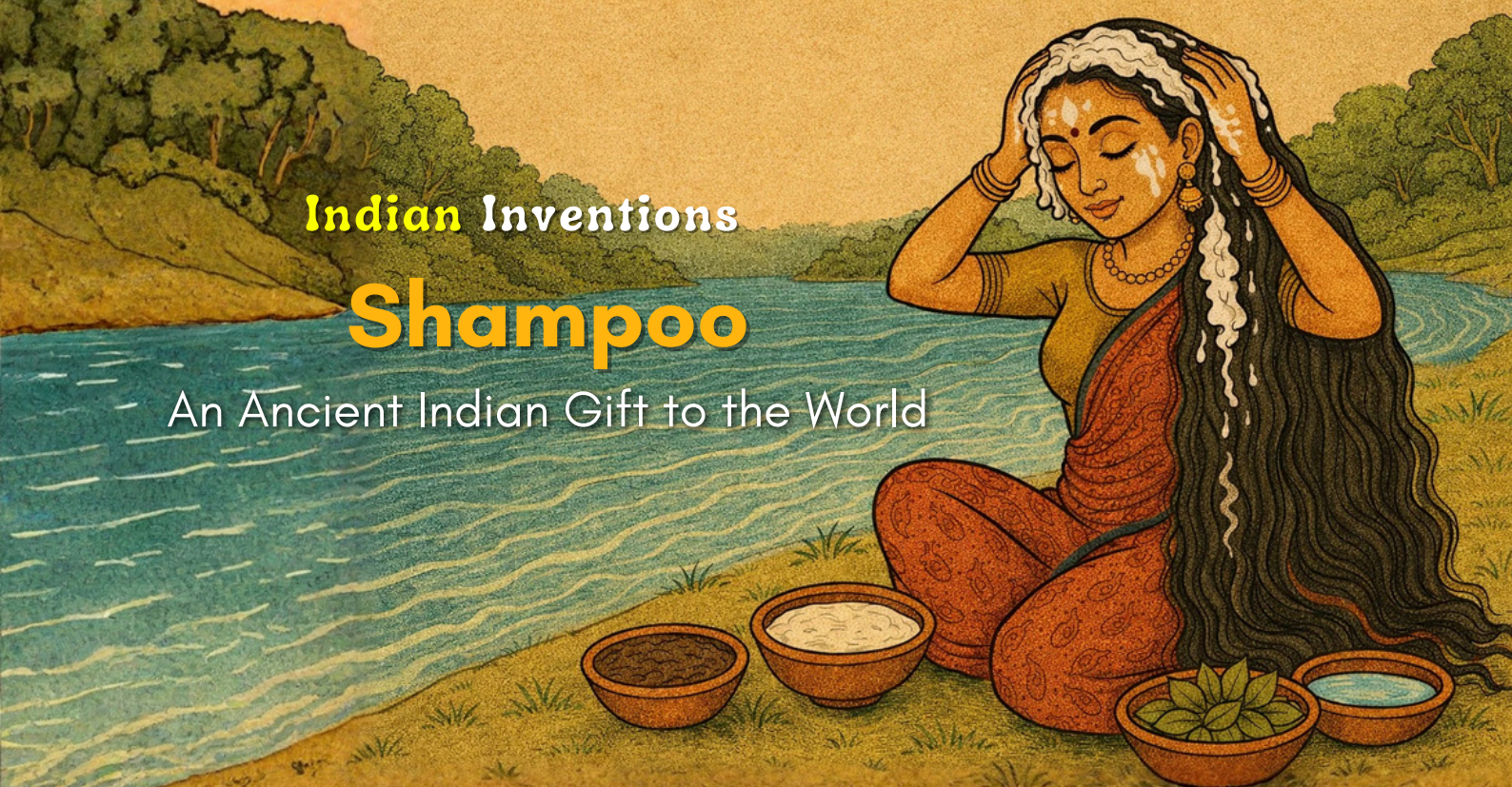


## Indian Inventions

# Shampoo

## An Ancient Indian Gift to the World



The word you use every time you wash your hair – "**shampoo**" – is a direct, often unnoticed, gift from India. It comes from the Hindi word "**chāmpo**", meaning to **massage** or **knead**.

The origins of shampoo were not in a bottle, but in a therapeutic head massage ritual. As early as the 15th century, and famously during the Mughal era (notably around 1762 in Bengal), Indian innovators used a combination of natural ingredients to cleanse and nourish hair while performing a relaxing head treatment.

The earliest recorded forms of this cleanser were made by boiling indigenous natural ingredients, including:

- **Sapindus:** The pulp of this small shrub (part of the Lychee family) contains natural soap-like substances called saponins, which created the original gentle lather.
- **Amla (Indian Gooseberry) & Hibiscus:** Added for their nourishing properties to keep hair healthy and shiny.

This practice, known as the "chāmpo," was much more than simple cleaning; it was a blend of hygiene and therapy.

The journey of "chāmpo" to your modern shower began in the late 18th century. British colonial traders in India were so impressed by the practice that they introduced it to Europe. Over time, European chemists replaced the natural herbal ingredients with modern synthetic detergents (surfactants) to create the liquid soap we recognize today.



While the ingredients have changed, the fundamental function—cleansing and nourishing the hair—remains connected to the original therapeutic practice developed centuries ago in India. Your daily routine is a direct link to this rich history of Indian innovation!