharana, it involves many procedures.

- a. The purohit or the Achar will teach us some of the Veda Mantras of all the Chaturvedaas, i.e, atleast one or two lines from each Vedas. Actually one is supposed to study all the Veda mantras. As many of us will not have studied the vedas, we would be formally doing the samarpana with one or two lines from the vedas.
- b. The purohit also teaches one line of Brahmasootra, Sarvamoola granthas, etc., as a mark of start of Study of Vedas and other Shastra granthas. We must continue to study further. But in majority of the cases, our study will stop on that day itself.
- c. This auspicious day also happens to be the day when Srimannaaraayana took the incarnation of Hayagreeva devaru. Hayagreeva devaru is worshipped as the God of Knowledge and he is the upasya moorthy of Sri Vadirajaru. Hayagreeva, is one of the early incarnations. Lord Vishnu took to restore the Vedas and give them back to Brahma. Vedas were stolen and hidden at the bottom of the sea by the demon killed retrieved the Vedas and restored them to Brahma for the benefit of mankind. In this incarnation, the head is of a horse while the rest of the body is of a human, possessing four hands.
- d. Nobody is entitled to perform any other Samskaara without having gone through the Yagnoopaveeta samskaara according to Manusmriti. Brahmins are well aware of the need of the Yagnopaveeta (sacred thread) perform the ceremony, and also adorn life-long, yagnopaveeta. One must undergo Yagnopaveeta Samskaara before the Vivaaha Samskaara (marriage ceremony). Similarly, Shraaddha karma is not valid unless the kartru had undergone the yagnopaveeta samskaara. Even when a person does not wear a yagnopaveeta regularly, priests insist upon it during specific periods, during rituals.
- e. **Importance of The Janivara or Yagnopaveeta, the sacred thread** –
  - i. Three thread Janivara symbolic of three debts one need to pay —to the teacher, to the Gods, and to the forefathers according to Taittareeya Samhita.
  - ii. It also stands symbolically of Brahma Vishnu Maheshwara Sannidhana.
  - iii. It also symbolizes the main Vedas Rug, Yajur and Samavedas.

- iv. It also symbolizes the three characters, the Gunaas – Sattva, Rajas and Tamo Guna.
- f. It is said in Saamaveda Chandogya-sootra, that drawing one strand from each Veda, Brahma made a composite string of three strands. Vishnu multiplied it by three with knowledge, action and worship. Chanting the Gaayatri Mantra Shiva tied an eternal knot..
- g. In this way Yagnopaveeta comprises of nine threads. Nine threads represent nine divinities. The first: **Omkaara**, the second: **Agni**, The third: **naaga**, the fourth: **Soma** (Chandra), the fifth: **pitrugalu** (forefathers); the sixth: **Prajaapati** ; the seventh: **Vaayu**, the eighth: **Surya**, and the ninth: **Vishwedevegale**.
- h. **Tarpana** – On this day, we (Tarpanadhikarigalu) have to give Pitru Tarpana to forefathers, Gurugalu, and others. Apart from forefathers, everybody has to give tarpana to Rishis.
- i. Everybody has to perform **Upakarma** - All brahmins should perform upakarma homa invariably. Only for those who are having Soothaka or Vrudhi during the said period, they need not do Upakarma on that day. However, after the soothaka or vrudhi is completed, they must do the Upakarma homa and have the yagnopaveetha changed.
- j. Why some people wear two or three or four janivaaras?–  
**First Janivaara** - For Nitya Karmanustana Yogyata siddhyartham – A Brahmachari must wear only one set  
**Second Janivaara** - represents Gruhastashrama Yogyata siddhyartham – for a Gruhastashrami  
**Third Janivaara** – For uttareeyartham (Those who are having Jeevan pitru or Jyesta Bratru need not wear uttareeya. They are the uttareeyam for him)  
**Fourth Janivaara** - additional janivara for Daana to others in case of exigencies.

Source :

Sri Chaturvedi Vedavyasachar's Rujveda Yajurveda Utsarjana Upakarma Prayoga book.

Collection by : Narahari Sumadhwa  
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