



A Critical Review Study on Nidra (Sleep) in Ayurvedic Literature w.s.r. to Nidranasha (Insomnia).

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ABSTRACT:

The ability to sleep is essential to human life. More detrimental to a person's quality of life than a lack of food is sleep deprivation. A human spends more than one-third of their life sleeping. One of the 13 *Adharaniya Vegas*,¹ or desires that shouldn't be controlled, is sleep. Sleep is one of the *Trayopastambhas*, or “three pillars of life,” according to *Ayurveda*². Numerous illnesses have listed lack of sleep as one of their symptoms. *Samhitas* from ancient science provide a full analysis of *Nidra* and *Nidranasha* as well as several therapies. A lack of sleep can occur for a variety of causes, including physical or mental disease, stress, aging, pain, and other factors. Ayurveda suggests a number of remedies to deal with the problem. The article offers a thorough analysis of the causes, effects, and treatment of *Nidranasha* from an *Ayurvedic* perspective. This paper makes an attempt to conduct a critical review of *Nidra* and *Nidranasha*.

KEYWORDS: *Nidra*, *Nidranasha*, Insomnia, *Swapna*, *Upastambha*, *Indriya*.

INTRODUCTION:

Ahara, *Swapna (Nidra)*, and *Brahmacharya* are the three *Upastambha* that the *Swasthya* is dependent upon. These are referred to as the “tripod of life” in *Ayurveda*.³ *Ayurveda* is a way of life in addition to a medical system. It entails mental, emotional, and spiritual health and wellbeing. According to *Ayurveda*, sleep is one of the most crucial health pillars since it is a result of a relaxed bodily and mental state and is linked to happiness and well health. According to *Charaka*, a person falls asleep when their *Mana*, including their *Indriyas*, is depleted and they are no longer connected to their things. It's possible that a poor lifestyle, mental strain, altered eating habits, and stress all contribute to the disruption of *Nidra*. *Nidra* is one of the three main pillars of existence, according to *Charaka*, and it contains advantages and disadvantages that may be categorized and managed. The importance of *Nidra* is described in the *Charaka Samhita* as If we take quantity and quality sleep, then it is beneficial as a healthy food and nutrition, it provides *Sukha* (wellness) *Pushti* (nourishment) *Bala* (strength/energy) *Vrishata* (potency/virility) *Gyanam* (knowledge) *Jiva* (life or longevity). Inadequate sleep leads to *Dukkha*(illness), *Karshya* (emaciation). *balam* (weakness) *Kleebatha* (impotency / frigidity), *Agyanam* (ignorance) *Marana* (death).

Nidra's background:

It is only ever used with the feminine gender. A condition of unconsciousness is when someone is sleeping. *Nidra* is regarded as one of the vital functions of living things in both Upanishad and *Ayurvedic* literature.

Synonyms:

Svapah, *Svapnah*, *Svapnam*, *Samvesh*, *Shayanam*, *Suptih*, *Vaishnavi-Maya*, *Bhutadhatri*

Definations of Nidra:

***Charaka Samhita*:** has described when the mind and body are tired; *Kapha Dosha* and *Tamas Guna* are increased in the body. In this state, the sensory organs are unable to function. This state leads to *Nidra*. *Tamas* is the prime factor responsible for *Nidra*.⁴

***Acharya Sushruta*:** described the sleep occurs when the *Hridaya* the seat of *Chetana* is covered by *Tamas*.⁵

***Ashtanga Sangraha, Vagbhata*:** stated that the *Manovaha Strotas* become accumulated with *Shleshma* and the mind is devoid of sense organs because of fatigue when an individual falls asleep.⁶

Types of Nidra:

Acharya Charaka⁷ categorized *Nidra* into the following groups based on its root causes:

- ✚ *Tamobhava*: caused by Tama
- ✚ *Shleshmasamudbhava*: caused by vitiated kapha.
- ✚ *Mana-sharirshramasaambhava*: caused by mental and mental exertion.
- ✚ *Agantuki*: indicative of a bad prognosis leading to imminent death.
- ✚ *Ratri-swabhavaprabhava*: is caused by the very nature of the night.
- ✚ *Vyadhyanuvaritini*: is caused as a complication of other diseases like *Sannipataja Jwara*, etc.

*Acharya Sushruta Samhita*⁸, though, doesn't directly provide classification of *Nidra* and divides *Nidra* Based on the *Guna* is more present in the mind of an individual, i.e.,

- ✚ In *Saatvika* people, *Nidra* happens at midnight.
- ✚ In *Raajasika* people, *Nidra* happens randomly without any cause for it.
- ✚ In *Taamasika* people, *Nidra* occurs both during the day and at night.

Acharya Vagbhata has classified *Nidra* into seven types in *Ashtanga Sangraha*,⁹ i.e.,

- ✚ *Kaalasvabhava*: naturally occurring *Nidra*.
- ✚ *Aamaya*: Due to Diseases.
- ✚ *Chittakheda*: Due to tiredness of the mind.
- ✚ *Dehakheda*: Due to tiredness of the body.
- ✚ *Kaphaja*: Due to *Kapha Dosha*.
- ✚ *Aagantuja*: Due to External Factors.
- ✚ *Tamobhava*: Due to the predominance of *Tamas*.

Importance of *Nidra*:

The three components; *Ahara*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* - are crucial to the preservation of a living creature¹⁰. These elements, namely *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*, have been compared with the three legs of support and are known as the three *Upastambhas* in *Ayurvedic* literature. *Nidra*'s presence in the three *Upastambhas* attests to its significance. When highlighting the significance of *Nidra*, *Ayurveda* stated that:-

- ✚ It brings pleasure in life.
- ✚ It maintains the body's consistency.
- ✚ It strengthens things.
- ✚ It improves mental and cognitive capacities.
- ✚ It eventually ends life.

Physiology of *Nidra*:

When *Mana* is depleted, it sleeps. The phenomenon can be understood in this way. Howell asserts that sleep is brought on by cerebral ischemia. The cerebral cortex contains the pre- and post-central gyres, association areas, and other higher centers linked to *Ayurvedic* mental processes. As a result of the reduction in cerebral blood flow, which causes sleep (*Nidra*), *Mana* transforms into *Klanta*. Due to their detachment from their sensory organs or their work, *Indriyas* (*Jnanendriya* and *Karmendriya*) likewise become inactive while they sleep. According to the *Bhela Samhita*¹¹, *Nidra* happens when *Shleshma* and *Tamas* jointly infiltrate the heart, hearing, and eyes. Additionally, it is said that only the *Praana*, mind, and *Agni* are active when you sleep, with the potential of the *Indriyas* as well, depending on the quality of your sleep.

Relationship between Nidra and Dosha Dhatu Malas

Nidra and the balance between the three *Doshas* go hand in hand. Classical texts link *Kaphaja Vikaras* to *Nidra* and *Tandra*; *Nidranasa*, or sleep loss, is seen in *Vataja Vikaras*, while *Alpanidra*, or less sleep, is connected to *Pittaja Vikaras*. The digestive process, or *Agni*, has deep relationships with appropriate *Nidra*, and a person who sleeps well has regular and timely bowel and bladder evacuations, which contribute to the maintenance of a long *Ayu*. However, undesirable behaviors like *Diva-Swapana*, or sleeping during the day, and *Ratri Jagarana*, or waking up at night, agitate and vitiate all three *Doshas* and cause a variety of diseases.¹²

Nidan of Nidranasha:

There is no precise reference to the Nidranasha's causes. The Charaka Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, and Ashtanga Sangraha all contain descriptions of the Chikitsa method of Atinidra by the Acharyas. According to them, if any Atiyoga occurs throughout these Chikitsa operations, it might lead to Nidranasha conditions. Nidranasha may therefore be attributed to Atiyoga of these Chikitsa processes from the viewpoint of the charkas.¹³

- *Atiyoga of Vaman*
- *Atiyoga of Virechana*
- *Atiyoga of Rakta mokshana*
- *Atiyoga of Dhoomapana*
- *Atiyoga of Nasya karma*
- *Vata Vriddhi*
- *Pitta Vriddhi*
- *Ati Chinta*
- *Ati Krodha*
- *Manastapa*
- *Dhatukshaya*

Some other *Nidana* factors that may also cause *Nidranasha*, according to *Ashtanga Sangraha*, are as follows:

- *Lobha* (Grief)
- *Harsha* (Happiness)
- *Vyatha* (Sorrow)
- *Ati Maithuna* (Excessive Intercourse)
- *Ati Kshudha* (Excessive Hunger)
- *Rukshanna Sevana* (Intake of Dry Food)
- *Anjana* (Collrium)

Further, *Sushruta Samhitas* has mentioned some extra *Nidana* factors that may cause *Nidranasha*.¹⁴ *Manasika Dosha Raja* may be the principal causative factors for *Nidranasha*. All these *Nidana* factors have been described under the following headings:

- 1) *Aharaja Nidana – Rookshanna sevana*
- 2) *Viharaja Nidana – Vyayama, Upavasa, Asukhashayya*
- 3) *Manasika Nidana – Bhaya, Chinta, Krodha*

Table 1: In Ayurvedic classics, some symptoms are mentioned as follows:

<i>Rupa</i>	<i>Charaka Samhita</i> ¹⁵	<i>Sushruta Samhita</i> ¹⁶	<i>Ashtang Hrudaya</i> ¹⁷	<i>Ashtang Sangraha</i> ¹⁸
Jrumbha	+	+	+	+
Angmard	+	+	+	+
Tandra	+	+	+	+
Shiroroga	+	-	+	-
Shirogaurava	+	+	+	+
Akshigaurava	+	+	-	-
Jadya	-	-	+	+
Glani	-	-	+	+
Bhrama	-	-	+	+
Apakti	-	-	+	+
Vataroga	-	-	+	+

Discussion:

Nidra has been described in Ayurveda as both a diseased state and a physiological phenomenon. As well as being described are how Nidra should be practiced properly, when it should be practiced, and any unintended consequences. Based on Prakriti and overall mental health, physiological sleep has also been categorized among healthy people. Sleep has also been mentioned as a need that, if not managed, can result in a variety of illnesses. The relevance of daytime sleep as an etiological element in the setting of illnesses has been highlighted.

Conclusion:

The importance of getting a good night's sleep for both a healthy body and mind is well known in both Ayurveda and contemporary science. Although different sources have varying opinions on the ideal amount of time to sleep, the majority of experts agree that individuals need 7-8 hours of sleep every night to function well.¹⁹

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