

Anidra and Its Management by Ayurveda and Yoga

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Abstract

These days *Anidra* is a prevalent health complaint that is often difficult to evaluate. *Ayurveda* has given more importance on *Nidra* by considering it among *Trayaupastambha*.

Anidra is a subjective complaint of poor sleep or an inadequate sleep. Sleep is one of the most important physiological processes responsible for maintenance of physical and mental health.

For the last four decades modern science has used barbiturates and use of hypnotic agents of the benzodiazepine class. But it seems that the effect of benzodiazepine is not as ideal line of treatment for insomnia. It produces drug dependence and it is having numerous advanced effects. Those who are having trouble sleeping, sometimes turn to sleeping pills which can help when used occasionally. But in *Ayurveda* there are many natural remedies to treat *anidra* and also the positive effect of *yoga* can help in better sleep.

Sushruta called *Nidra* as a *vaighnaviya* on a metaphoric language which is a physical process and provides nourishment to the living body and maintenance of health.

Nidranasa leads to different types of diseases specially the diseases which are originated from *vata* and same time this may create serious health problem. *Caraka* has given importance to *vata* in the management of *anidra*.

Due to proper and adequate sleep body tissue and *doshas* remains in blanch state of health both physically and mentally. So proper *nidra* is essential like food water and air for maintenance of good health and longevity.

The present article attempts to understand the cause, pathogenesis and effect of *anidra* in the body and mind and its management by *Ayurveda* and *yoga* (*sharbihan*).

Keywords

Anidra, *Aharbihar yoga*, *Trayaupastambha*



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INTRODUCTION

Anidra is a condition in which patient suffers from lack of sleep and it is very difficult for him to get sleep at night. For physical and mental wellbeing, proper sleep is essential in the human life. *Ayurvedic* classics have dealt with *anidra* and its management in details. Yet in modern era for the last half century, it becomes the most universal subject of human concern to examine its mysteries and mechanism.

Ayurveda mentioned sleep is one among the thirteen *Adharaniya vegas*¹. Like *Ahar* adequate sleep is essential for maintenance of the body².

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To evaluate the cause and pathogenesis of *Anidra*.
2. Management of *Anidra* by *Aharvihar* and *Yoga*.

MATERIALS

Ayurvedic textual materials were refer mainly Caraka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Astanga Hridaya and available commentaries of these *Samhitas*. For the study some modern books of medicine, psychiatry, journals etc. have also been

looked over. From these books references have been collected.

DISCUSSION

According to *Ayurveda* *Nidra* is considered to be one of *Trayaupasthambha*.

Nidra is derived from the root “*Dra*” with a prefix “*Ni*” The root “*Dra*” means undesired. Therefore, *Nidra* is considered as a state in which there will be no desire. So concept of *nidra* and the diseases which are occurring due to improper sleep is very essential for maintenance of positive health.

CAUSES OF ANIDRA

Sushruta mentioned that *vayu*, *pitta*, *manastap*, *kshaya* and *abhighat* are the cause of *Anidra* and by its counteracting measures *anidra* is treated.³

In modern concept Insomnia is a sleep disorder in which there is an inability to fall asleep or to stay asleep as long as desired.

Insomnia is most often thought of both a medical sign and a symptom, that can accompany several sleep, medical and psychiatric disorders characterized by persistence difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep or sleep of poor quality.

DEFINITION AND PATHOPHYSIOLOGY OF NIDRA:

Nidra is a state of life where *Jhanendriya* and *karmaendriya* are not doing their functions.

Nidra is a condition in which *Atma* does not have any desire for anything and it is caused *susupti* and not dream anything.

Sarangadhar mentioned that *Nidra* is a state where predominance of *kapha* and *Tamas* are seen.

Maharshi Patanjali states that sleep is a state in which all activities, thoughts and feelings come to an end.

Regarding *Nidra* several conception have been put forward by the ancient *Ayurvedic Acharyas*.

1) *Tamaguna* theory: *Astanga Hridaya* state that at Night *Tamas* being powerful and the higher psychic centres being over powers by it then the living organism goes to sleep.⁴

2) *Kaphadosa* theory: *Vagbhata* states that due to *avarana* by *sleshma* of the *srotas* and *shrama* of both types of *indriya* occur which dissociates from their respective senses then *nidra* occurs.⁵

3) Fatigue theory: *Caraka* states that when the mind including *Janendriya* and *karmenendriya* are exhausted they

dissociates themselves from their objects and then the individual sleeps.⁶

According to *Caraka* and *Sushruta* by nature, the night serves as a causative factor of sleep.

SAMPRAPTI OF NIDRA:

When the *srotas* (Channels of circulation) of the body become covered (coated or obstructed by exertion and when the *indriyas* (sensory and moter organs along with mind) are not functioning, the sleep manifests in the body. This is the physiological *nidra* which comes at night to every individual as a *swabhava*.⁷

EFFECTS OF ANIDRA:

Acharya Caraka mentioned that happiness and misery, nourishment emaciation, strength and weakness, virility, knowledge, ignorance, life and death depends on proper and improper sleep.

Deviation from normal routine of life is found to give rise to many biological disturbances along with *anidra*. The biological changes in the body are variable depending upon the duration, postures and states of the individual and thereby they disturb the body humors, leading of various types of diseases of the body.

Because of the *tridosha* theory, responsible for all types of troublesome in the body,

Ayurveda is very much particular about the disturbances in the routine life considering *anidra* and day sleep regimen of life. *Caraka* has advocated many pathophysiological changes, precipitating due to imbalanced *doshas*. *Caraka* clearly stated that vigil during night causes roughness in the body and sleep during daytime causes unctuousness and sleeps in the sitting posture neither causes roughness nor unctuousness.

HITAKARA MEASURES FOR THE TREATMENT OF ANIDRA:

Acharaya Caraka has said following measures for the treatment of *Anidra*. They are *abhyanga*, *utsadana*, *snsana*, 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 odour and 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. Comfortable seat for journey, use of clear cloths, use of flowers, scents, pleasant talk,

residing in beautiful places, listening to pleasing songs, reading of good books, news papers, articles pleasing to mind etc. are used in the management of *Anidra*.

Contact with female or sex, happy life, fulfillment of desires and subjects which are pleasing to the mind are also helpful for *Anidra*.

Apart from the above diet and regimens some *yoga* and *pranayama* are also very effective in *Anidra*. These are –

1. *Padmasana*
2. *Anulomvilam pranayama*.
3. *Bhramari pranayama* and
4. *Savasana*

CONCLUSION

Summing up the above explanation it can be concluded that there are various possible causes of *anidra* and these could include *aharvihar*, physical conditions, psychological conditions or temporary events or conditions.

Treatment of *Anidra* depends on the cause. Modern medications and sleeping pills do not work as a cure of *anidra*. Modern medications simply help to suppress the symptoms but it creates dependence and increase the severity of the problem.

Ayurveda and *yoga* is very helpful in dealing with *Anidra*. *Ayurveda* given more importance on *ahar* and *vihar* like *snigdha* and *madhur* diet, oil application over head, use of fresh cloths, residing in beautiful places. And above mentioned *yoga* and *pranayama* are also very effective for management of *Anidra*.

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