

PHYSIOLOGICAL ASPECT OF NIDRA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SLEEP

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ABSTRACT

Nidra gives nourishment to the body, keeping us away from the diseases. Nidra is one which helps to attain longevity, memory, intelligence, and freedom from disease, youthfulness, excellence of luster, complexion, voice, optimum development of physique and sense organs, mastery over phonetics, and brilliance. Nidra is also helpful to increase the immunity of the person to keep him away from the disease also reverses the disease processes and prevents the reoccurrence. So Nidra is one of traya upasthambha that is described in Ayurveda and it is needed for well life which is proved by researches. Here an attempt is made to describe the importance of Nidra and to enumerate its utility as Upasthambha.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Trayopasthambha, Swapna, Medhaswi.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the most ancient science of life, which is having an aim of curing and preventing a disease. It makes the holistic approach to the life and its well being. Ayu the life is considered as four dimensional entity comprising of the physical body, the senses, the psyche and the soul (consciousness). Ayu the individual life entity is considered as miniature replica of the universe. The Nidra is so important for maintenance of health. This is true in the light of modern scientific knowledge also. According to Ayurvedic concept, the Kapha and Tamas are responsible for Nidra.

Sleep production has been attributed to many factors which include stimulation of certain areas of brain, food activities, external stimuli etc. Any variation in the normal sleep pattern is not at all desirable thing and they may cause the serious health problem which demand proper medical attention.

For maintaining healthy life 3 Upasthambas are needed.^[1] Charaka and Vagbhata explains Trayopasthambha, They are Ahara, Nidra and Brahmacharya.

The term 'Nidra' origine as "*nindyate iti nidra*" (Sabdakalpadrumam).^[2]

The word 'nidra' is derived from nind+ ruk+tap= na lopa.^[3]

Means that "Nothing loss is there". In Upanishads also explanation about Nidra is there. So that while

explaining about diff. types of avastha, like Jagrutavastha, Swapnavastha, Sushiptavastha, and Trutiyavastha.^[4] Nidra is one among the Adharaniya vega which was explained by Charaka.^[5]

Synonyms

The synonyms of Nidra are as follows-Shayaanam, Swapa, Sushipti, Nidra, Swapna.^[6]

Definition

Sleep is the natural periodic state of rest for mind and body with closed eyes characterized by partial or complete loss of consciousness. Loss of consciousness leads to decreased response to external stimuli and decreased body movements. Depth of sleep is not constant throughout the sleeping period. It varies in different stages of sleep.

Nidra Utpatti

When Mind gets tired, when sense and motor organs get exhausted they can't perceive their objects more and these remains nothing to feed the mind for the sake of conveying to soul, in this status sleep occurs.^[7]

Mechanism of Sleep

Sleep occurs due to the activity of some sleep-inducing centers in brain. Stimulation of these centers induces sleep. Damage of sleep centers results in sleeplessness or persistent wakefulness called insomnia.^[8]

Types of Nidra

The types of Nidra are diff. according to diff. Acharyas. According to aacharya Charaka there are seven types of Nidra are as follows.^[9-12]

Sl. No	Charaka	Sushruta	V.vagbhata	Vagbhata
1)	Tamobhava	Tamasi	Kalaswabhavajanya	Mithyayoga
2)	ShleshmoSamudbhava	Swabhavaki—a)Tamobuyishta b)Rajobuyishta c)Satwabhuyst	Amayaja	Hinayoga
3)	Manashramasambhava	Vaikariki	Chittakedodhbha	Atiyoga
4)	Shareeashrama sambhava		Dehakedodhbhava	Samyakyoga
5)	Aaguntaki		Shleshmaprabhava	
6)	Vyadinuvartini		Agantubhava	
7)	Ratriswabhava Prabhavaa		Tamobhava	

Types of Sleep

Sleep is of two types:^[13]

1. Rapid eye movement sleep or REM sleep
2. Non-rapid eye movement sleep, NREM sleep or non-REM sleep.

1. Rapid Eye Movement Sleep – Rem Sleep

Rapid eye movement sleep is the type of sleep associated with rapid conjugate movements of the eyeballs, which occurs frequently. Though the eyeballs move, the sleep is deep. So, it is also called paradoxical sleep. It occupies about 20-30% of sleeping period. Functionally REM sleep is very important because it plays an important role in consolidation of memory. Dreams occur during this period.

2. Non-Rapid Eye Movement Sleep – Nrem Or Non-Rem Sleep Non-rapid eye movement (NREM) sleep is the type of sleep without the movements of eyeballs. It is also called slow-wave sleep. Dreams do not occur in this type of sleep and it occupies about 70% to 80% of total sleeping period. Non-REM sleep is followed by REM sleep.

Functions of Nidra

Happy status of mind, nourishment of the body, strength of body, virility, knowledge, and life are gifts of sleep.^[14] Sleep is one of the factor responsible for sustaining living body. It participates in happiness, misery, nourishment, emaciation, strength, weakness, sexual urge, impotency, learning and illiteracy, life and death.^[15]

Nidra is one among the Adharneeya Vega,^[16] if we have done Dharana it causes the Jrumba, Angamarda, Tandra, Shiroroga and Netraroga.^[17]

DISCUSSION

Now in modern text books scholars are more focusing over the water, food, sleep. But about this, before thousand years our Acharyas have told about Nidra and ahara under the heading of Trayopasthamba. As pillars support the house in the same way food, sleep, and sexual activities support the living body.

Now days one of the common problem for infertility is Nidra. The people now a days in their busy schedule are not having the proper time for food and sleep. Some people are having the duty at night time, then they are not able to take sleep also. So that not getting sleep at day time, the persons are suffering from anxiety and other psychological problems which will leads to infertility. So our Acharyas have given importance to sleep as one of the pillar for life.

And also while explanation of the Paryayas the word Shayana mentioned it's may be due to the sleep should be done in Shayyavastha because only by sitting we cannot sleep properly, so this word may used. Swap and Swapna indicates about dreams where Nidra is required to experience Swapna.

While explanations about the types of Nidra all are telling the same types and giving the same meaning. Only numbers are mentioned differently.

Sleep is a state of consciousness that differs from alert, wakefulness, by a loss of critical reactivity to events in the environment with a profound alteration in the respiration etc.

More than half of the life is invariably spent in sleep hence if it is not enjoyed properly it may lead to several disturbances and at the same time if it is properly enjoyed it proves most beneficial to the life.

Parallel Terms of Nidra

Nidra can be counted as follows

1. Tandra- is a condition characterized by reduced acuity of perception, yawning and tiredness. This condition is similar to intense urge for sleep. This may be correlated with stupor. This is caused by the increase of Tamas, Vaata and Kapha.
2. Jrmbhaa- Yawning.
3. Klama- Usually fatigue occurs after physical labour. A condition of tiredness without prior physical exertion is called Klama. It may be roughly correlated with exhaustion.
4. Aalasyam- Laziness. It is the lack of interest to work. Technically it is the aptitude for rest and the

aversion for work even when the person is having sufficient physical strength for doing work.

5. Glaani- Is a state characterized by abnormal sweet taste in mouth, stupor, nausea, giddiness and anorexia
6. Gauravam- Feeling of heaviness, as though wrapped in wet leather.
7. Moorcchaa- Fainting caused by the increase of Pitta and Tamas.
8. Bhramaa- Giddiness due to the increase of Rajas, Pitta and Vaata.

Tridosha Effects of Nidra

Vagbhatacharya tells the things like the individual should avoid all the distressing thoughts and thus clean the mind. Just before sleeping one should think about the almighty God. He can use a pillow which is comfortable for him. The bed should be covered with clean bed linen and it should be wide and even and should be comfortable for the person^[38]. Other opines that sleeping on bed with good qualities is Hrdaya and Vrshya. It removes the tiredness of body and mind and provides Pushti, Dhrti and Soundsleep.^[39] Sleeping on cot is tridoshasamana. Sleeping on bed which is filled with feather is Kapha vaatahara. Sleeping on floor provides Brmhana and Vrshyataand reduces the Pitta and Rakta doshas.^[40] Sleeping on plank is Vatala sleeping in the moonlight is Seeta and provides Smraananda. It reduces Trshna, Daaha and Pitta. Compared to this, sleeping in the Avasyaya is of less. Qualities because it may cause Vaata kaphakopa. Sleeping in complete darkness may frighten the individual because when gets up from sleep suddenly one cannot identify the place and direction due to extreme darkness. But it is pitta KaphaSamana and Kaamavardhana.^[41]

CONCLUSION

Timely sleep offers appropriate weight gain, better complexion, desire to work, fresh and alert status of sensory organs. It is also responsible for balanced status of the body entities gaining or loosing weight is directly dependent on their principle factors in physiology of living being namely Ahara, Nidra, Brahmacharya. Thus these are proved as Trayopasthambha.

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