



Literature Review on Nasya Karma in Urdhvajatrugata Rogas

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Abstract

Nasya Karma is an important therapeutic procedure among Panchakarma therapies in Ayurveda. It involves administration of medicated substances through the nasal route and is especially indicated for diseases occurring above the clavicle, known as Urdhvajatrugata Rogas. According to classical Ayurvedic texts, the nose acts as the gateway to the head (*“Nasa hi Shiraso Dwaram”*). Medicines administered through the nasal route reach the cranial region and help eliminate vitiated doshas from the head and neck area. Urdhvajatrugata Rogas include disorders of the eyes, ears, nose, throat, and head such as Pratishyaya, Shirashoola, Ardhavabhedaka, and Ardita. Classical texts like Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Ashtanga Hridaya describe Nasya therapy as the prime treatment modality for such disorders. This review aims to explore the classical literature regarding the importance and therapeutic role of Nasya Karma in the management of Urdhvajatrugata Rogas.

****Keywords:**** Nasya Karma, Urdhvajatrugata Rogas, Panchakarma, Shalaky Tantra, Nasal therapy

Introduction

Ayurveda emphasizes both preventive and curative aspects of healthcare through various therapeutic procedures. Panchakarma is a unique detoxification therapy that removes vitiated doshas from the body. Among the Panchakarma procedures, Nasya Karma is specifically indicated for diseases of the head and neck region.

In Charaka Samhita, Nasya is described as the most effective treatment for diseases located above the clavicle. The classical statement ****“Nasa hi Shiraso Dwaram”**** indicates that the nose is the gateway to the head. Therefore, drugs administered through the nasal route directly influence the structures of the head and neck.

Urdhvajatrugata Rogas include disorders affecting the eyes, ears, nose, throat, and head. These diseases are mainly discussed in the branch of ****Shalaky Tantra****.

Concept of Urdhvajatrugata Rogas

The term Urdhvajatrugata refers to the region above the clavicle. Diseases occurring in this region include disorders of the head, eyes, ears, nose, throat, and oral cavity.

According to Sushruta Samhita, these diseases occur due to vitiation of doshas, mainly Vata and Kapha, which accumulate in the head region and obstruct the channels (srotas).

Common examples include:

- Pratishyaya (rhinitis)
- Shiroroga (head diseases)
- Ardhavabhedaka (migraine)
- Ardita (facial paralysis)
- Karnaroga (ear diseases)
- Netra roga (eye disorders)

These conditions affect the normal functioning of sensory organs and require specialized therapeutic procedures like Nasya.

Concept of Nasya Karma

Nasya Karma is defined as the administration of medicinal substances through the nasal route for therapeutic purposes.

In Charaka Samhita (Siddhi Sthana 9), Nasya therapy is described as the primary treatment for diseases affecting the head region.

A classical reference states:

“नासा हि शिरसो द्वारं तेन तद् व्याप्य हन्ति तान्।” (*Charaka Samhita, Siddhi Sthana 9/4*)

This indicates that medicines administered through the nose reach the head and eliminate the accumulated doshas.

According to Ashtanga Hridaya (Sutrasthana 20), Nasya therapy helps remove morbid doshas from the head and improves the functioning of sensory organs.

Types of Nasya

Different types of Nasya are described in classical texts such as Charaka Samhita and Ashtanga Hridaya:

1. Navana Nasya – Administration of medicated oils or decoctions.
2. Avapeedana Nasya – Nasal instillation of fresh herbal juice.
3. Pradhamana Nasya – Insufflation of powdered drugs through the nose.
4. Marsha Nasya – Administration of larger doses of medicated oil.
5. Pratimarsha Nasya – Daily administration of small doses of oil.

These different types are used according to the condition and strength of the patient.

Importance of Nasya Karma in Urdhvajatrugata Rogas

1. Elimination of Vitiated Doshas

Nasya therapy removes accumulated doshas from the head region and clears obstructed channels. According to Ashtanga Hridaya, Nasya helps eliminate Kapha and Vata from the head.

2. Direct Action on Head and Sense Organs

The nasal route allows direct delivery of medicine to the head region. In Sushruta Samhita, it is mentioned that the medicine reaches ****Shringhataka Marma****, a vital point connecting the eyes, ears, nose, and tongue.

3. Improvement of Sensory Functions

Nasya therapy nourishes and strengthens the sensory organs, improving vision, hearing, smell, and voice.

4. Management of Various Disorders

Nasya is indicated in many Urdhvajatrugata disorders such as:

- * Shirashoola (headache)
- * Ardhavabhedaka (migraine)
- * Pratishyaya (rhinitis)
- * Ardita (facial paralysis)
- * Many eye and ear diseases

These indications are described in Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita.

5. Preventive Role

According to Ashtanga Hridaya, regular use of ****Pratimarsha Nasya**** strengthens the organs of the head and prevents diseases.

According to modern point of view:

There is no direct pharmacological correlation between nose and brain. However, the olfactory area is the only place in the whole human body where there is direct contact between the outer surface and Central Nervous System. However the effect of drug on the brain, administered through the nasal pathway can be seen in followed examples. The nose is used as a route of administration for inhalation of anaesthetic drugs. In modern medicine system, anterior pituitary hormones, in the form of nasal spray are being used since a long time. Nasal administration of an LRH antagonist for 3-6 months is found to be effective in inhibiting ovulation as a

contraceptive measure (Berauist et al 1979). Thus to understand the action of Nasya drug on central nervous system it is necessary to know the probable pathways of action of Nasya dravya. On the basis of fractional stage of Nasya Karma procedures, we can draw certain rational issues that are as follow:

1. At the level of blood circulation:

Many drugs including hormones are administered through the nose for their effective therapeutic results. However, these drugs are believed to be rapidly absorbed through the mucous membrane and enter into the general blood circulation of the body. Specific circulation may probably be involved for which, the posturing of the patient may be important. This includes the entry of the drugs absorbed into the facial vein, through which the back flow of the blood occurs through the inferior ophthalmic vein and to the venous sinuses of the brain.

2. At the level of lymphatic channels including C.S.F.:

The lipid soluble substances can easily and rapidly be transported across the epithelial membrane e.g. Taila, Kshara, Ghrita, etc. These lipid soluble substances can also gain an access into the lymphoid tissue. Thus, a rapid circulation through the lymphatic channels denotes a positive phenomenon. On the other hand, the extended arachnoid sheath from the brain to the submucosal area of the nose is the other path for the absorption of drugs directly through the nose.

3. At the level of neuroendocrinal and neurovascular stimulation:

The stimulation of the olfactory system during the course of Nasya Karma is other possibility. The olfactory nerve functions by means of chemoreceptors.

The chemical characteristic of the particle that has reached into the nose is identified by the nerves, which carry the stimuli to the olfactory bulbs. Further, the stimuli is carried to the high centres, probably involving the hippocampus, limbic system, hypothalamus, etc. they're the drug absorption deeper into the nasal drug delivery may influence certain enzymes and hormones in the body

Discussion

The classical literature clearly highlights the significance of Nasya therapy in diseases of the head and neck. Texts like Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Ashtanga Hridaya emphasize Nasya as the primary treatment modality for Urdhvajatrugata Rogas.

The therapy works by eliminating accumulated doshas, clearing channels, and nourishing sensory organs. Due to its direct route of administration, Nasya therapy provides faster and effective results in diseases of the head region.

Conclusion

Nasya Karma is a highly significant Panchakarma procedure indicated for diseases occurring above the clavicle. Classical Ayurvedic texts describe it as the most effective treatment for Urdhvajatrugata Rogas. By administering medicines through the nasal route, Nasya therapy helps remove vitiated doshas from the head, improves the functioning of sensory organs, and prevents various diseases of the head and neck region. Therefore, Nasya Karma remains an important therapeutic and preventive measure in Ayurvedic practice.

References

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