

CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF KUSHMANDA GHRITA NASYA AS A MEMORY BOOSTER

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ABSTRACT

Buddhi (intellectual power of brain) is a powerful entity which retains the specific knowledge or the essence of the texts gained by reading, listening or repeating it. It does not only retain the knowledge but time by time whenever needed it has the ability to recall the same. Retention of cognition takes place under the area of *Medha* (storage device). When any stimulant comes against, those stored experience comes in mind. Recollection happens with the help of *Smriti* (memory or recall). In modern science the memory and its processes is still undefined. The *Ayurvedic* philosophy of *Mana*, *Buddhi*, *Atma* (sole) definitely played a important role in the processes of cognition and memory. *Kushmanda* (*Benincasa hispida*) is mentioned as one of the *medhya* drug in the *Ayurvedic* literature. *Ghrita*, the *uttama sneha*, considered best for stimulation of digestion, promotion of longevity, promotion of memory and intellect, and further described as *yogavahi rasayana*, means that any drug processed with *ghrita* will possess the quality of the added drug. *Acharyas* have described importance of *Nasya* therapy by saying “*Nasa Hi Shiraso Dvaram*”. Because nose is indirectly connected to the brain centers in the head. This indicates there is a very close relationship between the *Nasa* and *Shiras* (Brain).

Keywords: *Kushmanda*, Memory boosting, *Nasya*

INTRODUCTION

In psychology, memory is the process in which information is encoded, stored, and retrieved. Encoding allows information that is from the outside world to reach our senses in the forms of chemical and physical stimuli.

Etymologically, the modern English word “memory” comes to us from the Middle English *memorie*, ultimately from the Latin *memoria* and *memor*, meaning “mindful” or “remembering”¹.

Many experimental studies has been carried out in modern medicine which show that Nasal delivery has been explored as an alternative administration route to target drugs directly to the brain² and in some experimental studies *Kushmanda* Improves Learning and Memory in Mice.

Acharyas have described importance of *Nasya* therapy by saying “*Nasa Hi Shiraso Dvaram*”³. Because, nose is indirectly connected with the brain centers in the head. This indicates there is a very close relationship between the *Nasa* and *Shiras* (Brain). *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned one specific anatomical structure named *Munja*⁴, which is like type of grass which acts like *Ishika* (i.e., like a painter’s brush). The *Munja* structure can be thought for an olfactory bulb and the *Ishika* for the numerous neurons join together to form the olfactory tract.⁵ During this explanation, classics have mentioned one more structure; the *Shringataka Marma* (anatomical area) where there is an association of *Ghrana* (nasal), *Akshi* (visual), *Shrotra* (auditory), and *Jiwha* (lingual) *Siras* (nerves and vessels) are present⁶. *Acharya Charaka* says the *Sneha Pradhana Navana* drug (lipid processed herbal drug), gets absorbed in the *Shringataka* region⁷. That means lipid soluble drugs are much more efficiently absorbed by nasal mucosa. *Nasya Karma* is used both to manage the *Sthanika* (local) and *Sarvadaihika* (general) disorders. *Ayurveda* says *Agni* (Digested Power) & Memory are related to each other. *Sadhak pitta*⁸ is type of pitta which reside in Brain & Heart and it is related with willpower, memory etc. *Pitta* and *Agni* are very closely related. So, memory & Digested power are linked according to *Ayurveda*.

AIM

Conceptual study of *Kushmanda ghrita Nasya* as a memory booster.

OBJETIVES

1. To study concept memory according to *Ayurveda* and modern science.
2. To study the concept of *Kushmanda Ghrita Nasya* as a memory enhancer.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Extensive literary review would be done from standard *Ayurvedic* texts about to elaborate the concept of memory according to *Ayurveda*. Extensive literary review will be done from standard *Ayurvedic* texts about Role of *Kushmanda & Ghrita* for their Memory boosting effect.

Extensive literary review will be done from standard *Ayurvedic* texts about *Nasyakarma*

DRUG REVIEW:

KUSHMANDA:

Latin name: *Banincasa Hispida*

Family: *Cucurbitaceae*

English name: The ash ground, White Pumpkin

Sanskritname: *Kushmandam, Pushpaphala, Pitapushpa, Brihatphala, Kumbhaphala, Som-srushta, Sthiraphala*

Gana: *Bruhaniya, balya, prajasthapan, Madhur skandh, (Charak) Vatasanshaman (Sushrut), balya, madyam panchamul (Vagbhat), guduchyadi (Bhavaprakash)*

Guna: *Laghu, Snigdha*

Ras: *Madhur*

Virya: *Sheet*

Vipak: *Madhur*

GHEE:

Ghee improves memory power – *Shasyate Dhee smruti medha agnikaanskhinaam Ghritam*. – For people seeking memory power, intelligence and digestive power, ghee is the best.

Ghee is a wonderful adjuvant. When herbal products to improve memory etc are advised, they should be taken with ghee, because lipid soluble herbal constituents cross blood brain barrier easily, to bring about the desired action at the level of brain. Even in normal circumstances, a little bit of ghee (say half spoon per day), included in your diet will be great. Since the quantity is less, there will not be any issues regarding lipid level increase.

MEMORY BOOSTER REVIEW:

In the Ayurvedic classics, the word "*Buddhi*" is used in many contexts. On studying its literally meaning, (*Nirukti* and *Vyutpatti*) it can be understood as the psychological faculty for reasoning and logic. However, after critical analysis of classics, it is evident that at many places it has been used as an advance stage or as a process leading to a true knowledge. *Buddhi* is described as *Jnana* (knowledge). The word "*Medha*" has been used mainly in two ways viz. *Grahana Shakti* (grasping power) and *Dharana Shakti* (retention power). Besides this, *Buddhi*, *Smriti*, *Dhi*, etc., words have been used in a similar sense at many places. In *Charaka Samhita* word *prajna* has been used for synonym to *Buddhi*. *Prajna* has been described to be of three types *Dhi*, *Dhriti* and *Smriti*.

Dhi means by which the known subject can be retained for long time is called *Dhi* or *Medha*. *Dalhana* has mentioned that control over the

mind is possible only on the basis of retained experiences whether that object is useful or not "*Dhriti Manaso Niyamatmika Buddhi*"

The meaning of the term, *Smriti* has been elaborated by *Chakrapani* in this context. *Smriti*, here does not stand for mere recollection but for the whole process involved in the formation of the faculty of memory. The meaning of the term, *Smriti* has been elaborated by *Chakrapani* in this context. *Smriti*, here does not stand for mere recollection but for the whole process involved in the formation of the faculty of memory.

Concept of improving cognitive functions like intelligence and memory is relatively very new to current modern system of medicine. The first drug discovered to enhance cognitive functions known as "Nootropics" were in 1972. Knowledge of natural herbal drugs possessing cognitive enhancing activity dates back to thousands of century back. "*Medhya Rasayana*" is a specific group of four, time-tested classical preparations for promotion of mental health and well-being. *Kushmanda* is one among them mentioned for these purpose by Acharya Charaka.

NASYA REVIEW:

One of the Panchakarmas mentioned in Ayurveda, *Nasya* therapy is a process wherein the drug (herbalized oils and liquid medicines) is administered through the nostrils. Since nose is the gateway of the head, the therapy is highly effective in curing a number of diseases pertaining to the head, if it is performed systematically. The therapy cleanses and opens the channels of the head, thereby improving the process of oxygenation (*prana*), which has a direct influence on the functioning of brain. The therapy is beneficial if done on a regular

basis, because it keeps the eyes, nose and ear healthy. It also prevents the early graying of hair and bear.

According to the functions the *Nasya karma* is of 3 types.

- *Virechana nasya*.
- *Brihmana nasya*
- *Shamana nasya*.

Also, according to the quantity of the *Nasya karma* used it is of 2 types.

- *Marsha nasya*
- *Pratimarsha nasya*.

Navana – When *Nasya Karma* is performed for *Snehana* and *Shodhana*. This form of *Nasya Karma* is regarded as the commonest type. The general indications are headaches, hair fall and untimely graying of hair, tinnitus, otalgia, Bells palsy etc.

Avapeedana – *Shodhana* and *Stambhana*. This is another type of *Nasya Karma* is wherein juices are squeezed in the nostrils. 4 or 8 drops are instilled in each nostril depending on the ailment and client's condition. *Avapeedana Nasya karma* is generally recommended for ailments like rhinitis, epilepsy, delirium, poisoning and the condition of coma.

Pradhamana – In this *Nasya karma*, dry powder are blown into the nostrils with the help of a narrow pipe. Or else the medicinal powder is made to be inhaled from a fine *potali*. Brain imbalance and mental diseases like epilepsy, unconsciousness and other psychiatry conditions are treated by this method. Generally the pungent and robust herbs like *vidanga*, *vacha*, *apamarga*, *maricha* etc are used in this *Nasya karma* type.

Dhooma – 3 further types – *Prayogik*, *Snehaik* and *Virechanik*.

In this particular *Nasya karma* type, medicated fumes are made to be inhaled. The inhalation may take place both from the nostrils as well as mouth for about 3 to 5 times. The client is advised to exhale out the fumes only from the mouth.

The *Dhooma Nasya karma* is generally practiced after the *Vamana karma* or the inducing of vomiting therapy so as to release the aggravated *Kapha dosha*. Of the 3 subtypes,

Prayogik type – This is also called as *Shamana* as it helps to mitigate the imbalance resulting from *dosha* discrepancy. Herbs like *Guggulu*, *Chandana* and *Jatamansi* are used for this *Nasya karma* type.

Snehaik type – This *Nasya* type is for providing lubrication and nutrition. *Jeevaniya* herbs in ghee are used for this type of nasal errhine.

Virechanik type – This *Nasya karma* type is meant to provide detox and expulsion of the built in toxins. Strong herbs and natural ingredients like *Hartal*, *Manashila*, *Malkangni* are used for this procedure.

Pratimarsha – *Snehana* and *Virechana*

Generally 8 to 10 drops of the medicated oil is inserted in a nostril in the procedure of *Nasya karma*. Yet, in case of *Pratimarsha Nasya*, only 2 drops are made to be inhaled.

Benefits of Nasya Karma

- *Nasya karma* ensures the proper and healthy growth of hair.
- The therapy enhances the activity of sense organs and protects the person from diseases pertaining to head (*urdhwanga*)
- Early aging process is effectively prevented by the regular administration of *Nasya karma*

DISCUSSION

According to commentators *Kushmanda ghrita* is act as a Memory booster by its “*Prabhava*” effect. *Kushmanda Ghrita* is a *uttam sneha* is consider as a best for memory booster . As per its *Rasa*, *Virya*, *Vipaka* *Kushmnda Ghrita* is act as a *MEDHYA* and *BALYA* also. Through its *Shita Virya* and *Madhur Vipaka* it promotes *Kapha* and enhances “*Dharana Karma*”. It act by stimulating and improving the function of *Agni*, and its *Madhur Rasa* and *Seeta Virya* increases the retention power by maintaining the balance of *Avalambak Kapha* and *Tarpak Kapha*. *Guru* and *Snigdha gunas* may enhance *Satva Bhava* which positively influences the *Medha*.

It promotes the Intellect (*Dhi*), Retention power (*Dhriti*), memory (*Smriti*). It promotes the function of “*Buddhi*” and “*Manas*” by correcting the disturbance of “*Rajas*” and “*Tamas*”.

CONCUSION

Kushmanda ghrita showed statistically highly significant results in Memory boosting. Thus, *Kushmanda Ghrita Nasya* is highly effective as a Memory booster.

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Source of Support: Nil

Conflict Of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Vijaysinh Babasaheb Patil Et Al: Conceptual Study Of Kushmanda Ghrita Nasya As A Memory Booster. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2017 {cited October, 2017} Available from: http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/3851_3855.pdf