



COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW ON NIDRA

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ABSTRACT

Sleep (Nidra) is a natural physiological phenomenon of human life. The pattern and duration of sleep are individualized depending up on various factors like age, Time, Nature of work, food habits etc.

Keywords: Nidra, Smriti, Memory

INTRODUCTION

Sleep (Nidra) is a natural physiological phenomenon of human life

TYPES OF NIDRA:

According to Acharya Charaka [1]

- Tamobhava
- Shleshmasamudbhava
- Mana Shrama Sambhava
- Shareera Shrama Sambhava
- Agantuki
- Vyadhyanuvaritini
- Ratri svabhava

Acharya Sushruta classifies as follows [2]

- Tamasi
 - Svabhavika / Vaishnavi
 - Vaikarika
- Vagbhata's classification of sleep is similar with Charak's classification but the names differ [3]
- Tamobhava
 - Kaphabhava
 - Chittakhedaja
 - Dehakhedaja
 - Agantuki
 - Kalasvabhava

g) Amayaja

1) Tamobhava Nidra: Generally, sleep is due to the effect of Tamas, but the Tamobhava Nidra is particularly due to the excessive Tamas, causing sleep. When Satva and Rajasa are diminished in excess and the seat of Atma and Mana i.e. Hridaya is covered by the vitiated Tamas, then the individual becomes inert or inactive. The sleep caused by Tamas is also the root cause for all sinful acts. Tamas always causes excessive sleep. Thus, the Individual is unable to perform the virtuous deeds and so he subjects himself to sinful behaviour.

2) Sleshma Samudbhava Nidra: Sleshma is the material state of Tamas and when the Sleshma increases in the body, sleep ensues.

3) Manah Shrama Sambhava Nidra: Sleep is also said to be produced as a result of exertion. Due to excessive mental stress and strain and also exhausted senses the mind gets tired and is unable to perform its activities; as a result the individual gets sleep.

4) Sharira Shrama Sambhava Nidra: The sleep has also been stated to be caused due to physical exertion. When a person indulges in excess physical activities he feels very much tired. The body and mind desire to take rest, and refuse to work further and the person gets sleep.

5) Agantuki Nidra: Sometimes the cause of Nidra remains obscure and the cause is not

explainable. However this sleep is followed by death.

6) Vyadhyanuvartini Nidra: Here the Nidra is associated with diseases. This is seen in conditions like Sannipata Jwara where in along with severe weakness the patient also suffers from sleep.

7) Ratri Svabhava Prabhava Nidra: As stated earlier sleep is a natural phenomenon and it comes at a particular time in the night. There is no particular reason for this sleep and it is also termed as Bhutadhatri. It has been observed that even the individual who has slept during the day time would feel sleepy in the night also, which is quite a natural phenomenon. The author of Ashtanga Sangraha followed the Charaka Samhita's view with a slight change in the names and has mentioned seven types. The commentator Indu has opined that Tamobhava is Antya i.e., comes at the time of death and Agantuka means Shastra Praharadina (due to injury) and considered that they are due to Vyadhis. In Ashtanga Hridaya, Acharya Vagbhata considered only four types of Nidra and included all the seven types in these. The commentator Hemadri considered them as -

1. Sleep taken in wrong manner
2. Excessively taken sleep
3. Inadequately taken sleep
4. Properly taken sleep

The properly taken sleep brings happiness, nourishment, strength, virility, knowledge

and life to the individual. The improperly taken sleep i.e., other three types may kill the individual like the Kalaratri, who killed all demons.

THEORIES OF SLEEP-

i) Upanishad concept

ii) Yogic concept

iii) Ayurvedic concept

i) Upanishad concept:-

a) It was imagined by these ancient seers that Atma moves from Hridaya through the Nadis to the space in hridaya, then the sleep follows [4]

b) Nidra occurs when Atma goes to rest in the space inside the Hridaya [5]

ii) **Yogic concept:-**

a) The yogic philosophers in India have given explanations regarding sleep and also explained the Samadhi state which resembles with Nidra but is entirely different.

They studied the Yoga Nidra“ a yogic phenomenon pertaining to various states associated with Atma. They have termed these states as-

Jagratastavtha – Waking Consciousness

Svapnavastha – Dreaming

Susuptavastha – Dreamless sleep

Turiyavastha – Conscious dreamless sleep

b) Maharshi Patanjali states sleep is a state in which all activities, thoughts and feelings come to an end. In sleep the senses of perception rests in mind causing

cessation of their functions as mind is also at rest.

iii) **Ayurvedic concept:**

Several concepts have been put forward by our ancient Ayurvedic Acharyas in their texts to explain the phenomenon of Nidra which can be studied under following headings.

a) **Kapha Dosa Theory:**

Sushruta mentions that when the Sanjavaha srotas are filled with Kapha and Indriyas are deprived from their respective objects of senses, the person goes to sleep. He also clearly mentions the role of Kapha and Tama for Nidra Utpatti [6]. Bhela explains that Kapha situated in Hridaya is augmented during the process of digestion of food, during day time and when covers the Chakshu vaha and Shrotra vaha Srotas, it leads to Nidra [7]. Astanga Sangraha states that due to Avarana by Shlesma of the Srotas and Shrama of both types of the Indriyas occur which dissociates from their respective senses then Nidra occurs [8]. Astanga Hridaya describes that whenever the sensation conveying channels of the body are blocked or filled up by the Shleshma and when this Shleshma is over saturated with the Tamasika quality the living being gets sleep [9].

b) **Fatigue theory:**

This theory is mainly stated by Aatreya school of Ayurveda and both Astanga

Sangraha and Astanga Hridaya followed this view. Charaka states that when the mind including Jnanendriya and Karmendriya are exhausted they dissociate themselves from their objects, and then the individual sleeps [10].

Vagbhata gives importance to the Kapha Dosha and Shrama of the Indriya and Manas in the normal onset of Nidra [11]. Due to exertion, Jnanendriya and Karmendriya cannot cognise their respective objects, then sleep is said to occur according to Bhavaprakash [12]. This opinion suggests that sleep is a phenomenon resulting out of mental tiredness.

Mechanism of Nidra

1. When mind gets tired, when sensory and motor organs get exhausted they no more can perceive their objects and there remains nothing to feed the mind for the sake conveying to soul, in this status, already tired mind does not perceive anything & state of Nidra occurs [13].
2. When Kapha Dosha encircles Srotus, when sensory organs are overworked and perform their duty of perception no more, Nidra is induced in human body [14].
3. Heart is main source of Chetana or activity. When Tama becomes prevalent Nidra is induced. This may be of any type but chief inductive factor for sleep is Tama. With Satva,

one keeps always well informed about internal and external environment of the living body. Hence Nidra is induced whenever tama is on higher side due to any reason [15].

BENEFITS OF SLEEP-

- 1) Properly and timely taking sleep brings the happiness, nourishment, strength, virility, knowledge and maintains the life [16].
- 2) As the real knowledge brings about Siddhi in a yogi similarly properly intake of sleep brings about happiness and longevity in human beings [17].
- 3) Properly sleeping at the night time makes the balance of the body constituents (Dhatusamyata) and provides alertness, good vision, good complexion, good strength and good digestive power [18].
- 4) Persons who intake proper sleep in proper time will not suffer from diseases, their mind will be peaceful, they will gain strength, good complexion, good virility, attractive body and they will not be too lean or obese and they live up to 100 years [19].

NIDRA AND KALA:

Pradeha (after Suryastha) and Paschima Yama (before Suryodaya) these are the Kala for Vidyabhyasa. The Kala between these two Kala, which is about two Yamas is the proper time for Nidra and it leads towards the Moksha [20]. And in Mahabharata it is mentioned that Ratri is of three Yamas, in

this three Yamas, Suryastottara Yama is excluded and next two Yamas are considered as proper time for Nidra. In Manusmriti, Manu, the great law maker has described the division of time and then has remarked that the 30 Muhurta periods (24hrs) is divided by the Sun into day and night, the day being intended for the activities and the night designed for the rest and repose [21]. Naturally the night is described as a proper time for sleep. The person should not awake at night and should not sleep in day time because both result in Dosh Prakopa.

Effects of sleep in improper time:

Halimaka (Chlorosis), Shirashula (headache), Staimitya (Cold sensation), Guru Gatrata (heaviness of body organs), Angamarda (body ache), Agninasha (loss of appetite), Ardhavabedhaka (migraine), Kasa (Cough), derangement of memory and intelligence, Samrodha (obstruction of channels), incapability of sense organs, intensity of effect of poison, these occurs due to unwholesome day sleep. Hence the wise, after knowing the effects and ill-effects of Nidra should take nidra properly [22].

NIDRA AND SWAPNA:

Humans sleep when the mind is exhausted and when sense organs retract from their objects. Sleep is caused by Kapha and Tamas. Those who have less Kapha and Tamas will have lighter sleep.

Relationship between the Nidra and Dosha – Dhatu – Mala:

By the previous descriptions regarding sleep it is very clear that sleep is having important role in the maintenance of equilibrium of body. As Nidra is said to be Sleshma dominant process, it also maintains the equilibrium between three humors. In Ayurvedic classics, it is mentioned that in the Kaphaja Vikaras, Nidra and Tandra are commonly seen while in Vataja Vikaras sleeplessness occurs and in Pittaja Vikaras lack of sleep is one of the symptoms. The equilibrium of the Dhatus also depends upon Nidra. Caraka and Sushruta have stated that by means of proper sleep the Dhatusamya, nourishment of the body, increase of strength and stability are also achieved through this. When the decrease of Rasa Dhatu takes place, the sleep is diminished as a result of which the Uttarottara Dhatus are not formed properly. By proper sleep Agni improves and evacuation of bowel and emptying of urinary bladder takes place properly. However the bad habits of walking at night and sleeping at day time have been stated to provoke all three Doshas.

Nidra – Role in Clinical Assessment:

Every doctor advises rest to patients and does enquiry about their sleep. It hence becomes very important aspect of history taking. Equilibrium of Dhatu represents the action itself. It is invariably associated with the alleviation or absence of the disease.

This state of health can be ascertained from

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1. Getting sleep at the appropriate time.
2. Absence of dreams indicating morbidity.
3. Happy awakening, feeling of lightness in the body.

Regimen for good sleep:

One feels sleepy during the night because of the calm and quite environmental conditions. During day, bright light and temperature have stimulating effects that keep people awake and alert. Noise and surroundings also contribute in this prospect.

Sleep – As a Regime:

For the treatment of Karshya, sleep is considered as one of the main treatment regimen. Along with other regimes adequate sleep makes the man fatty like a boar. Where the day sleep is indicated, for all of them nidra serves as treatment regime. Pregnant woman should take sufficient, proper sleep otherwise the child will suffer from many problems. Nidra is considered as universal nourishing device.

Utility of Nidra in Rogi: Ayurveda accepts the fact that the disease is psychosomatic in nature. With reference to Nidra and other associated conditions like Murcha, Tandra it is known factor that with the increase of Vata Dosha there occurs Nidranasha, while increasing Kapha Dosha causes Atinidra. Nidra has been described as one among the three essential supports for the health. Both

the Anidra / Nidranasha are explained in the classics. These treatments can be divided into three groups viz, external, internal and psychological treatment.

External treatment: It includes Abhyanga, Utsadana, Snana etc.

Internal treatment: Gramya, Anupa, Auduka Prani Mamsa Rasa, Shali, Dugdha, Ikshurasa, Sneha, Madya etc are Nidrajanaka.

Psychological treatment: Perceiving the Manoanukulakara Gandha, Shabdha like Sangeeta etc. Samvahana, sleeping on clean, comfortable and attractive bed.

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