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The Potency of *Nasya Karma*

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ABSTRACT

Nasya (Nasya Karma) is a term to be applied generally for medicines administered through the nasal route. The formulations used for the purpose of *Nasya Karma* are called *Nasika Kalpana*. Since nose is the gateway of the head, the therapy is highly effective in curing a number of diseases pertaining to the head, if it is performed systematically. The therapy cleanses and opens the channels of the head, thereby improving the process of oxygenation (*prana*), which has a direct influence on the functioning of brain. The therapy is beneficial if done on a regular basis, because it keeps the eyes, nose and ear healthy. It also prevents the early graying of hair. *Nasya karma* is mainly indicated in the diseases of head and it can be done in many other conditions which effects the head as head is the important part of the central nervous system that regulates functions throughout the body.

KEYWORDS

Nasya, Karmukta, Kalpana



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INTRODUCTION

The *sanskrit* term *Panchkarma* translates five therapeutic procedures which is known as *Vamana*, *Virechana*, *Anuvasana Basti*, *Niruha Basti* and *Nasya*. 'Pancha' refers to number five and the 'Karma' refers to the therapy that brings about homeostasis by way of evacuation of accumulated morbid *dosha*. *Panchkarma* procedures are carried out in 3 steps. These steps are-

1)-*Poorva Karma*, 2)- *Pradhana Karma*,3)-*Pashchata Karma*.

According to *Acharya Charaka Nasya Karma* is mainly indicated in *Shiroroga*. *Nasya Karma* evacuates the vitiated *dosha* and *mala* by nearest passage. The administered *Nasya Aushadha* directly reaches to *Shringataka Marma* and stimulates the brain¹.

Aushadha Dravya or *Siddha Sneha* that is administered through nasal route or passage is known as *Nasya*².

Aushadha given to patients by nasal route or *nasamarga* reaches head (after absorption) and gets distributed in head providing effective results in *urdhwajatrugaroga*.

SYNONYMS OF NASYA:-

Shirovirechana, *Murdhavirechana*, *Shirovireka*, *Nastah Karma* and *Navana* are the synonym of *Nasya Karma*.

INDICATIONS OF NASYA:-

Conditions like *Shiro Roga* (Diseases of the Head), *DantaRoga* (Tooth Disease) *Ardhavabhedaka* (Migrane), *Gala Graha*, *Manyastambha* (Cervical Spondylosis), *Svarabheda* (Hoarse Voice), *Hanugraha*, *Pinasa*, *Gala Shaluka*, *MukhaRoga* (Mouth Disease), *DantaShoola/harsha* (Toothache/Hyper Sensitivity), *Timira*, *Arbuda* (Tumor), *KarnaShoola* (Earache), *SkandhaRoga*, *Aptanaka*, *Khalitya*, *Aptantraka*, *Palitya* are the conditions where *nasya* is indicated.

CONTRAINDICATIONS OF NASYA:-

In conditions like *Ajirna* (Indigestion), *Bala* (Childs), *Bhuktabhata* (After Meal), *Vegavarodhita*, *Shoka-pidita* (In Sadness), *Akala* (not a appropriate season), *Durdina* (not a appropriate day), *Nava-jwara* (Acute Fever), *Nava Pratishyaya* (Acute Rhinitis), *Vyayama Klanta* (After Exercise), *Vyavaya Klanta*, *Peeta Madya* (Drunk), *Peeta Sneha* (After Internal Application of *Sneha*), *Shwasa-grasita* (Breathlessness), *Vridhdha* (Old age), *Kasa-grasita* (Cough), *Kshudharta* (Hungry), *Anuvasita* (After *Sneha Basti*), *Garbhini* (In Pregnant), *Shirah Snata* (After Bath).

CLASSIFICATIONS OF NASYA KARMA:-

According to *Acharya Charaka Navana Nasya*, *Avapidana Nasya*, *Dhmapana* or



Pradhamana Nasya, Dhuma Nasya and Pratimarsha Nasya are 5 types of *Nasya Karma*.

CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO ACHARYA SUSHRUTA:-

According to Acharya Sushruta there are mainly 2 types of *nasya* viz., *Shirovirechana nasya* and *Sneha nasya*. Apart from these 2, *Nasya, Shirovirechana Nasya, Pratimarsha Nasya, Avapidana Nasya* and *Pradhamana Nasya* is also mentioned by Acharya Sushruta.

NAVANA NASYA:-

The procedure of dropping the medicated oil into the nostrils is known as *Navana Nasya*. This is divided in *Snehana Navana Nasya* and *Shodhana Navana Nasya*.

Navana Nasya is effective in clearing the accumulation of *sanchitashirasthadoshas*. Administration of this *Nasya* is beneficial in condition like *Shiro Gaurava, Shirah Shoola, Jeerna Pratishyaya* and *Apasmara*. *Avaramatra* is 8 drops, *madhyama matra* is 16 drops and *pravara matra* is 32 drops. In contrast to this 4, 6 and 8 drops are the *Avara, Madhyama* and *Pravara* dose of *Snehana Navana Nasya*, respectively. *Aushadha* used for *Shodhana Navana Nasya* is *Anu Taila Nasya* and *aushadha* used for *shamana navana nasya* is *narayana taila*.

AVAPIDANA NASYA:-

Herbs are pounded into a paste and then squeezed to extract the juice which is dropped into the nostrils. *Shodhana Avapida Nasya* and *Stambhana Avapida Nasya* are the two distinct varieties of *avapida nasya*. *Avapida nasya* should be given in doses such as *hina matra* (small dose) 4 drops, *madhyama matra* (medium dose) 6 drops and *uttama matra* (large dose) 8 drops. *Stambhana Nasya* is beneficial in arresting the bleeding from nostrils, where as *Shodhana Nasya* eliminates the morbid *dosha* from head. *Aushadha* used for *Shodhana Avapida Nasya* is *Saindhava-Pippalayadi Kalka* and *aushadha* used for *stambhana avapida nasya* is *ikshu svarasa*.

DHMAPANA NASYA (PRADHAMANA NASYA):-

Herbs are used in fine powder form and this herbal powder is blown into the nostrils. This form of *Nasya* is mainly beneficial in eliminating the morbid *dosha*. The medicine in powder form is blown into the nostrils with the help of a 13.2 cm (6 Angula) long tube. Through this tube the medicine may be blown by mouth, or else a rubber bulb may be conveniently used. (as 1 Angula is 2.2cm approximate). The medicinal powder that is picked up thrice between the thumb and the index finger is the dose of the *Dhmapana Nasya (Pradhamana Nasya)*. This is useful



in psychological illness (*Manovaha Roga*) and epilepsy (*Apasmara*). *Aushadha* use for *Dhamapana Nasya* is *Katphala Churna*.

DHUMA NASYA:-

Smoke emitted after from burning the herbal medicines is inhaled through the nostrils and is known as *Dhuma Nasya*. *Prayogika Dhuma*, *Vairechnika Dhuma* and *Snaihika Dhuma* are 3 sub types of *Dhuma Nasya*.

PRAYOGIKA DHUMA NASYA

Herbs are powdered and shaped into a hollow stick. This hollow stick is attached to the smoking pipe and its free end is lighted. This smoke (*dhuma*) is inhaled. *Dhuma* inhaled 3x3 *avaritties* (3 little inspiration followed by one large expiration, total 9 times) which is the *Matra* for *Prayogika Dhuma Nasya*. The length of *Dhuma netra* for *Prayogika Dhuma Nasya* is 36 *angula* (79.2cm). Ex.- (*Harenu*, *Priyangu*, *Chandana*, *Usheera*, *Jatamansi*, *Aguru*, *Plaksha*, etc.).

VAIRECHANIKA DHUMA NASYA

The different herbs that have an ability to clear the accumulation of *doshas* in the head are used in the preparation of hollow sticks for smoking in *Vairechanika Dhuma Nasya*. This type of *nasya* is specially indicated in disease of the head due to morbid *Kapha Dosh*. *Vairechanika dhuma nasya* is continued for a longer duration till the

complete elimination of *dosha* (*doshanirharana*). The length of *Dhuma-netra* is 24 *angula* (52.8cm).

Ex.-(*Shweta-aparajita*, *Malakangani*, *Manahshila*, *Agurupatra*)

SNAIHIKA DHUMA NASYA

Snaihika Dhuma Nasya relieves the dryness and irritation in the respiratory passages. This is very effective in relieving the morbidity of *Vata Dosh*. The herbs like seeds of *eranda*, stem of *Devadaru* and *Guggulu* are used in the preparation of herbal sticks. Sticks is fixed to the smoking pipe, take one end in mouth (like cigerretes) then lighted the free end of stick and use like cigerretes, till '*AshruShrava*' is started. The length of *Dhuma-netra* is 32 *angula*(68.2cm).

PRATIMARSHA NASYA:-

Medicated oil when dropped in the nostrils in a small and specific dose is known as *Pratimarsha Nasya*. It is the most convenient form of *nasya* as it does not lead to any discomfort or complications. *Matra* of the *pratimarsha nasya* is two drops. The same *nasya* when administered in larger dose is known as *Marsha Nasya*. *Pravara matra* of *marsha nasya* is 10 drops, *madhyama matra* is 8 drops and *avara matra* is 6 drops.

Ex.-(*Shadabindu Taila*).



PRATIMARSHA NASYA KALA:-

According to *Acharya Sushruta* the *kala* for *Pratimarsha Nasya* is *Shayanotthita Kala*, *Dantaprakshaloparanta*, *Bahirgamana Kala*, *Vyayamottara Kala*, *Vyavayottara Kala*, *Yatra/Adhwashranta Kala*, *Mala Visarjanoparanta Kala*, *Mutra Visarjanoparanta Kala*, *Kavaloparanta Kala*, *Anjanoparanta Kala*, *Bhojanottara Kala*, *Vamanottara Kala*, *Divashayanotthita Kala*, *Sandhya Kala*, (Note- *Acharya Vagbhatta* mentioned a extra *kala* which is *Shiro Abhyangaparanta* (15th).

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MARSHA AND PRATIMARSHA NASYA:-

In *marsha nasya*, there are chances of *vyapada* or *upadrava* (complications) but in *pratimarsha nasya*, no any possibilities of *upadrava* or *vyapada* (complications) is occur. Differences in *matra* such as in *marsha nasya* the *pravara matra* is 10 drops, *madhyama matra* is 8 drops and *avara matra* is 6 drops but *matra* of *pratimarsha nasya* is 2 drops only. *Marsha nasya* is given on the basis of *kala* while *pratimarsha nasya* is given in all *ritu* and *kala*. *Marsha nasya* works fast while *pratimarsha nasya* works slowly. *Marsha nasya* administration is depends on age which is not indicated in *vridhdha* and *bala* while *pratimarsha nasya* is given to all age

groups. *Sneha* used in more quantity is *marsha nasya* while *sneha* used in less quantity in *pratimarsha nasya*.

PROCEDURE OF NASYA KARMA:-

Procedure of *Nasya Karma* is done in following steps.

POORVA KARMA:-

1. COLLECTION OF NECESSARY FACILITY:

A). MEDICINES

Anu Taila in *Jeerna Roga* (Chronic Disorders) of the nose, *Durva Svarasa* in spontaneous bleeding from the nose, *Vidanga Churna* in *Twaka Roga* (Skin diseases) affecting the head and neck, *Purana Ghrita* in *Manovaha Roga* (Psychological illness), *Madhu* in *Hikka* (Hiccups), *Lakshadi Taila* in *Jeerna Pratishyaya* (Chronic Rhinitis), *Karpasasthyadi Taila* in cranial nerve disorders and *Bhunaga Taila* in *Ardita* (Facial Paralysis).

B). EQUIPMENTS

Table, 100 ml lukewarm medicated oil for *Abhyanga*, metallic *Go-karna Yantra* or rubber dropper, 13.2 cm long glass tube fitted with rubber bulb at one end for blowing the medicine for *Dhmapana Nasya*, *Dhuma-netra* and spitton.

C). PREPARATION OF THE PATIENT



After evacuation of the bowel and bladder the patient is asked to take the light diet, several minutes after meal the patient may be subjected to *Nasya Karma*. *Abhyantara Snehapana* is Contraindicated, if it is essential than small dose of *Sneha* should be given only for 3 days, after a rest of one day *Nasya* therapy is planned on 5th day.

D). PERFORMING ABHYANGA AND SVEDANA

ABHYANGA

Patient is placed in the supine position on table. Therapist stands at the head end of the table facing the foot and to carry out *Abhyanga* and *Swedana*. Face and neck of the patient anointed with lukewarm oil, and then face and anterior neck are massaged.

Forehead, Eyebrows, Nose, Chin and Maxillary area is massaged by linear thumb movements. Cheek and temporal region is massaged with circular movements of the Palm in both clockwise and anticlockwise direction. Anterior of the neck is massaged by moving the flat of the Palms from the base of the neck to the mandible.

SWEDANA

For this purpose, we do *Nadi Sweda* for which we can use *Eranda Mula*, *Vasa*, *Nirgundi*, *Dashamula* etc. Thus every part of the face and neck is treated the patient is ready for administering the *Nasya Karma*.

The aim for doing *Abhyanga* & *Swedana* is for to move *Doshas* from *Shakha* to the *Koshtha*.

PRADHANA KARMA:-

A). POSITIONING THE PATIENT

The table used for *Nasya karma* will have facility for lowering the head portion. In the supine position of the patient the head is bent backwards for about 45 degrees.

B). ADMINISTERING THE MEDICINE

In case of *Navana*, *Marsha* and *Pratimarsha* *Nasya* prescribed oil is taken in a *Go-karna Yantra* or rubber dropper, then therapist stands near head end of the table (where patient is lying in supine position) and elevates the tip of the patient's nose with left thumb and then allows to drop the oil from dropper into each nostrils one after the other. After dropping the oil into one nostril, the patient is asked to take deep inhalation so that the medicine reaches deep inside the nose, the same is repeated in other nostril. In *Avapidana Nasya*, the herbal paste taken in a cloth piece is squeezed to extract the juice and is made to fall into the nostril.

In case of *Pradhamana Nasya*, the herbal powder is loaded into a glass tube and is then blown into the nostril. For this, the prescribed medicinal powder is placed on a plate. The glass tube fitted with bulb at one end is taken and free end of the glass tube is



pressed against the powder and it allows the powder to load into the tube. Then the therapist gently compresses the bulb to blow the medicine into the nostril, the patient then asks to close the opposite nostril and then to inhale.

In case of *Dhuma Nasya*, the patient is made to sit on a knee high chair and the lighted *Dhuma Yantra* is placed. The patient is asked to suck and then inhale the *Dhuma* by placing the mouth piece of the *Dhuma Yantra* between the lips. He should exhale the *Dhuma* only through the mouth, this is repeated several times. Following this the patient is now asked to suck by one of the nostrils and then inhale and the other nostril is closed with fingers and then exhale through the mouth. *Dhuma* should never be exhaled through the nose.

In *Prayogika & Vairechanika Dhuma Nasya* inhalation mostly through nostrils is preferred. Inhaling the smoke both through the nostrils as well as mouth is ideal in *Snaihika Dhuma Nasya*.

PASCHATA KARMA:-

A). OBSERVATION OF THE PATIENT

The therapist should closely observe the patient to assess the proper effect of the medication. If the patient develops any symptoms indicating inadequate or

excessive effect then it should be treated properly.

EFFECTS OF THE NASYA KARMA:-

The symptoms of proper effect are *Shiro Laghuta*, *Indriya Shuddhi*, *Sukha Swapna*, *Manah Sukha*, *Sukha Prabodhana* and *Vikara Upashamana*³.

INADEQUATE EFFECT OF NASYA KARMA:-

The symptoms of inadequate effect are *Vata Vigunata*, *Indriya Rukshata* and *Roga Anupashamana*⁴.

EXCESSIVE EFFECT OF NASYA:-

The symptoms of excessive effect are *Kapha Pravritti*, *Shiro Gaurava* and *Indriya Vibhrama*⁵.

B). AFTER NASYA:-

The patient is asked to spit out the medicine that reaches the throat. *Swedana* is repeated on the face after *nasya*. Gentle massage is done on the forehead, palms and soles of the patient, after that the patient is advised to take some rest then the patient is allowed to wash his mouth and face with luke warm water (tolerable to the patient).

C). KAVALA:-

After *Nasya Kwatha* made from *Shodhana Dravya* (*Trifala*, *Trikatu*, *Vacha*, *Pippali*, *Haritaki*, *Gomutra*) is administered to the patient for *Kavala*.

D). GANDUSHA:-



Trifala, Trikatu, Vacha, Pippali, Haritaki, Gomutra is to take with *Ushna Jala* or *Yava Kshara* or *Sarji Kshara* and then administered to patient with *Trifala Kwatha*.

MODE OF ACTION

Drugs used in *nasya karma* (mainly *churna aushadha*) is sensitive to smell (*shunthi, lashuna, hingu, vacha* etc.) and other *dravyas* have properties of *katu, ushna, tikshna* & because of these properties these *dravyas* works as *vishyandana, dravikarana, chhedana* etc. *madhura dravyas* works as *brimhana, shamana* and *tarpana* etc.

Aushadha which is *kashaya* in nature works as *stambhana, shirovirechana aushadha* works by reaching *uttamanga* & excrete out *vikrita dosha*⁶.

Nasa is the door of the head, that's why the *aushadha* which is giving through nasal route reaches to *shringataka marma* and shows its effects in *shira, netra, srotra* and *kantha* & excrete out *vikrita (vridhha) doshas*⁷.

Before starting the *nasya karma sthanika abhyanga* is given to patient which helps in stimulation of vasodilator nerves and spread out on superficial surface of face, this increases the blood circulation to the brain. When the head is kept in lower position, it aids retention of medicine in nasopharynx

and helps in providing sufficient time for local drug absorption.

When the *nasya dravya* are administered through the nasal cavity, the drug gets absorbed by the passive process across the cell wall through the cell membrane as lipid soluble medicine has greater passive absorption. Later transversion may be carried through capillaries and veins to stimulates olfactory nerve which is connected with higher centers of the brain (like Limbic system, Basic ganglia & Hypothalamus) which inturn stimulates endocrine and nervous system.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Nasya is very important procedure to cure *UrdhvaJatrugata Roga*. *Nasya Karma* enhances the activity of sense organs and prevents the diseases. *Nasya Karma* prevents *khalitya* and ensures growth of hair and alleviates diseases like *Manyastambha, Shirah-shoola, Ardhabhedhaka, Ardita, Ekanga-vata, Avabhahuka, Manasa-roga* etc. *Nasya Aushadha* makes its way to brain through nasal passage and olfactory tract to stimulate.

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