# WORLD JOURNAL OF PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH

SJIF Impact Factor 8.084

Volume 11, Issue 9, 342-357. **Review Article**  ISSN 2277-7105

# UNDERSTANDING PATHOLOGY OF ANIDRA FROM AYURVEDA **POINT OF VIEW: A REVIEW ARTICLE**

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# Article Received on 10 May 2022,

Revised on 31 May 2022, Accepted on 21 June 2022

DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20229-24640

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda is a holistic life science. In ayurveda ahar, nidra and bramhacharya is mentioned as tripod of life by Acharyas. Nidra considered as one of the basic instinct of life which is essential for maintaining health. But due to some reasons like modern lifestyle, work stress, older age, disease related pain, mental illness, night job shift, anxiety and some doshas like vata and pitta etc. are responsible for Anidra. A condition where the sufferer complains of loss of nidra (sleep)during its natural time i.e. ratri (night)is called Anidra. Vatavruddhi plays a key role in producing Anidra. In Anidra some symptoms occur like yawning, drowsiness, malaise, fatigue, lack of concentration, poor memory. When our mind gets disturbed due to any

thought, it increases Rajo Guna which closely resembles with the Vata Dosha. Hence increase in Rajo Guna ultimately increases Vata Dosha & diminishes the effect of Tamo Guna ultimately landing the person in Anidra. On the basis of this an attempt is made to understand the pathology of Anidra through an ayurvedic perspective.

KEYWORDS: Anidra, Insomnia, Vatavruddhi, Sleep, Nidra.

#### INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda mentioned ahara(food) svapna (sleep) and abrahmacharya(indulgence in sex) are the three pillars (of life). Supported by these three pillars, the body maintains it strength, color (complexion) and growth till the end of life.<sup>[1]</sup>

when mind is, exhausted and the exhausted sense organ distracts from its object one gets sleep. [2]

Acharya Sushruta says that *nidranasha* occurs due to aggression of *vata* and *pitta*, psychological disorders, extreme weakness or ill health and physical trauma.<sup>[3]</sup>

During the description of *nidra*, *acharyas* have mentioned that *sharirikadosha kapha*, *manasikadoshatama*, *chetanasthanahruday*(heart), *mana* and *sanjnavaha strotasa* are responsible for its production. hence it is evidence that the *vatadosha*, *pitta dosha*, *rajoguna*, *hruday*, *mana* and *sanjnavaha strotasa* play an important role in the formation of *samprapti* or pathogenesis of *Anidra*. Thus vitiation of these factors leads to the disease of *anidra*. [4]

# Importance/Benefits of nidra

Happiness, misery, nourishment, emaciation, strength, weakness, virility, sterility, knowledge, ignorance, life and death all these occur depending on the proper or improper sleep.<sup>[5]</sup>

Like the night of destructions, untimely and excessive sleep and prolonged vigil take away both happiness and longevity.<sup>[5]</sup>

The same sleep, if properly enjoyed brings about happiness and longevity in human beings as the real knowledge brings about *Siddhi* (spiritual power) in a *yogin*.<sup>[5]</sup>

Strength and misery, nourishment and emaciation (increase or decrease of the body), strength and debility, virility and impotence, knowledge and ignorance, life and death are all dependent upon sleep.<sup>[6]</sup>

# Physiology of Nidra

Nidra is considered as one of the important vega, i.e. physiological urge.

One should not suppress the natural urge relating tourine, feces, semen, flatus, vomiting, sneezing, eructation, yawning, hunger, thirst, tears, sleepand breathing caused by over exertion.<sup>[7]</sup>

Heart is a site of rasa, path of vata etc, mind, buddhi, indriya, atma and par oja. [8]

When the mind including sensory and motor organs is exhausted and they dissociate themselves from their objects, then the individual sleeps. When the mind (as well as the soul)

gets exhausted or become inactive and the sensory and motor organs become inactive then the individual gets sleep.<sup>[9]</sup>

Sleep is nothing but the location of the mind in a place unconnected with the sensory or motor organs.

In the event of the exhaustion of the mind, the individuals also get exhausted because action of individuals is dependent on that of the mind, so when mind dissociates itself from its objects, individuals also dissociate themselves from their objects.

The sensory and motor organs are not active because of the inaction of individuals.<sup>[9]</sup>

*Tamoguna* of mind helps in creating sleep.<sup>[10]</sup> *hruday* is a seat of *chetana* in living beings, when this is invaded by *tamoguna* person gets sleep.<sup>[11]</sup>

It is associated with *kaphadosha* and helps in generation of sleep.<sup>[12]</sup>

Sleep was born out of *tamas*, at the time of commencement of this creation, it is another form of *tamas* itself and manifests when *tamas* is predominant, generally at nights.<sup>[13]</sup>

When the *srotas* (tissues pores, channels etc.) of the body become covered (coated and obstructed) by *kapha*, when the body is fatigued by exertion and when the sense organs are not functioning, sleep manifests in the body.<sup>[14]</sup>

# kaphaprakopak causes and Aggravation

*kapha* aggreavated day sleep. That means, the properties aggravated by day sleep are similar to those of *kapha*.<sup>[15]</sup>

#### Contributing factors in Nidra

# 1. Role of Mind

Mind also play an important role in the loss of sleep. When our mind gets disturbed due to any thought, it increases *Rajo Guna which* closely resembles with the *Vata Dosha*. Hence increase in *Rajo Guna* ultimately increases *Vata Dosha* & diminishes the effect of *Tamo Guna* ultimately landing the person in insomnia.<sup>[16]</sup>

Mind, on the other hand, transcends all sense perception. It is known as 'sattva'; some call it 'chetas'. Its action is determined by its contact with its objects (like happiness, misery etc;) and the soul; this acts as a driving force for all the sense faculties.<sup>[17]</sup>

Mind transcends all the sense faculties which are responsible for the perception of external objects.

Even though, mind is also to be regarded as a sense faculty in as much as it is responsible for experiencing happiness etc; still it is above the other sense faculties.

Rather, mind acts as a controller of all the other sense faculties. So far as its transcend dental qualities are concerned, they are even attributed to other sense faculties; but they are more so in relation to the mind which is much more subtle than the other sense faculties.<sup>[17]</sup>

The objects motivate the mind by their' proximity. This motivation further depends upon the existence of the sensing soul. It is the soul which is in fact responsible for the experience of happiness etc., and psychic behavior. to sum up it is only when the objects like happiness etc present and the soul is active, the mind conceives its objects and motivates the sense faculties, and then the sense faculties are active in relation to their respective objects.<sup>[17]</sup>

# 2. Role of Indriyas

The sense faculties are capable of perceiving their respective objects only when they are motivated by the mind.<sup>[18]</sup>

# 3. Role of *Vata* (types of *vata* and their pathology in *avrutavata*)

#### Vayuksheena, pittasama, kaphavruddha-

When vata is in the state of diminution, the kapha obstruct the path of pitta in normal condition causing thereby the weakness of the digestive power, stiffness of head, sleepiness, drowsiness, delirium, heart diseases, heaviness in the body, yellowness of the nails, etc. and expectoration of phlegm and bile. [19]

When *vata* gets provocated, one of the *vikaras* is called as "*asvapnah*" which means 'loss of sleep'.<sup>[20]</sup>

#### 4. Role of Prakruti

*Prakruti* is supposed to be one of the deciding factors amongst all which influence the nature of *nidra* of the particular person. It is said that *vata prakruti* people are '*jagarukah*' means

they tend to remain awake for maximum time due to dominance of *ruksha* property of *vatadosha*.<sup>[21]</sup>

Kapha prakruti people are having the nature of nidralu<sup>[22]</sup>

means these people tend to remain sleepy for maximum time. This characteristic might be attributed to *snigdha* property of *kaphaprakruti* on the basis of dominance of *ruksha* property keeps the person awake.

#### 5. Role of Rakta

*Hrudaya* (heart) is its seat (chief place of stay), from the heart it travels through the twenty four *dhamanis* (arteries); ten of them going upwards, ten going downwards and four going sidewards/obliquely; nourishes the entire body constantly, makes it grow, supports and maintains by activities which are due to invisible causes.<sup>[23]</sup>

The decrease and increase of this 'rasa' which is travelling all over the body (constantly) has to be inferred by the abnormalities produced.<sup>[23]</sup>

On this 'rasa' which is moving in the entire body its different parts, organs, doṣhas. dhatus, malas and viscera, there is a debate; Is this saumya (cold in properties and actions) or taijasa (hot in properties and actions) On this we say, since it is a liquid possessing properties such as unctuosness, envlivening (sustaining life), nourishing, supporting etc., it should be considered as saumya(cold in properties and actions) only. [23]

#### 6. Role of various Dhatus in Nidra

#### (asthimajjagatavata. asvapna)

Aggravation of *vayu* in the bones and bone-marrow gives rise to the following signs:

- (1) Cracking of the bones and joints
- (2) Piercing pain in the joints
- (3) Diminution of muscle-tissue and strength
- (4) Insomnia; and
- (5) Constant pain.

Eventhough the aggravation of  $v\ddot{a}yu$ , both in the bones and bone marrow, are described above as a causative factor of similar signs and symptoms, the distinctive features of these two conditions are to be ascertained on the basis of the specific nature of these two types of tissue elements as described in Sutra.<sup>[24]</sup>

when asthidhatu decreases then vata gets increases because of ashravaashravisambandh. [25]

During this particular condition, increased or provocated *vata* gets lodged in *asthi* and *majja*. It causes excessive pain along with other symptoms. It is observed that in these patients, nidra gets hampered due to following reason.

# a. Severe pain disturbs the sleep(effect of Pain over sleep ..)

Saper et al found that damage to the anterior hypothalamus caused severe insomnia. These findings suggest that the hypothalamus is involved in controlling bothwaking and sleeping states, as well as in the control of pain.

Hypothalamus and the basal forebrain generate non-REM sleep. It is pertinent that bothof these areas contain active gamma aminobutyric acid (GABA)-ergic neurons, which have an important role in the control of pain and sleep. These GABAergicneurons are sensitive to changes in body temperature that trigger a "sleep switch" that turnssleep on and off. The pineal gland is regulated by the SCN(supra chiasmatic nucleus). [26]

Thus, in asthimajjagatavata or any type of severe vataprakopa, the aggravated pain might be playing a role in disturbing the sleep and wake cycle.

# 7. Role of oja

Oja is somatmaka in nature. <sup>27</sup> Heart is the substratum of the oja and it also controller of the mind.[28]

# Ojakshaya cause

Physical exercise, fasting, anxiety, intake of unctuous food and food in small quantity or habitual intake of food having one taste only, exposure to wind and sun, fear, grief, intake of unctuous drinks, vigil(ratrijagran), excessive elimination of phlegm, blood, semen, oldage, adankala, demoniac seizures. [29]

Ratrijagarana causes ojokshaya. It happens due to increase of ruksha property due to ratrijagarana.

#### **Ojavyapada**

In ojovyapada, the signs and symptoms like stiffness and feeling of heaviness of the body, edema caused by *vata*, discoloration, exhaustion stupor and more of sleep are observed.<sup>[30]</sup> As in *ojovyapada*, the symptom like over sleep is being observed, it can be understood that the properties like *snigdha*, *picchila* might be getting increased which might be causing over sleep. That means, the causes of *ojovyapada* are different than those of *ojokshaya*.

#### 8. Role of Dosha

#### Signs of symptoms of doshavruddi

#### Dosavruddhi

# symptoms of increase of dosha

The signs and symptoms of  $dosh\bar{a}$ , dhatu and  $mal\bar{a}$  increase occurs due over-indulgence in things (food, drink, activities etc.).

Great increase of *vata*, gives rise to harshness of speech, emaciation of the body, black coloration, throbbing in the body parts, desire for warmth (warm comforts), **loss of sleep**, poor strength and hard faces etc.

Great increase of *pitta* gives rise to appearance of yellow color, discomfort due to heat, desire for cold things, **diminished sleep**, fainting, loss of strength, weakness of sense organs, yellow color in faces, urine and eyes etc.<sup>[31]</sup>

Great increase of *shlesma* (*kapha*) gives rise to white coloration, cold, stability (absence of movements), feeling of heaviness, debility, stupor, **sleep**, looseness of joints etc.<sup>[31]</sup>

So, it can be observed that any change in any *dosha* invariably affects the nature of sleep. The *rukshaguna* of *vata* is the cause of lesser *nidra* in *vataprakruti* people. So, conversely, it can be assumed that *snigdhaguna* brings good sleep in the patients. That is why increase in *kapha dosha*, brings more sleep.<sup>[32]</sup> to the patient while increase in *vata dosha*, reduces the quantity of sleep in the said condition.<sup>[33]</sup> Probably, as *pitta* is slightly *snigdha*, but mostly *ruksha*.<sup>[34]</sup> the same property might be influencing the sleep pattern by diminishing sleep slightly.

Thus, prakruti, dosha, dhatu, mind, indriya, oja....etc factors take part in managing nidra.

#### Modern aspect of physiology of sleep.

Sleep is a state of decreased response to external stimuli, decreased metabolism, decreased muscle tone, and reduced vital signs of breathing, blood pressure, heart rate etc. The brain on

other hand is not completely inactive having distinct electrical activity in each stage. These are controlled by the different sleep centers in the brain major of which are the raphe nucleus and locus ceruleus of pons both present in the brain stem. The neurotransmitters that play an important role in the induction of sleep are serotonin and melatonin. Serotonin controls the brain activities and melatonin has a depressive effect on the central nervous system. Both these are important for quality and quantity of sleep.<sup>[35]</sup>

#### Hetu or causative factors of anidra

Elimination of *doshas* from the body and head through purgation and emesis, fear, anxiety, anger, smoke, physical exercise, bloodletting, fast, uncomfortable bed, predominance of satva and suppression of tamas go a long way towards overcoming the sleep in excess.

The above-mentioned factors along with overwork, old age, diseases, specially these due to the vitiation of vata like colic pain, etc. are known to cause sleeplessness even in normal individuals. Some are insomniac even by nature.

Old age usually causes sleeplessness. Some people suffer from sleeplessness by nature. [36] Excessive Purgations of the body and of the head, vomiting, bloodletting, inhalation of smoke; hunger, thirst, pain, happiness, grief, sexual intercourse; fear, anger, worry and such other emotions; uncomfortable bed, increase of satvaguna, victory over (conquering of) Tamoguna (inadequacy or non-existance), dry foods and intense engagement (induIgence in anything or work); lapse of the usual sleeping time and habit, effect of diseases, increase of vata and pitta in the body - all these are the causes for loss of sleep. [37]

# Signs and symptoms of Anidra

Loss of sleep causes vague pains all over the body, feeling of heaviness of the head, yawning, laziness, tiredness, giddiness, indigestion, stupor, and diseases produced by increased vāta. [38] If some one holding back *nidra*, that is *nidravegaavarodha*, signs and symptoms arising from that also indicate the same as those of anidra, as nidra is not getting completed in that case also.

A. Other pathologies where *Anidra* is explained and the *samprapti* behind that... Various pathological factors related with sleep in the form of anidra.

#### Charaka

# Vatpittaja visarpa lakshana

In *vatapittaja visarpa nidranash* (insomnia)occur. Because of *vata* and *pitta* both are increases by various causes. it creates *daha* because of each others *bala*. Since due to insomnia movement and sensation loss occurs in patient, he becomes restless. Due to severe pain patient cant get proper sleep.<sup>[39]</sup>

# Vataja trushna lakshane

In *vataja trushna* increased *vayu* absorbed body fluids (*rasa-rakta-vasa-kapha-pitta-mutra-sweda*etc)and dryness occur in *dhatu*. which causes *Nidranash*(insomnia),dryness in mouth etc.<sup>[40]</sup>

# Vamana atiyog lakshana

In *vamana atiyoga vataprakopa* occur, due to increased *vatadosha* increased thirst and loss of sleep occurs.<sup>[41]</sup>

# Virechana atiyoga lakshana

In *virechana atiyoga Kapha*, *rakta* and *pitta* decreased and *vayu* increased, due to increased vata nidranash occur. [42]

# Sushruta

#### Vata vruddhi lakshana

In *vata vruddhi lakshana nidranash*occur, *sheetaguna* of *vata* increased then increased desire of hot food and environment.<sup>[43]</sup>

#### Pitta vruddhi lakshana

in *pittavruddhi lakshana alpanidrata* occur, increased body *santap*(heat)then increased desire of cold food and environment.<sup>[43]</sup>

# kapha vruddhi lakshane

in kapha lakshana nidra increased because of kaphasheetaguna. [43]

# Pramehaupdrava

In pittaja prameha updrava nidranasha occur, in vataja prameha updrava anidra occur and in kaphaja prameha updrava nidradhikya occur.<sup>[44]</sup>

# Vatic jwaralakshana

in *vataja jwara* increase *vatadosha* dryness in lips and throat, *nidranash*, dryness in body. head, heart and body pain, abdominal pain, all these complaints occur due to increasing *vata*. <sup>[45]</sup>

#### Pitta jwaralakshana

In *pittaja jwara a*dysentery(occur due to *pittaja dravaguna*), *nidralpatva* (loss of sleep), vomiting mix with *pitta*(*pitta* occur in *kaphasthana*). [46]

# Kaphaja jwaralakshana

In kaphaja jwara because of kapha vruddhi atinidrata occur. [47]

# Apsmara purvaroopa

Mind of an individual is overshadowed by rajas and *tamas*. when *doshas* gets aggravated and attach person whose minds are overshadowed by rajas and tamas. the dosha permeate the heart and sense organs, in epilepsy *purvroopa hrutkampa* loss of senses, insomnia occur. <sup>[48]</sup>

#### Nidranasha karan

Loss of sleepis caused by aggravation of *vata* and *pitta*, exhaustion of the mind, loss of tissues and injury to the body. [49]

# Effect of bahudosha avastha over nidra

Signs and symptoms (in general) of patients having vitiated *doshas* in excess are indigestion, anorexia, corpulence, anemia heaviness, exhaustion, eruption of pimples and urticaria, pruritus, no inclination for work, laziness, fatigue, weakness, foul smell of the body, lassitude, vitiation(*utklesa*) of *kapha* and *pitta*, **sleeplessness** or excessive sleep, drowsiness, impotency, impediment to intelligence, inauspicious dreams and loss of strength and complexion inspite of the intake of nourishing diet.in the event of such signs and symptoms, the patient should be administered emesis and purgation with due regard to the *doshas* vitiated and the strength of the patient.<sup>[50]</sup>

# **DISCUSSION**

Proper sleep lead to *arogya* (health)and *sukha*(happiness).<sup>[51]</sup> *Anidra* is a *vataja nanatmaj vikara*. When quantity and quality of *nidra* are reduced, the provocation of *vata* and *pitta* takes the centre stage in the pathogenesis of *anidra*. *Anidra* causes *dukha* (unhappiness), *karshya*, *abala* (weakness) *klaibya* (impotency) *aghyanta* (impaired knowledge).

Increase condition of *vata dosha* can cause *anidra*. *Anidra* due to *vata dosha* of *ruksha guna*, increased condition of *pitta dosha* in Relation to its slight *ruksha* and slight *snighdha guna* is also responsible for *alpanidra*.

anidra is related to involvement of manovaha strotasa and indriyas resulting in impaired ability to concentrate, poor memory, reduction in working capability stamina and leads to behavioural changes in human beings.

Due to improper sleep *rasa dhatu* becomes deficient, does not circulate in and nourishes body which causes excessive emaciation.

suppression of urge for *nidra* causes yawning, malaise, drowsiness, heaviness in head and eyes.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Vata dosha, pitta dosha, rajo guna, hrudaya, mana, and sangyavaha strotas(sensory channels)play an important role in the pathogenesis of anidra. anidra has been included under vata nanatmaja vikaras.

*Manasika nidanas* as well as psychic stress are main causative factors of *anidra*. the quality and quantity of *nidra* is deranged by both *shareerika* and *mansika dosha*.

Thus, in the conditions where *vata* is dominating, like modern lifestyle, older age, disease related pain, night job shift, anxiety. the nature of *nidra* remains as *anidra* or *nidranasha*. These are mostly the conditions where *vata* is dominating factor.

In the conditions where *pitta* is dominating, like *krodha*, *vidagdha annasevana*, and during digestion of food, the nature of *nidra* remains as *alpanidra*.

*Nidra* is one of the supportive pillar of life, which gives adequate rest to body and mind. avoiding causative factors is must to tackle the condition more preciously with *ayurvedic* management.

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