

**ROLE OF NASYA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF ANOVULATORY CYCLE: AN
AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE**

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ABSTRACT

Infertility (*Vandhyatva*) is considered when one is unable to get pregnant after having unprotected sex for at least one year. If there is any issue with the female or male reproductive material, it could lead to anovulation, which is one of the most common reasons for female infertility. Anovulation can now be better understood by examining the function of the hypothalamus and pituitary gland and the communication that occurs between the two of them and the ovaries. The hypothalamus plays a crucial role in the regulation of reproduction and the hormones involved in reproduction by regulating the pituitary gland. According to Ayurveda, Anovulation (*Beejadushti*) can be successfully treated through *Nasya Karma*. The medicine given through the nose will affect the areas of the brain and help to restore physiological and hormonal balances. *Nasya Karma* is believed to work by influencing or having a positive effect on the function of the hypothalamus and the pituitary gland, which will in turn help to restore normal hormonal levels and allow for ovulation to occur. This article explains Ayurvedic perspective on the role of *Nasya Karma* in the management of Anovulatory cycle.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda, Nasya Karma, Anovulatory cycle, Infertility, Hypothalamus.*

INTRODUCTION

The principles of *Garbhasambhava* are based on four chief principles; *Rutu, Kshetra, Ambu* and *Beeja*. The gamete, or female reproductive cell, is known in Ayurveda as *Antahpushpa* (the ovum), and it is essential for *Garbhasambhava*. Large number of infertility percentage in women is attributed to abnormalities in ovulation. Proper ovulation (*Beejotsarga*) is controlled by *Prakruta Vata*; when *Kapha* and *Ama* interfere with *Prakruta Vata*, then abnormal lodging of ovum may occur. The current scientific understanding concludes that the stimulation of the olfactory pathway and the limbic system will affect the hypothalamus; the hypothalamus regulates the pulsatile release of GnRH, and therefore will increase the release of FSH and LH from the anterior pituitary gland to stimulate ovulation. There are several factors affecting abnormal ovulation; some of the contributing factors are dysfunction of the hypothalamus or pituitary, pituitary lesions and ovarian failure.^[1-4]

Ovulation is at the center of female fertility; disturbances in ovulation can be caused by hormonal imbalance/stress, obesity or other systemic disorders. In Ayurveda, "*Stree Beeja*" (ovum) represents the ovum and "*Beejotsarga*" represents the act of ovulating. Ayurveda suggested some therapeutic modalities for such types of condition and *Nasya Karma* is one of them.

Nasya Karma is a treatment of infertility due to abnormal ovulation in which medicines are introduced to the body via the nasal passages. The nose is considered a portal to the *Shira*, thus the *Nasya* medicine can affect the upper regions of the brain. There are several oils available for *Nasya*, such as *Bala taila, Aguruvadi taila, Sahacharadi taila* and *Narayana taila*, etc. which are indicated for *Nasya* therapy in women with anovulatory cycles.^[4-6]

Role of *Nasya Karma* in the Management of Anovulatory Cycle

As the hypothalamus and pituitary are both situated in the head, *Nasya Karma* has the potential to stimulate the neuroendocrine pathways that control the hypothalamo-pituitary-ovarian axis. The stimulation of GnRH, FSH and LH may occur by *Nasya Karma* due to its *Guna*, *Ushna Veerya*, *Katu Vipaka* and *Vata-Kaphashamaka* properties. Because of these properties, *Nasya Karma* performs the actions of *Deepana*, *Pachana*, *Anulomana*, *Vilayana* and *Srotoshodhana*. These effects also facilitate *Amapachana*, pacify *Vata-Kapha*, remove *Sanga* and remove *Avarana*. All of these actions restore proper function of *Vata* which supports *Beejagranthi* activity, and therefore lays the groundwork for *Beejotsarga*.^[5-7]

Nasya Taila being *Katu & Tikta Rasa*, *Laghu* and *Ruksha Guna* exhibits adaptogenic potency. *Nasya Taila* also offers *Prajasthapana*, *Rasayana*, *Balya* and *Brimhana* which may helps in the healing of the hypothalamo-pituitary-ovarian axis and in the improvement of ovarian function. *Nasya Karma* reaches the *Shringataka Marma* and spreads throughout the head, acting both to eliminate the vitiated *Doshas* in the body and restore physiological balance. *Nasya Taila* may activate the olfactory nerves and limbic system to stimulate the hypothalamus and regulate the pulsatile secretion of GnRH, thus it can support the regulation of the secretion of FSH and LH and contribute to the promotion of ovulation. Additionally, the ingredients present in these oils may influence neuropeptide activity, thereby influencing the amount of gonadotropins secretion.^[6-8]

The mechanism by which *Nasya* may work is by diffusion/absorption through the nasal mucosa into the systemic circulation or by having direct access to the cranial venous sinuses and possibly diffusing into cerebrospinal fluid. Given the close anatomical relationship between the olfactory nerves, limbic system and hypothalamus, stimulation of the nasal passages may influence neuroendocrine pathways. Proper positioning of the head, retention of the medication in the nasopharynx, and some adjunct techniques to enhance the pharmacokinetics of the medication create the conditions for optimal drug absorption. Since *Shiras* governs endocrine and reproductive functions, therefore *Nasya* directly influences higher regulatory centers and offers following benefits in anovulation:

- ✓ *Nasya* regulates *Prana Vata*
- ✓ Controls *Majja Dhatu*
- ✓ Maintain Hormonal Regulation of *Manovaha* and *Artavavaha Srotas*
- ✓ Maintain balance of *Apana Vata*, responsible for menstruation and ovulation.

Nasya Karma works by balancing *Prana Vata* in the *Shirah*. Normal ovulatory processes are supported when *Prana Vata* is properly regulated since it helps in the restoration of *Apana Vata's* coordinated pelvic functioning, eliminate *Kapha Avarana*, enhances microcirculation, unblocks channels and encourages healthy follicular maturation, all of which help to ensure proper ovulation process. Various types of *Nasya* useful in anovulatory cycle are depicted in **Figure 1**.

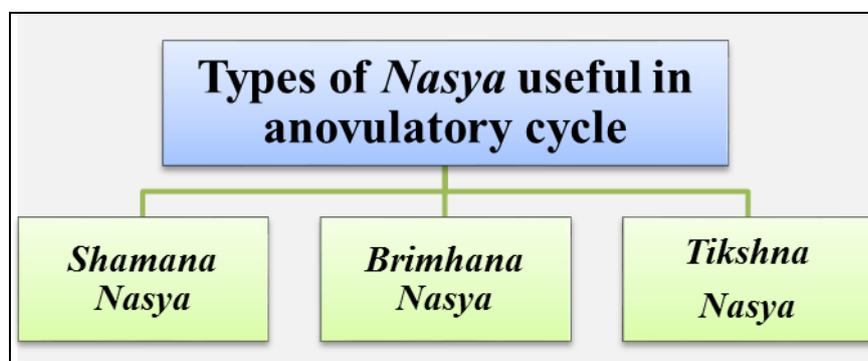


Figure 1: Various Types of *Nasya* useful in Anovulatory Cycle.

As mentioned above different *Nasya* can be chosen for the treatment of anovulatory cycles based on the clinical presentation and underlying *Dosha* predominance. *Shamana Nasya* is recommended for hormonal balance and is especially helpful for hypothalamic-pituitary-ovarian axis dysfunctions. Because it nourishes the *Dhatu*s and promotes the vigor of reproductive tissue, *Brimhana Nasya* is helpful in diseases like *Artava Kshaya*, where there is a lack and/or inadequate formation of *Artava*. *Tikshna Nasya* is recommended to alleviate channel blockages and promote healthy follicular development in cases of *Kapha*-dominant

obstruction resulting in *Srotorodha*. **Table 1**, depicted properties of various types of *Nasya Taila* useful in anovulatory cycles.^[7-9]

Similarly commonly used medicinal formulations include *Phala Ghrita*, which has been traditionally used to treat female infertility and reproductive diseases; *Shatavari Ghrita*, which promotes *Rasayana* and *Artava* and *Ksheerabala Taila* which pacifies *Vata* and supports neuro-endocrine function.^[8-10]

Table 1: Properties of Various Types of *Nasya Taila* useful in Anovulatory Cycles.

Name of <i>Taila/Ghrita</i>	<i>Rasa</i>	<i>Guna</i>	<i>Virya</i>	Therapeutic Role
<i>Ksheerabala Taila</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Guru</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	Control <i>Prana & Apana Vata</i> , thus improves neuro-endocrine regulation and useful in stress-induced anovulation.
<i>Shatavari Ghrita</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Snigdha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	Facilitate nourishment of <i>Artava Dhātu</i> , improves follicular growth thus useful in case of <i>Artava Kshaya</i> .
<i>Phala Ghrita</i>	<i>Madhura & Tikta</i>	<i>Snigdha & Guru</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	Boost fertility, improves ovulation and uterine functioning.
<i>Anu Taila</i>	<i>Katu & Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu & Tikshna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	Improves hormonal balance and clears <i>Srotorodha</i> of reproductive channels.
<i>Shadbindu Taila</i>	<i>Katu & Tikta</i>	<i>Tikshna</i> ,	<i>Ushna</i>	Stimulates follicular rupture and clears obstruction caused by <i>Kapha</i> .

DISCUSSION

Nasya Karma plays a crucial part in the regulation of anovulatory cycles. By acting at the *Shirah* level, it restores the coordinated activity of *Apana Vata*, which is necessary for ovulation and menstruation, and support in maintaining the hormonal balance of *Manovaha* and *Artavavaha Srotas*. *Nasya* facilitates the proper ovulatory process by removing *Kapha Avarana*, improving microcirculation, removing *Srotorodha* and encouraging healthy follicular maturation. *Shamana*, *Brimhana* or *Tikshna Nasya* may be chosen based on the clinical presentation and *Dosha* predominance. Traditional preparations that nourish reproductive tissues, balance hormones, and stabilize neuro-endocrine activities, like *Phala Ghrita*, *Shatavari Ghrita* and *Ksheerabala Taila* further improve therapeutic results in anovulatory cycles.^[8-10]

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda may be an effective way to help those with anovulatory infertility. Ayurvedic therapies are less about stimulating ovulation and start with restoring the body's natural state, correcting the functional problems that cause the lack of ovulation. Among the different types of Ayurvedic therapies, *Nasya* is believed to regulate neuroendocrine function and support hormonal balance. Ayurvedic therapy is a potentially good complement to managing anovulatory infertility and should be studied in greater depth to establish its relationship with conventional medicine.

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