

Review Article

Conceptual Analysis of Nasya Karma in Netra Rogas

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A B S T R A C T

Panchakarma plays an important role in *Ayurveda*, which does the function of cleansing the body from *Doshas*. Among them, *Nasya* is mainly indicated for *Urdhwajatrugata Vikaras*, in which *Doshas* are eliminated by means of the nearest possible opening, the nose. *Netra*, being considered as the important *Indriya* among others, should be protected with utmost care. Considering *Ama-Nirama* concept of *Netra*, treatment of *Netra Roga* is decided in which *Sthanika Dosh Shodhana* is very essential. For that, *Nasya Karma* is considered as an option among other *Shodhana Karmas*. A proper *Shodhana* at proper stage of a disease can avoid unnecessary surgeries even. Benefits of *Nasya Karma* in *Netra Rogas* are already proved through various previous studies.

This article is an attempt to conceptually analyze the role of *Nasya Karma* in *Netra Rogas* through various literature sources of *Ayurveda* and contemporary science.

Keywords: *Netra Rogas, Nasya Karma, Shodhana Karma*

Introduction

Netra, the most important *Indriya* among all others has to be treated with all the efforts. *Acharya Sushruta* has differentiated the *Netra Rogas* into *Aushadha Sadhya Vyadhis*, *Shastra Sadhya Vyadhis* and *Asadhya Vyadhis* on the basis of *Sadhyasadyata*. In the case of *Aushadha Sadhya Vyadhis*, *Nasya* plays a very important role. Especially while doing *Kriyakalpas*. *Aushadha Sadhya Vyadhis* have to be treated on the basis of *Ama-Nirama Lakshana* of *Netra*. Few treatments like *Seka*, *Aschyotana* can be done in any stage of the *Netra Rogas*. Yet proper removal of *Ama Lakshana* of *Netra* is necessary before *Netra Roga Chikitsa* in order to remove *Srotavarodha* followed by a proper *Shodhana*. Further treatments can be given after the *Shodhana* which would promote effective results.

Nasya, which is a *Shodhana Karma*, can be considered in

this context. *Nasya* is the prime treatment modality for *Urdhwajatru Vikaras*. *Nasa* is said to be the route to *Shiras*.¹ Medicines administered through *Nasa*, spread above the clavicle region and get absorbed to get rid of disease. The root word of the term *Nasya* is "*Nasa*" which conveys the pathway ie, "*Gati*".² Here, *Gati* is towards the internal structures like *Netra*, *Shirah*, *Kantha*, *Mukha*.

Due to the modern life style, diseases of eyes are so common. So, implementing *Nasya Karma* along with *Kriyakalpas* can give promising results for *Netra Rogas*.

Ayurvedic Review

Nasya refers to the instillation of *Aushadhas* processed in *Sneha* into nostrils.³ According to *Kaala*, time of administration is differentiated. *Nasya* is given in *Pratah* (morning) for *Kaphaja Vikaras*, *Madhyahna* (mid noon) for *Pittaja Vikaras* and *Sayahna* (evening) and *Nisha* (night)

for *Vataja Vikaras*. In *Sharat* and *Vasanta Ritu*, it is given in *Poorvahna* (morning) for *Swastha*. In *Shita Ritus* like *Hemanta* and *Shishira* it should be given in *Madhyahna* (mid noon), in *Grishma Ritu*, in *Sayahna* (evening), and in *Varsha Ritu* when there is presence of sun.⁴

Importance of *Nasya* can be seen in various another contexts also. For example, in case of *Tarpana*, *Nasya* should be given to the patient as *Purva Karma*⁵ and *Kayashudhi* should be done prior to *Anjana*⁶ according to *Acharya Sushruta*. *Acharya Dalhana* has given explanation for this by describing *Nasya* as one among the *Shodhana Karmas* for achieving *Kayashudhi*.⁶

Nasya Karma is of various types according to different *Acharyas* (Table 1).

Nasya can be considered in two aspects.

Table 1. Types of Nasya Karma according to different Acharyas

S. No.	Acharyas	Types
1.	<i>Sushruta</i> ³	<i>Nasyam, Shirovirechana, Pratimarsha, Avapeedaka, Pradhamana</i>
2.	<i>Vagbhata</i> ⁷	<i>Virechana, Brimhana, Shamana</i>
3.	<i>Charaka</i> ⁸	<i>Rechana, Tarpana, Shamana</i>

Preventive Aspect

Nasya is even incorporated as a part of *Dinacharya* by *Acharyas* owing to its significance. *Pratimarsha Nasya* can be considered as preventive aspect in order to delay ageing process and thereby maintaining the *Netra Swasthyam*. This type of *Nasya* is the one which can be given on daily basis in less quantity of medicines.

Curative Aspect

Nasya Karma can be seen as one of the important treatment protocols for various *Netra Rogas*. For curing some particular disease, *Nasya* can be given as *Shamana* in the form of *Pratimarsha Nasya* and as *Shodhana* in the form of *Marsha Nasya*.

In classics, various formulations for *Nasya* are specifically indicated for different *Netra Rogas* (Tables 2 and 3).

Materials and Methods

All the relevant Ayurvedic classical text books like *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Charaka Samhita* and various research articles, scientific websites and contemporary science books of the concerned subjects were referred and critically analysed.

Table 2. Various types of Nasya formulations indicated for different Netra Rogas by Acharya Sushruta

Disease	Drugs for Nasya
<i>Vataja Abhishyanda</i> ⁹	<i>Sthiraksheeramadhura Taila</i>
<i>Pittaja Abhishyanda</i> ¹⁰	<i>Ksheera/ Sarpi Nasya</i>
<i>Shleshmaja Abhishyanda, Balasagrathita, Pishtaka, Praklinna Vartma, Kaphaja Akshiroga</i> ¹¹	<i>Navana with Shringavera, Suradaaru, Musta</i>
<i>Raktaja Abhishyanda</i> ¹²	<i>Vairechanika dravya + Sita+ Sarpi</i>
<i>Shushkashipaka</i> ¹³	<i>Jeevaniya Ghrita, Anu Taila</i>
<i>Pakshmakopa</i> ¹⁴	<i>Abhishyandokta Nasya</i>
<i>Pitta Vidagdha Drishti</i> ¹⁵	<i>Triphala Sarpi, Tilvaka Sarpi</i>
<i>Kapha Vidagdha Drishti</i> ¹⁵	<i>Trivrut Sarpi, Tilvaka Sarpi</i>
<i>Sashophaja Akshipaka & Ashophaja Akshipaka</i> ¹⁶	<i>Raktabhishyandavat (Vairechanika Dravya + Sita + Sarpi)</i>
<i>Shleshmaja Timira</i> ¹⁷	<i>Goshakrut kwatha Taila</i>
<i>Pittaja Timira</i> ¹⁷	<i>Kevala Ghrita, Kakolyadi Ghrita, Aja avika Ghrita</i>
<i>Vata Raktaja Timira</i> ¹⁸	<i>Sthiradi Taila, Vidarigandha Taila, Kakolyadi gana sidha Taila, Anutaila</i>
<i>Kevala Vataja Timira</i> ¹⁸	<i>Sahashwagandhadi Bala Shatavari Taila, Trivrut Taila</i>

Table 3. Various types of Nasya formulations indicated for different Netra Rogas by Acharya Vagbhata

Disease	Drugs for Nasya
<i>Krichonmeelana</i> ¹⁹	<i>Purana Sarpi+ Draksha+ Sharkara</i>
<i>Kumbhika vartma</i> ²⁰	<i>Nasya on 4th day after Lekhana</i>
<i>Pakshma shatana</i> ²¹	<i>Drakshadi sidha Ghrita Nasya</i>
<i>Kaphotklishtha vartma</i> ²²	<i>Nasya with Kaphahara Dravya</i>
<i>Pakshmarodha</i> ²³	<i>Teekshna Nasya</i>
<i>Nimna Shukra</i> ²⁴	<i>Nasya</i>
<i>Ajakajata</i> ²⁵	<i>Ksheera Sarpi Nasya after Vyadhana</i>

Result and Discussion

Nasya Karma plays a very important role in *Netra Rogas*. At the same time, understanding the stage of eye disorder plays a pivotal role in deciding the administration of *Nasya* and its specificity. There are no direct contra-indications related with *Netra Roga* for *Nasya*. So considering certain conditions like diabetic retinopathy, hypertensive retinopathy, central serous retinopathy, etc., *Nasya* can be avoided when there is retinal vascular bleeding. *Nasya* if administered during these conditions may lead to more pressure towards these blood vessels which results in further bleeding. *Shamana Nasya* could be a better option for these conditions since it gives *Dosha Shamana*.

A *Vaidya* should be cautious while treating *Netra Rogas*. If the *Nasya Karma* is not done properly it will lead to *Netra Vikaras*. *Atiyoga* leads to *Akshi Toda*, *Timira*²⁶ and *Indriya Vibhrama*²⁷ which includes *Netra Vibhrama*. *Ayoga* leads to *Indriya Rookshata* which includes *Netra Rookshata* due to *Vata Vaigunya*²⁷ and *Akshi Stabdhat*.²⁸ *Shodhana Karmas* are supposed to do only after removing *Ama Lakshana*. Being *Nasya*, a *Shodhana Karma*, *Netra* should be free from *Amavastha* before administering *Nasya*. Or else because of the *Srotavarodha* the medicines will not get absorbed to the target, and may lead to other *Netra Vikaras*. That could be the reason why *Acharya Charaka* has told not to do *Nasya Karma* during *Jwara* and *Shoka* since it leads to *Timira*.²⁹

Virechana Nasya can be done in conditions like *Srotavarodha* and when the *Doshas* are vitiated excessively. *Dhmana Nasya* and *Avapidaka Nasya* can be selected with *Teekshna Gunayukta Dravyas* like *Gudardraka Nasya*. It can be done when the *Shamana Nasya* is insufficient for *Roga Shanti*.

Brimhana Nasya can be done in conditions like *Vata pradhana Netra Rogas* and in congenital anomalies.

Pratimarsha Nasya can be done for almost all the diseases after considering the age of the patient and the time for *Roga Shamana*. It can be performed daily without the supervision of a *Vaidya*.

Along with selecting the type of *Nasya* according to the condition, time of administration of *Nasya* also has important role. It varies for different *Doshaja Vyadhis*.

It can be explained on the basis of *Doshavastha* in different *Kala*. *Nasya* is given in *Pratah* (morning) for *Kaphaja Vikaras* as *Kaphadhikya* is seen in *Pratah*. *Madhyahna* (mid noon) for *Pittaja Vikaras* due to *Pittadhikya* in *Madhyahna* and *Sayahna* (evening) and *Nisha* (night) for *Vataja Vikaras* due to *Vatadhikya*. In *Sharat* and *Vasanta Ritu*, it is given in *Poorvahna* (morning) due to *Kaphadhikya*. In *Shita Ritus* like *Hemanta* and *Shishira* it should be given in *Madhyahna* (mid noon) due to *Pitta Shamana* and *Kapha Chhaya* respectively. In *Grishma Ritu*, in *Sayahna* (evening) due to *Vata Chhaya*

and *Kapha Prashamana* and *Vatadhikya*. In *Varsha Ritu* when there is presence of sun due to *Pitta Chhaya* and *Vata Prakopa*.

Few Medicines which can be used for *Nasya*

Pratimarsha Nasya: *Anu Taila*, *Jeevantyadi Taila*, *Purana Ghrita*

Marsha Nasya: *Shadbindu Taila*, *Triphaladi Ghrita*, *Tungadrumadi Taila*

Drishtiprasadanartha: *Goshakrutadi Taila*, *Purana Ghrita*

Nasya (Shirovirechana) is also a prerequisite to *Rasayana Chikitsa*.³⁰ In some degenerative eye diseases like Cataract, refractive errors, ARMD, Retinopathy etc, *Nasya* is to be performed in order to eliminate vitiated *Doshas* and thereby achieve better absorption of *Rasayana Dravyas*.

Various previous studies also show the benefits of *Nasya Karma* in *Netra Rogas*. Role of *Abhijit Taila Nasya* and *Murchita Tila Taila Nasya* in Simple Myopia (*Prathama Patalagata Timira*) is already proved in which *Abhijit Taila Nasya* provided statistically better effect than *Murchita Tila Taila Nasya* in all the signs and symptoms.³¹

Another case study shows the benefit of *Anu Taila Nasya* in *Shushkakshipaka* (Dry Eye Syndrome) in which 7 days of *Marsha Nasya* showed marked relief in the symptoms of *Shushkakshipaka*.³²

Mode of Action of *Nasya*

From the explanations given by different *Acharyas* about the mode of action of *Nasya*, certain assumptions can be made.

Nasa is the only passage to *Shirah*. So, the medicine taken through *Nasa* can easily move to *Shirah* and get absorbed.

Nasa being the passage to *Shirah*, the drug taken through nostrils reaches *Shringataka*, a *Siramarma* through *Nasa Srota* and enters the *Murdha* (Brain), through *Netra* (Eyes), *Shrotra* (Ears), *Kantha* (Throat) and puts out the morbid *Doshas* from *Urdhwajatru* and throws them out from *Uttamanga*.³³

Drugs, in the form of *Nasya* has probable mode of entry in circulation, hence it can play a vital role in the improvement of eye health. Of course, the position of the head during *Nasya Karma* also helps the medicines to enter easily to the pathway.³⁴ Probable mode of entry to the circulation might be as follows.

- By general blood circulation, after it is absorbed through mucous membrane.
- Direct pooling into venous sinuses of brain via, inferior ophthalmic veins.
- Absorption directly into the cerebrospinal fluid. As this medicine is absorbed in ophthalmic vessels it has its nourishing role in extra ocular muscles and eye

proper. Along with this antioxidant property have role in maintaining tissue built.³⁴

Conclusion

- *Shodhana Karmas* are always very effective before any therapy. *Nasya* being one among them is the best for *Urdhwajatru Vikaras* which includes *Netra Vikaras*.
- Comparing with other *Shodhana Karmas*, *Nasya* is less expensive and less complicated therapy. Since *Nasya* can give a *Sthanika Shodhana* of *Shirah* and *Netra* being situated in *Shirah*, it can act faster in *Netra* and can be more effective.
- Proper administration of *Nasya* in the early stages of *Netra Rogas* can even avoid unwanted surgeries even.
- Thus it promises a faster and effective therapy for the prevention and cure of *Netra Rogas* which have been already proven through various researches.
- ऊर्ध्वजत्रुविकारेषु विशेषान्नस्यमिष्यते ।¹ as rightly quoted by *Acharya Vagbhata*.

Scope for Further Study

Even though various studies have undergone on *Nasya Karma*, options for further studies are still open. Few of them are:

- Clinical study on critical analysis and role of *Poorva Karma* and *Pashchat Karma* in *Nasya*.
- Literary work on different types of *Nasya Karma* and their specific mode of action.

Conflicts of Interest: None

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