

A REVIEW ON NASYA KARMA IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

The nose is both a sensory organ and a key medicine delivery channel known as *Shirsodvara*, or "Gateway to Head." The nose can be inferred as one of the routes for medicine delivery in head and neck ailments due to its significant anatomical position. One of the *Panchadnaandriya*, the nose is thought to serve as a route for the delivery of drugs in addition to its usual functions of smell and breathing. The practice of delivering various medications through the nose is called *Nasya Karma*. It is one of the five therapies of *PanchKarma* mentioned in *Ayurveda*. When medication is inhaled through the nose, it enters the channels up to the *Sringataka Marma*, travels through the head and brain, and reaches all of the channels that are connected to the eyes, ears, and oropharynx. There, it eliminates the built-up *Dosha*, alleviating the afflicted conditions. In this article, an attempt has been made to compile the relevant information from previous research done, *Ayurveda* classical texts.

KEYWORDS: *Nasa, Nasya, PanchKarma, Dosha.*

INTRODUCTION

The head, or *Shira*, is regarded as one of the body's three essential organs in *Ayurveda*. This is because the head is regarded as the *Uttamanga* (Superlative organ) because it is the seat of the *Indriya* (Sensory organs) and the residence of the *Prana*. *Nasya Karma* is a significant treatment technique used to treat illnesses of the head region, including *Urdwajatrugata Roga*, by administering medication through the nasal canal. As the entrance to the skull, the nose has great therapeutic efficacy in treating head-related ailments. *Nasya Karma* purifies and opens the channels in the head, which enhances the *Prana* and oxygenation process, both of which are directly beneficial to brain function.^[1] When done on a daily basis, it is very beneficial since it maintains the eyes, nose, and ears healthy and functioning at their best. Additionally, it helps delay the onset of graying hair on the head, beard, and moustache. Today's fast-paced lifestyle, junk food consumption, irregular eating patterns, alcohol and tobacco use, stress, sleep difficulties, use of oral contraceptives and steroids, etc., all contribute to the manifestation of *Urdhwajatrugata Roga*. Given the increased prevalence of chronic disorders in contemporary society, it is imperative to be aware of the various treatment protocols in order to effectively address these conditions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Ayurvedic classics with references to *Nasya*, contemporary literature, published works in peer-

reviewed journals, books, and website content pertaining to the subject have all been selectively obtained, arranged, and interpreted. In reference to published research works, studies pertaining to *Nasya Karma* and various diseases were taken into consideration for the purpose of this study.

Nasya is a medical method used to treat *Urdwajatrugata Roga* by administering medication through the nose. *Nasya Karma* is the primary therapeutic method of *Urdhwanga Chikitsa*, an important branch of *Ashtanga Ayurveda*. *Urdhwanga* addresses body parts above clavicle e.g. *Nasa, Netra, Mukha*.

Classification of *Nasya Karma*

The following table lists the different *Ayurvedic Samhita*'s classifications for *Nasya Karma*, along with information on its mechanism of action, administration technique, and type of medicine used.

Sr. No.	Samhita	Types	Classification	Name
1.	Charaka Samhita ^[2]	3 types	Mode of Action	Rechana Tarpana Shamana
		5 types	Method of Administration	Navana Avapidana Dhmapana Dhuma Pratimarsha
		7 types	According to the part of the drug used	Phala Patra Mula Pushpa Niryasa Twaka
2.	Sushruta Samhita ^[3]	5 types	-	Shirovirechana Pradhamana Avapida Nasya Pratimarsha
3.	Ashtanga Hridaya ^[4]	3 types	-	Virechana Bruhana Shamana
4.	Kashyap Samhita ^[5]	2 types		Shodhana Poorana
5.	Sharangdhar Samhita ^[6]	2 types		Rechana Snehana

The following explanations help to understand Acharya Charaka's classification of Nasya Karma.

Virechana Nasya

The removal of the vitiated *Dosha* from the *Urdhwajatrugata* region of the body is indicated by the *Rechana Nasya*. *Choorna* (powder) of the required medication or *Sneha* prepared with medicines from *Shirovirechana* are used for this.

Indications: *Stambha*, *Supti*, and *Shirogaurava* as in *Kaphaja Shiroroga*. As per Acharya Sushruta^[7] and Acharya Vagbhata^[8] - *Shleshma Abhivyapta Talu*, *Shleshma Abhivyapta Kantha* and *Shirokrimi*, *Arochaka*, *Shoola*, *Shirogaurava*, *Pinasa*, *Pratishaya*, *Urdhwajatrugata Kaphaja Vikara*, *Urdhwajatrugata Shopha*, *Praseka*, *Vairasya*, *Arbuda*, *Dadru*.

Tarpana Nasya

Charaka's *Tarpana Nasya*, Sushruta and Sharangdhara's *Snehana Nasya*, and Vagbhata's *Bruhana Nasya* could all be regarded as synonyms for one another. Ideally, one should utilize the *Sneha* made with *Madhura Skanda* and *Vatapittahara* drugs. Vagbhata states that the *Sneha* produced with the pharmaceuticals *Snigdha* and *Madhura* or with the drugs prescribed for that specific illness should be utilized.

Indications: *Dantapaka*, *Keshpatan*, *Darunaka*, *Vatika Shiroroga*, and other *Vatapittaja Roga*. Sushruta advised *Snehana Nasya* to promote body strength and vision. Charaka indicated *Nasya* in *Shirakampa* and *Ardita*^[9].

Navana Nasya

Among the significant and useful treatments of *Nasya Karma* is *Navana Nasya*. *Navana Nasya*, often referred to as *Nasya Karma*, is typically the *Snehana Nasya*.

Snehana Nasya

Snehana Nasya strengthens all *Dhatus*, used as a *Dhatuposhaka* treatment.

Shamana Nasya

Shamana Nasya is utilized to relieve *Dosha* in the head area. It is described by Charaka and Vagbhata only. In *Shamana Nasya*, only the *Sneha* prepared with proper palliative medicines is utilized.

Indications: Used in *Raktapitta* to stop bleeding; also mentioned in *Darunaka*, *Raktaraji*, *Vyanga*, and *Nilika*; also indicated in *Akala Valita*, *Palitya* and *Khalitya*.

Shodhana Nasya^[10]

Shirovirechana Nasya type mentioned by Acharya Sushruta is included in *Shodhana* type of *Navana Nasya*.

Avapidana Nasya

This particular form of *Shodhana Nasya* uses the drug's paste or extracted leaf juice.

Sukumara, *Krishna*, *Murccha*, *Sanyasa*, *Bhaya*, *Krodha*, *Bhiru*, *Manas Roga*, *Apasmara*, *Shirovedana*, *Moha*, *Apatantraka*, *Raktapitta*, *Visha*, *Abhigata*, and *Apatantraka* are among the indications.

Pradhamana or Dhmapana Nasya

This kind of *Shodhana Nasya* involves blowing medicinal fine powder into the nostril. It was called *Dhmapana* by Charaka and *Pradhamana* by Sushruta. *Manas Vikara*, *Ati-Utklishta Dosha*, *Sandhyanasha*, *Krimi*, *Visha* are examples of indicators.

Dhuma Nasya

Dhuma Nasya smoke is inhaled via the nose and expelled through the mouth. It is defined as medicinal smoke. *Dhumapana*, or the inhaling of *Dhuma* through the mouth, is not a part of *Nasya Karma*. The classical texts strongly advise against inhaling *Dhuma* through the mouth and exhaling it through the nose since it can damage eyesight.

Indications: *Urdhwajatrugata Vyadhi*

Marsha Nasya

Marsha Nasya is the practice of inserting six to ten drops of *Sneha* into the nostrils, according to *Acharya*

Vagbhata. Although it can cause more *Vyapad* (Complications) than *Pratimarsha Nasya*, it is more effective and produces results than the latter.

Pratimarsha Nasya

This *Nasya* is the part of *Dinacharya* regimen. Every day, *Pratimarsha Nasya* can be taken in the morning and evening in any season. Typically, two drops should be taken in the morning and two drops in the evening.

Indications: *Vridhdha*, *Valitya*, *Palitya*, *Mukhashosha*, *Sukumara*, *Daurbalya*, *Bala*, *Bhiru*, *Kshata*.

Nasya Karma dose

The medication used in it and the chosen procedure type determine the *Nasya* dosage. While *Sushruta* and *Vagbhata* have indicated the dosage of *Nasya* in the form of *Bindu* (Drops), *Charaka* has not mentioned it. As a general rule, one *Bindu* is the amount of liquid that remains on the finger after the *Pradeshini* (Index) finger's first two phalanges have been dipped.

Sr. No.	Nasya type	Dose(Bindu)		
		Hrasva	Madhyama	Uttama
1	<i>Snehana</i>	8	16	32
2	<i>Shodhana</i>	4	6	8
3	<i>Avapidana</i>	4	6	8
4	<i>Marsha</i>	6	8	10
5	<i>Pratimarsha</i>	2	2	2

Nasya Karma administration time

Nasya should be administered in *Pravrut*, *Sharad*, and *Vasanta Ritu*, according to *Charaka*. It can, however, be

delivered in any season during an emergency by replicating the correct seasons.^[11]

Ritu (Season)	Time of Administration of <i>Nasya Karma</i>
<i>Grishma</i>	Before Noon (Morning)
<i>Sheeta</i>	Noon
<i>Varsha</i>	Day- the sky should be clear of rain-bearing clouds
<i>Shishira & Hemanta</i>	Noon
<i>Grishma & Varsha</i>	Evening
<i>Sharad & Vasanta</i>	Morning

The procedure of Nasya Karma

The procedure of *Nasya Karma* is conducted in the following three steps.

Purva Karma

It is necessary to gather and arrange all necessary equipment and materials prior to administering *Nasya Karma*. A specially designated area that is dust-free, has a direct airflow, suitable lighting, a *Nasya* table, *Nasya Dravya* (The medications needed for *Nasya Karma*, such as *Kalka*, *Choorna*, *Udaka*, *Sneha*, *Dhuma*, etc.), and a *Nasyayantra*, *Pichu*, or *Sutika* (Dropper) should be provided. There is a special *Dhumayantra* needed for *Pradhamana Nasya*. In addition to the above supplies, there should be a dressing room, a spittoon, napkins, bowls, and towels available.

In order to ensure that the patient is ready, it is important to confirm that they are aware of the correct *Nasya Karma* technique and that they offer their agreement to carry it out. After that, the patient is instructed to pass their natural urges before resting down on the *Nasya* table.

Using medicated oils, *Mridu Abhyanga* should be applied to the scalp, forehead, face, and neck for about ten to fifteen minutes. *Mridu Swedana* should be applied for the liquefaction of the *Dosha*; however, caution must be used when administering *Mridu Swedana*, as Ayurvedic classical texts advise against applying *Swedana* to the head region.

Pradhana Karma

On the *Nasya* table, the patient should be requested to lie supine with their head in the *Pra-lambita* position, or hanging downward, without being too extended or flexed. This is because, if the head is lowered too much, there is a chance that the medications will enter the brain and become lodged there, and if the head is dropped too much, the drug may not reach the intended target. The patient should have cotton or cloth over their eyes. Afterwards, the doctor should use the left thumb to lift the tip of the nose, and the right hand to pour the medication into the nostrils; the medication should be lukewarm and in the right dosage, depending on the patient's tolerance. The patient will be given instructions to remain calm and composed throughout the *Nasya Karma* procedure, and they should refrain from talking, laughing, sneezing, and shaking their heads.

Paschat Karma

The patient should be instructed to lie in a supine position for approximately one minute following the administration of the *Nasya* medication. During this time, the patient's feet, shoulders, palms, and ears should be massaged.^[12] Spit out any extra medication that has been supplied rather than swallowing it.^[13] Next, in order to remove any residual *Kapha Dosha* that might have lodged in the *Kantha* and *Sringataka Marma*, medicated *Gandusha* and *Dhuma* are provided. After that, the patient should be advised to drink warm water, eat a light diet, and stay in a room with no breeze.

Samyaka, Ayoga and Atiyoga Nasya Karma

When *Samyaka Nasya Karma* is administered, all five sense organs function normally, all channels of the body are unobstructed and open, and the head and chest area feel lighter.^[14] There is a sensation of something suffocating the throat area, as well as heaviness and increased salivation in the mouth in *Ayoga* (inadequate administration) of *Nasya Karma*.^[15] When *Nasya Karma* is administered excessively, or *Atiyoga*, it can cause severe pain in the head, eyes, ears, and temporal region.^[16]

Nasya Karma - Probable mode of action

The first step in drug absorption in the nasal cavity is the passage of the drug through the nasal mucosa. Small and uncharged particles move through the mucus easily, while large and charged particles are more difficult to pass through. There are two mechanisms to consider when thinking about drug absorption: -The first mechanism involves an aqueous route of transport (Paracellular route), which is slow and passive. -The second mechanism involves the transport of the drugs through a lipoidal route (Transcellular route), which is responsible for the transport of lipophilicity.^[17]

Nose-to-brain medicine pathway

The direct nose-to-drug delivery pathway most likely involves three mechanisms: two extracellular transport

mediated routes and at least one intracellular transport mediated channel.

Extracellular transport

The medication can enter the brain within minutes of intranasal delivery, which could be explained by the two extracellular transport-based pathways that are most likely to exist. The intranasally delivered drug, which is the first extracellular transport-based pathway, initially passes through the space between the olfactory neurons in the olfactory epithelium before being carried to the olfactory bulb. The intranasally given drugs may cross the blood-brain barrier by traveling via the trigeminal nerve in the second extracellular transport-based pathway. The material may diffuse into other parts of the brain after reaching the trigeminal nerve or olfactory bulb, a process that may also be aided by the "perivascular pump," which is powered by pulsations in the arteries.

Intracellular transport

The intracellular transport pathway is lengthy; medications administered intravenously usually take hours to reach the olfactory bulb. Axonal transport may enable the chemicals to be transported from the olfactory neuron in the olfactory epithelium to the olfactory bulb through mechanisms such as endocytosis.

DISCUSSION

As the *Nasa* serves as the entrance to the brain, *Nasya Karma* allows for the appropriate administration of medication based on the specific ailment. According to various types mentioned in Ayurvedic classics, variety of formulations can be used for *Nasya* procedure. The procedure of carrying out *Purva Karma*, *Pradhana Karma*, and *Paschat Karma* is simply carried out systematically after the patient is assessed and the precise type of *Nasya Karma* is chosen. With its probable mechanism of action, which involves supplying the head's channels and reaching the target organ for treatment, this technique may be useful in generating the intended outcomes for treating or preventing disorders related to the head and neck region.

CONCLUSION

Based on the collected data, *Nasya Karma* is a broad spectrum therapy which could be used to treat a variety of head and neck conditions. Its administration is reasonably simple and highly effective when the appropriate steps are executed.

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