

## Mundan Sanskar

Mundan Sanskara means first haircut of baby. Mostly this ritual is performed in hindu families for the baby boy. It is an important tradition performed during Shukla paksha. Usually in north India this ritual is performed in temples and rest of India it is done in homes.

The aim of these traditions and rituals is to get blessing for the child to have a long fulfilling life. The Mundan Sanskara is an important tradition in India and relatives and friends are invited to bless the child.

### **Rituals performed**

There are different beliefs all over the India for this ceremony. The child usually receives his/her first mundan in either the first year or the third year of age. In some families mundan sanskar for two male children of a family.

In home a priest is called to conduct the rituals according to the traditions and a barber is called to shave off the hair. The priest recited sacred hymns and chants and shaves a part of the head. The barber then shaves the entire head, sometimes leaving a clump of hair at the back of the head. Some of this hair is offered in the sacred rivers in holy cities like Haridwar and Varanasi. To cool down the head and to cure nicks and cuts, a paste of turmeric and sandalwood is sometimes applied on the entire head. Thereafter, a child may be shaved now and then or never, depending on the desire of that particular family.

In temples there are specifically built mundan ghats where barbers cut the hair. As honour to particular God or Goddess some of the hairs are gifted in feet of Lord.

### **Significance**

It is believed that the hair present at birth represent unwanted traits from the past lives. In order to make sure that the child has no undesirable qualities of the past birth in this life, the head is shaved off to ensure a new beginning and a fresh start

Mundan sanskar has benefits from medical point of view. It is said that shaving off the hair stimulates the cells and improves blood circulation to the brain. Some also believe that this gives the child a long life.