



CASE REPORT

CLASSICAL AYURVEDIC MANAGEMENT OF INSOMNIA (ANIDRA) – A CASE STUDY

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Summary:

Introduction: Insomnia is the most common sleep problem worldwide. It can lead to many psychosomatic manifestations like fatigue, high blood pressure, lack of concentration and ultimately reduce the productivity and badly hampers the quality of life. According to *Ayurveda*, Lack of *Nidra* causes many sign and symptoms like *Dukha*, *Karshyata*, *Balahani*, *Agnyanata* even *Mrityu*. Mainly *Vata Vaigunyata* is responsible for *Anidra*. *Ayurveda* advocates some fruitful panchakarma therapies like *Nasya*, *Shirodhara* and *Murdhni Chikitsa* for *Mana* and *Indriya Vikaras*. *Anidra* can be clinically correlated with Insomnia. In modern medical science for the management of insomnia includes administration of Antipsychotic and Sedatives, each of them is having its own limitations due to wide range of adverse effect. On the other side, *Ayurveda* having a light of hope for this condition by correction of basic pathology particularly through *Panchakarma*, like external treatment in the form of *Shirodhara* and internal administration like *Nasya karma* to treat the Insomnia. In this present study a female patient aged 42 years of registration number 405 presented with the complains of fatigue, sleeplessness, numbness and heaviness in head since 10 years. Treatment given is *Shirodhara* with *Himasagara Tailam* for 30 min for the duration of 21 days and *Nasya* with *Brahmi Ghritam* for the duration of 21 days along with *Medhya Rasyana* i.e. *Manasmitra Vatka*, *Mentocalm*, *Saraswata Arishta*. The treatment had shown positive response by increasing duration of sleep and quality of sleep along with over well being in terms of quality of life

Keywords: Insomnia, *Anidra*, *Nasya karma*, *Shirodhara*

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INTRODUCTION:

Insomnia is the very common sleep disorder which affects people's life and having trouble sleeping, lack of quality of sleep. Insomnia has reflective crash on mechanized 24-hour societies. In this present era Irregular and unnatural food habits, suppression of natural urges, lack of proper sleep and less time for relaxation are the inseparable part of our routine which enervate body and finally lead to the disease^[1]. The condition of insomnia also leads to increased human errors, impaired public and entertaining activities, loss of efficiency and eminent risk of accidents, alteration in their mood. It is recurrently co morbid with physical and mental illness, as either significance or a causative factor. Although about 30% of adults have symptoms of insomnia, it is seldom reported, and hence is an under-treated disorder^[2]. Insomnia is the complaint of inadequate sleep; it can be classified according to the nature of sleep disruption and the duration of the complaint. Insomnia is subdivided into difficulty falling asleep (sleep onset insomnia), frequent or sustained awakenings (sleep maintenance insomnia), or early morning awakenings (sleep offset insomnia), though most insomnia patients present with two or more of these symptoms^[3]. Short-term insomnia lasts from a few days to 3 weeks.

Long-term insomnia, or chronic insomnia, lasts for months or years^[4].

Insomnia can be grouped into Primary and secondary Insomnia. Primary Insomnia is a sleep disorder not attributable to a medical, psychiatric, or environmental cause and Secondary insomnia also known as co-morbid insomnia which is associated with psychiatric disorder^[5]. According to *Ayurveda*, Lack of (sleep) *Nidra*^[6] cause *Dukha*(pain), *Karshyata*(physical weakness), *Balahani* (loss of power or generalized weakness), *kaleibhya* (infertility) *Agnyanata* (lack of consciousness) even *Mrityu*(death). Mainly *Vata Vaigunyata* (vitiation of vata dosha or imbalance in body) is responsible for *Anidra*(insomnia). *Ayurveda* advocates *Nasya*(nasal administration of drugs) and *Murdhni Chikitsa*^[7] which include *Shiro-abhyanga*(massage of head with medicated oil), *Shiriseka* (pouring of medicine on head), *Shiropichu* (placing of oil on the anterior fontanel for the particular time) and *Shirobasti* for *Mana*(mantel status) and *Indriya Vikaras*(diseases of eye, ear, head and mantel disorders). *Anidra* can be co-related to Insomnia. The present day management includes administration of Antipsychotic and Sedatives, each of them is having its own limitations. On the other side, *Ayurveda* is look into the correction of basic pathology particularly through *Panchakarma*, like external treatment in the form of *Shirodhara*

and internal administration like *Nasya karma*^[8] to correct Insomnia.

MATERIAL & METHODS:

A female patient aged 42 years of registration number 405 presented with the complaints of fatigue, sleeplessness, numbness and heaviness in head since 10 years. Due to mental stress, patient complains of falling asleep and restlessness in the night, therefore she took Anti-Psychotic drugs and Sedatives regularly from last 8 years, in spite of that patient was not getting proper sleep.

Treatment Given:

Shirodhara: *Shirodhara* is a type of moordhana taila, in which suitable taila is to be continuously poured on the fore head and the oil to be allowed to flow over the scalp^[9]. It is very fruitful in insomnia, stress, anxiety, other neurological and psychological and psychosomatic disorders. Here pouring of oil is not followed by any massage.

The procedure was done with *Himasagara Tailam*^[10] for 30 min for the duration of 21 days.

Nasya Karma: Administration of the medicines through nasal route is known as *Nasya*. As this is the nearest route, the diseases related to head is best treated by this procedure. *Shirovirechana*, *Shirovireka* and *Murdhanivirechana* are the other names of this procedure. Depending upon the composition of the names of the herbs used in

the medication as well as variation in the pharmacological actions, the *Nasya* are of different types. The procedure of dropping the medicated oil into the nostril is called *Navana Nasya*.

The procedure was done with *Brahmi Ghritam*^[11] for the duration of 21 days.

Shamana Aushadhis :

Manasmitra Vatkam^[12] – 1 tablet two times a day.

Mantocalm – 2 tablets two times a day.

Saraswata Arishta^[13] – 10ml three times a day.

Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera) Churna (2gms) + *Shatavari (Asparagus racemosus) Churna* (2gms) + *Madhuyashti (Glycyrrhiza glabra) Churna* (2gms) two times a day.

Assessment Criteria & Observations

Sleep	Grade
Severe, requires medicine	4
Moderate	3
Mild	2
Occasionally	1
Normal	0

No numbness

Numbness in head	grade
Severe, requires medicine	4
Moderate	3
Mild	2
Occasionally	1

Heaviness	Grade
Always	4
Most of Time	3

Sometimes	2
Occasionally	1
No heaviness	0
Fatigue	Grade
Always	4
Most of time	3
Sometimes	2
Occasionally	1
No fatigue	0

Effect of therapies on insomnia:

S.No.	Symptoms	B.T.	A.T.
a)	Lack of sleep	4	2
b)	Numbness in head	3	2
c)	Heaviness in head	3	2
d)	Fatigue	4	2

DISCUSSION:

Probable mode of action of *shirodhara* with *Himsagara Tailam*^[14].

Shirodhara is a procedure which comes under the external application of oil used for neuromuscular relaxation and nourishment. *Shirodhara* is a relaxation therapy which relieves mental exhaustion as well as pacifies the aggravated *Vata Dosha* in head. It helps to normalize the function of central nervous system by relaxing the nervous system and balancing the circulation of blood in the head. According to modern medical science stress or anxiety is main cause for Insomnia, and the in the condition of *Anidra* (insomnia) the main vitiated *Dosha* is *Vata*, so balance of *Vata*

Dosha is an important thing to treat insomnia. By the application of oil over the head, the dryness of skin subsides and in turn *Kapha Dosha* increases. The increament of *Kapha Dosha* enhances the *Tama*, which counteracts the *Raja Dosha*. Ultimately this process nourishes the essential components of body and helps to get ride the problem like insomnia.

Shirodhara is one of the fruitful treatment for reducing stress & anxiety and *Shirodhara* with *Himsagara Tailam* is very beneficial due to procedural effect as well as due to drug effect also. As continuous pouring of liquid over a particular point increases local circulation may help the absorption of active principles. Main contains of *Himsagara Tailam* having cooling property which regulates Hypothalamo – Pituitary axis, which may help to reduce stress & enhancing secretion of serotonin and improves sleep.

Probable mode of action of *Nasya Karma*: - Drug administered through nasal rout which may be absorbed by vascular / lymphatic path through nasal mucosa, which has special parenchyma. It stimulates olfactory bulb and subsequently Amygdala. Nasal route is considered as the pathway to reach brain^[15]. Further the *Brahmi Ghrutam*, one of the widely indicated formulation for Psychiatric illness like *Unmada*, *Atatvaabhinivesha* etc, *Brahmi* is a proven brain tonic and act as neuro-activator

and helps to improve mental & intellectual activity, further when administered in the form of *ghee* it absorbs due to lipophilic nature and *ghee* itself is considered as *Medhya*. All these together helps to improve brain functioning and provides nourishment to brain which is responsible for subside the aggravated vata dosha and increases the kapha dosha thereby overcomes stress & anxiety and calm down the mind in turns improves quality and quantity of sleep.

CONCLUSION:

This case showed encouraging results with the given as with the treatment, the duration of sleep and quality of sleep improved and relief in heaviness and numbness and fatigue etc Symptoms. Patient had stopped Anti - Psychotic drugs and Sedatives drugs. From this study, it is stated that *Ayurveda* can be a promising alternative in insomnia. Further clinical trials are needed to establish a standard management of sleep disorders.

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