



# Insomnia (Anidra)- Nidan, Lakshan and Effect of Panchkarma Chikitsa

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## Abstract

Sleep is a naturally recurring state of mind and body. Insomnia disorder is defined as a subjective perception or complaint of inadequate or poor quality sleep due to a number of factors such as difficulty falling asleep, waking up frequently during the night with difficulty returning to sleep, waking up too early in the morning or unrefreshing sleep. Insomnia is not defined by the numbers of hours of sleep a person gets. Insomnia is widely associated with medical and psychiatric conditions as well as with impaired quality of life and emotional functioning. Now a day many people are dependent on sleeping pills and have become habitual to them. There are 3 support pillars of life Aahar, Nidra, Brahmcharya. Nidra provides nutrition to living body. Anidra has been described in detail by Acharyas in various contexts like Vata nanatmaja Vikara, Vataja Jwara etc. Panchkarma therapies like Shirodhara, Shirobasti, Shiroabhyang, Shiropicchu, Padaabhyang is very useful in treatment of Anidra. After reviewing the recent findings from literature we aim to discuss causes, consequences and management of insomnia with the perspective of Ayurveda.

**Keywords:** Insomnia; Anidra; Upstambh; Shirodhara; Shirobasti

## Introduction

In Ayurveda Aahar, Nidra, Brahmcharya are support system of life by these pillars body gets strength, good complexion, proper growth [1,2]. Sleep is one of the essential for healthy life. Nidra provides nutrition to living body and maintain the health like lord Vishnu. who nourishes and protect the world [3]. Nidra is Swabhavik Rog provoked by nature. According to Acharya Charak happiness and unhappiness, proper and improper development, strength and weakness, potency and impotency, intellect and non-intellect, life and death of an individual depend on proper and improper sleep [4]. Nidra is due to Sharirik dosha Kapha and Mansik dosha tama so any reason which cause decrease in kapha and Tamo guna

in body leads to anidra [5]. Acharaya Vagbhatt and Sushruta have mentioned Vata Pitt Vridhi in Nidranaash [6]. Insomnia is defined as difficulty in sleep. It is a common sleep disorder. Approximately 30% to 40% of adults in the United States report symptoms of insomnia at some point in a given year. Short-term insomnia has an estimated prevalence of 9.5% in the United States, but about 1 in 5 cases of short-term insomnia transitions to chronic insomnia, which can persist for years. Several lifestyle factors such as excessive caffeine consumption, alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, over-work, over exercise, poor sleep habits also play an important role in developing insomnia. In Ayurveda, Anidra is considered as a disease belonging to the category of Nanatmaja Vatvyadhi [7].

## Aetiopathogenesis

**Aharaj Nidan (Food habits):** Excessive consumption of Aahar like Rukshanna Ratriprabhutashana Upavasa Visamashana Adhyashana Alpashana Viruddhashana Ati-madhyapana Direct drug effects (Including Alcohol) Drug withdrawal effects (including Alcohol) can cause the Nidranasha [8].

**Viharaj Nidan:** Excessive Dhumpana Sewan (Adhika Dhumpana), Ratri Jagarana, Adhika Sharirika, Shrama, Diwaswapna, Ativyavaya, uncomfortable sleeping environment (Asukha Shayya), Vegavidharna are responsible factors for Anidra.

**Mansik Nidan:** The Satvaudiryaa and Tamojaya are said to be the causes for Nidranasha and Manasantapa.

**All the psychic conditions:** like worry, anger, mania etc. cause Anidra [9].

**Improper Chikitsa:** Excessive effect of Purgation, emesis, smoking, physical exercise (excessive), blood-letting (excessive) caused vitiation of Vata [10].

## Other Factors

- **Karya:** When an individual is deeply involved in a work, either mental or physical, his mind would be divorced from the sleep or he would not get the sleep. This happens in persons who are having a heavy load of mental work.
- **Kala:** It is another factor which plays an important role in the Nidra and Anidra both. Everyone experiences in day to day life, that as soon as the night comes he feels the desire for sleep. This type of feeling, under normal circumstance is never seen during the day time except in the summer. It indicates that the sleep has got a relationship with the time factor.
- **Vikara:** There are various diseases in which sleep is disturbed or they may be causative factors for sleeplessness.
- **Prakriti:** The Vata Prakriti persons have been described as Jagaruka i.e., those who sleep very less. The Satvika persons also sleep less time. The individuals of the Tamasika Manasa Prakriti are having excessive sleep.
- **Vata:** Vata Dosha is considered mainly as sleep dispeller. Vata is having Chala Guna and by virtue of this Guna, it does not allow the Mann to take rest and therefore, it doesn't allow the individual to sleep well and soundly. Hence, we can consider all Vata Prakopaka Hetus as the causative factors for Anidra [11].

## According to Modern Aspect

Insomnia is due to many factors like stress and anxiety, life style factors, some mental health conditions, some physical health conditions (COPD, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson disease, over active thyroid, Arthritis)

## Classification of Insomnia

### On the basis of Cause

- **Primary Insomnia:** Not directly associated with any other health condition or problem.
- **Secondary Insomnia:** Because of something else, such as a health condition (like asthma, depression, arthritis, cancer or heart burn) pain, medication they are taking, or a substance they are using (like alcohol) [12].

### On the basis of Duration

- **Transient insomnia:** Lasting from a night to a week and is usually caused by events that alter normal sleep pattern, such as travelling or sleeping in an unusual environment.
- **Short term insomnia:** Lasts about two to three weeks and is usually attributed to emotional factors such as worry or stress.
- **Chronic insomnia:** Occurs most of the night and lasts a month or more [12].

**Purvarupa:** Purvarupa of Anidra is not mentioned in any Ayurvedic classics. This is Vata predominant Vyadhi, so Avyakt is Purvarupa.

**Rupa:** Cardinal feature of Insomnia is Loss of Sleep. Due to lack of sleep symptoms usually appears are [13,14] (Table 1):

Rupa	Ch.	Su.	A.H.	A.S.
Jrumbha	√	√	√	√
Angamarda	√	√	√	√
Tandra	√	√	√	√
Shiro rog	√	-	-	-
Shirogaurav	-	√	√	√
Akshigaurav	√	√	-	-
Jadya	-	-	√	√
Glani	-	-	√	√
Bhrama	-	-	√	√
Apakti	-	-	√	√
Vata rog	-	-	√	√

**Table 1:** Rupa Symptoms.

## Samprapti

- Anidra is considered as Vata Nanatamaj Rog. If an individual falls asleep when his mind including the sensory and motor organs get exhausted, and they dissociate themselves from their objects.

- Mansik dosh raja plays an important role in pathogenesis. Vata vitiation occurs due to both kind of etiological factors i.e. Sharirik and Mansik.
- Impairment of psychosomatic functions of mind restrict detachment of Mann from Gyanendriya and karmendriya [15].
- This ultimately results into the pathological stage of Anidra.

### Management of Anidra

In the treatment of Anidra, one should depend upon the measures having Vatashamaka, Vedanashamaka and Roga Nivaraka effects as well as pacifying effects on mental activities. The treatments which are described for Anidra in Ayurvedic Samhitas are mostly same. It is described in form of Ahara, Vihara, Aushadh and Panchakarma as follows [15-18].

**Nidan Parivarjan:** Before starting treatment for insomnia any other pathological condition (psychiatric, neurological, chronic illness) may be ruled out first and if present it should be treated accordingly.

### Dietary form

- Mamsa of Anoop Deshiya animals and birds, Shali rice, curd, milk, wheat these food articles are responsible for Kapha Vriddhi.
- Use of Ikshu, Pishta, Draksh, Mishri.
- Incompatible, indigestible, hot spicy food article and excessive consumption of coffee, tea, soft drink, alcohol and smoking should be avoided.

### Life style Management

- Comfortable bed, comfortable room should be required.
- Patient may be advised to do some light physical activities before going to bed.
- Regular sleep time pattern should be followed. Day time sleeping should be avoided.
- Living active life both mentally and physically, practicing yoga and meditation like pranayama Surya namaskar, Tadasana, Shavasan, Padamasana relive stress and calm mind.

### Compound formulations:

Mansyadi Kvatha	Nidrodya Rasa	Brahmi Ghrita
Brahmi Vati	Vatkulantsk Rasa	Himsagar Taila
Sarpagandhadi Vati	Sarasvatarishta	Narayan Taila
Manasmitra Vatak	Ashvagandharishta	Kshirbala Taila
Mahakalyanak Ghrita	Smritisagar Rasa	Brahmi Rasyana

### Panchkarma form

- Nasya
- Abhyang (Abhyanga with medicated Vathara oil. This pacifies Vata Dosha and makes the body strong, grow well, healthy and induce sound sleep)
- Padabhyang (practice of Padabhyang before sleeping can improve eye sight and induce good sleep)
- Utsadan
- Chakshu Tarpana
- Shiro Lepa
- Vadana Lepa
- Murdha Taila (Pouring oil over the head and massaging oil result in calm sleep)
- Karna Purana
- Shiro Basti
- Shirodhara Ayurvedic treatment of Kerala has advised the Tailadhara, Takradhara, and Kshiradhara.

### Medication form

#### ➤ Single drugs

- **Sarpagandha churna:** It is a powerful tranquilizer and induces sleep [19-21].
- **Ashvagandha churna:** 3 gm Churna is used two times in a day with sugar and Ghrita before meal. It vitalizes our mind and improves memory. It refreshes our nerves and relaxes them.
- **Jatamansi churna:** Its dose is 500 mg to 1 gm two times in a day with milk after meal. It is a sedative herb, used to tranquilize a patient. It relaxes the nervous system. It has been found to increase levels of neurotransmitters like serotonin and is good for memory too.
- **Vacha churna:** Dose is 30-50 mg BD. It is an efficient mind calming herb which cures tension, emotional stress and depression.
- **Brahmi churna/svarasa:** Dose is 1-2 gm BD/10 ml BD with milk and sugar.
- **Mandukparni churna/Svarasa:** Dose is 1-2 gm BD/10 ml BD with milk and sugar.
- **Shankhapushpi churna/Svarasa:** Dose is 1-2 gm BD/10 ml BD with milk and sugar.

Brahmi, Mandukparni, Shankhapushpi are calming and tranquilizing herbs used widely as brain tonic.

## Discussion

The sleep is an indicator of good health because it brings the normalcy in body tissue and relaxes the person. Ayurveda's approach towards the illness gives due consideration to both - psychic and somatic levels of body. According to Ayurveda, the emotional diseases should be cured by Gyanam, Vigyanam, Dhairya, Smriti and Samadhi. As Anidra is a Vata vyadhi, which is disturbed the daily life routine when it is in acute phase, devoid of complications and has affected a patient who has strong will and physique can be managed with Chikitsa. The line of treatment comprises of Nidanparivarjan, Panchkarma therapies, Medication, Satwavjaya Chikitsa and life style management. Nidra is due to Kapha and Tama so in condition of Anidra use Kaphavardhak and Vata shamak Aahar-Vihar. Abhyanga reaches upto different Dhatu if it is applied for sufficient time, this pacifies Vata Dosha and induce sound sleep. When Nasya Dravya is instilled into the nostril, the drug reaches Shringataka Marma and Marma is again in contact with Siras of Nasa, Akshi, Karna and Gala. So, as the drug is instilled it will goes in upper part of nasal cavity and stimulates the olfactory neuron and thus the vitiated Doshas are expelled out.

In Shirodhara prolonged and continuous pressure due to trickling of medicated liquid over forehead cause tranquility of mind and reduce stress. Samvahana Means a caressing of the organs, Susruta has mentioned that a gently pressing or caressing of the lower limbs with hands is known as Samvahana, and due to gently massage of feet brings sleep, is being pleasing and wholesome for eyes removes fatigue and numbness and softness skin of the feet.

Internal medicines like Sarpagandha, Jatamansi, Brahmire mind calming herb which relaxes the nervous system and increases level of neurotransmitter like serotonin and melatonin hormone that helps in cure of Anidra and also improves memory. In Anidra Mansik Upchar like psychotherapy, follow rules of Sadvritta and Yoga meditation are also helpful.

## Conclusion

Prevention is the most important key factor for this disease. Patients should be educated to follow the life style changes recommended by Ayurveda. Insomnia is more commonly seen in middle age group especially more in female during menopause age. Disturbed sleep causes a high risk of lot of physical and mental abnormalities and most of the patient suffering from insomnia also having negative emotions likes Krodha, Bhaya, Shoka and Chinta etc. Ayurvedic medicines used in the treatment of insomnia, mainly acts by rejuvenating or nourishing brain cells.

Various measures provided in Ayurveda whether by avoiding causative factors or with administration of drugs in single or compound form can certainly manage Anidra (insomnia). Many Panchkarma procedure are best way to treat Anidra. Medhya herbal formulation containing the drugs having anti-anxiety and anti-stress effect with muscle relaxant activity also provides the beneficial results to keep the patient anxiety free and stress free to induce normal sleep to lead a healthy and happy life. so Ayurveda has great potential to treat a condition of Insomnia.

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