

Application of Medicine through Nostrils: An Emergency Treatment

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Abstract

Emergency management is a great challenge for the medical persons. Expertness and quickness are the two important factors of success in such a situation. In modern medical science, giving priority to the knowledge of emergency management, a special branch named "Emergency Medicine" is already started.

In most of the times it is observed that, a medical person should always keep himself prepared to face an emergency situation in each and every patient attended. Even sometimes a patient admitted in the hospital as a general patient may go to a state of emergency. Hence no person in the medical field should be casual in the hospital/clinic.

The study of the Ayurvedic classics reveal that, the physicians (vaidyas) of ancient time also faced a number of emergencies during their practice which were managed successfully. Specially in the branch "Ayurvedic Toxicology (AGADATANTRA)" a good number of emergency situations are described with their management.

Application of some selected medicines through the nostrils is one of such management procedures.

Study and discussion on this procedure as per classics is considered to be an important task.

Keywords: *Emergency; Selected Medicines; Application through Nostrils; Ayurvedic Toxicology*

Emergency is the situation of a patient when the attending physician has to act promptly with expertness. He has to diagnose the condition of the patient rightly and start treatment promptly. Any delay/negligence can lead the patient to a fatal condition. Ayurvedic Toxicology (AGADATANTRA) is rich with the descriptions of emergency situations in relation to the patients and the management procedures.

A number of emergency management procedures like application of medicine around the eyes (Anjana), through the nostrils (Nasya), medicated smokes (Dhooma) [1-3] are described vividly by the ancient Ayurvedic scholars which need scientific evaluation and appropriate application.

Application of medicated preparations through the nostrils for different purposes is discussed in the Ayurvedic classics with priority. In different conditions (diseases) affecting specially the parts of the brain are advised to treat with this procedure. It is said that, by applying medicines through the nostrils all the diseases affecting the organs above the clavicle can be treated successfully. Diseases like headache (Sirahshoola - Shiroroga), loss of memory (Smritinasha), recurrent attack of cold (Pratishyaya) etc. are advised to treat with

this method. In an emergency when the patient goes to a state of unconsciousness then strong, irritant medicines either in powder or expressed juice form are advised to use through the nostrils (Nasya) which can help the patient to regain consciousness.

Ayurvedic classics describe the nostrils as the door of the brain [4]. It is said that, when a medicine is used through the nostrils then it reaches the brain and shows its action as per the property and quality. Some such medicines give nutrition, expel out the cause of the disease or can revive the patient from a state of unconsciousness [5].

As the Ayurvedic classics say the basic character of an emergency is unconsciousness which may be associated with the signs like bluish discoloration of the lips, looseness of the hands, feet etc. absence/sluggish response to cold applications, looseness of the nose, loss of tone of voice etc [6,7]. It is advised that, at such a state the patient should be treated with application of strong, irritating medicinal preparations through the nostrils [8-11].

From the discussion of the Ayurvedic classics, specially Charaka Samhita and Susruta Samhita, it can be summarized that, (1) Nasal application of medicine is a beneficial process for treatment of the diseases occurring specially in the brain and nose, (2) Application of medicine through the nostrils is the only way to reach the brain, (3) Though the route of administration of drugs is one (nostrils) but different benefits can be obtained according to the property of the medicine applied, (3) In emergency only strong, irritant medicines can help.

Conclusion

As conclusion it can be said that, Scientific evaluation of the utility of the procedure "Nasya" may be proved to be beneficial for the patients, specially at a terminal state with loss/marked reduction of the vital functions. It is also to be mentioned here that, for such procedures there is no need of costly set-up, even can be applied without hospitalization of the patients.

Multidisciplinary scientific study in this aspect may be proved to be an invaluable boon to the society.

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