



EFFECT OF SHIRODHARA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF ANIDRA (INSOMNIA) - A CASE STUDY

Meenakshi Thakur¹, Rakesh Mittal²

¹Assistant Professor, *Panchakarma*, Guru Nanak Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital

²Associate Professor, *Kriya Sharir*, Mai Bhago Ayurvedic Medical College for Women

Corresponding Author: drthakurmeenakshi@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj4513042025>

(Published Online: April 2025)

Open Access

© International Ayurvedic Medical Journal, India 2025

Article Received: 08/02/2025 - Peer Reviewed: 29/03/2025 - Accepted for Publication: 11/04/2025.



ABSTRACT

Acharya Charaka considered *Nidra* as *Vataja Nanatmaja Vyadi*¹. *Tama* and *Kapha* are the causes of *Nidra*. Hence, if there is a decrease in *Tama* and *Kapha* Doshas levels, *Anidra* will occur. *Anidra* can be compared with *Insomnia*. *Insomnia* is a common sleep disorder affecting about 30% of the population. *Acharya Sushruta* has described the treatment of *Anidra*. According to *Acharya Sushruta*, *treatment 3 for Anidra includes Abhyanga, Murdhini taila, Udwartana, and Samvahana. Shirodhara* is effective in *Anidra*, and *Shirodhara* comes under *Murdhini Taila*. This study observed a single case of *Anidra* while doing *Shirodhara* symptoms such as heaviness, sleeplessness and headache. The benefits of treatment are observed as the reduction of these symptoms. The duration of treatment was 10 days.

Keywords: *Anidra, Shirodhara, Murdhini Taila, Udwartana, Abhyanga, Samvahana*

INTRODUCTION

In *Ayurveda*, *Nidra* comes under *Trayopastambha*. *Trayupstambha*⁴ includes *Ahara, Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*. The inclusion of *Nidra* in the three *Upastambha* indicates its importance. *Anidra* can be corre-

lated with *Insomnia*. *Anidra* (*Insomnia*) means poor sleep quality and comes under *Vata nanatmaja Rogas*. *Insomnia* is an extremely common disorder. The prevalence of *Insomnia* in India ranges from 13.8%

to 33%. The prevalence of Insomnia is estimated to affect around 10-30% of the adult population. According to Acharya Sushruta² Anidra is caused by increasing *Raja*, *Tama Guna* and *Vata*, *Pitta Dosha* and decreasing *Satva Guna*, *Kapha* (which is responsible for *Nidra*). The objective of this case study is to evaluate *Shirodhara* with *Ksheerbala Taila* in *Anidra*.

Case study- This is a single case study. A 35-year-old female patient presented to the OPD of *Panchakarma*, Guru Nanak Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital, on 24.01.25 at 9.30 am. The patient had been suffering from sleeplessness for 2 months. She had associated complaints of heaviness, excessive

thoughts, tiredness and weakness. The patient was taking allopathic medicine for alternate days for about 1 month. The patient didn't get relief from the symptoms, so the patient came for Ayurvedic treatment. There was no significant history of HTN, DM, etc.

Ashtavidha Pariksha: Table 1: Ashtavidha Pariksha

S.no.	Sthana	Lakshana
1.	<i>Nadi</i> (pulse)	76/min
2.	<i>Mala</i> (stool)	<i>Prakruta</i>
3.	<i>Mutra</i> (urine)	<i>Prakruta</i>
4.	<i>Jihwa</i> (Tongue)	<i>Saama</i>
5.	<i>Shabda</i> (speech)	<i>Prakruta</i>
6.	<i>Sparsha</i> (touch)	<i>Ushna, Snigdha</i>
7.	<i>Druk</i> (eye)	<i>Prakruta</i>
8.	<i>Akruti</i> (shape)	<i>Madhyama</i>

Table 2: Systemic examination

Blood Pressure	136/80
Temperature	98.6°F
Pulse	78/bpm
Respiratory Rate	18/min
Weight	76 kg
Height	5'7"
Gait	Normal
Oedema	Absent

Investigation—The Haematological Investigation was within the normal limit. Based on signs and symptoms, the case was diagnosed as Anidra (Insomnia).

Treatment Plan-

The patient was treated on an O.P.D basis. Therapy- Procedure- Shirodhara

Drug of choice- *Ksheerbala Taila*

Time- 45 minutes

Duration- 10 days.



Intervention

Shirodhara with *Ksheerbala Taila* was given to the patient. *Shirodhara* is a type of *Murdhni Taila* that involves the gentle pouring of lukewarm liquids over the forehead. It is the process in which liquids are poured in a continuous stream of drip over the forehead for a specific period of time. *Shirodhara* is extensively used for the alleviation of psychic and psycho-somatic ailments. In this study, *Ksheerbala Taila* was used for the *Shirodhara* procedure.

Proper counselling about the procedure was done. Before the procedure, the patient's vitals were within

normal limits. The eyes of the patient were closed with the help of a cotton plug and bandage to prevent the flow of liquid inside the eyes. *Dhara* was poured continuously for 45 minutes. The lukewarm temperature of *Ksheerbala Taila* was maintained throughout the whole procedure. *Dharapatra* was moved in a pendulum manner, starting from one lateral side to the other lateral side to the other lateral side. *Taila* was collected in another vessel and was used to refill the *Dharapatra* before it became empty. The procedure was done for 10 days.

Assessment Criteria and Observation

Table 3: Grading for heaviness

No heaviness	0
Occasionally	1
Sometimes	2
Most of Time	3
Always	4

Table 4: Grading for sleeplessness

Parameter	Grade
No sleeplessness	0
Occasionally	1
Mild	2
Moderate	3
Severe, require medicine	4

Table 5: Grading for Headache

Parameter	Grade
No headache	0
Occasionally	1
Mild	2
Moderate	3
Severe, required medicine	4

Results:**Table 6: Effect of Shirodhara on Anidra**

Symptoms	B/T	A/T
Sleeplessness	3	0
Headache	1	0
Heaviness	3	0

DISCUSSION

As *Shirodhara*⁵ comes under *Murdhni Taila*, *Taila* is poured on the centre of the forehead of the patient (3rd eye point) for a specific period of time. It is widely used as a relaxation therapy which reduces stress and anxiety. Stress or anxiety is the leading cause of Insomnia. Trayopastambha (Tripod of Life)- *Aahara*, *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*. *Nidra* is an integral part of life. The disturbance to *Nidra* includes *Anidra*, which is said to be a *Vata Nanatmaja Vyadhi*. In this case study, *Shirodhara* was done with *Ksheerbala Taila*.⁶ *Ksheerbala Taila* balances *Vata Doshas* in the body. As *Nidra* is *Vata Nanatmaja Vyadhi*. *Shirodhara* with *Ksheerbala Taila* for a specific period stimulates the central nervous system and may induce a tranquilizing effect on the cerebral cortex. Continuous flow of *Shirodhara* on *Shira* may improve *Dhi* (intellect), *Dhriti* (retention), and *Smriti* (Memory).

CONCLUSION

Significant improvement was seen in the case of *Anidra*. *Shirodhara* with *Ksheerbala Taila* shows much improvement in *Anidra*. Insomnia can be successfully managed through *Shirodhara*. Further and long-term

study is required to evaluate the effect of *Shirodhara* in the management of *Anidra*.

REFERENCES

1. *Agnivesha; Charaka Samhita*, Revised by Charaka and *Dridabala* with introduction by *Vaidya Samrata Sri Satya Narayana Sastri Padmabhushana* with elaborated *Vidyotini Hindi* commentary by Pt. Kasinatha Sastri, Dr. Gorakhnath Chaturvedi, part-1, *Sutra Sthana* ch-20/11, pg.no.400
2. *Maharshi Sushruta: Susrutasamhita* Edited with Ayurveda -*Tattva-Sandipika* by *Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri* Foreword by Dr. Prana Jivana Manek Chanda Mehta part-1, *Sharir Sthana*, Ch-4/33-34, pg.no.44
3. *Maharshi Sushruta: Susrutasamhita* Edited with Ayurveda -*Tattva-Sandipika* by *Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri* Foreword by Dr. Prana Jivana Manek Chanda Mehta part-1, *Sharir Sthana*, Ch-4/42 pg.no.46
4. *Agnivesha; Charaka Samhita*, Revised by Charaka and *Dridabala* with introduction by *Vaidya Samrata Sri Satya Narayana Sastri Padmabhushana* with elaborated *Vidyotini Hindi* commentary by Pt. Kasinatha Sastri, Dr. Gorakha Natha Chaturvedi, Part-1, *Sutra Sthana* 11, Ch-11/34 pg.no. 226.
5. Dr. Vasant C. Patil; Principles and practice of Pan-chakarma, pg.no.162
6. Journal of Natural and Ayurvedic Medicine(ISSN:25784986) To know the efficacy of *Shirodhara* with *Ksheerbala Taila* in the *Anidra* w.s.r to Insomnia: Single Case Study

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Meenakshi Thakur & Rakesh Mittal: Effect of Shirodhara in the management of Anidra (Insomnia)- A case study. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2025 {cited April 2025}