

Concept of Nasya Karma - A Visha Upakrama

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Abstract: Poisoning is a condition that requires an emergency line of management. Nasya Karma is nasal medication is one among the twenty four treatment modalities adopted by acharya Charaka. Nose is considered as an opening to head. So, Nasya karma produce its effect not only in urdhwajatrugarogabut also cures the ailments of brain. This article is to focus attention on the significance of Nasya karma, its mode of action and importance of Nasya karma in Visha Chikitsa.

Keywords: Nasya, Visha Chikitsa, Drug delivery, Brain

1. Introduction

Ayurveda has a unique approach to the treatment of poisoning. Twenty four treatment modality which is called Chathurvimshathiupakrama is a distinctive treatment modality of Visha Chikitsa. Nasya karma is one among them and different forms of nasya like Avapeedana, Pradhmana, Navana and teekshnanasya are useful in the treatment of Visha. Nasya is a special and important therapy in which medicine is administered through nose (Naasa) either in the form of powder, liquid, oil or smoke. That is the reason why it is called Nasya. Nasya Karma is an important therapy among Panchakarma for the management of diseases of Shalaky Tantra¹. Shalaky Tantra is a special branch of Ayurveda which deals with all diseases of head like ear, eyes, mouth, nose, throat etc and its treatment². There are a lot of Varieties of Nasya, among these Naavana, Dmapana or pradhmananasya, Avapeedanasya are indicated in Visha Chikitsa. Dmapana or Pradhmananasya is a purificatory nasya in which medicated powder is blown into the nostril with the help of a tube or by inhaling medicated powder. Avapeedanasya is a nasya in which drops are extracted from medicated paste and this is instilled into the nose. This avapeedanasya is of two types Sanjaprabdhaka and sthambaka. Sanjaprabdhaka is that which regains the consciousness and this is indicated in Visha³.

If the patient suffers from obstruction in the nose, eyes, ears, tongue and throat due to poisoning, the Nasya karma should be done with Varthaka, bijapura, jyothishmati etc⁴. If the visha has reached the head, then Nasya should be done with bandhujiva, bharangi and black variety of tulasi⁵. When a poisoned person is suffering from headache, heaviness of head, stiffness of neck, jaw etc, then Nasya should be done⁶. If the patient appears apparently dead by hanging, poisoning or drowning in water then for regaining the life of a patient (Mritasanjeevana) Nasya is done⁷. When the channels of circulation of kapha gets vitiated by poison, then this causes obstruction in the channel because of which the movement of vayu gets obstructed. As a result of this, the patient breathes as if he is taking his last breath. In this condition, pradhmananasya is done⁸. Vega is a phenomenon by which Visha moves from one dhathu to another dhathu penetrating the kala⁹. In the fifth samanya Vishavega, Nasya is indicated with Kaakanda and Shirisha¹⁰. In Sthavaravisha (inanimate poison), nasya is indicated in third Visha vega¹¹ and Avapeedanasya is indicated in the seventh Vishavega¹². In the third vishavega of Darveekara sarpa¹³ and Rajila

sarpa¹⁴, Nasya is indicated. In the third Vishavega of Mandali, Avapeedanasya is done¹⁵. According to acharya Vagbhata, Nasya is indicated in third samanya Vishavega¹⁵ and Avapeedana nasya¹⁷ is indicated in seventh samanya Vishavega. Naavananasya is indicated in third Vishavega of Darveekara¹⁸ and Rajila¹⁹. In the seventh Vishavega of Darveekara²⁰ and Mandali²¹, Teekshnanasya is indicated with drugs like trikatu. In the sixth Vishavega of Rajilaalso, Teekshnanasya is indicated²²

Sanjasthapanai regaining the consciousness of a poisoned patient, pradhmananasya is done²³. In rat poisoning, Nasya is done with fruit of shirisha²⁴. Nasya is one among the tenfold treatment modalities of spider poisoning²⁵. Paramo Agada²⁶, Mahasugandhi Agada²⁷, Vilwadi gulika²⁸, Mritasanjeevana Agada², Kshara Agada³⁰ are some of the Agada's used for the purpose of Nasya karma.

Nose is the opening of shiras according to acharya Charaka. The drug administered through nose reaches to the brain and eliminate the morbid doshas that produce diseases. According to acharya vagbhata, the nose is the opening of head and the medicine administered through the nostrils reaches shringataka by nasasrota and spreads moordha (brain) taking route of eye, ear, throat and opening of vessels and scrapes out all morbid doshas in supraclavicular region and extracts it out through uttamanga³¹.

The human brain is the most complex and delicate organ, highly protected by various physiological shields primarily the blood brain barrier (BBB) which upholds the homeostasis of the brain and restricts the entry of the most of the foreign components. The intranasal route offers an alternate approach to drug delivery to the brain without the interference of BBB. The upper part of the nasal cavity knows as olfactory region remains directly connected to the brain i.e. frontal cortex especially olfactory bulb via olfactory nerves. Along with this the middle and largest region of the nasal cavity (the respiratory region) remain supplied with the trigeminal sensory neurons and blood vessels. When the drug is administered in to the nasal cavity, it has to pass the mucociliary clearance in the vestibular region. Further, the drug molecule reaches to the internal portion of the nasal cavity where it comes in contact with the blood vessels and neuronal network, from the blood vessels it enters in to the systemic circulation and a minor portion of drug enters in to the brain via BBB. While another route of brain drug delivery is the direct neuronal pathway, in which the drug follows intracellular and extracellular transport

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mechanism to enter in to the different regions of a brain via olfactory and trigeminal sensory neuron. The drug transport mechanism depends on various factors such as nature of the drug, type of delivery system, dose form, device used for intranasal application etc. Mostly a suitable carrier system including polymeric nano particle, liposomes, lipid nano particle, micro emulsions, hydrogel etc are used. This carrier system enhance the nasomucosal permeability of the drug, protect the drug from enzymatic degradation in nasal cavity, reduce the nasomucosal clearance, improves the drug retention time, increases the bio availability in the brain. Sometimes, a nasal solution or powder or muco adhesive formulation seems effective nose to brain drug delivery³².

Nasya is used to cure the local symptoms produced by *Visha* like headache, heaviness of head etc, and when it is used to regain the consciousness of a patient or to regain the life of a patient who is apparently dead due to *visha*, it is a systemic action. In many contexts, *nasya* is mentioned which should be understood as '*Naavananasya*' which is the most important *Nasya*. The proper drug transportation needs many factors like nature of drug; *teekshmanasya* mentioned by acharya is with this intention. The '*Susookshmapishtatva*' of *Bilwadigulika* or *Nasya* in oil form which is mentioned in *Naavananasya* is definitely for enabling a suitable carrier system. The *pradhama* or *Dhmapana Nasya* is to enhance the nose to brain drug delivery. The full potential of *Nasya* karma on brain has not yet been investigated. Further research on this will prove *Nasya* karma as a next generation therapy for poisoning.

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