

## NASYA IN SHALAKYA TANTRA

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## ABSTRACT

*Shalakyatantra* is one of the *Ashtanga Ayurveda* that deals with the treatment of diseases related to the eye, ear, nose, throat, oral cavity, head, and scalp through oral medications, *kriyakalpa*, *Panchakarma* procedures, surgical and para-surgical procedures, etc. *Nasya* is one among *panchakarma*; the intranasal method of drug administration meant for treatment and detoxification and is widely used in *Shalakyatantra*. It is said '*Nasa hi shiraso dwaram*'; The nose is the gateway for drug administration for the ailments of head and organs situated in it viz, eye, ear, nose, throat, head, scalp, hair, and oral cavity. *Nasya* can be used also for the prevention of diseases, to strengthen the *indriya* (sense organs), and to bring *Shiro laghuta* by eliminating the doshas. This article is a compilation of references to *Nasya* used in *shalakya tantra chikitsa*.

**Keywords:** *Nasya*, *Shalakya tantra*, *Panchakarma*, eye, ear, nose, throat, head, scalp, oral cavity.

## INTRODUCTION

Administration of medicine through the nasal route is known as *nasya*<sup>1</sup>. This treatment modality is used to eliminate the vitiated *doshas* which are responsible for producing disease. *Shirovirechana*, *Shirovireka*,

*Murdhavirechana* are the other names of this procedure<sup>2</sup>. *Ayurveda* describes the nose as the doorway to the head. *Nasya* cleanses and opens the channels of the head, eyes, nose, ears, throat, and oral cavity and

improves the oxygenation i.e., the flow of *prana* which has a direct and highly beneficial influence on brain functions.<sup>3</sup>

#### INDICATIONS:<sup>4</sup>

*Shirastambha* –Stiffness of Head, *Gadgadavat* - A Form of Dysarthria, *Manyastambha* – Stiffness of Neck, *Dantaharsha* – Hypersensitivity of Tooth, *Dantastambha* – Stiffness of Teeth, *Chaladanta* – Mobility of Teeth, *Dantashula* – Toothache, *Swarabheda* – Hoarseness of Voice, *Hanugraha* – Rigidity of Mandibular Joint, *Vakgraha* – Dysarthria, *Peenasa* – Chronic Rhinitis, *Dantapata* – Falling of Teeth *Galashundika* – Elongated Uvula, *Karnaksweda* - Tinnitus, *Galashaluka* – Adenoids, *Keshapata* - Hair Fall, *Netra Roga* – Eye disorders, *Timira* – Myopia, *Vartmaroga* – Diseases of Eyelids, *Nasaroga* – Nasal Disorders, *Upajihiwika* – Rannula/Cyst, *Suryavarta* – Frontal Sinusitis, *Ardhawabhedaka* – Migraine, *Krimijashiroroga* - Headache due to Krimi, *Grivaroga* – Disease of Neck, *Vataja Shiroroga* – Headache due to *Vata*, *Amsashula* – Shoulder Pain, *Mukhashosha* – Dryness of Mouth, *Mukharoga* A Disorder of Mouth, *Mukharoga* - Oral Cavity Disorder, *Palitya* – Early Graying of Hair, *Nidranasha* – Sleeplessness, *Netragatasukraroga* - Corneal Opacity, *Vyanga* – Pigmented Spots on Face, *Karna Shula* - Ear Ache, *Akshishula* - Painful Eyes, *Shirashula* - Headache, *Ardita* - Cranial Nerve Palsies

#### CONTRA-INDICATIONS:<sup>5</sup>

*Ajeerna* – Indigestion, *Peetasneha* – The person who is subjected to oral *snehana* treatment, *Peetamadya* - The person who is intoxicated due to alcohol, *Virikta* - Client subjected to *Virechana Navajwara* – Suffering from fever, *Snatashira* - After the head bath, *Ksudhartha* - Hungry Client, *Trushnartha* - Thirsty client, *Ativyayama* - Excessive exercise, *Garbhini* – Pregnant women, *Bhuktabhakta* -After Meal, *Vyayama klanta* - Excessive physical work, *Vyavaya klanta* - Excessive sex indulging, *Shokabhitapta*- State of grief, *Vridhdha*-Aged person, *Bala*- Children below the age of 7 years

**Aims and Objectives:** A collection of the description of *Nasya* in *brihatrayi*, *laghutrayi*, and *related journals*.

#### PROCEDURE

The procedure of administration of *Nasya* comprises

1. *Purva karma*<sup>6</sup>
2. *Pradhana karma*<sup>6</sup>
3. *Paschat karma*<sup>7</sup>

**1) Purvakarma:** Selection of the patient: The patient should be selected according to the indications and contraindications of *Nasya* described in the classics.

#### Preparation of the patient:

- The patient who has passed his natural urges like urine, stool, etc. routine daily activities like bath, prayer, light breakfast, etc should be done. Now the patient gets ready for *Nasya karma*. He should lie down on *Nasya Shayya*.
- Before *Nasya*, *Mridu Abhyanga* should be done on scalp, forehead, face, and neck for 3 to 5 minutes by medicated oil like *Ksheera Bala Taila*, *Panchaguna Taila*, etc.

#### 2) Pradhana Karma:

- The patient should lie down in a supine position with ease on *Nasya Shayya*. *Shira* should be “*Pralambita*” (lowered) and the foot part is to be slightly raised.
- The Head should not be excessively flexed or extended. If the head is not lowered, the nasal medication may not reach the desired distinction and if it is lowered too much, there may be the danger of getting the medication to be lodged in the brain.
- After covering the eyes with a clean cotton cloth, the physician should raise the tip of the patient’s nose with his left thumb and with the right hand, the *sukoshna* medicine should be dropped in both the nostrils in a proper way.

#### 3) Paschat Karma:

- The patient is asked to spit out the medicine that reaches the throat. *Nadi Swedana* to be given again after *nasya*. Gentle massage to be given on the forehead, palms and soles of the patient and allow to take rest.
- Then the patient is to be given *dhumapana*, followed by *kavalagraha* or *gandusha* which eliminates *Kapha*.

- Then the patient is advised to follow a whole-some diet, resort to the breezeless, warm residence and observe self-restraint. Day sleeping and cold water for any purpose like *Pana*, *Snana*, etc. should be avoided.

**Nasya classification:**

Mainly classified into 2 types

1. *Shodhana*
2. *Shamana*

According to *charaka acharya* 5 types <sup>8</sup>

1. *Navana nasya*

2. *Avapeedana nasya*

3. *Dhmapana nasya*

4. *Dhuma nasya*

5. *Pratimarsha nasya*

1. *Navana nasya* : *Navana* is instillation of medicated *taila* or *Ghrita* into the nose <sup>9</sup>.

Ex : *Kaphajanyatimira – Triphaladi taila*<sup>10</sup> All type of *nasa roga – Shadbindu taila nasya*<sup>11</sup>

Sl.no	Disease	Nasya dravya	Reference
1.	<i>Kaphaja rohini</i>	<i>Taila</i> prepared of <i>Swetha aparajita, Dantimula, Vidanga &amp; Saindhava lavana Apamarga beeja</i> Vayu	A H U 22/62
2.	<i>Krimidanta</i>	<i>Snigdha nasya</i> <i>Taila</i> prepared with <i>vidarikanda, yasti, shringataka, kesara</i>	A H U 22/ 19 A H U 22/25
3.	<i>Vaidarbha</i>	<i>Sheetala nasya</i>	A H U 22/29
4.	<i>Upakusha</i>	<i>Madhura ganasadhita ghrita sidda nasya</i>	A H U 22/31 -32
5.	<i>Saushira</i>	<i>Taila</i> prepared with <i>kamala, krishnasarivakalaagaru, Raktachandana, yasti, patanilodra, misri, pundarika</i>	A H U 22/36
6.	<i>Talushosha</i>	<i>Dhanwamamsa snigdha ksheerasarpi</i>	A H U 22 /54
7.	<i>All types of mukharoga</i>	<i>Vata nashaka Madhuraskandha siddha taila nasya</i>	A H U 22/55
8.	<i>Vataja rohini</i>	<i>Taila nasya</i>	A H U 22/59
9.	<i>Vataja shirashula</i>	<i>Taila</i> prepared with <i>varunadi gana dravya and Madhura gana dravya</i>	A H U 24/4
10.	<i>Pittaja shiroroga</i>	<i>Snehadravya : Goghrita</i> <i>Dravadravya : Goksheera</i> <i>Kalkadravya : jivaniya varga dravyakalka</i>	A H U 24/11
11.	<i>Vatapittaja shiroroga</i>	<i>Taila</i> prepared with <i>jivaka, vrushabaka, draksha, sita, yastimadhu, bala, Utpala</i>	Vangasenashirorogaadhikara / 81
12.	<i>Krimija shiroroga</i>	<i>Vidanga taila nasya</i> <i>Taila</i> prepared with <i>vayuvidanga, bijaka, danti, hingu</i>	Vangasenashirorogaadhikara / 88
13.	<i>Krimija shiroroga</i>	<i>Apamarga taila nasya</i> <i>Taila</i> prepared with <i>apamarg bija, trikatu, haldi, hing, vayuvidanga, and Gomutra</i>	Vangasenashirorogaadhikara / 89
14.	<i>Suryavarta</i>	<i>Ksheera Ghrita nasya</i>	Vangasenashirorogaadhikara / 91
15.		<i>Taila</i> prepared with <i>bhringaraja swarasa and yastimadhu</i>	Vangasenashirorogaadhikara / 94
16.	<i>Pakshmathata</i>	<i>Swadu sheetaskandha sadhita sarpi navana nasya</i>	A S UT 12/6

17.	<i>Vataja abhishyanda</i>	A) <i>Snehadravya - taila</i> <i>Dravadravya – goksheera</i> <i>Kalka dravya – Madhura gana dravya</i>  B) <i>Snehadravya – taila</i> <i>Dravadravya – ksheera</i> <i>Kalkadravya – Rasna, Abhiru, Dashamula, Bala, kola, Kulatta, and yava</i>	<i>SU UT 9/10</i>  <i>A S UT 19/8</i>
18.	<i>Raktajaabhishyanda</i>	C) <i>Sneha dravya –Ghritamanda</i> <i>Dravadravya –Breastmilk</i> <i>Kalkadravya – powders of sugar, Madhuka, Nilotpala</i>	<i>A S UT 19/40</i>
19.	<i>Timira</i>	A) Oil processed in an iron vessel with the decoction of <i>asana</i> and <i>Bhringaraja swarasa</i> B) <i>Goshakrith taila Nasya</i> –oil processed with the decoction of cow dung is useful for <i>Nasya</i> C) oil processed with <i>tilataila</i> -1 lit <i>Shunti churna -125gm</i> <i>Yasti churna -125gm</i> <i>Bhringaraja swarsa -4lit</i>	<i>A S UT 19/44</i>
20.	All types of <i>Netrarogas</i> <i>Mukhadaantagreevabalaprada</i> <i>Kantiprada</i>	<i>Jivanti taila prayoga</i> <i>Roots of jivanti</i> <i>Sneha dravya :tilataila 1 prasta</i> <i>Dravadravya : goksheera</i> <i>Kalkadravya :jivanti 1 pala</i> <i>Shatavari 1 pala</i> <i>Yasti 4 pala</i> <i>Prepare taila in loha patra</i> <i>Then kept prepared taila in loha patra</i>	<i>A H UT 13/41,42,43</i>
21.	All type of <i>urdwajatrugata vyadhiand vatakaphajanetra roga</i>	<i>Snehadravya –tila taila</i> <i>Dravadravya –Goksheera</i> <i>Kalka Dravya- Swethaerand,vanabhandam, Triphala, devadaru, bala, vacha, tagara, ghosha, pathabeda, bilwamula make it into tailpaka.</i> <i>Use as nasya</i> - <i>Snehadravya : Goksheera</i> <i>Drava dravya ; Dashamulakwatha</i> <i>Kalka dravya :Netrabala (HRUBERA) ,devadaru ,nishi,daruhaldi,pippali</i>	<i>A H UT 13/43</i>  <i>A H UT 13/46</i>
22.	<i>Sannipataja timira</i>	<i>Taila prepared with Madhuka, vidanga, devadaru</i>	<i>A H U 13/75</i>
23.	<i>Kaphaja timira</i>	<i>Triphaladi taila</i> <i>Taila prepared with Triphala, Lodra, Usira, Phalapriyangu</i>	<i>Vangasenanetrarogaadhikara / 425</i>
24.	<i>Pittaja timira</i>	<i>Gomaya taila</i> <i>Taila prepared with Goshakrith.</i>	<i>Vangasenanetrarogaadhikara / 426</i>

25.	<i>Peenasa pratishyaya</i>	<i>Taila prepared with Kalinga, Hingu, Maricha, Laksha, Sursa, katphala, Kusta, Lodra, Sigru, Vidanga</i>	B.R 63/7
26.	<i>Nasaarsha</i>	<i>Taila prepared with Murchita tilataila, Gruhadhuma, Pippali, Devadaru, Yavakshara, Saindhava lavana, Shikaribeeja</i>	B.R 63/33
27.	<i>Badhirya</i>	<i>Taila prepared with Dashamoolakwatha, Dashamoolakalka, Murchitatila taila ,</i>	B R 63/36
28.	<i>Karnanada, karnapratinaha , karnashula, badhirya</i>	<i>Madhukadi taila Taila prepared with Murchitatilataila, Madhuyashti, Dashamoola, Daruharidra, Vacha, Kusta, Shigru, Rasanjana, devadaru, vidalavana, svarjakshara, saindhava lavana</i>	B R 63/69

## 2 ) Avapeedana nasya

*Avapeedana nasya* – It is a type of *shodhana nasya* Instillation of Fresh juice of pungent substance into the nose is called *Avapidana nasya*<sup>12</sup>

Drugs used are *teekshanadravyas* like *saindhava, pippali, maricha* etc.  
ex : *Galaroga, Akshiroga, Timira, Shiroroga, Nasaroga*

Sl no	Disease	Yoga	Reference
1	<i>Nasaroga</i>	<i>Gudanagara nasya</i>	<i>A S U 24/39</i>
2	<i>Dustapratishyaya</i>	<i>Trikatu, indrayava, vidangasara, indrayava, jeeraka, saindhava lavana is macerated well in ajamutra</i>	<i>A S U 24/37</i>
3	<i>Putinasa</i>	<i>Juice is prepared with hingu, trikatu, vatsaka, indrayava, swetha punarnava, laksha, saurabha beeja, katphala, ugra, vacha, kusta, shigrubeeja, vidanga, and karanja</i>	<i>Su ut 23/45</i>
4	<i>Kaphaja pratishyaya</i>	<i>Katu Dravya nirmita dhuma nasya</i>	<i>Ch chi 26/138</i>
5	<i>Sarvaprakara shiroroga</i>	<i>Swarasa from shunti and guda</i>	<i>Vangasenashirorogaadhikara /64</i>
6	<i>Suryavarta</i>	<i>Shunti swarasa, pippali, vacha</i>	<i>Vangasenashirorogaadhikara /13</i>
7	<i>Sarvashiroroga</i>	<i>Hruswa shigru beeja, nilottita mix with gomutra</i>	<i>Vangasenashirorogaadhikara /77</i>
8	<i>Peenasa</i>	<i>Kalinga(endraja), hingu, maricha, laksha swarasa, katphala, kushta, saindhava lavana, trikatu, grinded with ushnajala</i>	<i>Y R Nasaroga chikitsa adyaya /1</i>

**3)Pradhamana nasya /dhmapana nasya:** It is a type of *shodhana nasya* where one kola quantity of fine powder is blown into nostrils<sup>13</sup>.

Sl no	Disease	Yoga	Reference
1	<i>Kaphaja pratishyaya</i>	<i>Fine powder of manashila ,vacha, trikatu, hingu, guggulu</i>	<i>Ch chi 26/151</i>
2	<i>Naveen pratishyaya</i>	<i>Fine powder of Rohisha, Alaji, Tarkari, Choraka, twak, patra, maricha, ela, upakunchanka</i>	<i>Ch chi 26/137</i>
3	<i>Pratishyaya</i>	<i>Kalika navasagara nasya</i>	<i>YR Nasaroga chikitsa</i>

		Fine powder of Navasagara, chunaka churna, an equal quantity of gunja	adhyaya / 71-72
4	Pratishyaya	Chatur jataka churna nasya Fine powder of twaki, ela, tejapatra, nagakesara	YR Nasaroga chikitsa adhyaya / 70
5	Sannipataja shi-rashula	Smaraphaladi churna nasya Fine powder of mounaphala, tilaparni, Raktachandana , leaves of kushapatra, Jayapalabeeja.	YR Nasaroga chikitsa adhyaya / 43

4 )**Dhuma nasya**: Medicated smoke inhaled through the nose and exhaled through the oral route<sup>14</sup> is called *dhuma nasya*

Sl no	Yoga	Disease	Reference
1	Shathwadi dhumavarti shathwa, twak, bala, kumkuma, shonaka, erandamoola twak, aamlavetasa add vasa and Ghrita.	Naveena pratishyaya	Ch Si 9/92
2	Vidanga, Saindhava Lavana, Guggulu, Manashila, Vacha	Pratishyaya	YR Nasaroga chikitsa adhyaya / 67
3	Vartis prepared with daruharidra, ingudi, danti, apamargaa, surasa	Pratishyaya	B.R 63/10

5. **Pratimarsha nasya** : Instillation of oil into the nostrils is called *pratimarsha nasya*<sup>15</sup>. The dose of *pratimarsha nasya* is two *bindu* for each nostril.

A *bindu* is the quantity of the oil that drops from the index finger dipped into oil to the level of its first two phalanges.

Sl no	Yoga	Yoga	Reference
1	Taila prepared with bibitaki, nimba, gambhari, siva, selu, kakini	Palita	Sharangadhara samhita nasya prakarana 45
2	Taila prepared with pataharidra, daruharidra, murva, pippali, jatipatra	Peenasa	Y R 1/541
3	Shadbindu taila Taila prepared with Murchita tila taila, ajamutra, sunti, erandamoola twak, jivanti, rasna, tagara, vidariganda, yasti-madhu, Saindhava lavana	Sarva shiro-roga Kalitya	Vangasena shirorogadhikara / 76

**Indication<sup>16</sup> ( Sharangadhara samhita ,nasyaprakarana 45)**

Urdwajatru vikara
Kalitya
Palitya
Strengthen the sense organ

**Classification of nasya karma based on pharmacological action <sup>17</sup>**

A. *Virechaniya nasya*

Ex:

1.Shiroroga
2.Nasa roga
3.Galaroga
4.Galaganda
5.Swarabeda

B. *Tarpana /Brhamhana nasya*

**Indication**

1.Suryavarta
2.Swarakshaya
3.Nasikashotha
4.Mukhashotha
5.Vaksanga

C. *Shamananasya* :

Ex:

1.Kesha palitya
2.Netraroga

**DISCUSSION**

Drug absorption in 'Nasya karma ' is a complex process and depends upon drug properties, anatomical - physiological conditions of the nasal cavity, and intranasal pathways.

The probable mode action of drugs of *Nasya karma* can be. **Neurological Pathway-** It may be through stimulation of the Olfactory nerve & the Trigeminal nerve (Ophthalmic & Maxillary branches). The peripheral olfactory nerves are chemoreceptors in nature. These nerves differ from other cranial nerves in their close relationship with the brain. These are connected with the higher centres of the brain i.e the limbic system, consisting mainly of the amygdaloidal complex, hypothalamus, epithalamus, anterior thalamic nuclei parts of basal ganglia, etc. So the administration of the drug here stimulates the higher centres of the brain which shows action on the regulation of endocrine & nervous system functions. Diffusion of The Drug- Lipid soluble substances have a greater affinity for passive absorption through the cell walls of the nasal mucosa. Non-polar hydrophobic molecules diffuse through the lipid bilayer of the plasma membrane, into & out of cells. **Vascular Pathway:** It is possible through the pooling of nasal venous blood into an inferior ophthalmic vein (which in turn pools into the facial vein) & deep facial vein. The facial vein has no valves. It communicates freely with the intracranial circulation, not only at its commencements and by the supraorbital veins which are connected with the ophthalmic vein, a tributary of the

deep facial vein, which communicates through the pterygoid plexus with the cavernous venous sinus. Such a pooling of blood from nasal veins to venous sinuses of the brain is more likely to occur in head lowering position due to gravity, the absorption of the drug into meninges and related intracranial organ is a point of consideration.

Drugs in the form of *Nasya* have a probable mode of entry in circulation, hence has a role in improving vision and relieving asthenopic symptoms as follows.

- By general blood circulation, after absorption
- Through mucous membrane. Direct pooling into venous sinuses of the brain
- Inferior ophthalmic veins. Absorption directly into the cerebrospinal fluid, As this medicine is absorbed in ophthalmic vessels it has its nourishing role in extraocular muscles and eye proper. Along with this antioxidant property have a role in maintaining tissue built. It also pacifies the aggravated Vata Dosha in the head and helps to normalize the function of the central nervous system by nourishing the nervous system and balancing the circulation of blood in the sense organs including the ear also.

**CONCLUSION**

It can be concluded that either the essence of *Nasya* or *Nasyadravya* is reaching the brain and acting on important centres controlling different neurological, endocrine, and circulatory functions and thus showing systemic effects. According to *Charaka*, *Nasa* is

the gateway to *Shirah*. The drug is administered through the nose as *Nasya* reaches to *mastishka* and eliminates only the morbid *doshas* responsible for producing the disease. *Nasya* is a very important procedure to cure *Urdhva Jatrugata Rogas*. *Nasya Karma* enhances the activity of sense organs and prevents diseases. *Nasya Karma* prevents *khalitya* and ensures growth of hair and alleviates diseases like *Man-yastambha*, *Shirah-shoola*, *Ardhambhedhaka*, *nasanaha*, *krimidanta*, *timira*, etc. *Nasya Aushadha* makes its way to the brain through the nasal passage and olfactory tract to stimulate. Something happens when provocation of *Doshas* takes place in *Shirah* due to the irritating effect of an administered drug increasing the blood circulation of the brain. So extra accumulated morbid *doshas* are expelled out from small blood vessels and ultimately these morbid *doshas* are thrown out by the nasal discharge, tears, and by salivation. From the anatomical point of view, there are no such direct pharmacodynamic considerations between the nose and cranial organs. Moreover, the blood-brain barrier is a strict security system in the human brain. The nose is used as a route of drug administration for inhalation of anaesthetic materials and certain decongestants for paranasal sinusitis.

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