Importance Of Nidra In Healthy Life

Vd. Sanjiv D. Fulse
Professor and HOD,
Dept. of Kriya Sharir,
C.S.M.S.S. Ayurved
Mahavidyalaya,
Aurangabad, Maharashtra,
India.

Vd. Rajesh S. Upadhyay
Professor and HOD, Dept. of
Agadtastra Avum Vidhi
Vaidyaka, C.S.M.S.S. Ayurved
Mahavidyalaya, Aurangabad,
Maharashtra, India.

Vd. Sanjay J. Dahake
Professor, and HOD,
Dept. of Rasashastra and
Bhaishajya Kalpana, C.S.M.S.S.
Ayurved Mahavidyalaya,
Aurangabad, Maharashtra,
India.

Abstracts

When mind gets exhausted, sense organs (gaanendriya) and motor organs (Karmendriya) become inactive then Nidra occurs. Like proper diet, proper sleep is also essential for better health. Improper sleep produces abnormal symptoms in the body. Tamas (A guna) becomes predominance at night which produces sleep. Sleep during night is most effective than day time. Proper sleep is responsible for nourishment of body, strength, desire for work, appetizer, happiness, virility, knowledge etc. It is also responsible for equilibrium of dhatus (M. dosa, dhatu and mala). Improper sleep produces abnormal symptoms in the body such as obesity, headache, heaviness in the body, loss of digestive power, symptoms related to heart, impotence, emaciation, illiteracy etc. Nidra during day time except in grismartu (summer season) should be avoided. If a person doesn't sleep properly at night, he should make it up by sleeping during the day time for half the period spent in the night vigil.

Key words – Nidra, Sleep, health, dhatu, life.

Introduction

Ayurveda is an ancient science of life. Ayurveda described the hita and ahita (wholesome and unwholesome), sukha and dukha (Happy and unhappy) life. The life which is healthy and welfare of the society is called hitayu otherwise it is ahitayu. Similarly when the person is healthy is known as happy otherwise he will be unhappy. The equilibrium of dhatus in qualities as well as in their actions is called prakriti or health and their disequilibrium is called dukha (disease). In the state of health equilibrium of dhatus should be maintained as it is the object of Ayurveda.

Charaka described the three supports of life viz. ahara (diet), Nidra (Sleep) and bramhacharya (abstinence). Proper use of these three supports maintain healthy life otherwise body gets ill health. Food is essential to nourish the body, nidra maintain good health. The last support bramhacharya protects our shukradhatu (semen) from excess loss. Among these three supports Nidra is described in this article.

Nidra

When mind gets tired, when gyaanendriya (sense organs) and karmendriya (motor organs) cannot perceive their vishyas (objects), then state of sleep occurs. Timely sleep is responsible for nourishment of body, strength, desire for work, appetizer, better complexion. It is also responsible for equilibrium of dhatus.

Happiness, unhappiness, nourishment, emaciation, strength, weakness, virility, impotence, Knowledge illiteracy, life and death – all these occur depending on the proper or improper sleep. Tamas becomes strong at night which leads to sleep. Untimely and excessive sleep take away
both happiness and longevity. 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. Hence proper sleep is essential for physical and mental well being of a person.

**Aims and objects**
1. To create awareness about the importance of Nidra among the people.
2. To study benefits of proper sleep in healthy life and side effects of improper sleep.
3. To promote life style in betterway.

**Literary Review**

**Indications of day sleep**
Sleeping at day time in all seasons is prescribed for those persons who are tired in singing, study, alcoholism, sexual intercourse, elimination therapy, carrying heavy weight, indigestion, injured, emaciated, those who are too old, too young, those suffering from thirst, diarrhea, colic pain, hiccup, those who are exhausted by journey, vigil, Krodha (anger), shoka (grief) Bhaya (fear) and those who are suffering from habitual day sleep. By this the equilibrium of dhatus and strength are maintained and the kapha nourishes the organs and ensures longevity. In summer season nights become shorter and vata gets aggravated in the body due to the adana (absorption of fluid from body). Therefore during this season day sleep is prescribed for all.

**Contra-indications of day sleep**
Sleeping during the day time in the seasons other than summer is not advisable as it causes vitiation of kapha and pitta. Persons with excessive fat, those who are addicted to taking unctuous substance, those with slaismika constitution, those suffering from disease due to the vitiation of kapha and those suffering from dusivisa (artificial poisoning) should never sleep during day time. If one violates the prescription regarding sleep during the day time, he would subject himself to halimaka (serious type of Jaunice), headache, timidity, heaviness of the body, malaise, loss of digestive power, hrdayapalepa (a feeling as if phlegm adhered to the heart), Oedema, anorexia, nausea, rhinitis, hemicrania, urticaria, eruption, abscess, pruritus, drowsiness, coughing, disease of the throat, impairment of the circulating channels of the body, fever, weakness of sensory and motor organs and enhancement of the toxic effects of artificial poisons. So one should keep in view the merits and demerits of sleep in various seasons and situations in order that it may bring happiness to him.

**Effect of night awakening**
Vigil during night causes roughness in the body, sleep during day time causes unctuousness and dosing in sitting posture does neither cause roughness nor unctuousness.

**Importance of Nidra**
Like proper diet, proper sleep is also essential for the maintenance of the body. Corpulence and emaciation are specially depends upon proper or improper sleep and diet. Sleeping during the day time in the season other than grisma (Summer) is not advisable as it causes vitiation of vata, pitta and kapha. If a person doesn’t sleep properly at night for a specified period, he should make it up by sleeping during the day time for half the period spent in the night vigil. According to vagbhata, if a person wants to sleep at day time, he should sleep before lunch.
Types of Nidra:- Caraka described 7 types of nidra\(^{16}\).

1. Tamobhava - caused by tama
2. Shleshmasamudbhava- caused by kapha.
4. ShariraShramasambhava – caused by physical exertion
5. Agantuki – caused by external factors.
7. RatriSwabhavaprabhava – normally occurring at night.

Tamobhava occurs at the time of death. Agantukinidra is indicative of bad prognosis leading to imminent death. RatriSwabhavaprabhavanidra is the best for good health and it occurs naturally at night. It is also called bhutadhatrinidra.

Suitable time for wake

One should wake up in the brahmamuhurtas (i.e. between 4 to 6 am) following the proper digestion of food taken at night \(^{17}\).

Sleeping posture

After taking the dinner, one should walk for hundred steps before going to sleep, then one should down in recumbent posture up bed taking eight times breath and should change the posture to night lateral till taking 16 times breath and thereafter to left lateral taking 32 times breath and then can sleep in any posture but it is always advisable to sleep in left lateral posture because the Agni (digestive power) lies in the left side of the body above the nabhi (umbilicus), which is responsible for the digestion \(^{18}\).

Modern concept of sleep

**Definition**- Sleep and wakefulness occur alternatively within 24 hrs in the life of human beings. It has not yet been possible to find out the correct cause of sleep. During sleep organs like kidney, heart, lung, brain, organs of the gastro intestinal tract etc. remain active so it can be assumed as an active phenomenon. Sleep can be defined as a state of consciousness that differs from wakefulness by a loss of critical reactivity to events in the environment with a profound alteration in the function of the brain.

**Time of sleep**- Animals and man should one sleep period in 24 hours depends on habit. Night, commonly being the period of rest is used for sleep. But in night workers day – sleeping is the habit.

**Sleep requirement** – for the new born baby 16-20 hours, children – 12-14 hours, adults – 7-9 hours, old age 5 hours.

**Physiological changes during sleep- changes are given below**

1) **Circulatory system** – during sleep pulse rate, cardiac output and blood pressure reduced.
2) **Respiratory system**- a) may be costal or periodic, specially in children. b) Tidal volume, rate of respiration and therefore pulmonary ventilation lowered.
3) **Basal metabolic rate**- reduced by 10-15 %.
4) **Urine** – volume less, reaction variable, specific gravity and phosphates raised.
5) **Secretions** – a) Salivary and Lacrimal reduced. b) gastric raised c) sweet raised.
6) **Muscle**- relaxed
7) **Eyes**- a) eyeballs – roll up and out. b) eyelids – come closer, c) pupils contracted.
8) **Blood** – volume increased
9) **Nervous system**- a) electroencephalogram- appearance of δ- wave. b) Deep reflexes reduced. c) Babinski – extensor d) superficial reflexes – unchanged e) vasomotor reflexes more brisk. f) Light reflexes – retained.
Effects of prolonged sleeplessness in man

Objective changes are few, viz, Babinski- extensor, equilibrium – disturbed, neuromuscular – fatigue etc. Subjective symptoms are chief viz, a) mental concentration difficult and inaccurate. b) Threshold for pain lowered. If very much prolonged, collapse and death. Cortical nerve cells undergo shrinkage and chromatolysis.

Two types of sleep – During each night, a person goes through stages of two types sleep that alternate with each other. They are called (1) slow-wave sleep because in this type of sleep the brain waves are very strong and very low frequency (2) rapid eye movement sleep (REM – sleep) because in this type of sleep the eyes undergo rapid movements despite the fact that the person is still asleep. Most sleep during each night is of the slow-wave variety; this is the deep restful sleep that the person experience during the 1st hour of sleep after having been wake for many hours. REM. Sleep, on the other hand, occurs in episodes that occupy about 25 percent of the sleep time in young adults. Each episode normally recurs about every 90 minutes, this type of sleep is not so restful, and it is usually associated with vivid dreaming.

Children need many hours of sleep per day for the proper functioning and development of the body. Up to 18 hours for newborn babies with a declining rate as a child ages. Early in 2015 after a two year study, the national sleep foundation in the US announced newly revised recommendations as shown in the table below. Newborns need up to 18 hours of sleep per day for 1st couple of month, the requirement goes on decreasing with increasing age. Infants and toddlers (i.t. till 3 years) need around 14 hours of sleep per day.

- Newborns (0-2 month) - 12-18 hours
- Infants (3-11 month) - 14-15 hours
- Toddlers (1-3 year) - 12-14 hours
- Preschoolers (3-5 year) - 11-13 hours
- School age children (5-10 year) - 10-11 hours. Teens (10-17 years) - 8.5 to 9.25 hours.
- Adults - 7-9 hours

Discussion

According to ayurveda Ahar, Nidra and Brahmacharya are the important upastambha (Basic pillars) for maintain good health. Like proper diet and proper brahmacharya, proper nidra is also essential for healthy life. It maintains health as well as prevents the disease. Natural sleep occurs due to predominance of tamas. Tamoguna is predominant at night therefore naturally sleep occurs at night. Sleep during night is more effective for better health. Sleeping during day time should be avoided except grismrutu. In grismarutu predominance of adana occurs. i.e. dryness occurs in the body which aggravated the vatadosa, therefore to decrease vatadosa day sleep is necessary during grisma. Day sleep increases the kaphadosa. Kapha has snigdha (unctuous) which reduces dryness of vatadosa. Also day sleep is essential in those persons who vigils at night. These persons can sleep at day time but they should sleep half the period which they spent in the night vigil. If a person wants to sleep at day time he should sleep before lunch. Day time sleep after meal vitiates the dosa. Sleeping at day time in all seasons is essential in those persons who are tired by singing, study, intoxication, sexual intercourse, carrying heavy weight, indigestion, injured, emaciated, too old, too young, those suffering from thirst, diarrhoea, which are exhausted by journey, anger, grief, fear etc. Person should wake up in the brahmamuhurta.
Conclusion

From above description it is concluded that proper sleep is mandatory for good health and improper sleep produce so many abnormal symptoms in the body. If anyone vitiate this rule, his body gets ill-health and if proper treatment is not given he may die also.

References