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Sleep Urge - A Pivotal Component of Life

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Ayurveda describes "Vegasandharanam Anarogyakaranam" i.e. suppressing the natural urges is considered as amongst the most impactful cause responsible for the manifestation of any illness. For the healthy life, one should not supress the natural urges as these results in the occurrence of various types of diseases. Appropriate elimination of these natural urges is essential to maintain the homeostasis of various body systems.

In today's era among all the natural urges, suppression of sleep urge is very commonly seen due to unhealthy lifestyle. Everyone is struggling in the battle of success, that is why everyone is suppressing their urges of sleep by keeping their health as secondary.

MATERIALS AND METHODS: The classical texts of Ayurveda are accessed as materials for the references of *Nidra Vega Dharana* for this work.

DISCUSSION: For the sustenance of good health, it is mandatory for every one not to indulge in the *Nidra Vega Dharana* (Suppression of sleep urge) no matter whatever the situation may be. Not only this, sleeping at appropriate time and duration should also be taken into the consideration as along with the timing of sleep, the quality of sleep is equally important for healthy functioning of body, mind and soul.

CONCLUSION: As an authentic indicator of good and blissful health one should always pay attention towards their sleep habits because for enjoying the feeling of proper wellness the quality of sleep should also be fulfilled. Taking sound sleep at proper time and for proper duration is the key for good health.

KEYWORDS

Adharniya Vega, Nidra Vega Dharana, Sleep, Night, Vega, Suppression, Trayaupstambha.



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INTRODUCTION

Vegas or Natural urges are the fundamental and imperative concept described elaborately in Ayurveda. Suppression of natural urges (Adharniya Vega) related to urine, faeces, hunger, thirst, flatus, hiccup, sneezing, yawning, vomiting, sleep etc; and elimination their forced has considered to be harmful by Acharyas. Such acts are likely to induce the vitiation of Doshas, thereby causing several diseases. Prajnapradha is considered to be the main cause for the occurrence of disease caused by the suppression of natural urges. As it is the *Prajna* (intellect) of an individual which gets disturbed primarily during this condition thereby initiating the pathogenesis of the consequent diseases influencing both psychic and somatic levels of the body.

In total there are 13 *Vegas* which are mentioned in the classics by our *Acharyas* in the category of non-suppressible urges. One amongst which is *Nidra*, which itself holds a very significant position responsible for maintaining the optimum and good quality of life. Almost every *Acharya* has explained the importance of *Nidra* in various contexts. They have also designated *Nidra* as one of the three important subsidiary pillars i.e *Trayaupstambha*, which are responsible for the healthy life¹.

The proper and timely sleep provides health, happiness, strength, virility, knowledge, wealth and life to a person². As also stated by Acharya Kashyapa, getting good sleep at an appropriate time is one of the uniqueness of a healthy individual³. There is a proven adage that without proper sleep, there is no life. *Nidra* is a harmonious feature gifted by nature because it is an essential phenomenon for the maintenance and the restoration of both - body and mind. Therefore, for the proper sustenance of life adequate sleep is must but due to rapid and increased competition in this fast and speedy era has deprived an individual sleep duration, thereby rendering him prone to many vulnerable diseases and ailments. Somewhere man either by his carelessness or due to the helplessness is ignoring this important aspect due to which the sleep related disorders are becoming more common. Nearly, one third of the general population is estimated to suffer from sleep disorders at some point during their lifetime.

Due to continuous suppression of natural urge of sleep the symptoms like headache, repeated yawning, heaviness in the eyes, drowsiness, disturbed digestion etc. are manifested which consequently deteriorates the quality of life of an individual. Not only this, sleep deprivation even has its awful effect and it is



responsible for causing higher risk of chronic health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke⁴. It also further complicates the health by resulting in fatigue, mood changes like depression, decreased cognitive functioning, executive functioning, impaired vigilance, and a predisposition to infections⁵. This proves the tremendous and terrific consequence of sleep deprivation or Nidra Vega Dharana on human health. Many researches around the globe have also proved this concept.

National According to the Sleep Foundation (NSF), sleep is essential for a person's health and wellbeing. Yet millions of people do not get enough sleep and many suffer from lack of sleep. Surveys conducted by National Sleep Foundation (1999-2004) reveals that at least 40 million Americans suffer from over 70 different sleep disorders and 60% of adults report having sleep problems a few nights a week or more⁶. So, it is advised for maintaining optimum hours along with quality of sleep for the preservation and promotion of health.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials are the classical texts of Ayurveda viz. *Brahattrayi* with commentaries and *Astanga Samgarha*,

Madhava Nidana, Sharangdhara Samhita, Bhela Samhita which were referred for understanding the Nidra Vega Dharana.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of *Nidra* has been lucidly described in Ayurvedic Classics by considering it as a valuable harmony for the health because once this harmony gets violated by any means; health gets hampered as sleep exactly runs on the path of the biological clock. The concept of *Nidra* in classics can be better understood by reviewing each and every aspect of *Nidra* which is stated as below:

SYNONYMS OF NIDRA

In classics, the word *Nidra* has been described by using various synonyms by *Acharyas* which is shown in next page.

DEFINITION OF NIDRA

Sushruta Samhita: According to Acharya Sushruta, Nidra is due to its Swabhava¹⁴. He further stated that the seat of mind is heart and when the mind gets enveloped by the *Tamo Guna*, then the individual experiences the sleep¹⁵. Dalhana in his commentary, has said that the Nidra is the state when mind and intellect get combined and in this state the person feels happiness at both physical as well as at sensorial levels¹⁶.



Charaka Samhita: According to Acharya Charaka, Nidra is considered as the resultant state of Manah Sharira Shrama¹⁷. When the mind including both sensory and motor organs gets exhausted and with this, when they get dissociated themselves from their objects, then the individual sleeps.

Further *Chakrapani* adds that, *Mana* has the residence at that place which is devoid of *Indriyas* as a result of which it does not get associated with any of the *Karmendriya* or *Jyanendriya*¹⁸.

In · <u>SushrutaSamhita</u> ¶	Section Break (Continuous)				
$I. \rightarrow Shayanam^7 \rightarrow \P$	2.→Swapah ⁸ : Section Break (Continuous)				
3.→ <u>Sushupti</u> ¶	4.→ <u>Vaishnavi</u> -Maya¶				
In·Vachaspatyam ⁹ ¶	Section Break (Continuous)				
I.→Rudrapatni¶	$4.$ \rightarrow $Abhimanini$ ¶				
2.→Kalagni¶	5.→Kali¶				
3.→Singhyogini¶	6.→ <i>Tamasi</i> etc.¶				
In Shabdaratnawali¶	Section Break (Continuous)				
I.→ <u>Suptih</u> ¶	2.→ <u>Swapanam</u> ¶				
In: Amarkosha, there are 4 synonyms mentioned 10 ¶					
1.→ <u>Shavanam</u> ¶	3.→ <u>Swapnah</u> ¶				
2.→Swapah¶	4.→ Saveshah¶.: Section Break (Continuous).:				
In $\underline{\textit{Vaidyakashabdasindhu}}$, there are 3 synonyms mentioned $^{11}\P$					
$I. o Sambhashah \P$					
2.→Suptih¶					
3.→ <u>Swapanam</u> ¶					
In:Charaka:Samhita:-Bhutadhatri ¹² ¶					
In <u>Charudutta</u> – Nayanavalambini ¹³ ¶					

Astanga Samgraha: It has been stated here that when the *Srotasa* of the body gets obstructed and covered by *Kapha* along with the body attains fatigue, then mind gets devoid of sense organs resulting into manifestation of sleep¹⁹.

Sharangdhara Samhita: In this Samhita, it has been mentioned that sleep manifests

when *Kapha* and *Tama* in dominant state gets united together²⁰.

So, it can be inferred that when the mind gets *Tamoadhikya* and body gets *Kaphadhikya* (which is the representative of *Tamo Guna* at physical level), *Indriyas* becomes inactive and person gets arrested by *Nidra*.



Nidra Utpatti or Physiology of Sleep (In Ayurveda)

Sleep occurs when the seat of *Chetana* (consciousness) is covered by *Tamo Guna*²¹ which predominates along with *Kapha*²². Sleep manifests when *Tamas* naturally predominates at night and the mind along with intellect are in depth of relax state^{23,16}. This occurs when bodily channels become accumulated with *Kapha* and the mind is devoid of contact with the sense organs because of fatigue¹⁹.

As per *Hathayoga Pradipika*, Sleep is one among 5 different states of mind²⁴.

Concept of Vega in Ayurveda:

VEGA

Table 1 Types and number of Vega

Table 2 Table of Symptoms of Nidra Vega Dharana

Dharniy	3	Kayika,	Vachika	and
a Vega		Mansika		
Adharni	1	Apana Va	ta, Mutra, Pu	ırisha,
ya Vega	3	Shukra, C	Chhardi, Ksh	vathu,
		Udgara, .	Irumbha, Ksh	ıudha,
		Trusna,	Vashpa, Nidr	a and
		Shramaja	nya Shwasa	

Granthakaras have described 13 different kinds of urges which should never be suppressed by human beings in any situation. Along with these 13 Adharniya Vegas (Non-suppressible urges) Acharya Vagbhatta has mentioned about the Kasa Vega instead of Udgara Vega. Acharya Bhela has also added the Pitta Vega and Kapha Vega.

Effect of Nidra Vega Dharana

The signs and symptoms caused due to the *Nidra Vega Vidharana* is elucidated from the following table stated below:

Symptoms of Nidra Vega Dharana	C.S. ²	S.S. ²	A.H. ²⁷	A.S. ²	Ma.Ni. ²	B.S. ³⁰
	5	6		8	9	
Jrambha (Yawning)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×
Moha (Delusion)	×	×	✓	✓	×	×
Alasya (Unenergetic)	×	×	✓	✓	×	×
Angamarda (Generalised bodyache)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×
Angajadya (Stiffness of body parts)	*	✓	×	×	×	*
Tandra (Drowsiness)	✓	×	×	×	✓	×
Shiro Roga (Head related ailments)	✓	×	×	×	×	*
Shiro Ruja (Headache)	*	×	×	×	×	✓
Shiro Jadya (Stiffness of head)	×	✓	×	×	✓	*
Murdha Gaurava (Heaviness of forehead)	×	×	✓	✓	×	×
Akshi Gaurava (Heaviness of eyes)	✓	×	✓	✓	×	×
Akshi Jadya (Stiffness of eyes)	×	✓	×	×	✓	×

C.S.- Charaka Samhita, S.S.- Sushruta Samhita, A.H.- Astanga Hridaya, A.S.-Astanga Samgraha, Ma. Ni.-Madhava Nidana, B.S.-Bhela Samhita



The various symptoms as seen in Table No. 2, that ascends due to the *Nidra Vega Dharana* finally leading to the *Vata Dosha* aggravation predominately^{31,32}.

CHIKITSA OF NIDRA VEGA DHARANA

The *Chikitsa* of the ailments caused as a consequence of *Nidra Vega Dharana* is also explained in *Samhitas*. *Acharya Charaka* has specified about *Swapnah* and *Samvahana* for treating the resultant

diseases²⁵. In this context *Acharya Chakrapani* has mentioned about *Samvahana* at *Pani Pada Pradeshe* i.e. soft and gentle massage of body parts by hands in a comfortable way²⁵. *Acharya Sushruta* has stated *Dugdha Sevana, Sayana and Mano Priya Katha Shravana. Dalhana* has explained the use of *Gau Dugdha*³³. *Sayana* and *Abhyanga* are indicated in *Astanga Hridaya*²⁷.

Nidrajanana Ahara and Vihara from Ayurvedic texts are as follow:

- ✓ → <u>Mahishi</u>· <u>Ksheera</u>· (Buffalo· milk)^{34,35,36,37,38}¶
- √ → Ksheera·(Milk)³⁹
 ¶
- ✓ → Kilata (A milk preparation)40,41¶
- √ → Pivusha, Kurchika, Morata

 (Various milk preparations)⁴²
 ¶
- √ → Padabhyanga-(Foot-massage)⁴³¶
- ✓ → <u>Sukha-Shvva</u>-Asana-(Comfortable-bed)⁴⁴¶
- √ → Samvahana: (Soft: &: gentle: massage)⁴⁵
 ¶
- ✓ → <u>Gramina</u> <u>Mahisha</u> Mansa (Buffalo meat)⁴⁶¶
- ✓ → Potaki-47¶

- ✓→ <u>Pratimarsha</u>· <u>Nasya</u>· in· the Evening⁴⁸¶
- √ → Varaha·Mansa·(Pork)^{49,50}
 ¶
- √ → Pathina-Matsya-(Fish)⁵¹
 ¶
- √ → Rajika-(Mustard)⁵²
 ¶
- ✓ → Upodika⁵³¶
- √ → Sumukha⁵⁴
 ¶
- √ → Lajaodana⁵⁵
 ¶
- √ → Head Massage with Oil⁵⁶
 ¶
- √ → Pleasant·Fragrance¶
- √ → Chankramana · (Slow walking)⁵⁷
 ¶
- √ → Music of interest¶
- ✓ → Meditation¶
- ✓ → Listening Shiva Sankalpa Suktam
 ¶

Nidrahara Ahara and Vihara from Ayurvedic texts are as follows:

- ✓ Antriksha Jala⁵⁸
- ✓ Water^{59,60}
- ✓ Taruna Dadhi (Fresh curd)^{61,62}
- \checkmark Snana (Bath)^{63,64}
- ✓ Swedana (Sudation)⁶⁵

- ✓ Vamana (Emesis)⁶⁶
- ✓ *Dhumapana* (Medicated smoke)

DISCUSSION

In this today's stressful life, the sleep is proved as the divine gift for the human beings which refreshes and recharges them for the next day performance. Unbalanced



food habits, suppression of natural urges, lack of proper sleep etc., these are gradually becoming the inseparable parts of our daily routine. Now, this is the exact time to know the precious value of proper sleep for the sustenance of healthy life. A famous saying by Thomas Dekker, a great English dramatist of London - Sleep is the golden chain that ties health and our body together. If someone has taken a sound sleep at night then he/she will remain happy and active throughout the day. Quality sleep is an indicator of good health as it is a stressreliever and normalizes the body tissues⁶⁸. We, humans spend our one-third of life in the sleeping stage; this communicates its pivotal importance for an individual. Both either holding the urge of sleep or sleeping at an odd time, are considered detrimental for the health i.e. in authority for the of occurrence the various Noncommunicable diseases like Diabetes, Obesity, Hypertension and other comorbidities. Along with this, it is also a potential cause of numerous mental disorders such as anxiety, depressed mood, irritability etc.

half the potentiality to cure the disease thereby signifying the crucial aspect of appropriate sleep. Like food is needed by all the creatures of this living world for their existence and growth, sleep is also necessary for the same. Sleep runs parallel to our circadian rhythms that is why there is always need to sleep at its natural time i.e. Night hours (10 P.M. - 4 A.M.). Timely sleeping and awakening gives energy, enhances the person enthusiasm, restoration of energy, a sense of freshness and increases the performance ability. Thus, quality sleep is essential for both growth and development of the individual along with good quality of life. On the contrary, sleep deprivation in turn leads to many comorbidities and this can be sometime fatal too.

CONCLUSION

As rightly said in *Vaidhyakiya Subhaashitasahityam* that "*Ardha Rogahari Nidra*" that proper sleep itself has



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