

Nasal Application of Medicine (Nasya): The Ancient Emergency Intervention

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Application of medicine through the nostrils is commonly considered to have its efficacy in relieving nasal congestion and some other conditions related to the nose. Nasal drops are very frequently prescribed and used for a group of conditions related with the nostrils. In Allergic rhinitis, deviated nasal septum, some types of headaches the patients are advised to use nasal drops for a long time regularly. Inhalation of vapor is also not uncommon advice of the medical practitioners in a group of diseases related to the nose, specially in conditions when there is "nasal congestion".

In the Ayurvedic classics like Charaka Samhita and Susruta Samhita a vivid discussion on nasal application of medicine is available. They consider the nostrils as the door (dwara) of the head (sirah) and advice that, in all the diseases of the head (siroroga) medicines should be applied through nostrils using different drugs in different form, like oil, powder, ghee etc.

Use of medicines through nostrils can help in maintenance of nasal health, brain health, hair health, ear health, eye health etc. as said by the Ayurvedic scholars. Appropriate use of this process is also mentioned to have important role in disease prevention.

In relation to management of emergency in poisoning (bishapidita awastha) the physician is advised to use powder of strong irritating drugs through the nostrils with the specific indications like headache (sirahshoola), heaviness of head (sirogaurava), stiffness of jaw (hanustambha), torticollis (manyastambha), senselessness (nashtasangya), ptosis (bibritakshya), drooping of the head (bhagnagriva) etc. A number of herbs like root powder of *Clerodendrum serratum* (Bhargi), *Ocimum sanctum* (Sacred Basil, Holy Basil) (Surasha) etc. are advised to use in these situations in fine powder form.

Nasal application of medicines (specially the root powder) of some selected drugs that have irritative property for seriously ill patients is an interesting concept of the ayurvedic classics which have scope of extensive study and research.

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