

REVIEW OF SLEEP IN RELATION TO DEHA PRAKRUTHI

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ABSTRACT

Sound, Restorative sleep is the foundation of a healthy life. A good night's sleep is undoubtedly one of the most precious gifts one can enjoy. In *Ayurveda* (Science of life), *Ahara* (food), *Nidra* (sleep) and *Brahmacharya* (celibacy) are given prime importance under the name of “*Trayopastambha*” (the three sub pillars of life).

Sleep is a natural physiological phenomenon and an essential entity of human life. It is also enumerated as the natural urge which should not be suppressed and if suppressed would lead to various diseases. The healthy livelihood, peace of mind, enthusiasm to work, clarity of senses and desire towards life are the positive benefits of proper sleep and vice versa. However the pattern of sleep and duration of sleep are individualized depending up on various factors. The *Deha Prakruthi* (body constitution) is one of such variable and is decided depending up on the dominancy of *Dosha* at the time of conception. *Deha Prakruthi*, is represented by a vivid description of the Physique, Physiology & psychological make-up of an individual. Sleep in each *Prakruthi* can be understood with the understanding of *Bhoutika Sanghatana* (Materialistic or physical composition) of *Tri-Gunas* (*Satva, Raja & Tama*) and *Tri-Dosha* (*Vata, Pitta & Kapha*). *Kapha Prakruthi* individuals are told *Nidralu* (enriched with sleep) compared to other *Deha Prakruthi* and the probable reason behind this is discussed in this paper.

Keywords: *Ayurveda*, Sleep, *Deha Prakruti*, Body constitution, *Trayopastambha*, *Tri-Dosha*

INTRODUCTION

Desire for - food, water, sleep and sexual pleasure are considered as four natural instincts of the living organisms.¹ *Ahara*, *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya* are given importance under the name of “*Trayopastambha*” the sub pillars of life.² The strength, complexion and compactness, criterion for the assessment of health of an individual, depend on these three factors. Sleep is an essential factor responsible for a healthy life and it gives relaxation to body,

mind and senses.³ Sleep occurring during night, at about the same time and for a particular duration is said to be *Ratri Svabhava Prabhavaja*.⁴ It is also enumerated as the natural urge which should not be suppressed and if suppressed would lead to various diseases.⁵ At the same time day sleep is condemned and is said to cause for various diseases. It is termed as “*Bhootadhatri*” *Svabhavika Vyadhi, Vaishnavi Maya*.⁶

Types:

Table 1: Types of sleep according to different Acharyas^{7,8,9}

CHARAKA	SUSHRUTA	VAGBHATA
Tamobhava	Tamasi	Tamobhava
Shleshma samudbhava	Vaishnavi	Kaphabhava
Mana Shrama Sambhava	Vaikarika	Chittakhedaja
Shareera Shrama Sambhava	--	Dehakhedaja
Agantuki	--	Agantuki
Vyadhyanuvartini	--	Kala Swabhava
Ratri Swabhava Prabhava	--	Amayaja

Importance of Nidra:

- 1) Properly and timely taking sleep brings the happiness, nourishment, strength, virility, knowledge and maintains the life.¹⁰
- 2) As the real knowledge brings about *Siddhi* (enlightenment) in a yogi similarly properly intake of sleep brings about happiness and longevity in human beings.¹¹
- 3) Properly sleeping at the night time makes *Dhatusamyata* (balance of the body constituents) and provides alertness, good vision, good complexion, good strength and good digestive power.¹²

Mechanism of Nidra:

1. When mind gets tired, when sensory and motor organs get exhausted they no more can perceive their objects and there remains nothing to feed the mind for the sake conveying to soul, in this status, already tired mind does not perceive anything & state of *Nidra* occurs.¹³
2. When *Kapha Dosha* encircles *Srotus* (channels), when sensory organs are overworked and perform their duty of perception no more, *Nidra* is induced in human body.¹⁴
3. Heart is main source of *Chetana* (activity). When *Tama* becomes prevalent *Nidra* is induced. This may be of any type but chief inductive factor for sleep is *Tama*. With *Satva*, (intellect) one keeps always well informed about internal and external environment of the living body. Hence

Nidra is induced whenever *tama* is on higher side due to any reason.¹⁵

Factors Influencing Nidra

There are many factors like Age, working environment, personal needs, food habits, daily regimen, seasonal variations, mental status etc which influences quality, quantity and its impact as well. *Deha Prakruthi* is also one such factor which plays a role in deciding the nature and duration of sleep. It expresses unique trait of an individual that is defined by specific and permanent composition of *Dosha* at the time of conception.

Prakruthi is one among the important and basic principles of *Ayurveda*. This forms the basis in the study of wide range of aspects ranging from *Shareera* (human body) and *Nidana* (causative factor of disease) till *Chikitsa* (treatment). *Prakruthi* in simple words is the “Structural and functional make” of a person and is represented by a vivid description of physique, physiology & psychological make-up of an individual. *Deha Prakruthi* is the foremost factor which determines the pattern of susceptibility of an individual to different diseases, their prognosis, course and complications. Hence has been ranked first amongst the *Dasha Vidha Pareekshya Bhavas* (Ten tools of examination)¹⁶

Relation of Nidra and Prakruthi

It is pertinent to note that *Nidra* and *Prakruthi* are closely related to one another.

Even the literatures of *Ayurveda* opine that the *Kapha Prakruthi* individual will have more sleep in comparison to other *Ekadoshaja* (Dominant of one *Dosha*) or *Dwandwaja Prakruthi* (Dominant of two *Dosha*). The variation may be because of individual *Guna* (quality) or *Bhoutika Sanghatana* of the *Dosha*. Hence an attempt has been made in the paper to analyse the same.

DISCUSSION

Tryptophan is the amino acid our body uses to produce serotonin, a neurotransmitter that influences many brain functions, including sleep. Milk, cottage cheese, cheese and eggs contain amino acids that are converted into serotonin. Dairy products contain tryptophan and calcium, which make them excellent sleep-inducing foods.¹⁷ The studies have shown that the food has its own role in deciding the nature, pattern and duration of sleep. It is observed that *Kapha Prakruthi* (Body constitution dominant with *Kapha Dosha*) persons are fond of sweet, sour and salty tastes & researches have shown that the food articles which are having more sweet, oily and bulky nature like sweets curds will have positive impact on mind and serotonin secretion thus helps the person to sleep better. The presenting feature of *Kapha Vriddhi* (vitiation of *Kapha*) also has its influence on sleep.¹⁸ Research has shown over the years that a spicy meal at night can indeed lead to poor sleep. The studies done in Australia¹⁹ have proved this fact that spicy foods like Tabasco sauce and mustard alters the sleep patterns. Excessive sour, bitter and astringent food articles will lead to *Pitta* accumulation in the body leading to reduce the amount of sleep in that particular individual.²⁰ Similarly drier or non oily,

bitter, astringent, light food articles will lead to accumulation of *Vata* in the body which leads to further reduction in the duration of sleep.

In relation to age, the individual will have more sleep in Childhood, moderate in middle age and lesser duration of sleep in old age. It is shown that Newborns (0–2 months) will have 12 to 18 hours of sleep, Infants (3–11 months) 14 to 15 hours, Toddlers (1–3 years) 12 to 14 hours, Preschoolers (3–5 years) 11 to 13 hours, School-age children (5–10 years) 10 to 11 hours, Adolescents (10–17 years) 8.5 to 9.25 hours^{21, 22} Adults 7 to 9 hours and elderly 6 hours of sleep. It is known factor that in younger age *Kapha* will be predominant, in Middle age *Pitta* and in old age *Vata*.

Hence it can be noted that there is a close relation of *Dosha* with sleep. *Kapha Dosha* will induce more sleep in an individual and the *Vata Dosha* on contrary reduces the duration of sleep. With this logic the pattern of sleep in individual *Deha Prakruthi* also can be understood.

Its determination is also important in diseased condition as it is essential in the prognosis and planning of treatment. All the biological elements have certain properties, eg: *Vata* is dry, *Pitta* is hot and *Kapha* is heavy. Since, these elements are the constituents of the entire body as well as of the mind; their qualities are reflected in the physical and mental characteristics of an individual. Personality denotes an individual and it covers whole nature of an individual. It refers to distinctive patterns of behaviours that reflect individual adaptation to the situation of his or her life.

Sleep in each *Prakruthi* can be understood with the understanding of *Bhoutika* composition of *TriGunas* (*Satva*,

Raja & Tama) and Tri-Dosha. Acharya Sushruta explains sleep as Tamo Guna Pradhana and the Bhoutika Sanghatana of Kapha also is similar to Tama Guna²³ and hence the Kapha Prakruthi individuals have deep and sound sleep. Acharya Vagbhata also mentions Kapha Prakruthi individuals as Nidralu (sound sleep).²⁴ Kapha vridhhi Lakshana also supports with a feature of Excessive sleep. The Pitta Dosha is Satva Guna Pradhana²⁵ (enriched with Satva Guna) and does not allow the Tamo Guna influence it thus Pitta Prakruthi (Body constitution dominant with Pitta Dosha) persons have moderate but sound sleep. Supporting this factor the Pittavridhhi lakshana is suggestive of Alpanidrata (less sleep). Vata dominant with Vayu Mahabhuta & Rajo Guna²⁶ because of its Chalatra (movement) and Rukshadi Gunas results in interrupted sleep and hence the Vata Prakruthi individual will have less and broken sleep. Insomnia being one of the commonly observed complaints of old age can be explained as Vata being dominant entity at that age influences the sleep of an individual.

CONCLUSION

The happiness, nourishment, strength, lightness of body and mind, hunger and thirst greatly depend on proper sleep. Hence it is an essential component supporting human existence. The sleep pattern varies a lot on various factors. The Deha Prakruthi is one such factor on which the Sleep pattern depends. This review have helped to conclude that the Kapha Prakruthi person will have sound sleep, Pitta Prakruthi person will have moderate sleep and Vata Prakruthi individual will have poor and disturbed sleep.

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