Humans spend almost a third of their lifetime sleeping. Good sleep is essential and advantageous to the quality of life. A number of vital physiological changes occur during sleep and help people stay healthy and function at their best. Ayurveda regards nidra (sleep) as one of the most essential factors responsible for a healthy and fulfilling life. It is one of the Trayaopastambhas (three great subsidiary pillars) on which a person's health is firmly balanced. Sound sleep at night is a natural and nourishing phenomenon, so it is also called Bhutadhatri (nourishes all living beings). Quality sleep is an indicator of good health as it is stress-relieving and normalizes bodily tissues. Adequate hours of sleeping is required for all the levels of wellbeing such as mental, physical and emotional levels. In Ayurvedic literature, sleep is one of the four basic, natural instincts, and is considered as the pioneer for health; the remaining three being the desire to eat, drink and have sexual contact. In almost all Samhitas, there is detail description of Dinacharya, Ratricharya, Ritucharya, Ahara Vidhi, Adharaniya and Dharaniya vega, Sadvritta etc. is given which are very helpful to an individual for healthy life and prevention.
of diseases. *Nidra* is part of lifestyle and may cause many diseases if it is not ideal, so why ancient seers have well elaborated this topic in their literature.

**KEYWORDS:** Nidra, Health, Lifestyle, Ayurveda.

**INTRODUCTION**

The word *Nidra* is derived from the prefix “*Ni*” is the Sanskrit root of our English word “Nether” or down as in “nether world” (under world). While the suffix “*Dra*” may be cognate with the English “drowsy”, to be half asleep, to be inactive or present an appearance of peaceful inactivity or isolation. The word *Nidra* is a feminine gender, the root “*Dra*” means undesired and “*Gatau*” to lead; it is a state which is hated, there for turned as “*Nidra*”.

Sleep is a naturally occurring periodic state of rest of both mind and body, in which the eyes usually close and consciousness is completely or partially lost, with decreased bodily movement and decreased responsiveness to external stimuli. Sleep determine many aspects of our life like mood, cognitive functions such as attention and working memory, homeostasis etc.[1]

In metaphoric language it is also called ‘*Vaishnavi maya*’, indicating that nidra provides nutrition to maintain good health like Lord *Vishnu* (the sustaining god), who nourishes and sustains this world. Concept of Sleep When the mind along with the soul gets exhausted, or becomes stationary, and the sensory and motor organs also become inactive, the individual sleeps. Sleep occurs when the seat of *Chetana* (consciousness) is covered by *Tamo Guna* (one among the three main qualities of mind which is responsible for ignorance) which predominates along with *Kapha*. Sleep is another form of *Tamas* (mental darkness). Sleep manifests when *Tamas* naturally predominates at night and the mind and intellect are in deep rest. Sleep occurs when bodily channels become accumulated with *Kapha* and when the mind is devoid of contact with the sense-organs because of fatigue. Types of Sleep In general, sleep is classified into two types: *Svabhavika* (natural sleep) and *Asvabhavika* (abnormal sleep). *Maharshi Charaka*[2] described seven types caused by: *Tamas*; vitiated *Kapha*; mental exertion; physical exhaustion; *Agantuka* (indicative of bad prognosis leading to imminent death); a complication of other diseases like *Sannipataja jvara* (fever having involvement of *Tridosha*); and the very nature of the night (physiological sleep). *Acharya Vagbhata*[3] follows a similar view, adding that sleep occurring at night is considered normal while the remaining are abnormal. *Acharya Sushruta*[4] describes three types as: *Vaishnavi* (created by
the sustaining god which is natural one); Tamasi (due to mental darkness); Vaikariki (due to diseases).

**Ancient Literature Review**

According to Maharishi Patanjali, sleep is modification of mind where there is no mental contentment. *pramāṇa viparjaya vikalpa nidrā smātayaà | pa. yo. su. 1. 6 ||*

There are five modification of mind Right knowledge, Indiscrimination, Delusion, Sleep and Memory. *abhāvapratyayālambanā vāttinidrā. pa.yo.su. 10.01*

Sleep is the state in which mental content is absent. Sleep is also called Nidra in Sanskrit language. Nidra is not a new word; there are so many references of Nidra available from the Vedic period. Nidra mentioned in Rig Veda as “Swapna”.

*na svapnāya spāhahayanti debāù | āgveda 8.2.78*

It is clear that gods were not having any sleep pattern because they had more Sattva Guna and less Tamo Guna. According to Acharya Charaka, sleep is-yadā tu manasi klānte karmātmānaù klamānvitāù. viñayebhyo nivartante tadā svapitī mānavaù. a.su.27.35

When body and mind fed up with the action, then mind is not capable to focus on action and sense organs also getting fatigue because of too much work load. It is finally leads to sleep.

**Importance of Nidra:** nidrāyattaà sukhāà duùkhaà puñöiù kärçāà balābalam vâñatā klēbatā jūnamājīnānaà jēvitaà na ca ||(charaka samhita).

Sukha (happiness), dukha (unhappiness), Pushhti (good physique), Karshya (emcitaion), Vrushta (sexual power), Klibata (impotence), Gyan (knowledge), and Agyan (illiteracy), Jivita (long life), Ajivita (death) all these factors are depend on Nidra. Samyak Nidra gives us Sukha, Pushhti, Bala, Vrushta, Gyan and Jivan. Asamyak Nidra causes Dukha, Karshya, Abala, Klibata and Aagyan

**Merits and Demerits of Proper and Improper Sleep**[5]

It is said in Charak Sutra Sthan 21st chapter that Happiness, misery, nourishment, emaciation, strength, weakness, virility, sterility, knowledge, ignorance, life and death—all these occur depending on the proper or improper sleep. Proper sleep leads to increase in Agni (digestive proper) and Dhatusamya (proper structure and functioning of Dhatu).
Relationship between Nidra and Dosha, Dhatu Malas

As Nidra is said to be kapha dominant process it also maintains the equilibrium between three Doshas. In classics, it is mentioned that in Kaphaja Vikaras Nidra and Tandra (sleepiness) are commonly seen and in Vataja Vikaras Nidranasa (Loss of sleep) occurs and in Pittaja Vikaras Alpanidra (Less sleep) manifest. By means of proper sleep the Dhatusamya, nourishment of the body, increase of strength and the stability of Ayu are achieved. By proper sleep the digestive power is properly maintained and the agni functions remains in normal condition. Evacuation of the bowel and emptying of urinary bladder take place properly if a person sleeps well. Bad habits like Ratri-jagarana (waking up during night) and Diva-swapana (sleeping in the day) have been stated to provoke all the three Doshas.

Demerits of Diwaswapa

If one sleep in daytime, whom it is contraindicated, then he may suffer from Halimaka (serious type of jaundice), Shirahshula (headache), Staimitya (timidness), Gurugatrata (heaviness of the body), Angamarda (malaise), Agninasha (loss of digestive power), Hridaya Pralepa (a feeling as if phlegm adhered to the heart ), Shopha (oedema), Arochaka (anorexia), Hrillas (nausea), Pinasa (rhinitis), Ardhavabheda (hemicrania), Kotha (urticaria), Aru (eruption), Pidaka (abscess), Kandu (pruritus), Tandra (drowsiness), Kasa (coughing), Galamaya (diseases of the throat), Smriti-Buddhi Pramoha (impairment of the memory and intelligence), Srotasaam sanrodha (obstruction of the circulating channels of the body), Jwara (fever), Indriyanam asamarthya (weakness of sensory and motor organs) an Vishavega pravardhana (enhancement of the toxic effects of artificial poisons).

Demerits of Ratrau Jagarana

If one remains awake in Vatakala i.e. in late night (approx. 2 am to 6 am if sunrise at 6 am), then Vata gets vitiated which vitiates the Agni and leads to inappropriate digestion of food. Vitiation of Vata is more harmful for digestion than Pitta and Kapha. If one remains awake in Kapha and Pitta kala i.e. first two Praharas, and sleep in Vatakala i.e. in last Prahara then definitely food gets digested properly.

Types of bed and their effects [6,7]

1. Anukula shayya (Comfortable bed): It is considered good for proper sleep, nourishment,pleasure, relives tiredness, pacifies the vitiated Vata, and aphrodisiac.
2. **Bhumishayya (On ground):** It can pacify the vitiated Vata, nourishes human body gives strength and aphrodisiac.

3. **Khatva (Cot):** Causes vitiation of Vata.

4. **Darupatta (Wooden planks):** It is unctuous and highly vitiates Vata.

5. **Andolika (Hanging bed):** It relieves tiredness, leads to long life, plumpness aphrodisiac, alleviates vitiated Vata, decreases sweating, pleasing to mind.

6. **Talpa:** It helps to decrease weight. It is good for health of skin.

**Nidra and Disease**

1. According to Charak Sleeping in day time except in *Grishma ritu* causes vitiation of *Kapha* and *Pitta*.

2. It can cause *Krimi, Prameha, Sthaulya, Visarpa, Medovaha Strotas Dushti, Yonikanda, Asrigdara*.

3. Sleeping on Cot (*Khatva*) leads to vitiation of Vata.

4. Sleeping on wooden planks can highly vitiate Vata because it is un-unctuous.

5. Excess sleeping leads to *Kaphaprakopa, Antarvidradhi*.

6. Sleeping on uncomfortable bed leads to *Vatavyadhi*.

7. Excess sleeping especially in day time leads to *Kaphaprakopa, Pratishyaya*,( Allergic Rhinitis) *Arsha* (piles).

8. Sleeping in day time and keeping awake in night time leads to *Samana Vata Dushti, Shiroroga, Urustambha, Vatarakta, Ajirna*.

9. Sleeping in irregular posture leads to *Vata-gulma*.

10. Keeping awake at night leads to *Udavarta, Punaravartaka Jwara, Stanyaroga, Pratishyaya, Kshaya*.

11. Sleeping without taking pillow under the head leads to *Kaphaprakopa, Shiroro*.

12. Sleeping improperly or too much in quantity or in lateral position or with covered face leads to *Pratishyaya*.

13. Sleeping with keeping pillow very low or very high under head leads to *Pratishyaya*.

14. Sleeping with face down leads to *Mukharoga*.

15. Sleeping in daytime by *Rajaswala* (menstruating woman) leads to birth of a child who is always sleepy.

16. Sleeping in day time during the period of *Snehapana* leads to *Sneha-vyapada*. 
17 Constantly giving into sleep by pregnant woman makes the offspring drowsy, dull and deficient in digestive power.

18 Sleeping in day time by Sutika leads to Sutikaroga.

19 Divaswapna causes impediment in healing the ulcers and also causes pain.

20 Sleeping by patients suffering from Shotha, Jwara, Visarpa, Vatarakta, Kushtha, Netraroga leads further complication related to disease, jashotha, Vatavyadhi.

CONCLUSION
In ancient times, people were following ideal Lifestyle. Therefore people were not much get affected by various types of diseases. Afterwards, it has been turned into sedentary lifestyle. In modern era of civilization, due to growing use of technologies and increasing competition, changing lifestyle especially sleeping pattern has become a leading cause for manifestation of many diseases like Hypertension, Migraine, Rhinitis, Diabetes mellitus, Obesity etc. Sleep is an important part of our personality. In ancient Yoga texts sleep is defined as the state in which mental content is absent. Para sympathetic nervous system is responsible for sleep. Yogic relaxation technique which is described in Ayurveda stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system and helps to calm down the mind. Yoga has been gaining popularity as a tool for developing both physical and mental faculties and reducing stress.

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