



A LITERARY REVIEW ON STUDY OF *NIDRA* AND *NIDRANASH* ACCORDING TO CHARAK SAMHITA

Review Article

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ABSTRACT

For people of all ages the everyday stress of life often leads to the sacrifice of one of the most important aspect of human health: sleep. Sleep is biological need of every individual. Not only does sleep help you feel more awake during the day, it is also important for helping your body fend off illness and fight infections. People who are sleep deprived may become sick more often than those with enough sleep. Sleep also helps to think clearly, have a strong memory and maintain a high energy level throughout the day. On the other hand, sleep deprivation has been shown to contribute to weight gain, irritability, lowered academic performance, bad communication and depression. Ayurveda has given tremendous importance to mental health along with physical health. According to Ayurveda *Ahara* , *nidra* and *bramhacharya* are *trayopstambh*(three pillars) of life. As sleep plays very important role in our health it is necessary to study about it in detail. This article highlights the importance of *nidra* according to Charaka samhita .

Key Words: *Nidra* , *Nidranasha* , *Trayopstambh* , *Diwaswapna*.

INTRODUCTION: Ayurveda believes in preventing disease rather than treating them, so it gives enormous importance to maintain healthy lifestyle. According to Ayurveda the tripod of life i.e. *Trayopstambha* (*three pillars*) includes *Ahara*(diet), *Nidra* (sleep) and *Brahmacharya* (celibacy)⁽¹⁾ . Imbalanced diet is the main cause for many disorders like diabetes obesity etc. So Ayurveda has considered *ahara* as first pillar in tripod of life. *Nidra* which is sleep directly affects physical as well as mental status and therefore it is considered as second pillar. *Brahmacharya* means maintaining celibacy which in Ayurveda means as controlled sexual activity. By keeping balance between these three one can achieve good physical, mental and spiritual well being. As mentioned above *Nidra* plays very crucial role in our life. In today's era

lifestyle related disorders like hypertension, diabetes mellitus, obesity, etc. are increasing . Along with improper diet and stress, disturbed sleep cycle is also a cause of these disorders. A good sleep restores energy of body and provides relaxation. Thus, sleep disturbance can lower ones efficacy and affect his physical, mental and emotional state. Among lot of sleep disorders insomnia i.e. when it is hard to get to sleep or stay asleep is common. Globally, insufficient sleep is prevalent across various age groups and is considered to be a public health epidemic that is often unrecognized, under- reported , and that has rather high economic costs. Reduced sleep duration has been linked to 7 of the 15 leading causes of death in the U.S., including cardiovascular disease, accidents, diabetes , septicaemia and hypertension⁽²⁾ . In Ayurveda insomnia is

mentioned as *Nidranasha* or *Anidra*. In the modern science the treatment of insomnia mainly consists of drugs which are acting on central nervous system. These drugs have various side effects. Hence, the ayurvedic science can be explored to find better alternative to manage this condition. In order to be able to treat insomnia, it is crucial to study *Nidra* and *Nidranasha* in detail from ayurvedic texts.

In *Charaka samhita* one can find many references which explain in detail the definition of *Nidra*, types of *Nidra* and importance of *nidra*, causes and management of *Nidranash*. He has thoroughly discussed types of *nidra*, what is its importance, what are the benefits. This study was performed to study the ayurvedic concept of *Nidra* and *Nidranash* according to *charaka samhita*.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To understand *Nidra* as explained in *Charaka Samhita*
- To study *Nidranash* according to *Charaka Samhita*.

MATERIALS USED: For this article, references regarding *Nidra* and *Nidranash* were collected from *Charaka Samhita* as a principle reference book and compilation was done. Concept of *Nidra* and *Nidranash* was studied in detail.

DEFINITION OF NIDRA: According to Acharya *charaka*, when mind (*Mana*) and soul (*Atma*) gets tired and sensory and motor organs become inactive then the person gets *Nidra*⁽³⁾

SYNOMYS: Acharya *Charaka* has called *Nidra* as *Butadhatri*⁽⁴⁾, which means one who takes care of all living beings as their mother.

TYPES OF NIDRA: According to causes Acharya *Charaka* has classified *Nidra* in following manner⁽⁵⁾:

- 1) *Tamobhava* - Caused due to increased *Tama guna*.
- 2) *Shleshmasamudbhava* - Caused due to elevated *kapha dosha*.

3) *Manah- Sharirshramasambhava*- Due to *Mansikshram* like *chinta*, *krodh* etc and *sharirik shram* like *vyayam*, the mind and body become tired and person falls asleep. This *nidra* brings health and happiness.

4) *Agantuki*- Caused by some unknown external factor and is known as *Arishtasandnyak* which means indicating bad prognosis which may lead to death.

5) *Vyadhyanuvartini* - Caused as complication of other disease for example *Sannipataja jwara*.

6) *Ratriswabhav prabhava*- Sleep which comes naturally at night.

Out of these, *Tamobhava* is considered as result of all the wrongdoings, *Ratriswabhavprabhava* is considered. *Bhutadhatri* and the rest all *Nidras* are considered as diseases (*vyadhi*)⁽⁶⁾

MITHYAYOGA OF NIDRA:

Akal nidra— sleeping at day time. Due to this *snigdha guna* increases in body.

Ratru jagaran— staying awake at night. This increases *ruksha guna* in body

Atiprasang of nidra – this means taking excessive sleep.

All these three *nidras* Have negative impact on health and well being⁽⁷⁾.

INDICATION FOR DIWASWAPNA:

Singing, study, alcohol consumers, sexual acts, *shodhana chikitsa* (elimination therapy), carrying heavy weight, *ajirna* (indigestion), walking long distance, wasting, thirst, diarrhoea, colic pain, dyspnoea, hiccough, insanity, those who are too old, too young, weak and emaciated, those injured by fall and assault, exhausted by journey by a vehicle, anger and fear and those who are accustommed to day sleep. Along with these anyone can take day sleep in *grishma ritu* as there is elevated level of *vata dosha*. Taking day sleep in above mentioned cases maintains balance between *dhatus* and increases *bala*. Day sleep elevates *prakrit kapha dosha* in body

and nourishes the body and increases longevity of life⁽⁸⁾.

CONTRAINDICATION FOR DIWASWAPNA: Sleep during day time in other than *grishma ritu* is not advisable as it raises level of *kapha* and *pitta dosha* in body. Obese person, persons consuming excessive fatty diet on regular basis, *kapha prakriti*, *kapha vikar grasta*, *dushi visha* (chronic poisoning) should not sleep at day time⁽⁹⁾.

ADVERSE EFFECTS OF DIWASWAPNA: Jaundice, headache, numbness, heaviness of the body, malaise, loss of digestive capacity, chest tightness, oedema, anorexia, nausea, coryza, hemicrania, urticaria, abscess, itching, drowsiness, coughing, throat diseases, fever, improper functioning of *indriyas*, memory dysfunction, *strotasavarodh*, increase in symptoms of poisoning.⁽¹⁰⁾

IMPORTANCE OF NIDRA: Sleep is biological necessity and is important for cognitive functioning, mood, mental health and cardiovascular, cerebrovascular and metabolic health. While individual sleep needs vary, the American academy of sleep medicine (AASM) and sleep research society (SRS) recommend that the average adult should sleep 7 or more hours per night on a regular basis to promote optimal health⁽¹¹⁾. For any individual to work with fullest potential it is essential to have right diet and good sleep.

Acharya charaka has given many benefits of having good sleep, which are as follows⁽¹²⁾

- 1) It brings happiness in life.
- 2) It maintains physical wellbeing.
- 3) It increases strength.
- 4) It increases sexual potency
- 5) It increases power of brain.
- 6) It maintains the life.

Also *Acharya charaka* has said that *nidra* is responsible to keep one happy just like *ahara* (diet) is important for health and both of these are responsible for *krushata* (leanness) and *sthulata* (obesity) of body⁽¹³⁾

ABOUT NIDRANASHA: The word *Nidranasha* is formed by two words *Nidra* and *Nasha*. Based upon *niruktis* of these two words *Nidranasha* can be understood as loss of sleep.

CAUSES OF NIDRANASHA: Direct reference about causes of *nidranasha* could not be seen but *Acharya charaka* has mentioned *Nidranasha* in following conditions⁽¹⁴⁾:

- 1) *Atiyoga of Vamana*
- 2) *Atiyoga of Virechang*
- 3) *Atiyoga of Nasya*
- 4) *Atiyoga of Raktamokshana*
- 5) *Atiyoga of Dhoomapana*
- 6) *Ati Chinta*
- 7) *Ati Krodha*
- 8) *Vata Vridhii*
- 9) *Pitta Vridhi*
- 10) *Kapha Kshay*.
- 11) *Manastap*
- 12) *Dhatukshaya*
- 13) *Abhighat*

DISCUSSION: Ayurveda has stated that sleep (*Nidra*) is one of the most important pillars of health as it is directly associated with physical and mental health, so main aim was to study *nidra* according to *charak Samhita*. To combat the lifestyle disorders and lead healthy life ideal *nidra* plays an important role. Sleep itself acts as a nourisher. During sleep, anabolism is more than catabolism hence prevents body organs from damage and repairs damage at cellular level. Thus by studying *nidra* and *nidranasha* one can get rid of from diseases arising from the loss of sleep. This article explains about *nidra* and its importance. *Acharya charak* has called *nidra* as *bhutadhatri* which means one who take care of all leaving beings as mother. Along with loss of sleep at improper time, daytime sleep also creates lots of problems which is highlighted by *Acharya charaka*. Although daytime sleep creates lot of issues; yet *Acharya charaka* has mentioned exceptions for it which showss the gratitude of research done.

CONCLUSION: Sleep is directly connected with mental state. Ayurveda

emphasized that *Sharir* and *Satwa* both interact with one another in all spheres of life. Sleep is particularly relevant to psychiatric illness and frequently part of diagnostic criteria for specific disorders. In a recent review of various surveys, it was concluded that individual who slept for less than six hours each night had a tenfold greater risk of premature mortality than those who obtained seven to nine hours of sleep⁽¹⁵⁾. In today's era people are not getting enough hours of sleep because of busy life schedules and overload, as a result, work hours have engaged the time of sleep. Tension also contributes its share in reducing the sleeping time. If a healthy person does not get proper sleep, he will become a patient. In today's era *Nidra* and *Nidranash* are the very important factors to be studied for as many of the sufferers are there who complains about it and did not get relief because of the lack of detailed studies and treatment. As in *Charaka samhita Acharya* had already told the causes, symptoms and treatment, so here is an attempt to lighten up the study of *Nidra* and *Nidranash* is done.

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