

## A REVIEW ON NASYA KARMA

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## ABSTRACT

Shalakyatantra is a branch of Ayurveda which deals with the diseases affecting body parts above Jatrakasthi (clavicle bone). The process of instillation of medicines through nasal cavity is known as Nasya Karma. It is the unique process of Shodhana Chikitsa in which medicines reach to the brain and eject the vitiated Dosha responsible for producing the diseases. There are different types of Nasya, depending upon method of administration, mode of action, part of drug utilised etc. as described by Acharya Charka, Sushruta and Vagbhata. Nose is the root for head; thus the diseases related to Urdhvajatrugata are best treated by this procedure.

**KEYWORDS:** Nasya, Panchakarma, Shalakyatantra, Shodhana Chikitsa, Uttamanga.

## INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, two types of treatment are mentioned- Shodhana Therapy (purification therapy) and Shamana Therapy (pacification therapy). Acharya explain the importance of Shodhana Therapy by noting that the disease treated by Shodhana therapy will never reoccur.<sup>[1]</sup> Nasya is one of the most important therapy and is widely used for Urdhvajatrugata rogas (diseases pertaining to eyes, ears, nose etc).

“औषधमौषधसिद्धो वा स्नेहो नासिकाभ्यां दीयत इति नस्यम्।” (सु.चि.४०/२१)

As per Acharya Sushruta, administration of medicine or medicated oils (Tail, Ghrita) through the nose is known as Nasya.<sup>[2]</sup> Nose is organ which anatomically connected with cranial cavity and other organs like eyes, ears, pharynx etc. So, the administered drug through this route can work as medicament for disorders affecting all these related structures.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To study about the concept of Nasya Karma described in the classical texts of Ayurveda.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Classical texts of Ayurveda and Indian sciences were scanned for references regarding Nasya. These references were compiled, analysed and discussed in depth for understanding of the concept of Nasya.

## ETYMOLOGY OF WORD NASYA

- The origin of the word Nasya is from "Nasa" dhatu. It bears the sense of Gati (motion).
- According to Vachaspathyama, word "Nasata" means beneficial for nose.
- In Ashtang Sangraha, it is clarified that Nasa being the entrance to shira (head).

## SYNONYMS OF NASYA

- Shirovirechana, Shirovireka, Murdhavirechana.<sup>[2]</sup>
- Nasta Pracchardana.<sup>[3]</sup>
- Nasta Karma, Navana.<sup>[4]</sup>

## IMPORTANCE OF NASYA

Nasya is one among panchakarma; the intranasal method of drug administration meant for treatment and detoxification and is widely used in Shalakyatantra. It is said -

“नासा हि शिरसो द्वारं।” (अ.ह.सु.२०/१)<sup>[5]</sup>

Nose is described as the gateway to the head. It is the best method to alleviate the vitiated Doshas of Urdhvajatrugata (diseases of head, eye, ear, nose, pharynx etc).<sup>[6]</sup>

## CLASSIFICATION OF NASYA KARMA

Table 1: According to Prayogbheda (method of administration).

S. No.	Charaka Ch.Si 9/89-91 <sup>[7]</sup>	Sushruta Su.Chi.40/21 <sup>[8]</sup>	Vagbhata A.H.Su.20/7 <sup>[9]</sup>
1	Navana (Snehana, Shodhana)	Nasya	Snehana
2	Avapida (Shodhana, Stambana)	Avapida	Avapida
3	Dhamapana (Rechana)	Pradhamana	Dhumpana
4	Dhuma (Prayogika, Snehika, Virechanika)	Shirovirechana	
5	Pratimarsha (Snehana, Shodhana)	Pratimarsha	

Table 2: According to Karmabheda (Mode of action).

S. No.	Charak Siddhi. 9/92 <sup>[10]</sup>	Sushruta Chi.40/21 <sup>[8]</sup>	Astanga Hri.Su.20/2 <sup>[11]</sup>
1	Rechana	Nasya	Virechana
2	Tarpana	Shirovirechana	Brihmana
3	Shamana		Shamana

According to Ashrayabheda (various parts of drug utilised):<sup>[12]</sup>

According to Acharya Charaka:-

a) Mula 2) Twaka 3) Patra 4) Pushpa 5) Phala 6) Kanda 7) Nirya

**1. Navana Nasya**

Process of administration of Sneha Dravya in each nostril is called as Navana Nasya. It is of two main types:

- Snehana Nasya
- Shodhana Nasya

**Snehana Nasya**

Snehana Nasya gives strength to all the Dhatus and is used as Dhatuposhaka. It is indicated in Vatika Shirahshula, Keshapata, Timira, Nasaroga, Vatapittaja Mukharoga etc.

**Shodhana Nasya**

In this type of Nasya, oil prepared by Shirovirechana Dravyas like Pippali, Shigru etc. can be selected. Sushruta's Shirovirechana type is included in this type of Navana Nasya.

It is indicated in Pratishyaya, Apasmara, Gandhagyananasha, Urdhvajatrugata Kapharogas, Urdhvajatrugata Shopha, Praseka, Arbuda and Kotha.

**2. Avapida Nasya** The word Avapida means the expressed juice of leaves or paste (kalka) of required medicine (Chakrapani). Thus it is the process of administration of avapida svarasa in each nostril. It is mainly of two types:

- Stambhana Nasya
- Shodhana Nasya

It is indicated in Manasroga, Apasmara, Shirovedana, Moha, Bhaya, Krodha, Sukumara, Krisharogi, manovikara and krimi.

**3. Dhamapana/ Pradhamana Nasya**

Process of administration of churna (powder) form of drug in the nostrils of patient with the help of an instrument; Nadi yantra is known as dhamapana nasya. The Churna (fine powder) of required drug is kept at one

end, and is blown from the other end, so that the medicine may enter into the nostrils. It is indicated in Shiro roga, nasa roga and Akshi roga.

**4. Dhuma Nasya**

Dhuma Nasya is defined as medicated fume taken by Nasal route and eliminated by oral route. It is of three types: Prayogika Dhuma, Snehika Dhuma and Virechanika Dhuma.

For Prayogika Dhuma drugs like Priyangu, Ushira etc should be used. For Snehika Dhuma Vasa, Ghrita etc. and for Virechanika Dhuma, drugs like Aparajita, Apamarga etc. should be used.

It is indicated in Nasaroga, Akshiroga and Shiroroga.

**5. Pratimarsha Nasya**

Pratimarsha Nasya is given by dipping the finger in the required Sneha and then dropping it in the nostrils.

Pratimarsha nasya is indicated in Bala, vridha, Bhiru, Sukumara, Kshatakshama, Trishna Pidita.

**INDICATIONS:**<sup>[13]</sup>

As per Acharya Charaka, following general indications are mentioned: Shirastambha - Stiffness of Head, Manyastambha - Stiffness of neck, Dantaharsha - Hypersensitivity of Tooth, Chaladanta - Mobility of Teeth, Dantashula - Toothache, Swarabheda - Hoarseness of Voice, Peenasa - Chronic Rhinitis, Dantapata - Falling of Teeth, Galashundika - Elongated Uvula, Galashaluka - Adenoids, Keshapata - Hair Fall, Netra Roga - Eye disorders, Vartmaroga - Diseases of Eyelids, Nasaroga - Nasal Disorders, Palitya - Early Graying of Hair, Nidranasha - Sleeplessness, Karna Shula - Ear Ache, Akshishula - Painful Eyes, Shirashula - Headache, Ardita - Facial palsy etc.

**CONTRAINDICATIONS**<sup>[14]</sup>

As per Acharya Charaka, Nasya is contraindicated in following conditions: Ajeerna - Indigestion, Peetasneha - The person who is subjected to oral snehana treatment, Peetamadya - The person who is intoxicated due to

alcohol, Navajwara -Suffering from recent onset fever, Snatashira - After the head bath, Ksudhartha- Hungry, Trushnartha -Thirsty, Ativyayama- Excessive exercise, Garbhini -Pregnant women, Bhuktabhakta -After Meal, Vyayama klanta - Excessive physical work, Vyavaya klanta - Excessive sex indulging, Shokabhitapta- State of grief, Vriddha-Aged person, Bala- Children below the age of 7 years.

### SUITABLE RITU (SEASON/ TIME) FOR NASYA KARMA

Nasya Karma should be administered in Pravrita, Sharad and Vasanta ritus. (Sadharana Ritus). But nasya can be given in any season in emergency conditions.

**Table 3: Nasya Kala according to ritu.**<sup>[15]</sup>

S. No.	RITU/ SEASON	KALA/TIME
1	Grishma Ritu	Evening
2	Shita Ritu	Afternoon
3	Varsha Ritu	Only when sun is visible and sky is clear.
4	Sharad- Vasanta	Morning

**Table 4: Nasya Kala according to dosha.**<sup>[16]</sup>

S. No.	DOSHA	KALA/ TIME
1	Kaphaja Vikara	Morning
2	Pittaja Vikara	Noon
3	Vataja Vikara	Evening

**Table 5: Nasya Matra.**

S. No.	Type of Matra	Navana Nasya <sup>[17]</sup>	Sneha Nasya <sup>[18]</sup>	Avapida Nasya <sup>[19]</sup>
1	Hina Matra	8 drops in each nostrils	4 drops	4 Bindu
2	Madhyam Matra	Shukti Pramana- 16 drops in each nostrils	6 drops	6 Bindu
3	Uttama Matra	Pani Shukti- 32 drops in each nostrils	8 drops	8 Bindu

**Table 6: Dose of Marsha Nasya is**<sup>[20]</sup>

S. No.	Type of Matra	Dosage
1	Hina Matra	10 Bindu
2	Madhyam Matra	8 Bindu
3	Uttama Matra	6 Bindu

**Dose of Pratimarsha Nasya -2 Bindu**

### NASYA KARMA (PROCEDURE)

Administration of Nasya can be divided into 3 steps: -

- 1) Purva karma
- 2) Pradhan Karma
- 3) Paschat karma

#### Purva Karma

Purva karma stage includes Samagri, selection of the patient & preparation of the patient.

##### A. Samagri-

- Nasya Dravya, Oil for Abhyanga, Cotton pad, Gokarna (dropper), Gauze, Dhumvarti for Dhupana, Towel for Swedana.

##### B. Selection of the patient:

- Before preparing the patient for Nasya Karma, Doctor should check whether the patient is fit or unfit for the Nasya Karma.

##### C. Preparation of the patient:-

- Patient is asked to get relieved from natural urges. He should lie down on Nasya table. Before Nasya, Mridu Abhyanga (massage) should be done on scalp, forehead, face and neck for 3 to 5 minutes by medicated oil like Bala Taila, Panchaguna Taila etc.

- Then the organs above neck (head-scalp-ears-face and neck) are subjected to Mridu Swedana. While performing Swedana, a wet cotton pad will be applied over eyes to prevent them from heat as it may damage the Netra. Cloth dipped in hot water may be useful for Mridu Sweda. After Swedana smooth massage should be applied on regions of Gala, Kapola and Lalata.
- While performing Nasya, neck will be partially extended and palm of left hand of the physician will be kept on forehead of patient. Eyes will be covered with clean pad. Tip of nose will be stretched by middle finger and one nasal cavity will be closed by Anamika or pradeshini Anguli (finger).

#### Pradhana Karma

- After Snehana and Swedana, Nasya Dravya is to be poured in one nasal cavity with the help of Anamika Anguli. Tip of the patient's nose is drawn with upward by the vama pradeshini and with Dakshina Hasta, the medicine is instilled into both nostrils, in one nostril first closing the other nostril & vice versa.

- Oil will be poured without breaking the stream in the concerned nostril then after.<sup>[21]</sup>
- After administration of Nasya, Samwahana i.e. light massage of ears, forehead, scalp, cheeks, neck, shoulders, palms and soles will be done.<sup>[22]</sup>
- The patient should be trained not to ingest the secretions and instead they should be spitted out. If ingested, these secretions will diminish Agni, provoke Doshas.
- If administered oil arrives in oropharyngeal cavity, it to be spitted out.<sup>[23]</sup>
- Repeated Hastasweda will be given Jatrurdhwa organs.<sup>[24]</sup> This procedure is to be continued till the medicines starts coming out through spitted instead of secretions.

### Paschat Karma

- Patient will be advised to be in lying down position till 100 Matras.<sup>[25]</sup>
- One of the Dhooma types like Vairechanika or any other appropriate Dhooma as per the diseased condition, will be administered.<sup>[26]</sup>
- Gandusha with lukewarm water to be carried out afterwards.<sup>[27]</sup> Patient has to follow the rules & regulations as explained in Snehapana.<sup>[28]</sup>
- Light diet to be advised.<sup>[29]</sup>

### MODE OF ACTION OF NASYA KARMA

As per Acharya Charka, the drug administered through the nose enters in the Uttamanga and eliminates the morbid doshas residing there (Ch. Si. 2/22). According to Ashtanga Samgraha, Nose is the doorway to sheera (head). The drug administered through nostrils (Nasa) reaches Shringataka marma. Shringataka marma is a siramarma & spreads in the Murdha (Brain), taking routes of Netra (Eyes), Shrotra (Ear), Kantha (Throat) & stretches the morbid doshas from Urdhwajatu & expels them from Uttamang.

Indu, the commentator of Ashtanga Sangraha, opined that Shringataka is the inner side of middle part of head i.e. “शिरसो अंतर मध्यम ।”<sup>[30]</sup> Shringataka Marma helps in integration and transference of Nasya drug in local as well as general circulation.

### Pharmacokinetics

- Drugs absorption may be through Receptor cells of Olfactory mucosa, Cavernous sinus.
- Circulation of drug, Neural pathway is through Olfactory Pathway and Trigeminal.
- Circulating Pathway- Cavernous sinus.
- Target - Limbic System, Sensory area trigeminal nerve circulation

### DISCUSSION

Nasya karma is an important Shodhana procedure in Urdhwajatrugata Rogas (Netra, karna, Nasa, Mukha, Shira Roga). Acharya Vagbhata described that Nasa is

the pathway to Shira. Nasya karma is used for preventive and curative purpose. It used to treat Local & Systemic diseases of eye, ear, nose etc. Drug administered via nose gets rapidly absorbed through mucous membrane of nose into the general blood circulation. After the absorption of the drug it follow neural (olfactory & trigeminal) & circulatory (cavernous sinus) course to reach the site of action. Nasya Karma stimulates the peripheral olfactory System.

Prior, to Nasya Karma Snehana and Swedan should be done to the patients. Snehana and Swedan will help to loosen the adhesive Doshas. Many nerves ending which are arranged in the peripheral surface of mucous membrane will be stimulated by Nasya dravya (the medicine used to give Nasya) & impulses are transmitted to the central nervous system. This result in good circulation & nourishment of the organs and the diseases will subside.

As this medicine is absorbed in ophthalmic vessels it has its nourishing role in extraocular muscles. Its antioxidant property has a role in maintaining tissue built. Nasya Karma prevents khalitya and ensures growth of hair and alleviates diseases like Manyastambha, Shirah- shoola, Ardhabheda, nasanaha, krimidanta, timira, etc. Drugs in the form of Nasya have a probable mode of entry in circulation, hence has a role in improving vision and relieving asthenopic symptoms.

The mode of action of Nasya is said to be through Marma Points which correlates with functions of Pituitary Gland, Thyroid Gland and other pathways etc.

### CONCLUSION

Shira (Head) is considered as Uttamang & to protect it from ailment it should remain healthy & disease free. Nasya Karma is the best Shodhana procedure. Nasya is less expensive & less complicated therapy when compared to other shodhanatherapies.

It can be concluded that either the essence of Nasya or Nasya dravya is reaching the brain and acting on important centres controlling different neurological, endocrine, and circulatory functions and thus showing systemic effects. Nasya Karma is easy to perform and is highly effective.

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