

AYURVEDIC CONNECTION BETWEEN *NIDRA* AND *DHATU PUSHTI* - A REVIEW STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Everyone needs sleep just as much as they need nourishment. In Ayurveda, there are three tripods of life—*Aahar*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya*.^[1] *Nidra* means asleep; that is very important for maintaining normal physiological activities of the body. Ayurveda defines *Nidra* as the physiological state of rest for the *Sharira*, *Manas*, and *Indriya*.^[2] The good physical and mental state merely depends upon *Nidra*, thus one can acquire a normal health status by following a conduct of life which induces good sleep. *Dhatu* acts as a structural component and gives strength to the body. The *dhatu*s not only form structural components of the body but also perform many functions, including nourishment of the body, circulation of biomaterials, holding up the organs, reproduction, and maintenance of the body frame.^[3] Getting enough quality sleep at night can protect our physical and mental health. *Nidra* is considered crucial for

maintaining the balance of *dhatu*s (body issues), meaning that adequate sleep is essential for the proper formation and nourishment of the seven *dhatu*s^[4], leading to overall health and well-being. Conversely, improper sleep can disrupt the *dhatu* equilibrium and lead to disease. **Aim:** To introduce the relation between *nidra* and *dhatu pushti*. **Material and Method:** The literature review was compiled from available *ayurvedic samhitas*. **Conclusion:** This article summarizes the importance of appropriate *nidra* in *dhatu pushti*.

KEYWORD: *Nidra*, *Dhatu*, *Dhatu Pushti*, Sleep.

INTRODUCTION

As a holistic medical system, Ayurveda emphasizes the fundamental roles that *dhatu Pushti* (tissue nourishment) and *nidra* (sleep) play in preserving optimum health and well-being. *Nidra* is acknowledged as one of the essential pillars, or *Upasthambhas*, that maintain the delicate equilibrium of physiological processes and are crucial for mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Contrarily, *dhatu Pushti* refers to the appropriate maintenance and integrity of the seven body tissues (*dhatu*s) as described in Ayurvedic physiology, which guarantees the body's structural and functional vitality. Numerous physiological functions, including digestion, metabolic balance, and systemic regeneration, are closely linked to this tissue's nutrition.

According to Ayurveda, getting enough sleep is essential for maintaining overall health and vitality because it is a regenerative state in which the body repairs, cleanses, and regains equilibrium. Numerous health issues, such as poor tissue nourishment and accelerated disease progression, are associated with disturbed *Nidra* or poor sleep quality.^[4] Clarifying the complex relationship between *Nidra* and *Dhatu Pushti* as understood in Ayurvedic principles and bringing these traditional insights into line with current scientific understanding of sleep and tissue physiology are the goals of this review.

The word *Nidra* is obtained by adding the prefix to the *dhatu dra*. *Dra dhatu* means to sleep. Hence, the term *Nidra* means back to sleep, into sleep, down to sleep. When the mind (as well as the soul) gets exhausted or becomes inactive, and the sensory and motor organs become inactive, then the individual falls asleep. Sleep is nothing more than the mind's location away from the senses and motor organs.

In the event of the exhaustion of the mind, the individuals also get exhausted because the action of individuals is dependent on that of the mind; so when the mind dissociates itself from its object, individuals also dissociate themselves from their objects. The sensory and motor organs are not active because of the inactivity of individuals.^[5]

Sleep was born at the time of the commencement of the creation of the universe, only, out of *tamas*. Sleep is another form of *tamas* and manifests due to the predominance of *tamas* generally at night.^[6]

Kapha will agitate dietary items and block internal pathways, making it difficult for the sense organs to work normally owing to fatigue, which will show up as sleep.

When the mind gets exhausted or becomes inactive, and the sensory and motor organs become inactive, then the individual falls asleep. The condition of the three *doshas*—*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*—which govern mental and physical processes, has a significant impact on the quality of *nidra*. The state of *doshic* equilibrium is directly reflected in *nidra* disturbances. A vicious cycle of exhaustion and mental instability, for example, can result from fragmented and inadequate sleep caused by an aggravated *vata dosha*.

Types

Sleep is of the following types

1. Caused by *tamas* (*Tamobhava*)^[7]
2. Caused by (vitiated) *kapha* (*Shleshmasamudbhava*)
3. Caused by mental exertion (*Manah-Sharirshramasaambhava*)
4. *Agantuki* or indicative of a bad prognosis leading to imminent death (*Agantuki*)
5. Caused as a complication of other diseases like *Sannipata jvara* (*Vyadhyanuvartini*)
6. Caused by the very nature of the night (physiological sleep) (*Ratri-Swabhavaprabhava*)

Significance of *Nidra*

Among all of the *nidra*, *ratri swabhavaprabhava nidra* nourishes and maintains the body, which is ultimately responsible for *dhatu pushti* (tissue nourishment). The benefits of this type of *nidra* are stated by *Acharya Charak*: happiness, misery, nourishment, emaciation, strength, weakness, virility, sterility, knowledge, ignorance, life, and death all occur depending on the proper or improper sleep. Like the night of destruction, untimely and excessive sleep and prolonged vigil take away both happiness and longevity. The person remains free from diseases, cheerful, endowed with strength & fair complexion, sexually potent, of moderate physique & glorious, and lives for a hundred years.

Bliss & gloom, nourishment & emaciation, power & weakness, virility & sterility, knowledge & lack of knowledge, existence & bereavement, all these occur depending on the proper or improper sleep. Excessive, improper, and sleeplessness lead to misery and finally to death. Proper sleep will make for happiness and a long life, just as the mind of the sages became clear from the knowledge of the soul.

Pleasure and sadness, nourishment (good physique) and emaciation, potency and weakness, sexual powers and impotence, acquaintance and unawareness, all are dependent on sleep.^[8]

Dhatu

A working cell is always a necessary part of a living thing (*Sharira*). The primary duties of *dhatu*s are *dharana* and *poshana*.^[9] Whereas *sapta* means seven, *dhatu* means bears or supports. According to Ayurveda, the body's seven main tissues provide all of its structure, growth, and nourishment. *Dhatu*s are a form of tissue that is similar to the primary tissue identified by modern science in many ways. According to *Acharya Vagbhat*, the *sharir* is made up of seven fundamental *dhatu*: *rasa*(plasma/lymph), *rakta*(blood), *mamsa*(muscle), *meda*(fat), *asthi*(bone), *majja*(marrow and nervous tissue), and *shukra*(reproductive tissue).^[10]

These *dhatu*s are more than just physical features; they are phases in a multifaceted tissue transformation process that starts with *rasa*, the main nutritional fluid, and ends with *shukra*. For general health, vitality, and longevity, these tissues must be properly nourished and interact in a balanced manner. Every *dhatu* has distinct characteristics and roles, and abnormalities in one *dhatu* can affect other tissues and the system as a whole. For example, a lack of *rasa* (plasma) can hinder the production of *rakta* (blood), resulting in weakness and increased vulnerability to disease. Similarly, obesity or emaciation can be signs of an imbalance in *meda dhatu* (fat tissue), which can impact a number of physiological functions. One of the main objectives of *Ayurvedic* treatment is to keep these seven *dhatu*s in the right balance and sustenance.

Ayurvedic Relationship Between *Nidra* and *Dhatu Pushti*

The understanding that sleep serves as a crucial time for physiological regeneration during which tissues are nourished and revitalized is how Ayurveda expresses the close relationship between *Nidra* and *Dhatu Pushti*. *Ratri swabhavaprabha Nidra* promotes tissue growth and regeneration by creating an environment that is favourable for the anabolic processes required for hormonal homeostasis, cellular repair, and the removal of metabolic waste. This supports the Ayurvedic theory that healthy sleep balances the *doshas* and rejuvenates the senses, which in turn supports optimal body function and the efficient feeding of *dhatu*s. Sleeping well enhances the metabolic and circulatory processes controlled by *Agni* and the *rasavaha Srotas*, which are delicate channels that carry nutrients from food that has been digested to the tissues.

The rhythmic release of hormones and digestive enzymes that promote effective nutrient absorption, distribution, and assimilation is supported by a well-synchronized sleep cycle, which eventually improves *Dhatu Pushti*. Vital metabolic processes that are essential to tissue health and systemic vitality are kept from being disrupted by this biological orchestration.

On the other hand, chronic insomnia or disturbed *Nidra* impair these regenerative mechanisms, resulting in diminished *Dhatu Pushti*. Tissue depletion and the advancement of systemic disease are symptoms of a series of metabolic inefficiencies brought on by the ensuing *doshic* disturbances. Confusion, fatigue, fever, weakened immunity, cognitive decline, and a variety of psychosomatic conditions linked to insufficient tissue nutrition are among the clinical manifestations.^[11] The therapeutic implications are twofold: promoting *dhatu pushti* may promote better sleep, which could lead to a positive feedback loop, and enhancing the quality of sleep can improve tissue nourishment.

Current Scientific Views on Tissue Nourishment and Sleep

Many of the fundamental ideas that Ayurveda has long expressed about the importance of sleep for tissue regeneration and repair are supported by modern biology. Growth hormones and cytokines that control immune modulation, protein synthesis, and cellular repair are secreted in greater amounts during certain stages of sleep, especially rapid eye movement (REM) and slow-wave sleep (deep sleep). In line with the Ayurvedic recognition of *Nidra* as a restorative state, this correlation highlights the physiological foundations of tissue nourishment during sleep.

According to neuroendocrine research, getting enough sleep helps the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis function in a balanced manner and supports the regular release of hormones like cortisol and melatonin, which are crucial for anti-inflammatory and metabolic processes.

Contrarily, lack of sleep causes oxidative stress, systemic inflammation, and tissue deterioration, which are linked to chronic illness and weakened immunity—the very conditions that Ayurvedic texts link to disturbed *nidra* and compromised *dhatu pushti*.

By offering quantifiable biochemical and physiological correlates for the conventional ideas of *dosha* equilibrium and tissue nourishment, these scientific discoveries enhance the

Ayurvedic paradigms of balance and vitality. By incorporating this knowledge, we can better understand how sleep affects the body and how Ayurvedic-inspired treatments can improve tissue health in contemporary clinical settings.

DISCUSSION

Proper sleep is a *vata shamak* and *kapha vardhak* agent, which increases *kapha* and thus nourishes the seven *dhatu*s. Due to less sleep, *kapha* decreases in the body, and there is a decrease in *dhatu poshan*. Especially in *rasa*, *mamsa*, *meda*, and *shukra*, which lead to *dhatu kshaya* and cause emaciation. Because these *dhatu* have an *ashray ashrai* relationship with *kapha dosha*.^[12]

Due to a lack of sleep, *kapha* decreases, and *vata* increases, and *dhatu kshaya* cycles start in the body, and emaciation occurs. Sleeping too much can lead to obesity. The body tissue (*dhatu*) is nourished by sustaining a balance in the processes of digestion, appetite stimulation, and defecation when people sleep and wake up at the appropriate times.

In *charak samhita*, *nidra* has been considered as a *chikitsa* plan for those suffering from *karshya vyadhi*.^[13] *Karshaya*, which means emaciated or slender, is a result of irregular sleep (*nidra*). *Rasa*, *mamsa*, and *medha dhatu dushti* and *mandagni* cause *prakop* of *vata doshas* in the body, which results in *poshak dhatu abhava*, *Uttarottara dhatu kshaya*, and *karshya* develop in this state. *Nidra* plays an important part in *dhatu pushti*.

Since *nidra* is a *kapha*-dominant process, it also keeps the three *doshas* in balance. According to Ayurvedic classics, *nidra* and *tandra* are frequently observed in *Kaphaja vikaras*^[14], *nidranasa* happens in *Vataj vikaras*^[15], and *alpanidra* appears in *Pittaj vridhi*.^[16]

Ayu's strength and stability are increased, the body is nourished, and *dhatu samya* is attained via adequate sleep.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, *nidra* is emphasized in Ayurvedic teachings as an essential component supporting *dhatu pushti* and overall health. Because it promotes physiological regeneration, *dosha* balance, and metabolic homeostasis, sound, restful sleep is essential for tissue nourishment. The significance of incorporating sleep quality into holistic health paradigms is highlighted by this all-encompassing relationship, which is backed by both contemporary scientific findings and classical texts. From a practical standpoint, Ayurveda provides a variety of

successful interventions that together improve both *nidra* and *dhatu* balance, such as herbal formulations, specialised *panchakarma* therapies, yogic practices, and diet and lifestyle optimization. By adopting these integrative modalities, one can improve overall vitality by managing and preventing sleep disorders and tissue deficiencies in a natural, non-pharmacological way.

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