

NASYA AND ITS MODE OF ACTION: A REVIEW ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

According to *Ayurveda*, the universe is made up of *Panchamahabhuta* (five basic elements) i.e. *Akasha* (space), *Vayu* (air), *Agni* (fire), *Jala* (water) and *Prithvi* (earth). The human body consists of three humors called *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* which are also a combination of *Panchamahabhuta*. According to *Ayurveda*, imbalance in these *Dosha* causes disorders of body and mind. Thus, for maintenance of a healthy body and mind, equilibrium in all three *Dosha* is necessary which can be achieved by *Panchakarma*. *Nasya Karma* is one of the important therapies in *Panchakarma* for maintaining balance of *Dosha*. In this therapy, the medicine is administered through nose. It is particularly useful in the treatment of diseases occurring in upper clavicular region but also works on the whole body by acting on endocrine and nervous system. *Nasa* (nose) is called the doorway to head. It is not only used for functions like smell and respiration but also as a route of drug administration. Medicines introduced through nose stimulate the higher centers of brain which acts endocrine and nervous system functions. Thus, considering benefits of *Nasya* it is widely used in preventive as well as curative aspects.

KEYWORDS: *Nasya*, *Urdhvajatrugata*, *Dosha*.**INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda is an ancient science which states that health is not only the state of absence of disease but also have normalcy of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Agni*, *Mala* and also having healthy soul, sense organs and mind.^[1] Absence of any of these factors state that a person is not healthy. The main objective of *Ayurveda* is to maintain equilibrium of all the factors. In order to achieve this many regimes such as *Dinacharya* (daily regime), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regime), use of *Rasayana* (rejuvenation therapy) and *Panchakarma*.

Panchakarma is a special branch that has specially designed five procedures for elimination of vitiated *Dosha* through nearest possible route. This is achieved by *Shodhana* (purification) which includes five special procedures called *Vamana* (therapeutic vomiting), *Virechana* (purgation), *Basti* (enema), *Nasya* (errhine therapy) and *Raktamokshana* (bloodletting). Of all these procedures *Vamana* is used for expulsion of vitiated of *Doshas* through mouth. In *Virechan*, *Doshas* are expelled through anal route. In *Basti* medicine is administered through rectal canal which disintegrates *Doshas* and stool and also spreads the medicine throughout the body and then is expelled through rectal canal. In *Nasya* *Doshas* residing in upper clavicular region are targeted

by administration of medicines through nose and in *Raktamokshana* vitiated blood and *Pitta Dosha* is removed.

NASYA KARMA

Medicine or medicated *sneha* administered through nose is called *Nasya*.^[2] In *Ayurveda*, the word *nasya* is used to describe the root of drug administration.

Nasya is mainly used for the treatment of diseases of upper clavicular region. *Nasya Karma* has many synonyms such as *Shirovirechan*, *Murdhavireshan*, *Navana*, *Nastahkarma*.

SIGNIFICANCE OF NASYA KARMA

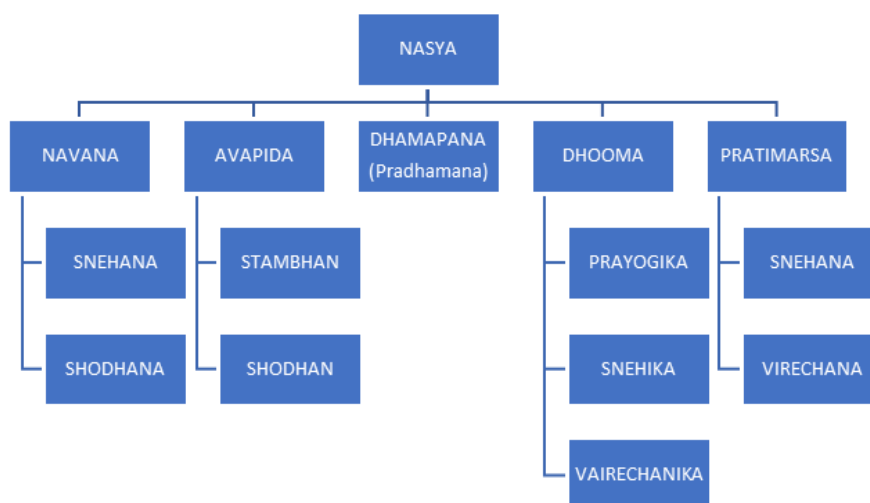
Nose is the doorway to *shiras* (head) which is 'uttamanga' and one of the 'trimarma'. The medicine administered through the nose spreads through the channels and promotes the functions of sensory and motor system situated above the clavicle and cures the diseases of *udhrajatrugata*.^[3] It is also used in emergency drug administration like in *sangyanasa* (unconsciousness), *apasmara* (epilepsy), bleeding nose etc. *Nasya* also prevents premature greying of hair, early hairfall, melasma, *ardhavebhedak* (migraine) and gives strength to upper clavicular organs.

NASYA INDICATIONS^[4]

<i>Sirostambha</i> (stiffness of head)	<i>Manyastambha</i> (stiffness of neck)
<i>Ardhavabhedaka</i> (migraine)	<i>Apatantraka</i> (tetanus)
<i>DantaStambha</i>	<i>Shiroroga</i>
<i>Apatantraka</i> (tetanus)	<i>Ardita</i> (facial paralysis)
<i>Peenas</i>	<i>Timir</i> (cataract)
<i>Galasaluka</i>	<i>Sukra Roga</i> (diseases of sclera of eye)
<i>Galashundika</i> (tonsilitis)	<i>Akshishula</i> (eye pain)
<i>Vyanga</i> (melasma)	<i>Dantachaal</i>
<i>Swarabheda</i> (hoarseness of voice)	<i>DantaShula</i> (tooth ache)
<i>Hanugraha</i> (Lockjaw)	<i>Arbuda</i> (tumor)
<i>Mukhroga</i> (diseases of mouth)	<i>Skandharoga</i>
<i>Aptanaka</i>	<i>Grivaroga</i> (neck disease)
<i>Galagandnda</i> (goitre)	<i>Amsashula</i> (pain at scapular region)
<i>Nasa Shula</i> (pain in nose)	<i>Karna shula</i> (otalgia)

CLASSIFICATION OF NASYA

Nasya is of five types namely, *Navan*, *Avapida*, *Dhoom*, *Dhamapan* and *Pratimarsha nasya* according to its method of administration.^[5]

**NAVANA NASYA**

In this, *Nasya* is administered by giving medicated *oils* or *ghrita* in the nose. It is classified into *Snehana* and *Shodhana nasya*. *Snehana nasya* is given to strengthen all *Dhatu*s and is used as *Dhatuposhaka*. *Shodhana nasya* is given to eliminate vitiated *Dosha*. For this *Sneha*, *Kalka* and *Kwatha* are used.

AVAPIDA NASYA

Avapida Nasya is given by extracted juice of fresh leaves or *Kalka* of required medicine. *Bhavprakash* has described it as a type of *Shirovirechan Nasya*. It is of two types- *Stambhan Nasya* and *Shodhan Nasya*.

DHAMAPAN NASYA

Dhamapan or *Pradhamana Nasya Churna* is administered with the help of *Nadi Yantra* in 3 *Muchunti* (300 mg) quantity. *Videha* has given another method for *Dhamapan Nasya* intake, i.e., two *Kola* (approx.12 gm) powder of drug is kept in a *Potli* and is inhaled.

DHOOMA NASYA

In this medicated fume is taken through nose and extracted through oral route. It is only described by *Acharya Charaka* as a type of *Nasya*. Three puffs from each nostril is to be taken.

PRATIMARSHA AND MARSHA NASYA

In these, oil is administered via nose. There is a difference in the dose of drug used. In *Pratimarsha Nasya* two drops are given daily and can be given in all seasons while in *Marsha Nasya*, doses may vary as 6-8-10 drops accordingly. *Marsha Nasya* is highly efficacious, quick acting and has long lasting effect than *Pratimarsha Nasya*.

Age limit for nasya-above 7 and below 80 years.

NASYA KARMUKTA (PHARMACODYNAMICS OF NASYA KARMA)

In *Ayurveda* there is no clear description regarding the mode of action of *Nasya Karma*. All prominent *Acharyas* have given that nose is the gateway of head. *Acharya*

Vagabhata has given, on administration of *Nasya Dravya* in nasal cavity, the drug reaches *Sringatakamarma* and distributes in *Murdha* (brain), *Siramukh* (opening of vessels), *Netra* (eyes), *Karna* (ear), *Kantha* (throat) etc. This explains the neural, vascular and other connection between various organs. By *Nasya* morbid *Dosha* gets scratched from supra clavicular region like *Munja* from its stem.^[6] *Acharaya Susruta* has explained under *nasya* complication that excessive *Shodhan Nasya* may cause *Mastulunga* (CSF) to flow out through the nose.^[7] Thus, this shows some connection between nose and brain.

EFFECT ON NEUROVASCULAR JUNCTION AND NEURO ENDOCRINE LEVEL^[8]

Purvakarma and the posture adopted during instillation of medicine are the factors which help to increase the effect of *Nasya* on neurovascular junction. The efferent vasodilator nerves are present on surface of face and they cause hyperaemia due to *Snehana* and *Swedana*. This causes increase in blood flow in that area due to dilatation of cerebral capillaries caused by facial efferent stimulation which leads to more blood inflow. All this leads to increase of fluid transfusion into brain tissue.

The terminal nerves run along the olfactory nerves and are connected to limbic system of brain including Hypothalamus which is responsible for integrating the functions of endocrine and nervous system. Thus, *Nasya* may also act on endocrine system.

EFFECT ON NEURO- PSYCHOLOGICAL LEVELS

The adjacent nerves are connected to limbic system of brain including Hypothalamus (Hamilton 1966). Limbic system is responsible for behavioural aspect of human beings. Thus, certain drugs administered through nose may have an impact on psychological functions and thus can be helpful in diseases like *Unmada* (psychosis) and *Apasmara* (epilepsy).

NASYA IN HEALTHY INDIVIDUALS

Nasya is given as both *Panchakarma* and *Dinacharya* in *Ayurveda*. *Pratimarsha Nasya* should be taken daily as a regimen of *Swasthavritta* to promote healthy functions of eyes, ears and nose for prevention of diseases like *Khalitya*, *Pakitya*, *Ardhavabhedaka*, *Sirashula* and other diseases which can affect *Urdhavajatrugata*. *Ghrta* or *Anu Taila* can be used for *Nasya* in everyday practise.

CONTRAINDICATION

Nasya is contraindicated in a person suffering from indigestion, tiredness, who has taken or wants to take oil or ghee, who has consumed alcohol and water, who is hungry, who wants to take head bath, during menstruation, in pregnant woman, in acute rhinitis, who has undergone bloodletting procedure etc.^[9]

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Modern science as well as *Ayurveda* has explained various route of drug administration. Among different routes, nasal route is the most effective route of drug administration for diseases of upper clavicular region. *Acharya Charak* and *Acharya Vagabhata* have given that nose as the gateway of head.^[10,11] The drugs administered through nose can easily spread, has higher bio availability, is non invasive and easily absorbed and thus easily helps in the removal of vitiated *Dosha* from body. Thus, it is very useful in preventive and curative aspect.

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