

THE SIGNIFICANCE ROLE OF IDEAL NIDRA (SLEEP) FOR PROMOTION OF HEALTH

Dr Miral Parmar

Assistant Professor, Department of Samhita Siddhanta & Sanskrit Department

S S Agrawal Institute of Ayurveda, Navsari

Email Id: miralayurved5061@gmail.com, Page. No. 22-28

Abstract

The earliest systematic discipline to emerge globally, Ayurveda, places a strong emphasis on maintaining bodily and mental health while promoting and preserving life in its entirety. The three primary pyramids of life—Ahara, Nidra, and Brahmacharya—are essential for the preservation of human health. The second essential pillar of existence is nidra, or sleep. People sleep when their minds are worn out and their sense organs are detracted from their objects. The human body contains an inherent biological clock that controls our circadian rhythm, or 24-hour sleep-wake cycle. Getting a good night's sleep is a healthy and normal occurrence. Thus, Acharya Charaka also refers to it as Bhutadhatri. Joy, sorrow, sustenance, emaciation, strength, weakness, knowledge, and ignorance are all contingent upon appropriate sleep. So, along with diet and lifestyle Sleep is one of the most important factor for health.

Aim: To understand the role of Ideal *Nidra* (sleep) in Promotion and maintenance of the health and Wellness.

Materials and Methods:

The study has been framed through the compilation and analysis of subject-related data from the Internet, published research papers, and other sources.

Observation and Discussion:

Nidra, or sleep, is the second most vital life pillar. It is a state of physiological rest for the senses, motor organs, body, and mind. A person sleeps for one-third of their lives. It is also listed as a normal drive that should not be repressed because doing so can result in a number of illnesses. Because of hectic schedules, people in today's society are not receiving enough sleep, which contributes to a number of illnesses like diabetes mellitus, hypertension, obesity, and migraines. Treatments for insomnia include massage, unction, bathing, soup made with domestic, marshy, and aquatic animals, Shali rice with curds, milk, alcohol, and psychological enjoyment. Tarpana for eyes, a cosy bed, a house, and getting enough sleep.

Hence, it is very important concept of life, which if practiced accordingly it will lead to a healthy state of body, mind and spirit.

Conclusion:

Nidra, or sleep, plays a crucial role in both health and the onset of diseases. Therefore, obtaining adequate sleep at the appropriate times is vital for the promotion and maintenance of overall health and wellness.

Key words: Ayurveda, *Trayopstambha*, *Nidra*, Health.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda represents not merely a medical system but a comprehensive lifestyle approach. It encompasses physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. The fundamental principle of Ayurveda is encapsulated in the adage, "Prevention is better than cure." This ancient discipline, rooted in the profound insights of esteemed sages, is rich in knowledge that remains unrefuted to this day. The three essential pillars of life—Ahara, Nidra, and Brahmacharya—are crucial for maintaining human health.ⁱ Among these, Nidra, or sleep, serves as a significant secondary pillar. The saying, "Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise," underscores its importance. Sleep is a physiological state that provides rest for the body, mind, senses, and motor functions, with individuals spending approximately one-third of their lives in this state. The human body operates on an internal biological clock that regulates the circadian rhythm, governing the sleep-wake cycle over a twenty-four-hour period. Quality sleep at night is a natural and restorative process, referred to as Bhutadhatri by Acharya Charaka. Ayurveda posits that the physical body (sharira) and the mind (Satwa) are interconnected in all aspects of life. The Tamo Guna of the mind facilitates sleep; however, disturbances caused by intrusive thoughts can elevate Rajo Guna, which is closely associated with Vata Dosha. An increase in Rajo Guna subsequently raises Vata Dosha and diminishes the calming effects of Tamo Guna, potentially leading to insomnia.

The disruption of Nidra may be associated with an unhealthy lifestyle, psychological stress, altered dietary habits, and overall tension, all of which can adversely

affect sleep quality. Studies indicate that inadequate sleep can elevate the risk of conditions such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. Along with diet and lifestyle Sleep is one of the most important factors for health.

AIM & OBJECTIVE:

□ To understand the role of Ideal *Nidra* (Sleep) in Promotion and maintenance of the health and Wellness.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The study has been framed through the compilation and analysis of subject-related data from the Internet, published research papers, and other sources

Etymological Derivation

The etymology of the term Nidra reveals its feminine gender. It originates from the root "Dra," which is prefixed by "Ni." The root "Dra" signifies something undesired, thus Nidra is understood as a state characterized by the absence of desire, leading to its designation as Nidra.

Historical Overview of Nidra:

The PATANJALI YOGA SUTRA defines Nidra as "the involuntary absence of thought, waves, or knowledge."

The BHAGWAD GEETA, as explained by Lord Krishna, emphasizes the significance of adequate sleep for a Dhyana Yogi, noting that both excessive sleep and constant wakefulness are detrimental. MANU, after detailing the smaller units of time, states that the 30 Muhurta period (24 hours) is divided by the sun into day and night, with daytime allocated for activities and

nighttime reserved for rest and sleep. According to VAIDYAKIYA SUBHASHITA, Nidra is said to alleviate half of ailments.

In the BRAHMANOPANISHAD, the initiation and development of sleep are characterized by the Chitta's exhaustion, leading it to retreat from sensory stimuli of the external world; thus, sleep serves as a restorative phase for the mind. Sleep is a mental process characterized by a lack of awareness.

Acharya Vyasa emphasized that while one is asleep, there is still an awareness of their own unconscious state. Maharshi Patanjali described sleep as a condition where all thoughts, activities, and emotions cease.

Charaka noted that when both the mind and soul are fatigued or inactive, and when the sensory and motor functions are at rest, the individual enters into sleep.ⁱⁱ

Sushruta explained that sleep happens when Tamas envelops the Hridaya, which is the center of consciousness. In the Ashtanga Samgraha, Vagbhata noted that when the Manovaha Strotas are filled with Shleshma and the mind lacks sensory input due to exhaustion, a person succumbs to sleep.ⁱⁱⁱ

Types of Nidra:

Acharya Charaka^{iv} has classified Nidra in following manner according to causes

1. *Tamobhava*- caused by *tama*
2. *Shleshmasamudbhava*- caused by vitiate *kapha*
3. *Manah-Sharirashramasaambhava*- caused by physical and mental exertion
4. *Agantuki*-indicative of bad prognosis leading imminent death

5. *Vyadhyanuvaritini*- caused as a complication of other disease.

*Acharya Vagbhata*⁶ has classified in seven types as following manner

1. *Tamobhava*- it is produced by predominance of *Tamoguna*
2. *Shleshmaprabhava*- it is produced due to predominance of *kapha*
3. *Chitta khedaja*- when *mana* is exhausted
4. *Deha Khedaja*- when body is exhausted
5. *Agantuka*- this type of *Nidra* is produced
6. *Kalaswabhawaja*- it is produces at the accustomed time. i.e. nights
7. *Amayaja*- it is produced due to effect of diseases
6. *Ratri-swabhavaprabhava*- caused by the very nature of the night

Acharya Dalhana^v has classified *Nidra* into three types on the basis of *Sushruta Samhita*

1. *Tamasika*- when *sangyavaha strotas* become filled with *shleshma* dominated by *tamoguna* then *Tamasi Nidra* is produced.
2. *Swabhaviki*- this type of *Nidra* occurs naturally and daily in all living beings.
3. *Vaikariki*- If there is any disturbance in *mana* and body, *Nidra* does not occur. But if *Nidra* is occurred, it is *vaikariki Nidra*.

Acharya Vagbhata has classified in seven types as following manner

1. *Tamobhava*- it is produced by predominance of *Tamoguna*
2. *Shleshmaprabhavaja*- it is produced due to predominance of *kapha*
3. *Chitta khedaja*- when *mana* is exhausted
4. *Deha Khedaja*- when body is exhausted
5. *Agantuka*- this type of *Nidra* is produced
6. *Kalaswabhawaja*- it is produces at the accustomed time. i.e. nights
7. *Amayaja*- it is produced due to effect of diseases

Ideal time for *Nidra*:

Brahmamuhurta is auspicious time for getting up from bed.^{vi}

Ritucharya highlights the significant impact of atmospheric changes on all living beings, often with negative consequences. To maximize the benefits of favorable environmental conditions while minimizing adverse effects, Ayurveda has established specific guidelines related to diet and sleep, known as the seasonal regimen or Ritucharya.

During the summer months, the roughness associated with Adana, along with the increase in Vayu and shorter nights, makes daytime sleep advisable.^{vii}

Conversely, in seasons other than summer, daytime sleep can disturb the balance of Kapha and Pitta, making it inadvisable during those times.

Individuals who are obese, consume a high-fat diet, have an excess of Kapha, experience Kaphaja disorders, and

are affected by latent toxins should avoid daytime sleep.^{viii}

Awakening at night can lead to increased dryness in the body, while sleeping during the day can enhance unctuousness. Additionally, resting in a seated position during the day does not contribute to either unctuousness or dryness.^{ix}

Daytime sleep is recommended for those who are emaciated due to activities such as singing, studying, consuming alcohol, engaging in sexual activity, undergoing elimination therapies, carrying heavy loads, walking long distances, or suffering from conditions like phthisis, wasting, excessive thirst, diarrhea, colic pain, dyspnea, hiccups, or mental disturbances. It is also advised for the very young, weak, emaciated, those recovering from injuries, or individuals who are exhausted from travel, sleeplessness, emotional distress, or fear, as well as those who are accustomed to sleeping during the day.^x

Factors that affect *Nidra*:

Ayurveda highlights the interrelationship between *sharira* and *Satwa* across various aspects of life. The Tamo Guna of the mind plays a crucial role in facilitating sleep and is linked to the Kapha Dosha, which contributes to the onset of sleep.^{xi} Conversely, when the mind is agitated by intrusive thoughts, there is an elevation in Rajo Guna, which is closely associated with Vata Dosha. Consequently, an increase in Rajo Guna leads to a rise in Vata Dosha, thereby reducing the influence of Tamo Guna and potentially resulting in insomnia.

There are many factors that affects *Nidra* are as follow

1. Sharirika Nidana:

| Nidanas | Charaka^{xii} | Ashtangas amgraha | Ashtangah ridaya^{xiii} |
|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Rukshaanna sevana | - | - | + |
| Dhoomapana | + | - | + |
| Vyayama | + | - | + |
| Upavasa | + | - | + |
| Asukhashayaa | + | + | - |
| Kshudha | - | + | - |
| Maithuna | - | + | - |
| Trit | - | + | - |
| Atiyoga of Vamana | + | + | + |

2. Manasika Nidana

| Nidanas | Charaka^{xiv} | Sushruta^{xv} | Ashtanga samgraha^{xvi} | Ashtan gahrid aya^{xvii} |
|----------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| Bhaya | + | - | - | - |
| Chinta | + | - | + | + |
| Krodha | + | - | - | + |
| Manast apa | + | + | - | - |
| Shoka | - | - | + | + |
| Harsha | - | - | + | - |
| Lobha | - | - | - | - |

3. Other Nidanas:

| Nidanas | Charaka^{xviii} | Sushruta^{xix} | Ashtang asamgr aha^{xx} |
|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Karya | + | - | - |
| Kala | + | - | + |
| Vikara | + | - | + |
| Prakriti | + | - | - |
| vata | + | + | + |
| pitta | - | + | + |
| Manasantapa | - | + | - |

| | | | |
|-----------|---|---|---|
| Abhighata | - | + | - |
| Kshaya | - | + | + |
| Sheela | - | - | + |

Importance of Nidra:

Ahara, Nidra, and Brahmacharya are often likened to the three supporting pillars, collectively referred to as the three *Upastambhas*. The inclusion of Nidra among these pillars underscores its significance. Proper knowledge leads to siddhi in a yogi, just as adequate sleep contributes to human happiness and longevity.^{xxi}

Conversely, irregular or excessive sleep can diminish both happiness and lifespan, akin to the effects of Kala Ratri. Individuals with a Kapha-dominant constitution tend to require more sleep, whereas those with a Vata-dominant constitution typically need less, and individuals with a Pitta-dominant constitution experience a moderate amount of sleep.^{xxii}

Manasika Upachara (Psychiatric treatment):

| Manasika Upachara | CS | SS | AS | AH |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Manonukula vishaya grahana, | + | - | - | - |
| Manonukula Shabda granaha | + | - | - | - |
| Manonukula gandha granaha | + | - | - | - |
| Mrudushayya | - | + | - | - |
| Sukhasparsha | - | - | + | - |
| Nishchinta | - | - | - | + |
| Nityatrupti | - | - | - | + |

(Notes: CS: Charaka Samhita, SS: Sushruta Samhita,

AS: Ashtanga samgraha, AH: Ashtanga Hridaya)

Adequate and timely sleep contributes significantly to overall well-being. It fosters a sense of happiness in life, supports bodily consistency, enhances physical strength, and boosts cognitive function. Furthermore, sufficient sleep is essential for sustaining a healthy life.

Adequate sleep is a vital sign of good health, as it restores balance in bodily tissues and promotes relaxation. Sushruta metaphorically referred to sleep as Vaishvanari, highlighting its role as a physiological process that nourishes the body and sustains overall health. Acharya Charaka described sound sleep at night as a natural and restorative phenomenon, coining the term Bhutadhatri.

The Yogaratnakara identifies four fundamental instincts essential for human beings: the desire for food, water, sleep, and sexual pleasure.^{xxiii}

Bhavaprakasha underscores the significance of sleep during fetal development, noting that a fetus experiences enhanced rest and comfort when the mother sleeps during pregnancy.^{xxiv}

Adequate nighttime sleep is essential for maintaining the equilibrium of the body's constituents (Dhatu-samyata) and contributes to heightened alertness, improved vision, enhanced complexion, increased strength, and robust digestive capabilities. Furthermore, it is recognized as a natural physiological urge that should not be repressed; doing so may result in a range of health issues.^{xxv}

DISCUSSION:

Sleep constitutes a fundamental instinct essential for life. The attainment of health and longevity is significantly influenced by adequate sleep. Insomnia increasingly poses a threat to an individual's health, affecting personal and social behaviors, as well as professional life. Charaka identifies several contributing factors, including excessive practices of Vamana, Virechana, Nasyakarma, Raktamokshana, and Dhoomapana. The overindulgence in these practices leads to the aggravation of Vata, resulting in the onset of Anidra (insomnia). Additionally, excessive physical exertion (Ati-yayama), prolonged fasting (Ati Upavasa), and uncomfortable sleeping conditions (Asukha Shayana) are identified as contributors to Vata aggravation, thereby inducing Anidra. Furthermore, mental disturbances such as excessive worry (Atichinta), anger (Atikrodha), and fear (Atibhaya) lead to a depletion of Tamasic qualities and an increase in Rajasic qualities, further exacerbating the condition of Anidra.

In today's fast-paced world, individuals often struggle to obtain sufficient sleep due to their hectic lifestyles, which can lead to various health issues such as hypertension, obesity, migraines, and diabetes mellitus.

This condition is often viewed as a psychosomatic disorder exacerbated by an imbalance in Vata-Dosha. Ayurveda offers several strategies to address this challenge effectively. It is essential to eliminate the factors contributing to sleeplessness. Treatments for insomnia may include massage, oil application, bathing, consuming soups made from local and aquatic animals, using unctuous substances, milk, alcohol, and engaging in pleasurable activities. Additionally, the use of pleasant scents, comfortable bedding, and maintaining a proper sleep schedule can significantly improve sleep quality. Hence, it is a very important concept of life, which if practiced accordingly it will lead to a healthy state of body, mind and spirit.

CONCLUSION:

Nidra, or sleep, plays a crucial role in both health and the onset of diseases. Therefore, obtaining adequate sleep at the appropriate times is vital for the promotion and maintenance of overall health and wellness.

ⁱ Ashtangahridaya with commentaries of Arundatta and Hemadri Edited by PT.Hari sadashiva paradakara Vaidya sutra sthana 7/52 Chaukhambha Orientalia Varanasi, Reprint 2019.

ⁱⁱ Acharya YT, editor. Charakasamhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana 21/35, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabhi Prakashan: 2016, Page no-118.

ⁱⁱⁱ Acharya YT, Acharya NR. editor, Sushrutasamhita of Sushruta, Sharira Sthana 4/34 , Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan: 2015, Page no-358.

^{iv} Acharya YT, editor. Charakasamhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana 21/58, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabhi Prakashan: 2016, Page no-119.

^v Acharya YT, Acharya NR. editor, Sushrutasamhita of Sushruta, Sharira Sthana 4/34 , Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan: 2015, Page no-358.

^{vi} Ashtangahridaya with commentaries of Arundatta and Hemadri Edited by PT.Hari sadashiva paradakara Vaidya sutra sthana 2/1 Chaukhambha Orientalia Varanasi, Reprint 2019 Page no-24.

^{vii} Acharya YT, editor. Charakasamhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana 21/44, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabhi Prakashan: 2016, Page no-118.

viii Acharya YT, editor. Charakasamhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana 6/47, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabhi Prakashan: 2016, Page no-47

ix Acharya YT, editor. Charakasamhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana 21/50, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabhi Prakashan: 2016, Page no-119.

x Acharya YT, editor. Charakasamhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana 21/39-43, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabhi Prakashan: 2016, Page no-118.

xi Ashtangahridaya with commentaries of Arundatta and Hemadri Edited by PT.Hari sadashiva paradakara Vaidya sutra sthana 7/62-63 Chaukhambha Orientalia Varanasi, Reprint 2019 Page no-143.

xii Acharya YT, editor. Charakasamhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana 21/55, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabhi Prakashan: 2016, Page no-119.

xiii Ashtangahridaya with commentaries of Arundatta and Hemadri Edited by PT.Hari sadashiva paradakara Vaidya sutra sthana 7/62-63 Chaukhambha Orientalia Varanasi, Reprint 2019 Page no-143.

xiv Acharya YT, editor. Charakasamhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana 21/55, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabhi Prakashan: 2016, Page no-119.

xv Acharya YT, Acharya NR. editor, Sushrutasamhita of Sushruta, Sharira Sthana 4/42, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan: 2015, Page no-359.

xvi
xvii Ashtangahridaya with commentaries of Arundatta and Hemadri Edited by PT.Hari sadashiva paradakara Vaidya sutra sthana 7/62-63 Chaukhambha Orientalia Varanasi, Reprint 2019 Page no-143.

xviii Acharya YT, editor. Charakasamhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana 21/57, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabhi Prakashan: 2016, Page no-119.

xix Acharya YT, Acharya NR. editor, Sushrutasamhita of Sushruta, Sharira Sthana 4/42, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan: 2015, Page no-359.

xx Acharya YT, editor. Charakasamhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana 21/52-55, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabhi Prakashan: 2016, Page no-119.

xxi Acharya YT, editor. Charakasamhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana 21/38, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabhi Prakashan: 2016, Page no-118.

xxii Acharya YT, Acharya NR. editor, Sushrutasamhita of Sushruta, Sharira Sthana 4/65, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan: 2015, Page no-361.

xxiii Yoga ratnakara purva khanda.

xxiv (B.P. Vol-1, Chapter III. Sloka No.- 317).

xxv Acharya YT, editor. Charakasamhita of Agnivesha, Sutra Sthana 7/3, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabhi Prakashan: 2016, Page no-49.