

SIGNIFICANCE OF *YOGA NIDRA* IN THE MANAGEMENT OF *ANIDRA* (INSOMNIA); A REVIEW

***Kamla Moond**

Lecturer, Department of Basic Principles, Sblld Ayurved Vishwa Bharti, Sardarshahar, India.
331403.

Article Received on
24 Jan. 2019,

Revised on 14 Feb. 2019,
Accepted on 07 March 2019

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20194-14524

***Corresponding Author**

Prof. Kamla Moond

Lecturer, Department of

Basic Principles, Sblld

Ayurved Vishwa Bharti,

Sardarshahar, India. 331403.

ABSTRACT

Insomnia can be measured by the satisfaction with sleep, the perception or complaint of inadequate or poor-quality sleep due to number of factors, such as difficulty falling asleep, walking up frequently during the night with difficulty returning to sleep, waking up too early in the morning or unrefreshing sleep. Insomnia is a very common problem in present era due to fast and stressful life. *Yoga* is a multi component practice that is also known to be effective in reducing arousal, although it has not been well evaluated as a treatment for insomnia. *Yoga* has also been used as a therapeutic treatment as it is believed that different techniques can produce unique psycho-physiological effects and that this specificity can be used to target

specific disorders. *Yoga Nidra* is beneficial to reduce stress in a simple way and easy to incorporate into daily life, it also gives the opportunity to learn about your intimately. *Yoga Nidra* is probably best-known technique to induce complete physical mental and emotional relaxation.

KEYWORDS: *Yoga Nidra*, Insomnia, Stress.

INTRODUCTION

WHO defines insomnia as a problem initiating and or maintaining sleep or the complaint of non-restorative sleep that occurs on at least three nights a week and is associated with day time distress or impairment.^[1] Definition focused on sleep symptoms typically describes insomnia as difficulty in initiating sleep, difficulty in maintaining sleep, a final awakening that occurs much earlier than desired or sleep that is non-restorative or of generally poor quality.^[2]

Ayurveda describes that happiness and sorrow, growth and wasting, strength and weakness, virility and impotence, the knowledge and ignorance as well as existence of life and its cessation depend on the sleep. *Nidra* is a harmonious gift of nature. Man of this techno-world is trying to get overcome such harmonious features by elaborating his mental dimensions. But the biological clock which is mandatory for the well-being of human life's rhythm is not ready to recognize these upsetting created by him. Once this harmony is violated his sleep as well as total health is hampered, because sleep exactly runs according to biological clock. The importance of sleep is well accepted by modern science also because of its restorative, recuperative and resting actions to the living organisms.

Yoga Shashtra is that science which mainly deals with the stress. Multiple studies have shown that yoga can positively impact the body in many ways, including helping to regulate blood glucose levels, improve musculoskeletal ailments and keeping the cardiovascular system in tune. It also has been shown to have important psychological benefits, as the practice of Yoga can help to increase mental energy and positive feelings, and decrease negative feelings of aggressiveness, depression and anxiety. It is difficult to predict on the basis of the findings of these studies the effect of Yoga on people with insomnia, and therefore it is important to identify the evidence that is currently available.

Yoga Nidra is derived from two Sanskrit words, 'Yoga' ('yuj' = yoke) meaning union or one pointed awareness and 'Nidra' means sleep. During the practice of *Yoga Nidra*, one appears to be asleep, but the consciousness will be functioning at a deeper level of awareness. For this reason, *Yoga Nidra* is often referred to as psychic sleep or deep relaxation with inner awareness. It is a state of consciousness, which is, neither sleep nor awaken, neither is it concentration nor hypnotism. It can be defined, as an altered state of consciousness. According to *Maharshi Markandey Yoga Nidra* is the state of deep relaxation as *Lord Vishnu* Himself uses this marvelous technique.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study was to evaluate the evidences from a range of sources on the effectiveness of –

1. *Yoga Nidra* for the treatment of Insomnia.
2. *Yoga Nidra* in other psychosomatic and psychiatric diseases.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Classical books, previous study, journals and Peer reviewed research article on *Yoga nidra* in insomnia from internet.

CAUSES

The four factors are portrayed as common etiological and precipitating factors for insomnia. They are following:

1. Circadian Factor

- Disturbance of the circadian rhythm such as such as shift work, jet leg and sleep scheduling can cause inability to sleep.
- Poor sleep hygiene E.g. Noise

2. Psychiatric Factor

- Mental disorder such as clinical depression, generalized anxiety disorder, posts traumatic stress, Schizophrenia or obsessive compulsive disorders.
- Psychiatric drugs or stimulants including certain medication like amphetamines etc.
- Life problems like fear, stress, anxiety, emotional or mental tension, work problems, financial stress etc.

3. Pharmacological Factors

Medication that commonly cause insomnia

- b-Blockers
- corticosteroid
- Bronchodilators
- Respiratory stimulants
- Methyldopa
- Thyroid stimulants
- Central nervous system stimulants
- Phenytoin

4. Medical/Neurological Illness

- Any injury or condition for that causes pain
- Hormone shifts such as those that precede menstruation and those during Menopause
- Certain neurological disorders, brain lesion or a history of traumatic brain injury

- Medical conditions such as Hyperthyroidism and Rheumatoid arthritis.^[3]

Causes of *Anidra* in Classical Texts

Psychic disease is that which is caused by non-fulfillment of desires and facing of undesired. Fasting, uncomfortable bed, predominance of *Sattva* and suppression of *Tamasa* these lead to the unwholesome occurrence of sleep. These factors may be taken as causes of *Anidra*, along with over work, time, disorder (*Vatika*), constitution (*Vatika*) and aggravation of *Vata* itself. The *Satvaudirya* and *Tamojaya* are said to be the causes for *Nidranasha*.

By going through the above description, it is quite evident that *Anidra* may be due to a variety of causes and these may be act so effectively as to keep the person awake altogether or may serve, when present in a less degree to produce one of the forms of dreaming and unrefreshing slumber mentioned above. Indigestion, due to overeating shortly before the bed time or some other internal disorder may act in a similar manner, even though there may be no severe pain. In case of habitual sleeplessness, a voluntary limitations of the hours of the sleep, combined with over study, worry or greed is often instrumental in forming a bad habit which is exceedingly hard to break.

MANAGEMENT OF INSOMNIA

Insomnia can be managed simply by removing the causative factors. Behavioral, psychological treatments along with sleep education and sleep hygiene proved better improvement in the patients of insomnia. Insomnia is something to do with “not getting enough or proper sleep”. This essence of the definition is of the subjective dissatisfaction. Such concern may reject a poor sleep pattern, poor quality of sleep, daytime effects or a combination of these. Effective practical management of insomnia must respond to the presenting characteristics of the complaint that otherwise they may persist.

Non-specific treatment

- Sleep Education – Giving accurate information is a form of treatment. Although the patients with insomnia are probably no less informed about sleep than good sleepers, there is benefit in discussing some simple facts and relating them to the problem.
- Sleep Functions And Effects – Sleep helps the body recuperate. The brain is active in processing and storing information during sleep. Sleep is a natural process that will find its own equilibrium.

- Sleep Hygiene – Lack of inner peace and security may cause enough tension to require psychotherapy and even psycho-analysis. But sometimes a few simple suggestions will help to encourage sleep.
- Try to relax for at least one hour before bed time with quiet music or an unexciting, easily read book.
- Avoid too much physical activity just before bed time.
- To be resigned to the disturbance in the sleep function – to accept it and neither fight it nor fear its consequences – may be a great help.

Establishing an optimal sleep pattern

The sleep pattern is optional when it is efficient and regular. Sleep efficiency refers to the proportion of time spent asleep relative to the time spent in bed. Many patients with insomnia complain about difficulty in getting sleep, or waking during the night, or both, and they often also wish to increase time asleep.

The *Chikitsa* of any disease in simple word is the giving up of the causative factors. In the treatment of *Anidra*, one should depend upon the measures having *Vata Shamaka* effects as well as pacifying effects on mental activities. Management has been described in form of specific procedures, psychiatric treatment, drugs and diet as follows:

1) Specific procedures

- *Abhyanga* (body massage manually)
- *Utsadana* (anointing)
- *Shirodhara* (oil dripping on head)
- *Padabhyanga* (foot massage)
- *Snana* (bath)
- *Samvahana* (Gentle rubbing)
- *Asanaa*(*Shavashana*, *Shalabhasana*, *Vipratkarani*)

2) Psychiatric treatment (*Manasika Upachara*)

- Pleasant smell, sound, touch
- Psychic pleasure
- Sense of satisfaction
- Thinking of things pleasant to mind and fulfillment of desire
- Comfortable bed and home and proper time

***Yoga Nidra* as an unique approach for Insomnia**

Yoga Nidra, or yogic sleep as it is commonly known, is an immensely powerful meditation technique, and one of the easiest yoga practices to develop and maintain.

Stages of the *Yoga Nidra*

Practice of *Yoga Nidra* is the simplest method of relaxation, which is being practiced in the flat lying position of *Shavasana* and follows the spoken instruction of *Yoga* instructor. The practice includes the resolve, body part awareness, breath awareness and visualization.

1. Internalization / Relaxation – Preliminary preparation of the body.
2. Affirmation (*Sankalpa*) – A personal goal previously decided upon is declared silently.
3. Rotation of Consciousness – The consciousness is taken on a tour of the whole body in a structured fashion.
4. Respiration awareness – A period of awareness of the breath at special positions in the body.
5. Manifestations of Opposites – Pairs of feelings and emotions are experienced.
6. Creative Visualization – Various Archetypal images are visualized mentally.
7. Affirmation- *Sankalpa* is repeated and, now in a highly suggestible state of consciousness, is programmed into the subconscious mind.
8. Return to Full Awareness – A careful and gradual return to a normal state.^[4]

In *Yoga Nidra* the practitioner remains in a state of light withdrawal of the 5 senses (*Pratyahara*) with four of his or her senses internalized, that is withdrawn, and only the hearing still connects to the instructions. *Yoga Nidra* is among the deepest possible states of relaxation while still maintaining full consciousness. In *Yoga Nidra*, it is not necessary to concentrate. One should just keep the mind moving from point to point and be aware of every experience. *Yoga Nidra* means sleep with a trace of awareness.

Technique of *Yoga Nidra* has preventive, promotive and curative value. It prevents stress and stress-related disorders by inducing deep physical, emotional and mental relaxation, by training the mind to remain calm and quiet and by rooting out the repressed desires and thoughts from the deeper realms of the mind.

Role of *Manasa* in *Nidra*

In the event of the exhaustion of the *Manas*, the individuals also get exhausted because action of individuals is dependent on that of the *Manas*, so when *Manas* dissociates itself from its

objects, individuals also dissociate themselves from their objects. The sensory and motor organs are not active because of the inaction of individuals.

OBSERVATION AND RESULT

Deuskar et. al. (2006) found a significant change in the Performance of archers due to the practice of *Yoga Nidra*. The result shows that *Yoga Nidra* positively decreases the stress level of the male and female subjects both.

Kumar (2008) reported the effectiveness of *Yoga Nidra* in curing the psychological disorders like anxiety, hostility, insomnia etc. and psychosomatic diseases like Asthma, coronary heart diseases, cancer, hypertensions etc. In the study it has been found that the practice of *Yoga Nidra* decrease the stress and anxiety level of the students of higher class in Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar.

Rani et al. (2013) examined the effects of *Yoga Nidra* on stress levels among B.Sc Nursing first year students at academic level Performance interface student's preparation, concentration attention, memory etc. As a result it has been found that the level of stress after the administration of *Yoga Nidra* was decreased in moderate and low level of stress but no effect of *Yoga Nidra* has been found on students having high stress level.

Yogitha Bali M. R. (2012) found that *Yoga Nidra* is an important tool in stress management and also has showed significant results in various psychosomatic diseases like Hypertension, Insomnia, Cardiovascular diseases.

Researches also indicate that *Yoga Nidra* can be used as a therapeutic technique to cure psychological disorders like anxiety, hostility, insomnia, etc.^[5]

Benefits of *Yoga Nidra*^[6]

- Everyone can practice. Even beginners who have no experience with meditation.
- *Yoga Nidra* is easy to incorporate into daily life.
- Physical stresses and tensions are removed.
- Mental stresses and unwanted impressions are removed.
- Emotional balance is restored.
- The faculties of imagination and visualization are practiced and enhanced.
- The subconscious is focused on and able to manifest any personal goal be it physical.

- *Yoga Nidra* offers the opportunity to learn about yourself intimately.

Mechanism of *Yoga Nidra*^[7]

Through the consistent practice of *Yoga Nidra*, threefold tension can be progressively released.

1. Physical Tension- This is termed as muscular tensions related to the body itself, the nervous system and endocrinal imbalance. These are easily released by the deep physical relaxation attained in the state of *Yoga Nidra*.

2. Emotional Tension- It controls the emotional state of the mind, tranquilize the entire emotional structure of the mind.

3. Mental tension- Everyone involved in some kind of mental activity in day to day life. The mind is whirlpool of fantasies, confusions and oscillations. The tensions related to family, workplace, and interpersonal relationships are accumulated in the consciousness state of the mental body. This may bring psychological and behavioral changes in the body responsible for abnormal behavior of an individual and ultimate leads to Insomnia.

DISCUSSION

The increasing incidence of insomnia is becoming a major health burden. A lot of drugs have been used, but with significant side effects and a decrease in the quality of life. In this context, the practice of yoga assumes importance. Yoga is a state where the dual sensations (happiness and misery) disappear and mind is concentrated and contained in the soul and the supernatural powers are attained in the body and mind. Yoga therapy has beneficial effects on the nervous system, and the brain. Certain yoga *Asanas* increases the blood supply to the sleep centre in the brain and so that they normalize the sleep cycle.

Yogic procedures controls the *Chanchalatva Guna* of *Vata* and also *Rajas* and *Tamas* are decreased which helps to remove *Avarana* and channelize the *Vayu* to the *Nadi* (i.e. *Ida*, *Pingala* and *Sushumna*). *Manasa* gets activated for proper *Indriyabhigraha Karma* therefore it can be said that practicing of Yogic procedures works by controlling the excessive activity of *Vata*.

One of the most important and effective practices of yoga for insomnia is *Yoga Nidra* (or yogic sleep) as it brings deeper relaxation on both mental and emotional levels. *Yoga Nidra* has been also applied for treatments of various diseases, including chronic diseases, psychological disorders, drug addiction and so on.

Yoga will induce sleep sooner and improve the quality of the sleep. Yoga therapy will provide a more restful sleep because of its relaxing aspect and the subsequent relieving of stress, tension and fatigue. The practice of breathing allows the uptake of more oxygen in the body, thus providing clarity of the mind.

***Yoga Nidra* and Its Impact on Body Systems**

Yoga Nidra unlocks the mystical, integrative powers of the subconscious, as well as your higher centers of consciousness, to effortlessly erase your most tenacious, self-destructive habits and behavior patterns. The practice of *Yoga Nidra* helps to harmonize the two hemispheres of the brain and the two aspects of the autonomous nervous system (sympathetic and parasympathetic).

Through the consistent practice of *Yoga Nidra*, tensions can be progressively released.

The *Yoga Nidra* state reflects an integrated response by the hypothalamus resulting in decreased sympathetic nervous activity (excitatory) and increased parasympathetic (relaxatory) function. This relaxation response can be thought of as the inverse counterpart of the so called 'fight or flight' response. *Yoga Nidra* alleges regulation of hormones, stabilization of glucose levels, and alleviation of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

In short, the ultimate objective of *Yoga Nidra* is to combat the stressful influences and rectifying the imbalances created by poor stress management. It is not only a way of coping with stress, it provides a means of transforming and positively utilizing tension as a stepping stone to greater awareness, efficiency and achievement in life, hence *Yoga Nidra* is a most useful therapy or relaxation technique to counteract one of the prime cause of Insomnia i.e. stress.

Thus, *Yoga Nidra* is the science of relaxation which enables to enter into the realms of the subconscious mind, thereby releasing and relaxing mental tensions, stress and anxiety, providing a perfect self-development tool for the often fast-paced life of the modern world and establishing harmony in all facts of life thus person feels fresh, happy and free from all stress and becomes able to sleep easily. So, *Yoga Nidra* is having definite role to relieve insomnia by allowing ones to disengage from thoughts and other stressors and to experience deep relaxation.

CONCLUSION

Yogic procedures also help to clear the *Manasa* from unwanted thoughts and reduces excessive thinking also makes one sharp and attentive. Yoga may offer a safe, beneficial intervention for reducing sleep disturbance, perceived stress and anxiety. *Yoga Nidra* is a powerful technique to induce complete physical, mental and emotional relaxations and it is beneficial to reduce stress in a simple way and easy to incorporate into daily life, it also gives the opportunity to learn about your intimately. Thus, *Yoga Nidra* acts positively in the management of insomnia.

REFERENCES

1. Clinical Handbook of Insomnia.
2. Principle and practice of sleep medicine.
3. Clinical sleep Disorder.
4. Yoga Nidra as a Stress Management Intervention Strategy, Manish Kumar Dwivedi, Research Scholar, Institute of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University.
5. Bhushan Siddhartha Mar, *Yoga Nidra* and its advantages and application; *Yoga* (Bihar School of *Yoga*, Munger), 2001.
6. <https://yogainternational.com>
7. Yoga Nidra as a Stress Management Intervention Strategy, Manish Kumar Dwivedi, Article in Purusharta · March 2016, Vol. IX, No. 1, March 2016- August 2016.