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Nidra : a prerequisite to healthy life

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is one of the ancient knowledge, which deals with every aspect of life. It is not only science of life as well it tells about how to lead a healthy life style. Ayurveda described many *Adravayabhuata oushadhis* to prevent diseases and to promote health, those include *Dinacharya, Ratricharya, Ritucharya, Sadvritta Palana* and *Achara Rasayana*. In that *Ratricharya* is one of the most essential part of life. *Nidra* is explained under *Trayopasthambas* which include *Ahara, Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*. *Trayopasthambas* are the three main supportive pillars of life. *Swasthasya Swastha Rakshanam* is main aim of Ayurveda. So to maintain healthy life we should concentrate on *Trayopasthambas*. Which helps in keeping balance, harmony and equilibrium of all the physiological act. *Nidra* is very essential because it affects our body, mind as well our emotions of wellbeing. *Nidra* is one of responsible factor to lead healthy life. It participates in happiness, misery, nourishment, emaciation, strength, weakness, sexual urges, impotency, learning and illiteracy, life and death. The life style changes in present era are the main cause for many lifestyle disorders like hypertension, diabetes, polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), metabolic syndromes and depression. And *Nidranasha* or lack of proper sleep also plays a very important role in all of them. So this present study is taken to explain importance of *Nidra* and its clinical significance of *Nidra* in lifestyle disorders.

Key words: *Nidra, Trayopasthamba, Nidra mahatva, Nidra nasha, life style changes.*

INTRODUCTION

A good sound sleep is one of the most precious gift one can enjoy. The health is mainly depends upon *Trayopasthambas*. *Nidra* is explained under *Trayopasthambas* which include *Ahara, Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*.^[1] *Nidra* means a state of unconsciousness of a person. Ayurveda is not only system of medicine but also way of life. Health means physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing.

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Paryayas of Nidra

Shayanam, Svapah, Sushupyi, Svapana.

Nidrotpatti

Acharya Charaka explained that when body and mind gets tired and all the sense organs gets exhausted and becomes inactive leads to occurrence of sleep.^[2] In this state sense organs not perceive their objects and there nothing remains to feed the mind, and connection between sense organs, mind and soul gets detached which is responsible for acquiring the knowledge. According to *Susruta Hridaya* is considered seat of *Chetana* (mind/soul). He stated that when *Hridaya* get covered by *Tamas* then sleep will occur. *Tamas* is responsible for the occurrence of *Nidra* and *Satva* is responsible for wakefulness. And also explained that sleep is the effect of *Kapha* and *Tamas*.^[3] Sleep will occur when *Manovaha Srotas* accumulated with *Kapha* then mind gets detached from all the sense organs due to exhaustion of mind.^[4]

Nidra and Kala

The *Kala* between *Pradeha* (after *Suryastha*) and *Paschima Yama* (before *Suryodaya*) which is two *Yama* is the proper time for *Nidra* and it leads towards *Moksha*.^[5]

Types of Nidra

Various *Acharya's* have given various opinions regarding the types of sleep.

But broadly it can classify into 2 types;

1. *Swabhavika Nidra* : which comes regularly and naturally at night.
2. *Aswabhavika Nidra* : Which comes due to some other causes.

According to Acharya Charaka^[6]

- a) *Tamobhava* - which caused by *Tama*.
- b) *Shleshma Samudbhava* - caused by vitiated by *Kapha*.
- c) *Mana Shareera Shrama Sambhava* - caused by mind and body exertion.
- d) *Agantuki* - caused by external trauma.
- e) *Vyadhyanuvartini* - one which occurs due to any disease.
- f) *Ratri Svabhava*- one which occurs physiologically/naturally.

Acharya Sushruta classifies as follows^[7]

- a) *Tamasi - Nidra* occurs due to external trauma.
- b) *Svabhavika / Vaishnavi- Nidra* occurs physiologically/ naturally.
- c) *Vaikarika* - the one which occurs due to decreased *Kapha* or increased *Vata*, due to *Abhitapa* (disease) related to mind and body.

Astanga Hrudaya classifies as per time of sleep^[8]

- a) *Mithayogarupa* - if one sleeps untimely.
- b) *Hinayogarupa* - if one does not sleep properly.
- c) *Atiyogarupa* - if one sleep more hours and more times a day.

- d) *Samyak Yogarupa* - if one sleeps timely and certain time of duration.

Astang Sangraha classifies as follows^[9]

- a) *Kalavabhavaja*
- b) *Amayaja*
- c) *Chittakhedaja*
- d) *Dehakhedaja*
- e) *Kaphobhava*
- f) *Agantuki*
- g) *Tamobhava*

Out of these seven types, first is natural, last is out of sin; rest five types spell out sleep out of disease.

Functions of sleep

Nidra is the most essential factor for life. *Nidra* when taken properly in good quality and quantity is responsible for *Sukha* (happiness), *Dukha* (misery), *Pusti* (nourishment of the body), *Karshya* (deprivation of body), *Bala* (strength), *Abala* (weakness), *Vrishata* (virility), *Klibata* (impotency), *Jnana* (knowledge) *Ajanana* and life-death also depend upon sleep.^[10,11]

Timely sleep offers appropriate weight gain, better complexion, desire to work, and fresh and alert status of sensory organs. It also is responsible for balanced status of body entities.^[12]

Gaining or losing weight is directly dependent on two principal factors in physiology of living being, namely food and sleep. These two factors are natural necessities of life.

Nidra Mahatva

Both *Ayoga* and *Atiyoga* of *Nidra* is not good for health. If one does excessive or less sleep it will cause some life style disorders like obesity, diabetes, metabolic syndrome and hypertension etc. *Nidra* is very important part of life because it provides rest relaxation to body and mind. A good sound sleep at the night time does the balance of body constituents, alertness, good complexion, good vision and digestion will be perfect. Those who take proper quality of sleep-in proper time they will get good strength,

peace of mind, good complexion and virility. And they will not suffer from any sleep related lifestyle disorders. Excessive, improper sleep at improper sleep and sleeplessness will cause misery, emaciation, loss of strength and finally it leads to death. Sleep is used as management of emaciation.

Nidra is varies from person to person depending upon some factors like age, food, work place, work load, environment and habits. Sleep is mentioned one among *Adharneeya Vega*.^[13] According to modern physiology sleep is needed to maintain metabolic caloric balance, thermal equilibrium and immune competence. sleep is necessary for learning and memory consolidation, not only the proper hours of sleep important, but also the good quality of sleep is needed for healthy life. in present era poor quality of sleep or improper sleep is the primary cause for various lifestyle disorders. For maintenance of health, an adequate amount of sleep is needed. Not merely count of hours but also timing of sleep is also very important for health.

Improper *Nidra* as *Nidana* of disease

Svapnasukha - is one of the cause for *Prameha* (diabetes mellitus)

Nidra Vegadharana - One of the cause for *Karshya* (emaciation), *Shirashula* (headache), and *Angamarda* (body pain) and *Tandra* (drowsiness).^[14]

Diwasvapna - will cause *Sthoulya*, *Prameha*, *Kusta*.

If one does not sleep at proper time he will suffer from headache, heaviness of the body, drowsiness, loss of digestive power and irritation, impairment of memory and intelligence.

If one sleeps during day time it will produce anorexia, indigestion, drowsiness and weakness.

Indication of day sleep

Day time sleep is indicated in summer.^[15] Sleep in day time is indicated in all the seasons those who are indulged in excessive singing, study, sexual acts, walking long distance, and those suffering from emaciation, thirst, diarrhea, dyspnea, insanity and hiccup and also those who are old, young and

weak.^[16] Sleep is also indicated for those suffering from grief, anger, vigil and fear for them sleep is needed in day time, by this equilibrium *Dosha* and *Dhatu*s are maintained. It will give the strength and nourishes the body properly.^[16]

Contra indications of day sleep

Sleeping during day time in all seasons other than summer is not advisable. As it causes vitiation of *Kapha* and *Pitta*. Persons with obesity, those who are addicted to taking unctuous substances, those are with *Kapha Prakriti* and those are suffering from *Kapha Doshaja* diseases and those are suffering from *Dushivisha* should never sleep during day time.^[16]

DISCUSSION

Ahara, *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya* are three main sub pillars of life. *Nidra* plays an important role in promotion of health and prevention of disease. Sleep is the most important aspects of one's life. it has its role in physical, mental and spiritual attributes of life. In Ayurveda explained that sleep is connected with mental state. *Shareera* and *Satva* are interact with one another in all aspects of life. Sleep is mainly relevant to mental illness. With proper quantity of sleep, proper quality of sleep is also very important. Improper sleep will affect health of individual. Loss of proper sleep can lead to emaciation and excessive day sleep leads to obesity. Improper sleep will disturb physical and mental health of individual. One should not sleep in day time nor keep late hours in night. The healthy person should get up during *Brahma Muhurta*, to sustain his life. to rise early one should sleep early in the night. But in present era people are not following appropriate time for sleep. Improper sleeping habits will lead many life style disorders. Now a days the people in their busy schedule not concentrating on proper sleep. And some people are having night, then they are not taking sleep, so that they are getting sleep at day time. Due to this sleep disturbance many are suffering from anxiety, depression and many psychological problems, and these psychological problems are one of the causes for infertility. So, one should take proper sleep at proper time with appropriate duration. More than

half of the life is invariably spent in sleep hence one should enjoy it properly, if one should not enjoy it properly it may lead to many life style disorders and at the same time if one enjoyed it properly he can lead healthy long life.

CONCLUSION

Sleep is the state where both body and mind are at rest. We can achieve healthy long life by following proper sleep due to its importance has been mentioned as one of the *Trayopasthambas*. Proper quality and quantity of sleep acts as rejuvenator of the body and mind. And it will helps in proper functioning of body and mind. Thus, it is observed that the person has sufficient sleep according to their age, season, and can attain positive energy and enthusiasm to perform work. Sleep is the chief nourisher of body and mind. Altered habits of sleep will cause many mental illness and physical changes, so one should sleep proper to quench all these problems. Proper and comfortable sleep helps to restore strength and virility. Untimely in adequate sleep will cause fatigue, weakness, and sterility. Thus, balanced sleep is the key to happy and disease-free life.

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