



Review Article

THERAPEUTIC USES OF NASYA KARMA: CONCEPTUAL CRITICAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Nasa (Nose) is an *Indriya*, which works not only to perceive the smell but also to provide the main breathing pathway, along with this, *Nasa* is one of the drug administration pathways. *Acharyas* have been placed *Nasya* as one of the *Panchkarma* procedures, which signify the importance of *Nasya* as *Shodhana Karma* (Purification procedure) especially for *Urddhva-jatrugata Vikara* (disease which affect the body above clavicle). *Nasya Karma* is a therapeutic measure in which the drug (Medicated Oil/Ghee/Decoction/ Powder/Smoke etc.) is administered by *Nasa* (Nose) essentially to remove the vitiated *Dosha* found in *Shira* and its constituent parts. Indirectly, by enhancing the functions of the endocrine glands and nervous system, *Nasya* can operate on the entire body. In classics *Nasya* is mentioned in different type of supra-clavicular as well as in systemic diseases. So present review article focused on the therapeutic uses of *Nasya Karma* in different diseased condition which are proven by clinical researches.

KEYWORDS: *Nasya, Panchakarma, Shira, Urddhva-jatrugata Vikara.*

INTRODUCTION

Nasa (Nose) is an *Indriya*, which works not only to perceive the smell but also to provide the main breathing pathway, along with this, *Nasa* is one of the drug administration pathways. A particular *Nasya* procedure has been defined in *Ayurvedic* texts, the literary sense of which is in the *Nasa* or the things that are beneficial to the *Nasa*. The word *Nasya* has been derived from "*Nasa*" *Dhatu* which denotes the sense of *Gati* (motion) *Nasa Gatayu*. *Nasyas* textual description indicates that the medications or medicated *Sneha*, delivered through the nose, are called *Nasya*. In Classics, synonyms of the term *Nasya* are mentioned as *Shirovirechana, Shirovireka, Murdha Virechana, Nastakarma, Navana* etc. *Acharya Sushruta* defined the idiom *Shirovirechana* as a separate variety of *Nasya Karma*.^[1] Meaning of the label *Virechana* is to eliminate the morbid *Dosha* from the body. Thus, *Shirovirechana* or *Murdhavirechana* makes sense for elimination of morbid *Dosha* particularly from the *Shira* (Head) or parts situated above the clavicle. The sentence "*Nastah Pracchardana*" was applied to *Nasya* by *Acharya*

Charaka ^[2] which denotes *Shodhana* (purification) by *Nasya*. By glimpse of all these facts, it can be said that *Nasya Karma* is a therapeutic measure in which the drug (Medicated Oil/Ghee/Decoction/Powder/Smoke etc.) is administered by *Nasa* (Nose) essentially to remove the vitiated *Dosha* found in *Shira* and its constituent parts. Indirectly, by enhancing the functions of the endocrine glands and nervous system, *Nasya* can operate on the entire body.

Nose is anatomically connected with cranial cavity and other organs like eyes, ears, pharynx etc. So the administered drug through this route can work as medicament for disorders affecting all these structures.^[3] *Acharyas* have been placed *Nasya* as one of the *Panchkarma* procedures, which signify the importance of *Nasya* as *Shodhana Karma* (Purification procedure) especially for *Urddhva-jatrugata Vikara* (disease which affect the body above clavicle). *Nasya* is the only approach which can directly influence *Indriya doshas* and helps in rapid action of administered drug.^[4]

Types of Nasya Karma^[5-9]

Types of Nasya Karma				
Charaka Samhita	Sushruta Samhita	Ashtanga Hridaya	Kashyapa Samhita	Sharangadhara Samhita
Navana, Avapeeda, Dhmapana, Dhuma Pratimarsha	Shirovirechana and Snehana Further classified into 5 types- Nasya, Avapeeda, Pradhamana, Shirovirechana Pratimarsha	Virechana, Brimhana Shamana	Brimhana Karshana	Rechana Snehana

Pranidana Kala (Suitable Time For Nasya Karma): Nasya should generally be delivered in Pravrita, Sharada and Vasanta Ritu, according to Acharya Charaka, but Nasya can be operated in any season in emergency conditions, which are defined by Acharya as being.^[10]

Season	Nasya Pranidana Kala
Grishma Ritu	Purvahana (Morning)
Shita Ritu (Shishira & Hemanta)	Madhyahana (Afternoon)
Varsha Ritu	Adurdina Kala (day should be clear from clouds)

Acharya Sushruta stated that Nasya should usually be performed empty stomach at the time of meal; Sushruta Acharya also listed the Nasya Karma time schedule according to Doshaja Vikara i.e.^[11]

Doshaja Vikara	Time for Nasya
Vataja vikara	Aprahana (Evening)
Pittaja vikara	Madhyahana (Afternoon)
Kaphaja vikara	Purvahana (Morning)

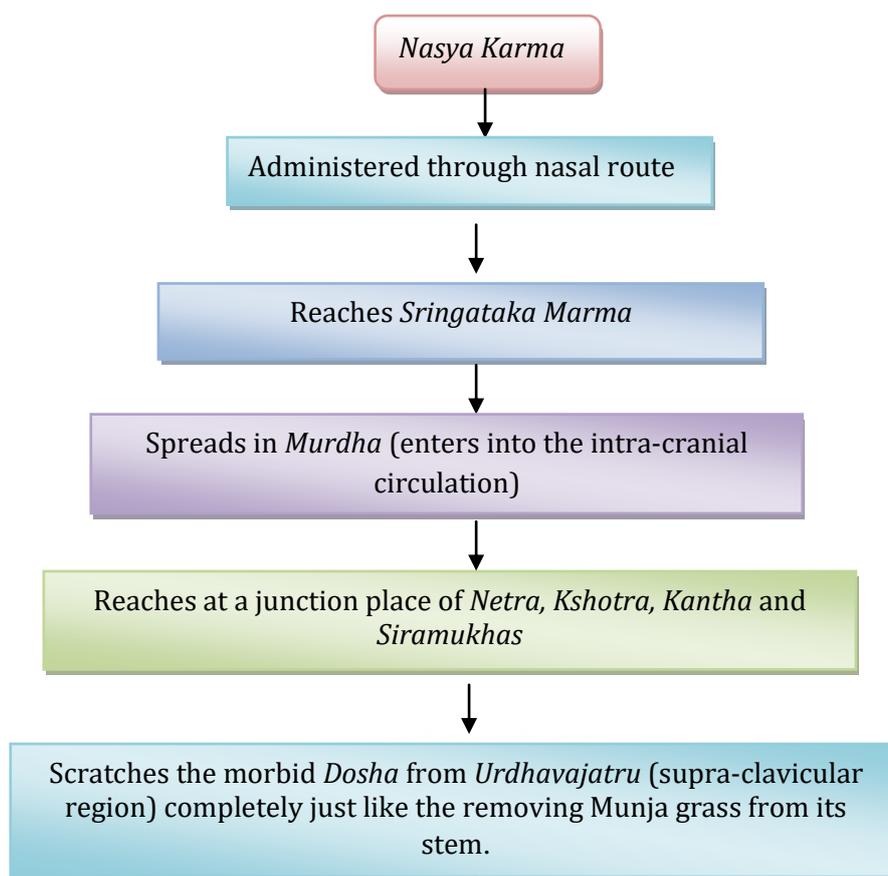
In the case of Vataja Shiroroga, Hikka, Aptanaka, Manyastambha and Swarabharansa, Acharya Vagbhatta specified a specific schedule for Nasya Karma such as Nasya should be given daily in the morning and evening. Acharya Vagbhatta also describes time for Nasya according to Doshaja Vikara and Ritu i.e.^[12]

Doshaja Vikara & Season	Time for Nasya
Vataja vikara, Grishma Ritu	Sayankala (Evening)
Pittaja vikara, Shishira & Hemanta Ritu	Madhyahana (Afternoon)
Kaphaja vikara	Pratah (Morning)
Swastha, Sharada & Vasanta Ritu	Purvahana (Morning)
Varsha Ritu	Atapa

Probable Mode of Action of Nasya Karma

There is no specific explanation available in Ayurvedic classics concerning the mode of action of the Nasya Karma. According to Acharya Charaka, Nasa is the portal (gateway) of Shirah^[13], the drug given through the nose as Nasya enters the brain and removes only the morbid Doshas responsible for creating the disease. According to all the Acharyas Nasa is said to be the portal of Shira, It does not mean that any anatomical channel connects directly to the brain but it might be connected pharmacodynamically through blood vessels or through nervous system (olfactory nerve etc.)

Acharya Vagbhatta has described mode of action of Nasya Karma i.e.^[14]



Nasya Karma Yogya and Ayogyia (Indication and Contraindication For Nasya Karma)

In our classics, there are different indications and contraindications for *Nasya Karma*, but general indications for *Nasya* which are stated in *Charaka Samhita* are ^[15] - *Shirostambha* (stiffness of head), *Manyastambha* (cervical spondylosis), *Danta Stambha*, *Danta Shoola* (toothache), *Hanugraha* (lock jaw), *Pinasa* (rhinitis), *Galashundika* (tonsillitis), *Galashaluka*, *Timira*, *Vartmaroga*, *Vyanga*, *Upajihvika*, *Ardhavabhedaka* (migraine), *Grivaroga* (neck disease), *Skandharoga* (shoulder pain), *Ansashula* (pain at scapular region), *Mukharoga* (oral disease), *Karnashoola* (otalgia), *Nasa Shoola* (nasal disease), *Akshishoola* (eye pain), *Shirahshoola* (head ache), *Ardita* (bell's palsy or facial paralysis), *Apatantraka*, *Apatantraka* (epilepsy), *Galaganda* (goiter), *Danta Harsha* (numbness in teeth), *Danta Chala*, *Netra Roga*, *Arbuda*, *Svarabheda*, *Vaggraha*, *Gadgadatva*, *Krathana* etc.

Contraindication For Nasya^[16]

Bhuktabhakta, *Ajirni*, *Pita Sneha*, *Pita Madhya*, *Pita Toya*, *Snehadi Patukamah*, *Snatah Shirah*, *Snatukamah*, *Kshudarta*, *Shramarta*, *Matta*, *Murcchita*, *Shastradandahrta*, *Vyavayaklanta*, *Vyayamaklanta*, *Navajvara* *Pidita*, *Shokabhitapta*,

Virikta, *(Shuddha)*, *Anuvasita (Datta Basti)*, *Garbhini*, *Navapratishyayarta* etc.

Various clinical studies are being carried out to demonstrate the efficacy of *Nasya Karma* in various diseased conditions, some of which are described here.

Cervical Spondylosis (Manyastambha)

A single case study was carried out on a female patient suffering from cervical spondylosis. She was subjected to *Ksheera Bala Taila Nasya* and *Manya Basti* by *Nirgundi Taila* for 15 days. Patient assessment was based on the effect of therapy on the disease's signs and symptoms. It has been observed that cervical spondylosis can be successfully treated by *Nasya* and *Manya Basti*.^[17] A further clinical research on cervical spondylosis was performed in which patients receiving *Nasya* along with oral drugs reported more successful outcomes.^[18] A case series was reported on the efficacy of *Nasya Karma* in cervical spondylosis, in which *Nasya Karma* was administered with *Anutaila* for the first 3 days and 101 with *Avartita Kshirabala Taila* for the next 4 days. Cervical spondylosis has been shown to be a *Kapha-Vata* dominant condition, preceded by *Nasya* with *Avartita Kshirabala Taila* which pacify *Vata Dosha* by *Brimhana* & *Nasya* with *Anutaila* pacify *Kapha* with profuse secretions.^[19]

Frozen Shoulder (*Apabahuka*)

A clinical trial of 15 patients with signs and symptoms of *Apabahuka* (frozen shoulder) was performed. These cases were submitted to *Marsha Nasya* with *Laghumasha Taila* for seven days at doses of 6, 8, or 10 drops, as required by the patients. It was noted that when used as *Marsha Nasya*, *Laghumasha Taila* show *Brimhana* effect, provided a moderately significant result in the signs and symptoms of *Apabahuka* (frozen shoulder).^[20] A further clinical trial was performed on 30 *Apabahuka* (frozen shoulder) patients and *Nasya (Partimarsha) Karma* with *Vatada Taila* (almond oil) was administered for 15 days. An efficient treatment modality for *Apabahuka* has been found.^[21] A clinical study was performed on 15 diagnosed cases of *Apabahuka*, treated with *Nasya* with *Dashamooladi Yamaka Sneha* along with *Maharasnadi Kwatha* with *Yogaraja Guggulu* as *Shamana Aushadhi*. Statistically, better outcomes were observed.^[22]

Myopia (*Timira*)

In order to determine the function of *Tarpana Karma* with and without *Nasya Karma*, a clinical analysis on the 30 diagnosed cases of myopia was carried out. *Nasya* with *Abhijita Taila*, followed by *Tarpana* with *Mahatriphaladya Ghrita*, was administered in Group A and *Tarpana* with *Mahatriphaladya Ghrita* in Group B. In this research, *Tarpana* with *Nasya Karma* was found to be more effective in treating the signs and symptoms of the disease.^[23]

Chronic Sinusitis (*Dushta Pratishyaya*)

A clinical trial was performed in which 31 chronic sinusitis patients were randomly classified into three groups: A, B, and C. *Trayodashanga Kwatha* with *Madhu* was orally administered in group A; *Pradhamana Nasya* with *Trikatu & Triphala Churna* was administered in group B; and *Pradhamana Nasya* was initially administered in group C (combined group), followed by oral *Trayodashanga Kwatha* with *Madhu*. Total relief was seen in group A in 10 percent of patients; marked progress was seen in group B in 81.82 percent of patients; and significant relief was seen in group C in 60 percent of patients. Group C showed percentage-wise better outcomes for most of the symptoms compared to the other groups (Group A and Group B).^[24]

Coma

In order to assess the efficacy of *Nasya*, a single case study of a female patient suffering from coma along with two years of history of hypertension was performed. Acute infarction in the right middle cerebral artery (MCA), diffuse cerebral cortical atrophy, was observed in radiological tests. She was

treated with *Trikatu Churna* (powder) *Pradhamana Nasya*, followed for seven days by *Dhumapana* (fumigation) with *Sanghyasthapana* (consciousness restorative) medicines. The outcome of this management was noticeable, as it resulted in positive improvements from 3 to 11 in the Glasgow Coma Scale (GSCS). This case report has been shared to provide proof that *Nasya Karma* can restore consciousness in a comatose patient.^[25]

Psychosomatic Disorder

An article on the effectiveness of *Brimhana Nasya* in psychosomatic disorders was published which showed that *Nasya* is considered a drug delivery port for the brain and intranasal delivery bypasses the blood brain barrier to target the central nervous system, reducing drug systemic exposure and thus reducing systemic side effects. Stress and the brain have a close relationship with each other, to provide brain nourishment; stress may be separated from the root and helps to avoid psychosomatic disorders.^[26]

Facial Paralysis (*Ardita*)

A clinical research was performed on 20 diagnosed cases of facial paralysis that were randomly divided into two classes. The control group was given *Anu Taila Nasya* and the trial group was given *Mashadi Taila Nasya* for 15 days at a dosage of 6 drops per nostril. Both drugs were found to be equally successful, but *Anu Taila Nasya* was much more effective in comparison.^[27] Another pilot study was performed on 6 diagnosed *Ardita* (facial paralysis) patients who administered *Kukkutanda Swedana* along with *Ksheerbala Taila Nasya* and demonstrated high efficacy in *Ardita* management.^[28]

Allergic Rhinitis (*Anurjata Janita Pratishyaya*)

A clinical research was performed on 69 allergic rhinitis patients. Patients were chosen and divide into 3 groups at random. For 14 days, Group A received *Shunthi Taila Nasya* with oral drug *Shuddha Haridra* 2 gms TDS for 21 days, Group B received *Pradhamana Nasya* with *Katphal churna* till *Samayaka Shuddhi Lakshana* was obtained, followed by oral drug *Shuddha Haridra* 2 gms TDS for 21 days, and Group C received oral drug *Shuddha Haridra* 2 gms TDS for 21 days. The two trial drugs used for *Nasya Karma* were found to provide better results compared to the oral drug group.^[29] Another study was performed on 32 allergic rhinitis patients diagnosed randomly into two groups. *Haridra Khanda* in group A and *Pippalyadi Taila Nasya* in group B were administered for two months with the oral drug *Haridra Khanda*. It was concluded that patients in group B showed a marked improvement in allergic rhinitis signs and symptoms.^[30]

Hair Fall (Khalitya)

A research on the efficacy of *Nasya* with *Shadbindu Taila* in management of *Khalitya* was conducted and it was found that *Nasya* with *Shadbindu Taila* provided substantial relief in the signs and symptoms of *Khalitya*, primarily in hair fall and hair breakage.^[31] Another clinical trial was performed on 15 hair-falling patients. *Nasya Karma* was administered to these patients with *Chandanadhya Taila* for 15 days at a dosage of 8 drops per nostril. It was reviewed that *Nasya Karma* given significant result in hair fall.^[32]

Peenasa Roga

A clinical research on 100 diagnosed cases of *Peenasa Roga* was performed. Selected patients were divided randomly into two classes. In group A patients treated with *Sneha*, *Swedana* and *Nasya Karma* with *Nirgundi Taila* (4 drops in each nostril) and in group B patients treated with *Sneha* and *Swedana*, the period for both groups was seven days. Group A was found to display substantially improved results in *Peenasa Roga* signs and symptoms.^[33]

Suryavarta

A clinical research was performed to assess the efficacy of *Nagara Ksheera Nasya* and *Vacha Pippali Avapeedana Nasya* in the treatment of *Suryavarta* in 40 diagnosed cases of *Suryavarta*. It was found that both groups provided significant results, but the impact of *Vacha Pippali Avapeedana Nasya* in *Suryavarta* management was comparatively better.^[34] Another clinical study was examined, which administered *Shodhana Karma* (*Virechana* and *Nasya Karma*) along with oral Shamana drugs (*Pathyadi Kwath* and *Shirashooladi Vajra Rasa*) on 50 diagnosed cases of *Suryavarta*. *Suryavarta* was found to be successfully controlled by this administration.^[35]

Migraine (Ardhavabhedaka)

Nasya with *Kumkumadi Ghrita* was given for 7 days in a female patient diagnosed with migraine. Because *Tridosha Shamaka* property of *Kumkumadi Ghrita*, migraine was successfully managed by its *Nasya*.^[36] A clinical trial was performed on 33 migraine-diagnosed patients, which classified into three groups. Patients in group A received *Nasya* with *Kumkumadi Ghrita*, patients in group B received *Shirodahara* with *Dashmoolashrita Ksheera* and patients in group C received tab propranolol 40 mg bd of and diclofenac 50 mg bd. The therapy period in all three groups was 21 days. The study concluded that migraine management by *Nasya* with *Kumkumadi Ghrita* was more effective.^[37] Another clinical research was performed on 20 cases of migraine. These patients were treated with *Nasya* with *Swarasa* of *Acalypha Indica* linn patra along with oral drug *Panchgavya Ghrita*. It was noted that this

treatment modality was highly effective for migraine cases.^[38]

In Gynecological Disorders

A review article published on the effectiveness of *Nasya Karma* in gynecological disorders (such as menorrhagia, oligomenorrhea, dysmenorrhea, PCOD and Infertility etc.) which based on that all the symphony of menstrual cycle is under the control of Pituitary hormones which is situated at the base of brain. *Nasa* is considered as the gateway of *Sirah* i.e., brain thus *Nasya* helps to regulate hypothalamo-pituitary-ovarian axis and establishment of normal menstruation. Hence *Nasya* is the best remedies to manage gynecological disorders.^[39]

CONCLUSION

There are many forms and methods of administration of *Nasya Karma* in various diseases are described in classics. But we can find out that there is wide variability and lack of proper understanding all along the country. The method of administration of *Nasya* needs to be standardized according to a universally accepted standard operative procedure (SOP). The mode of action of *Nasya* also should be properly understood by suitable research methodologies. As the nasal drug route is very promising in nature, in future it is imperative to say that newer methods of *Nasya* or advanced methods for trans nasal drug administration should be developed by collaborative or integrative approach. It can be concluded that if Standard operative procedure is used in giving this therapy i.e., *Nasya*, then it will provide all the benefits given in Classics. Hence standardization of the various form of *Nasya* procedure and there uses in different diseased condition which mentioned in classics is must so as to achieve maximum efficacy.

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