

REVIEW ARTICLE

A Critical Review of *Nidra* and *Nidranasha* – Ayurveda Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a complete science of life that emphasizes physical and mental wellness and it also includes preventive strategies. *Ayurveda* incorporates several principles to sustain health and cure disease. The body of a human being is supported by three pillars that are *Ahara*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya*; these three elements are regarded as the *Trayopastambha* of life. *Nidra* is considered as the second pillar of life next to *Ahara*. If any of these three pillars is disturbed from its usual healthy state, it produces a number of disorders in the human body. *Nidranasha* is one among them. Nowadays, *Nidranasha* is a major lifestyle disorder, since people are not following the codes and conducts of life, such as *Dinacharya* and *Ritucharya*, and as a consequence, they are suffering from a variety of issues and psychological disorders. In today's world, numerous sleep disorders are becoming more common as a result of working at night, transmeridian travel, exposure to various electronic devices, and so on. In contrast with modern science, Ayurveda clearly explains *Nidra* and *Nidranasha*, and different treatment principles are used to deal with the *Nidranasha* condition. Because there is no fruitful management in modern science drugs have also created several complications. This article provides a thorough review of the causes, consequences, and management of *Nidranasha* from an *Ayurvedic* perspective. In this study, an attempt of critical review on *Nidra* and *Nidranasha* is done.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is not only the system of medicine but also the way of life. It comprises physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. *Nidra* is one of the *Trayopastambha*^[1] in *Ayurvedic* literature and is necessary for the physical and mental well-being of the body. Sleep, according to *Ayurveda*, is one of the most essential foundations of health connected with happiness and well health and is the result of a relax physical and mental state. It is one of the 13 *Adharaneeya vegas*.^[2] Like food, water, and air, sleep is the vital for all living beings on the earth, including plants. It is possible to prepare for new tasks by getting enough sleep. A good night's sleep regenerates the mind and body's ability to embrace new challenges, sustain health, and emotional well-being. According to *Acharya Charak*, when the *mana* along with the *indriyas* is exhausted and they detach themselves from their objects, then a person falls a sleep.^[3]

Nidranasha is the difficulty in initiating or maintaining sound sleep, or waking up early with a fatigued feeling. The disturbance in *Nidra*

might have been caused by a faulty lifestyle, mental stress, and change in dietary habits. In the context of *Vataja Nanatmaja Vyadhi*, *Nidranasha* is regarded as a separate disease entity and also considered as a symptom of a variety of physical and psychological problems.

Acharya Charak classified *Nidra* as a fundamental life tripod, encompassing both advantages and disadvantages, classification, and management. According to *Charak Samhita*, the importance of *Nidra*^[4] has been mentioned as *Sukhakara* (Happiness), *Pushtikar* (Nourishment), *Balyakara* (Strength), *Vrishya* (Aphrodisiac), *Jnanakara* (Learning), and *Jeevanakara* (Life Providing).

1.1. Aim and Objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study about *Nidra* as one of the *Trayopastambha*.
2. To review on *Nidranasha* available in *Ayurvedic* texts.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The article content is compiled from ancient books/*Teeka* such as *Charak Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Ashtanga Sangraha*, and various articles, web, authentic books, inquire about paperwork, and courses.

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2.1. About *Nidra*

It is only used in the feminine gender. Sleep is a state in which a person is unconscious. *Nidra* is regarded as an important function of living beings in *Upanishad* and *Ayurvedic* literature.

Acharya Charak referred to sleep as *Bhutadhatri*, which comes naturally at night and nourishes all living beings.^[5]

It was classified as a *Swabhavika roga* by *Acharya Sushruta*.^[6]

According to *Acharya Charak*, like *Ahara*, enough sleep is essential for physical maintenance.^[7]

On a metaphorical language, *Acharya Sushruta* named *Nidra* of “*Vaishnavimaya*” a physiological process that supplies nutrition to the living organism and maintains health.^[8]

Sleep was emerged from *Tamas* at the beginning of this existence; it is another aspect of *Tamas* that manifests when *Tamas* is prominent in general at night.^[9]

Yogaratanakar has mentioned four natural instincts or basic human requirements. These are the desires for food, drink, sleep, and have sexual pleasure.^[10]

According to *Sharangadhara*, *Nidra* is a condition characterized by the predominance of *Kapha* and *Tamas*.^[11]

2.2. Definition of *Nidra*

- *Acharya Charak* stated that when the mind, including *Jnanendriya* and *Karmendriya*, gets fatigued and they dissociate themselves from their objects and then an individual falls asleep.^[3]
- *Acharya Sushruta* narrates that once the *Sanjavaha Srotas* are filled with *Kapha* and *Indriyas* are separated from their respective objects of perception, the person goes asleep.^[8]
- According to *Astanga Sangraha*, *Avarana* of the *Manovaha Srotas* by *shlesmas* and *Shrama* of both sorts of *Indriyas* occur, which dissociates them from their respective senses, and then *Nidra* occurs.^[12]
- According to *Astanga Hridaya*, when the sensation transmitting pathways of the body is blocked or filled up by *Shleshma*, and if this *Shleshma* is over saturated with the *Tamasika* quality, then the living beings fall sleep.
- According to *Mandukya Upanishad*, *Nidra* is a state in which “*Atma*” has no dreams or desires, and this state is referred to as “*susupti*.”^[13]
- *Maharshi Patanjali* affirmed that sleep is the mental operation having the perception of absence for its grasp. Sleep is the non-deliberate absence of thought, waves, or knowledge.^[14]

2.3. Synonyms of *Nidra*

In *Amarkosha*, four synonyms have been mentioned: (1) *Shayanam*, (2) *Svapah*, (3) *Svapnah*, and (4) *Samvesh*

Similarly, three synonyms are present in *Vaidyaka Shabda Sindhu*: (1) *Sambhashah*, (2) *Suppti*, and (3) *Svapnam*

Bhutadhatri is used as a synonym by *Acharya Charak*, while *Vaishnavi Maya* is used in *Sushruta Samhita*.

2.4. Types of *Nidra*

- According to the causes, *Acharya Charak* classed *Nidra* as follows^[15]

- *Tamobhava* – caused by *tama guna*
- *Shleshmasamudbhava* – a condition caused by vitiated *kapha*.
- *Manahsharirshramasaambhava* – a mental and bodily exhaustion.
- *Agantuki* – indicative of a poor prognosis and impending death.
- *Vyadhyanuvaritini* – a complication of other diseases such as *Sannipataja jwara*, etc.
- *Ratri swabhavaprabhava* – caused by the nature of the night.
- According to *Acharya Sushruta*^[8]
 - *Tamasi* – Dominated by *tamoguna*, then sleep known as *Tamasi*, from which the person cannot be woken; this occurs at the time of death.
 - *Svabhavika/Vaishnavi* – Sleep happens naturally in people with a predominance of *Tamo guna* throughout the day and at night. In those with *Raja Guna* dominance, it can happen at any time. It happens at midnight among those with a *Satva Guna* preponderance.
 - *Vaikariki* – Whenever any disturbance occurs in mind and body, then *Nidra* does not arise. If *Nidra* is arise, it is termed as *Vaikariki Nidra*.
- *Acharya Vagbhat* has classified in seven types as following manner^[16]
 - *Kalawabhawaja* – it is produced at the usual time, that is, at night
 - *Amayaja* – it is formed as a result of disease
 - By exhaustion of *mana* – when *mana* becomes depleted
 - By fatigue of *sharira* – when body is exhausted
 - *Shleshmaprabhavaj* – it is formed due to *kapha* dominance.
 - *Agantuka* – this type of *Nidra* is caused by external factors such as trauma etc.
 - *Tamobhava* – this type of *Nidra* is caused by *Tamoguna* predominance.

2.5. Physiology of *Nidra*

Sleep occurs when *Mana* is exhausted. This phenomenon can be interpreted in this way. Howell says that sleep is caused by cerebral ischemia. The cerebral cortex is the location of higher centers such as the pre- and post-central gyres, the association region, and so on, all of which are associated with the mental functions outlined in *Ayurveda*. As a result of the decrease in cerebral blood supply, *Mana* turns into *Klanta*, resulting in sleep (*Nidra*). In addition, *Indriyas* (*Jnanendriya* and *Karmendriya*) become inactive during sleep due to detachment from their sense organs.

2.6. Importance of *Nidra*

The three components, *Ahara*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya*, have been compared to the three legs of subsupport and are known as the three *Upastambha* in *Ayurvedic* literature. The inclusion of *Nidra* in *Trayopastambha* attests to its significance.

- Getting enough sleep at the right time brings happiness, nourishment, strength, virility, knowledge, and longevity.^[17]
- Just as real knowledge brings about happiness and longevity in humans.^[18]
- A person who gets adequate sleep at the right times will not become ill, their mental state will be calm, they will acquire strength, have a good complexion, good virility, an appealing figure, and they will not be too lean or obese, and they will live up to 100 years.^[19]

- d. *Akala Nidra* and *Atinidra* will destroy one's happiness and life in the same way that *Kalaratri* (Night of Destruction) did.^[20]
- e. *Yuktipurvaka Nidra* is good in preserving *Swasthya* and *Sukha* in the same manner as proper *Ahara* is beneficial for *Shareera Dharana*. *Sthaulya* and *Karshya*, are particularly, depend on *Ahara* and *Nidra*.^[7]
- f. According to *Acharya Kashyap*, one of the characteristics of good health is getting adequate sleep at the proper time.^[21]
- g. According to *Vaidyakiys Subhasitam*, if the *Rogi* is receiving proper *Nidra*, it signifies that half of the *Roga* has been treated, and when the *Kshudha* is proper, that is, *Agni* is in a normal state, it shows that the *Roga* has been totally eradicated.^[22]

3. CONCEPT OF NIDRANASHA

The word *Nidranasha* is a combination of two words, that is, *Nidra* and *Nasha*. Based on the *Nirukti*, the term *Nidranasha* can be generally defined as a lack of sleep or a disturbance in both the quantity and quality of sleep.

Acharaya Charak classified *Aswapna* as one of the "80" varieties of *vataja nanatmaja vikara*.^[23]

Ayurveda does not explain *Nidranasha* as a distinct disease.

Inadequate *Nidra* (*Nidranasha*) intake causes a variety of issues including *Dukha*, *Karshya*, *Abala*, *Klibata*, and *Ajnana*, as well as death.^[4]

3.1. Synonyms of *Nidranasha*

According to different *Acharyas*, the following are synonyms for *Nidranasha*: (1) *Anidra*, (2) *Alphanidra*, (3). *Asvapna*, (4) *Jagarana*, (5) *Nidranasha*, and (6) *Nidrabhranasha*

3.2. *Nidanas* of *Nidranasha*

There is no specific reference regarding causative factor of *Nidranasha*. The *Acharyas* detailed the *Chikitsa* procedure of *Atinidra* in *Charak Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*, and *Ashtanga Sangraha* and in this context, they pointed out that if any *Atiyoga* occurs to these *Chikitsa* procedures, it may lead to *Nidranasha* state. As a result, the *Atiyoga* of various *Chikitsa* strategies could be considered as causative factor for *Nidranasha*.

By considering the views of *Acharya Charak*^[24] – *Atiyoga* of *Vamana*, *Atiyoga* of *Virechana*, *Atiyoga* of *Nasya karma*, *Atiyoga* of *Rakta mokshana*, *Atiyoga* of *Dhoomapana*, *Ati Chinta*, *Ati Krodha*, *Ati Bhaya*, *Ati Vyayama*, and *Ati Upavasa* are the *Nidanas* of *Nidranasha*.

According to *Ashtanga Sangraha*, some other *Nidanas* that may produce *Nidranasha* are *Lobha* (Grief), *Harsha* (Happiness), *Vyatha* (Sorrow), *Ati Maithuna* (Excessive Intercourse), *Ati Kshudha* (Excessive Hunger), *Rukshanna Sevana* (Intake of Dry Food), and *Anjana* (Collyrium).

Manasika Dosha Raja may be the primary cause of *Nidranasha*. All of these *Nidana* factors are classified under the following headings –

Table 1 *Roopa* of *Nidranasha*

1. *Aharaja Nidana* – *Rookshanna sevana*,
2. *Viharaja Nidana* – *Vyayama and Upavasa*,
3. *Manasika Nidana* – *Bhaya, Chinta, and Krodha*.

3.3. *Poorvarupa* of *Nidranasha*

Poorvarupa of *Nidranasha* is not mentioned in any *Ayurvedic* classic. As *Acharya Charaka* included the *Nidranasha* under *80 Nanatmaja*

Vata Vikaras, he stated that *Avyakta lakshana* are the *poorvarupa* of *vataavyadhi*.

3.4. *Roopa*

Jrumbha, *Angamarda*, *Tandra*, *Shiroroga*, *Shirogurava*, *Akshigaurava*, *Jadya*, *Glani*, *Bhrama*, *Apakti*, *Vataroga* etc.

3.5. *Samprapti*

It is clear that the *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Raja*, *Hridaya*, and *Sanjnavaha Srotas* play a key role in *Nidranasha's Samprapti*. As a result of the deterioration of these elements, *Nidranasha* develops.

3.6. *Upadrava*

According to *Ashtanga Sangraha*, increased *Vayu* as a result of *Nidranasha* creates *Kaphakshaya*, and this decreased and dry *Kapha* adheres to the walls of *Dhamanis* and causes *Srotarodha*. This leads to exhaustion that the patient's eyelids remain open and watery secretions from the eyes. This hazardous tiredness is *Sadhya* up to 3 days and later develops into *Asadhya*.

3.7. *Chikitsa* of *Nidranasha*^[29,30]

In the treatment of *Nidranasha*, one should rely on measures with *Vatashamaka*, *Vedanashamaka*, and *Roganivaraka* effects, as well as pacifying effects on mental functions. The methods of treatment described for *Nidranasha* in *Ayurvedic Samhitas* are generally the same.

Management modalities can be categorized as follows, according to many classics:

- *Bahya Upachara*
- *Manasika Upachara*
- *Ahara Upachara*
- *Any Upachara*

3.7.1. *Bahya Upachara for Nidranasha*

Abhyanga, *Utsadana*, *Samvahana*, *Akshi-tarpana*, *Shiro-Lepa*, *Karna-Purana*, *Shiro-Basti*, *Shiro-Dhana*, and *Moordhni Taila* are described as *bahya upachara*.

3.7.2. *Manasika Upachara for Nidranasha*

Acharya Charak mentioned *Manonukula vishaya grahana*, *Manonukula Shabda grahana*, and *Manonukula gandha grahana*, as *Manasika upacharas*.

3.7.3. *Ahara Upachara for Nidranasha*

Acharya Charaka mentioned *Gramya mamsa rasa*, *Anoopa mamsa rasa*, *Jaleeya mamsa rasa*, *Mahisha ksheera*, and *Piyusha* as *aahara upacharas*.

3.7.4. *Any Upachara for Nidranasha*

- Maintain a consistent routine for sleep.
- Avoid smoking, tea, coffee, and alcohol before going to bed.
- Do not do any work or studying till late at night.
- Before going to bed, any thoughts and tensions should be released.
- Listening to peaceful music or favorite tunes might also help you sleep.
- 5–10 min of meditation before going to bed.
- Offering a prayer before going to bed.
- Washing hands, feet, and face before going to bed.
- Stay away from day sleep.

- Proper stool and urine evacuation.
- Keep protected from mosquito bites.
- Ensuring appropriate privacy and freedom from disturbances.

4. DISCUSSION

About 30% of the population suffers from insomnia, which is very common. A wide range of everyday functions, including those in the emotional, social, and physical spheres, is hampered by insomnia, which also affects cognitive and physical functioning. People who experience frequent sleep disturbances are more likely to have accidents, experience greater rates of absence from work, perform worse on the job, have lower quality of life, and use more medical services compared to people who sleep well. Age, gender, and concomitant medical and psychological problems are a few risk variables linked to an increased prevalence of chronic insomnia. About 40% of persons who suffer from insomnia also have a diagnosable mental illness, most commonly depression. According to Ayurveda, one of the triads for sustaining life is sleep, or *nidra*. The classics use the term “*Nidranasa*” to explain how the same might change, how etiopathogenesis works, and how to regulate it. *Nidra*, in conjunction with *Ahara* and *Brahmacharya*, provides important physiological implications and promotes the body and mind in remaining healthy. According to *Ayurveda*, *Nidra* is an essential pillar of life that is vital to maintaining regular physiological functions. The physical and mental status merely depends on *Nidra*; it additionally promotes mental as well as physical relaxation. *Nidra* also boosts immunity, allowing it to resist the pathological initiation of common diseases, and protects against early aging symptoms. Proper sleep nourishes the body, decreases stress and anxiety, hence preventing mental illness. A person who gets enough sleep has a spiritual belief and is in touch with nature. It also promotes in the attainment of longevity, youthfulness, luster, and complexion. Nowadays, people are not getting enough sleep due of their hectic schedules and work pressure. As a result, sleep hours have turned into work hours. Initially, a lack of sleep only manifests physical symptoms; however, as this progresses, it affects the mental state and leads to a variety of health problems as well as disturbances in social life. *Nidranasha* is the state of insufficient sleep or insomnia. The *Nidranasha* causes ailments which include digestive problems, depression, mental illness, and fatigue etc. The implementation of a regular daily and dietary regimen, as well as purifying methods and natural medicines, helps in the relief of *Nidranasha* symptoms.

5. CONCLUSION

As one of the sub-pillars of our body, *Nidra* plays a significant role in our life; therefore, to maintain proper health physically, mentally, and socially, the regimen of *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, and *Shadvritta* should be followed along with an adequate amount of *Nidra* to achieve a balanced state. The primary objective of this article is to overview and enlighten the main study on *Nidra*, as presented in different *Samhitas*. The overview of *Nidranasha* with an attempt to overlook to its all aspect is done. *Nidra* and *Nidranasha* are highly significant issues to be studied in today’s era because many sufferers complain about it and fail to get relief due to a lack of extensive study and therapy. As *Acharyas* had already explained the causes, symptoms, and medication in our *Samhitas*, an attempt is done here to lighten up the study on *Nidra* and *Nidranasha*.

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11. DATA AVAILABILITY

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Table 1: Roopa of nidra according to different Acharya

<i>Roopa</i>	<i>Charak Samhita</i> ^[25]	<i>Sushruta Samhita</i> ^[26]	<i>Ashtang Hrudaya</i> ^[27]	<i>Ashtang Sangrah</i> ^[28]
<i>Jrumbha</i>	+	+	+	+
<i>Angamarda</i>	+	+	+	+
<i>Tandra</i>	+	+	+	+
<i>Shiiroroga</i>	+	-	+	-
<i>Shiirogaurava</i>	-	+	+	+
<i>Akshigaurava</i>	+	+	-	-
<i>Jadya</i>	-	-	+	+
<i>Glani</i>	-	-	+	+
<i>Bhrama</i>	-	-	+	+
<i>Apakti</i>	-	-	+	+
<i>Vataroga</i>	-	-	+	+