

A CRITICAL STUDY ON *NIDRANASH* AND ITS *AYURVEDIC* MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Tridoshas i.e. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* are described as *Tristhambha* (three main pillars) of *Ayurveda*—the science of life. Similarly *Aahara* (food), *Nidra* (sleep) and *Bramhacharya* (abstinence) are described to be the *Trayopasthambas* (three supportive pillars). Hence forth, sleep is one of the essential factors to lead a healthy life. Due to loss of sleep person suffers too many problems related with health. In modern era insomnia may be symptom of stressful lifestyle, depressive illness, anxiety disorder, any psychiatric conditions or any other pathological conditions. Line of management of *Nidranasha* explained in the

different contexts by various *Acharyas* can be described in detail. Diet modification (milk, *Ikshu Ras*, *Madya*, *Shalianna*, *Dadhi*), various therapeutic procedure's (*Senehana*, *Abhyanga*, *Samvahan*, *Murdhnitaila*, *Padaabhyang*, *Shirobasti*, *Shirodhara*, *Nashaya*), various *Ayurvedic* medicines (*Swarn Makshika Basma*, *Jahar Mohara Pisti*, *Nidrodaya Ras*, *Bramhi Curna*, *Sarpagandha Churna* etc.), *Yoga* and meditation therapy (*Anuloma Viloma*, *Kapalbhati*, *Bhramari*, *Chakrasana*, *Shirsasana*).

KEYWORDS: *Nidranash*, health, insomnia, *Shirodhara*, *Ayurveda*, *Yoga*, meditation.

INTRODUCTION

The ancient *Acharayas* of *Ayurveda* considered *Nidra* among the *Trayopastabhas* for the maintenance of the healthy life. One of the most important principles is the three factors i.e. *Aahar*, *Nidra* and *Brahmncharya*, are mentioned as three *Upasthambha* executing an important role in maintaining the health. As per the classical literature it is more evident that

Nidra is not only an important phenomenon but an essential factor in one's life, which affects the body and mind equally in a favorable way when it is enjoyed in a rightful manner. *Nidra* also has its important role in healthy life. The causes of *Nidranash* in *Ayurveda* includes dietary consumption of food which is predominant in excessive exercise, fasting. *Vamana*, *Virechana*, *Nasya*, *Raktamokshana*, *Swedana* and *Anjna*, Psychological causes-anger, anxiety, fear, apart from this excessive joy, sorrow and agitation is also responsible for insomnia. Improper sleep can increase risk of developing obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure or heart disease. *Ayurveda* has enlightened about this fact centuries ago and mentioned various causes, symptom and remedies for *Nidranash*. *Ayurveda* prescribes several herbs in single or compound form to overcome the situation and various *Ayurvedic* procedure like oil massage especially on the head, *Abhyanga* (whole body massage) and *Padabhyanga* (foot massage), *Shirodhara*, *Shirobasti*, *Nasya* are very cost effective in *Nidranash*.

Review of literature

Anidra is a term formed when a prefix "A" which means "lack of" is added to the term *Nidra*. Hence *Anidra* means less or lack of sleep it is defined as a pathological condition in which the patient is devoid of sleep.^[1]

Anidra is explained as an independent pathological entity and it has also been described as a symptom secondary to many pain predominant diseases and other medical conditions.

- In *Charaka Samhita* and *Ashtanga sangraha*, *Anidra* is mentioned as a disease belonging to the category of *Nanatmaja Vatavyadhi* and also as a *Pitta Vruddhi Lakshna*.
- In *Sushruta Samhita* the causative factors of *Anidra* are mentioned as vitiated *Vata* and *Pitta* but it has not been described as a separate disease.^[2]

Explanation regarding the causative factors of *Anidra* and its treatment modalities are available in all the *Bruhatrayees* and *Laghutrayees*.

Aetiopathogenesis of *Anidra*

Causes of *Anidra*

Anidra may be the effect of multiple causative factors such as *Ahara* (food habits), *Vihara* (activities), *Chikitsa Atiyoga* (improper treatment induced) *Manasika* (emotional factors) and *Anyanidanas* (other non specified causative factors). Most of the times the cause of *Anidra* is multifactorial.

Aharaja Nidana (Food habits)

Specific references regarding the relation of *Nidra* with *Ahara* are available in the classical texts of Ayurveda. Consumption of *Ahita Ahara* is considered as a cause of *Anidra*. Specifically excessive consumption of *Yavanna* and *Rukshanna* are explained as the cause of *Anidra*. However multiple references are available regarding the food materials which cause *Atinidra* and all the food materials which contain antagonist qualities to them should result in *Anidra*. Hence it can be inferred that *Anidra*, which is an opposite condition of *Atinidra* is caused by excessive consumption of food materials having qualities such as *Ruksha*, *Laghu*, *Teekshna Guna*. This set of causative factors cause imbalance in both *Shareerika* and *Manasika Doshas*. At the physical level these food mainly cause *Vata Vriddhi* and *Kapha Kshaya* and at the psychological level they cause derangement of *Rajo Guna*.

Viharaja Nidana (Activities)

Excessive indulgence in various activities is explained as the causes of *Anidra*. They are as follows;

- Excessive *Dhooma Sevana* by the virtue of its *Teekshna Ushna*, *Ruksha Guna* causes vitiation of *Vata* and *pitta* thus induces *Anidra*.
- Over indulgence in *Vyayama* (physical activities), *Vyavaya* (sexual activity) and *Upavasa* (fasting) causes *Vriddhi* of *Vata Doshas*. Concurrently *Vata Doshas* by the virtue of its *Gunas* causes *Kapha Kshaya*.
- *Asukha Shayya* is a term which represents improper sleep environment including improper bedding and bed room where there will be a problem in following generally accepted practices to sleep leading to insomnia.
- *Karya*: When an individual excessively indulges in any work either mental or physical, there will be deviation of mind from sleep. This can be seen in individual who work vigorously. Thus over indulgence in any work takes away the focus of *Manas* from sleep. These set of factors causes imbalance in both *Shareerika* and *Mano Doshas*.

Manasika Nidanas (Emotional factors)

Psychological factors are the other set of etiological factors involved in the manifestation of *Anidra*. Either the emotional factors such as *Bhaya*, *Krodha* and *Shoka* cause vitiation of *Doshas* both at physical and psychological level leading to the manifestation of the disease or the disease manifests itself during the various stages of other *Mano Rogas* such as *Apasmara*, *Vishada* and *Chittodvega* as a secondary manifestation. Emotional disturbances such as

Bhaya, Shoka, Krodha play an important role in causing *Anidra*. These factors primarily cause derangement of *Manodoshas*. These emotional factors even cause *Shareerika Dosha Prakopa* (*Bhaya, Shoka* causes *Vata Vruddhi*, *Krodha* causes *Pitta Prakopa*).^[3]

Thus this set of causative factors primarily cause derangement of *Mano Doshas*, leading to imbalance in *Shareerika Dosha* in the later stage.

Chikitsa Apachara (Improper treatment modalities)

Atiyoga of Vamana, Virechana, Nasya and *Raktamokshana* can induce *Anidra* by vitiating *Vata Dosha*.^[4]

Anya Nidanans (other non specified causes)

- **Kala or Kala Sheela Kshaya:** Kala is considered as time factor. Night being the period of rest is considered as the normal time for sleep. As the night proceeds, people feel the desire for sleep. When this usual period is lapsed, person will not be able to get sleep. Insomnia develops as a result of persistent or recurrent disruption in the normal sleep pattern. Kala can also be considered as age factor. In old age, people are more prone to suffer from *Anidra*. In elderly individual *Vata Vruddhi* occurs as a natural tendency. Even *Vata Prakruti* is considered as having increased vulnerability towards *Anidra*.
- **Vikara:** *Vikara* represents a pathological state. Various pain predominant diseases like *Grudrasi, Asthi Majja Gata Vata* and also discomfort predominant diseases like *Sannipataja jwara* and *Tamaka Shwasa* cause *Anidra* because of pain and discomfort, wherein the lack of sleep can be attributed to these complaints. *Anidra* in such condition represents secondary insomnia.
- **Abhigata:** The term *Abhigata* represents an external injury. It causes vitiation of *Vata Dosha* which leads to *Anidra*. Even in *Abhigata* there will be pain which is also responsible for *Anidra*.
- **Kshaya:** It specially refers to *Kapha Kshaya*.

Thus at the physical level indulgence in causative factors which increase the *Ruksha, Chala* and *Laghu Guna* of *Vata* and at *Manasika* level there will be *Rajo Guna Vruddhi* (as *rajas* and *Vata Doshas* share same qualities) which subdues the effect of *Tamas*.

Sign and symptom

Ayurveda describes *Nidranasha* as a symptom, as a disorder and even sometimes as a complication of certain disease. Peculiar symptoms arising during *Nidranasha* are yawning, body ache, lethargy and head-ache, giddiness in the head and eyes apathy, fatigue, indigestion and diseases produced by *Vata Dosha*.^[5] Troubled sleep can lead to unpleasantness, emaciation, weakness, impotency, terminating in death.^[6]

Upadrava

In *Ashtanga Sangraha*, it is explained that aggravated *Vata* is due to *Anidra* produces *Kapha Kshaya*. The decreased and dried *Kapha* sticks in *Dhamanis* walls and causing *Srotorodha*.

This finally results in so much exhaustion that eyes of the patient remain wide open and causing watery secretion from eyes. This dangerous exhaustion is *Sadhya* up to three days after that it becomes *Asadhya*.^[7]

Upashaya and Anupashaya

As *Upashaya* and *Anupashaya* are not described in texts so they can be evolved. *Mamsasevana*, *Madya*, *Ksheera* and *Ksheera Vikaras*, *Abhyanga*, *Utsadana*, *Tarpana* and *Snehasevana* etc., may be considered as *Upashaya* of *Anidra*; whereas *Rukshanna*, *Yavanna*, *Dhoomapana*, *Krodha*, *Shoka* etc., may be considered as its *Anupashaya* of *Anidra*.

Management of Anidra

There is no specific line of treatment explained for *Anidra* in our Ayurvedic texts. Depending upon the treatment mentioned; is in different contexts, for *Anidra* can be mainly divided into 2 types 1. *Bahya Chikitsa* 2. *Abhyantara Chikitsa*. *Abhyantara Chikitsa* would be again sub divided into (a) *Ahara Pradhana Chikitsa* (b) *Aushadha Pradhana Chikitsa*.

Our ancient *Acharyas* have given more importance to *Bahya Upacharas* such as *Moordhni Taila*, *Abhyanga* etc. and *Manasika Upacharas* such as *Manonukula Vatavarana* *Manonukula Vishayagrahana* etc., including all these; therapeutic measures are also explained along with some specific *Aharas* for patients of *Anidra*.

All these therapeutic measures in the different contexts can be divided into the following groups' i.e. *Bahyau pachara*, *Manasika upachara*, *Ausadha upachara* and *Ahara Upachara*.

Ahar and Vihar

Acharya Charaka has said following measures for the treatment of *Anidra*. They are take meat of *Gramya*, *Anup* and *Odaka* birds as animals rice of Sali variety, curd, milk, ghee, *Madhya* and those substances pleasing to mind, pleasant odorant massaging of the body, *Tarpana* of the eyes, applying of paste over head and face, comfortable bed, beautiful dwelling place proper tie for sleeping etc. such measure bring sleep well which is destroyed due to different causes.

Oil application in the head, meat soup, *Snigdha* and *Madhur* diet, *Draksa*, *Iksu* etc. also helpful for sound sleep. Use of clear cloths, use of flowers, scents, pleasant talk, listening to pleasing songs, reading of good books, are used in the management of *Anidra*.

Some other measures, which can be advised to the patient of *Anidra*; though are not explained in Ayurvedic literature, are as follows:

- Maintenance of regular time for going to bed.
- Avoid watching excited pictures at night.
- Not advised for smoking, tea, coffee or alcohol at night time before going to sleep.
- Avoid indulging in any type of work or reading till late night.
- Must be devoid of thoughts tensions before going to bed.
- Advised to hear soft music or favourite songs also induces sleep.
- Advised for 5-10 minutes mediation before going for sleep
- Regular offering prayer before sleep.
- Activities such as washing of hand, feet and face help inducing sleep.
- Not advised of excess coitus
- Day sleep should be prohibited
- Advised for proper evacuation of stool and urine
- Advised for mosquito control measures to avoid mosquito bites
- Maintaining of adequate privacy and free from disturbances

Aushadha Chikitsa (Upachara)

❖ **Single drug therapy:** Majority of single drugs are explained in Ayurvedic texts which give relief from *Nidranasha*. These single drugs are as follows: *Palandu*, *Ikshurasa*, *Potaki*, *Tila*, *Trikatu*, *Vartka*, *Kakamachi*.

❖ **Compound drugs:** *Sarasvata Choorna, Nidrakara Choorna, Ashvagandh Arista, Shankhapushpy Arista, Vatakulantaka Rasa, Nidrodya Rasa, Sarpagandhaghana Vati, Indumarichadi Vati*^[8], *Swarnamakshika Bhasma*^[9], *Yashada Bhasma*^[10], *Tungadrumadi Taila*^[11], *Kantakaryadi Kwatha*^[12], *Kakajanghadi Kwatha*^[13], *Ghrita Bharjita Nagara*.^[14]

Yoga- Practice of *Anuloma Viloma, Ujjanini, Bramari, Pranayama* and meditation along with the practice of *Yama* and *Niyama. Suryanamaskara, Tadasana, Matsyasana, Bhujangasana, Pdamasana, Savasana, Anulomvilom pranayama.*

Yoga has been used as a tool for *Anidra* management that can assist in alleviating depression and anxiety disorders and other psychological ailments.

Panchakarama- *Panchakarma* is a specialty of *Ayurveda* having preventive, promotive and curative actions and indicated in wide range of diseases conditions. *Abhayanga* and *Swedana Udsadan, Udvartan, Karanpurna, Nasya, Akshitarpana, Shirobhyanga* and *Padabhyanga* are best result in the management of *Anidra. Shirodhara, Shirobasti* with medicated oils proves very beneficial in *Anidra*.

Amayika Prayoga

- *Ghrita Bharjita Bhangha + Madhu*^[15]
- *Pippalimoola + Guda*^[16]
- *Aswagandha Choorna + Pippalimoola Choorna + Parasika Yavani Choorna* to be given with milk.
- *Sarpagandha* powder – 1 g + *Rasa sindura* ¼ g to be given with milk.
- *Sarpagandha* powder (50 g) + *Jaharamohara Pisti* 6 g + *Pravala Pisti* (6 g) + *Amrita Satva* (6 g) to be given.
- *Amalaki* – 2 parts + *Pippalimoola* – 1 part + *Jatamansi*– 1 part to be given; dose – 1 tsp twice daily.
- *Kakajangha Twak Kwatha + Madhu* to be given^[17]
- *Shalmali Niryasa + Kiratatikta*^[18]
- *Ghrita + Taila Yamaka Yusha*^[19]
- *Mahisha Ksheera + Khas Khas.*
- *Rohitamatsya Kambalika + Kutajaveeja Choorna + Guda* advised to be taken.^[20]

CONCLUSION

As a diagnostic entity 'Anidra' represents disorder of sleep deprivation or insomnia. *Anidra* enumerated in the context of *Vata Nanatmaja Vyadhi* effectively represents. Involvement of *Vata Dosha* plays a predominant role in the manifestation of the disease which concurrently causes *Kapha Kshaya*. In the *Ayurvedic* texts and the later literatures; the usefulness and value of sleep and its essential role in the maintenance of health is elaborately discussed. Form the review above, we observe that *Anidra* has been described by different *Acharyas* in *Ayurveda* and their treatment vary according to their types and different *Acharyas*. *Ayurveda* and *Yoga* is very dealing with *Anidra*. *Ayurveda* has given more importance on *Ahar* and *Vihar* like *Snigdha* and *Madhur* diet etc. and above mentioned *Yoga*, *Pranayama* and *Panchkarama* procedure are very effective for management of *Anidra*.

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