

The Significance of Ideal Nidra in Lifestyle Disorder- The Ayurvedic Concept



Medical Science

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ABSTRACT

The lifestyle changes in the recent times have led to a large amount of disorders like hypertension, obesity, diabetes mellitus and others and lack of proper sleep or nidra plays an important role in all of them. Here we explain the ancient wisdom of Ayurveda about the importance of idea Nidra or sleep and its role in various lifestyle disorders.

Background:

Due to the rapid changes in the lifestyle of people in recent years many new disorders have come up, collectively called as lifestyle disorders. Hypertension is a well-known risk factor of the cardiovascular system [1] that increases the risk of cardiovascular disease and places serious burdens on society and the economy [2]. In terms of lifestyle, recent epidemiological studies suggest a minimum sleep duration to be obtained to maintain health. Research argues that short sleep duration is related to the prevalence of hypertension [3,4,5] Sleep deprivation significantly increases blood pressure in both control and hypertension groups [6,7]. Similarly, research suggests that an appropriate sleep duration can help to lower the prevalences of hypertension, cardiovascular-related mortality, obesity, and metabolic syndrome [8,9,10] If sleep duration is too short or too long, cardiovascular disease-related mortality increases [11]. Obtaining the proper amount of sleep may help prevent or treat hypertension. Ayurveda also describes the importance of sleep or nidra in lifestyle disorders.

Ayurveda, the first systematic science ever evolved throughout the globe emphasizes on physical and mental fitness with prevention and preservation of health in a comprehensive manner. This ancient science developed from extra-sensory logic of our great seers, is crowned with undoubted knowledge, which is unchallenged till date.

“Prevention is better than cure” is the basic concept of Ayurveda. Curing a diseased person and redefining his healthy status, is the primary goal of a physician. However, Ayurveda generally aims at preventing the person from getting diseased by maintaining the balanced condition of *Tridoshaj*, viz ; *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* in his body. This idea of prevention is explained for the first time in ayurveda and is the basic concept for a healthy society. [12]

Ayurveda suggests balance in the functions of *Doshas*, *Dhatu* and *Mala* as well as *Agni* and *Ojas*, throughout a day and accordingly the daily routine should be planned. Each and every individual for maintaining healthy conditions of body and mind, should follow this concept called “*Dincharya*”.[13]

“Early to bed and early to arise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise. This proverb has a great significance. Ayurveda has recommended auspicious time *Brahma-muhurta*. *Brahma-muhurta* is auspicious time for getting up from bed. *Brahma-muhurta-vaishishtyam* is the best time for meditation.[14,15]

Ayurveda believes in saying it. It focus on daily regimen that can avoid lifestyle disorder diseases, but in todays lifestyle changing day by day and in changed lifestyle it's very difficult to follow daily regimen.

Ritucharya is a well known fact that different atmospheric changes in the atmosphere affect all living things is detrimental. In order to achieve maximum benefits from the good qualities of the atmosphere and protection from the bad effects, Ayurveda has prescribed certain rules, in regard to diet and sleep (*Nidra*), called seasonal regimen or *Richaryacharya*.

Trayopstambha is the key to health and disease, does not lie in the application of drugs or chemicals or special therapies but in the prime factors on which our life and vitality is based. The three most important ones in Ayurveda are food, sleep and sexual energy. (*Ahar, Nidra and Brahmacharya*).

Importance of Three Pillars: The life will be happy with increasing body strength, colour, complexion and growth. In Ayurveda *Dincharya* is mentioned by *Acharyas*. According to ayurveda, one should wake up at “*Brahmya muhurta*” Sleep is an important phenomenon in our life as a part of normal physiology to provide rest and relaxation to the body, mind and senses which gets tired and exhausted because of daily schedule, hence in *Charak samhita* it is included *Trayopstambh* to give prime importance to three pillars of life which gives strength, complexion and compactness to the individual body. *Susrutacharya* said that *nidra* is a state of human body when sense organ disconnect from their grasping of their objects. According to *Vagbhat nidra* is caused by increased in *Tamma gunna* and also influenced by *Tamma gunna* as we see that *Tamma gunna* increases at night time, hence *nidra* will occurs at night time. According to *Charak samhita nidra* which taken properly in terms of quality and quantity gives *Sukh*, *Pushty*, *Balata*, *Gyana* and *Jivitam*. On the other hand abnormal sleep in terms of quality and quantity inadequate, excessive or irregular will exert exactly opposite effects that are *Dukkh*, *Karshyam*, *Abalam*, *Agyanam*, *Ajivitam*. [15,16]

Stressful life is also a cause to push youngsters to get addicted to alcohol, cigarette smoking, drug abuse etc. Because of this stress induced diseases like hypertension, diabetes also increases. Due to these diseases lifespan of human being is also decreasing day by day.

Ayurvedic Concept:

Importance of Nidra: *Nidra* or sleep is the secondary important pillar of life. It is a physiological state of rest for the body, mind, sense and motor organs. When the mind is exhausted and exhausted sense organs detract from their objects, the man sleeps. A person spends 1/3rd of his life in sleep. So, it is important to see that one gets a sound sleep at night.

According to *Samhitas Kapha Pradhan Prakruti* person will have more *Nidra*; In *vatapradhanprakruti* person will have less *nidra* & *nidra* will *madhyam* in *pitta pradhanprakriti*.

Natural Sleep in Adults: One feels sleepy during the night because of the calm and quiet environment conditions and increase of Tamma gunna. During day bright light and various noises stimulating effects and keeps a person awake and alert similarly *Sattava* quality predominates and hence the person remains active.

1. Qualities of adequate sleep (*Samyak Nidra*): Due to proper and adequate sleep body tissues and *doshas* remain in balanced state of health both physically and mentally. *Charak* states that, happiness and sorrow, obesity and emaciation, strength and weakness, virility and impotence, knowledge and ignorance, life and death are all depends on adequate and inadequate sleep.

2. *Atinidra*: Oversleep leads to obesity and diseases due to increased *kaphadosha* such as DM.

3. *Anidra*: Inadequate sleep leads to increase *vatadosha* wasting of tissue, emaciation, causes of insomnia.

Effects of Insomnia:

1. Body ache
2. Indigestion
3. Drowsiness
4. Giddiness

Improper sleep causes mental as well as diseases like diabetes mellitus, hypertension, obesity, congenital heart diseases. Due to stressful lifestyle and improper sleep the risk of hypertension had increase.

Obesity: Repeated disruption of Circadian System, pineal hormone Melatonin suppression by exposure to light tonight. Sleep deprivation causes impairment of the immune system plus metabolic changes favoring obesity.

Diabetes mellitus: Improper sleep causes Diabetes mellitus.

CHD: Stressful lifestyle causes coronary heart diseases.

Due to smoking, alcoholism, psychological disturbances more people get addicted and various causes of death due to cancer etc. Today alcoholism is main addiction in India.

Modern Concept:

Ancient lifestyle was little bit different than today. During ancient time person where less occupied and there was less strain, but in today's hectic and materialistic culture. Rarely person gets the time to think of his own health or fitness. Many people think that daily lifestyle is not possible to follow.[17]

Lifestyle of Indian villagers is more natural than people living in urban area. They sleep early and get up in early morning, but in urban life is very artificial. Due to person activities, occupations and recreations people go to bed very late and also get up very late after sunrise. Night duty causes disturbance in sleep. People who work in night becomes more prone to symptoms of loss of sleep, hence ayurveda prescribes not to work in night and not to sleep in day time.

Human body has internal biological clock that regulates our twenty four hours sleep wake up cycles also known as Circadian rhythm. Light is the primary source that influences circadian rhythm, when the sun comes up in the morning, the brain tells the body to wake up. At night when there is less light our brain triggers to release Melatonin hormone that makes sleepy. When circadian rhythm disrupted, person may feels disoriented and

sleepy and cause many disorders like insomnia. The etiological factors of insomnia provided in ayurveda include dietary consumption and stress. [18]

During sleep sympathetic activity decreases; while parasympathetic activities sometimes increases therefore the blood pressure falls, pulse rate decreases, BMR falls by 10% to 20%, muscle tone decreases, skin vessels dilates and activity of gastro-intestinal tract sometime increases. Disorders are causing due to improper sleep are *Agnimandhya*, *Ajirna*, *Amlapitta*, headache, constipation. It also affects on nervous system causing mental disorders like lack of concentration, insomnia, inability to concentrate, poor judgement, memory problem, mood disturbances, anxiety, depression.

Conclusion: To combat the lifestyle disorders and lead a healthy life, ideal *Nidra* plays important role.

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