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AN OBSERVATIONAL ANALYSIS ON EFFECT OF NASYA KARMA ON URDHVAJATRUGATA VIKAR'S

Dr. Saurabh Kumar

Associate Professor, Department of Shalakya Tantra, Rohilkhand Ayurvedic Medical
College & Hospital Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh

Corresponding Author- Saurabh Kumar, Associate Professor, Department of Shalakya
Tantra, Rohilkhand Ayurvedic Medical College & Hospital Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh.

Email- drsaurabh2516@gmail.com

Abstract

Nasya therapy, a specialized Ayurvedic treatment involving the administration of medicinal substances through the nasal route, is a pivotal intervention for *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras* (disorders of the head and neck). This study explores the therapeutic efficacy of *Nasya* in managing these conditions, which include chronic sinusitis, migraines, and other ailments characterized by the accumulation of *Kapha* and *Vata* doshas in the *urdhvajatru* region. The nasal route serves as a direct channel to the *Shiras* (head), enabling the swift delivery of medication to the central nervous system and adjacent structures. Various *Nasya* formulations, such as *Shodhana Nasya*, *Brahmana Nasya*, and *Marshya Nasya*, were analyzed for their impact on pathophysiological mechanisms, symptom relief, and overall patient quality of life. The findings indicate that *Nasya* effectively clears obstructions, nourishes tissues, and restores dosha balance, reaffirming its role as a frontline therapy for head and neck disorders.

Keywords: *Nasya*, *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras*, Ayurveda, *Kapha*, *Vata*, Head Disorders

Introduction

Nasya therapy, an integral part of Panchakarma, is a highly specialized treatment in Ayurveda that involves administering medicated substances through the nasal route. This therapeutic modality is particularly effective for managing disorders of the head and neck, referred to as *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras*.¹ The term *Urdhvajatru* signifies the region above the clavicle, encompassing the head, neck, eyes, ears, nose, and throat. According to Ayurvedic principles, the nasal cavity is considered the gateway to the brain (*Shiras*), making it a critical access point for treating diseases related to the central nervous system and associated structures.²

Ayurveda postulates that the accumulation and vitiation of *Kapha* and *Vata doshas* in the *urdhvajatru* region contribute to a wide range of disorders, including migraines (*Ardhavabhedaka*), chronic sinusitis (*Pratishyaya*), cervical spondylosis (*Manyastambha*), and disorders affecting sensory functions, such as tinnitus (*Karnanada*) and impaired vision (*Drishtigata Roga*).³ The imbalance in doshas not only obstructs the pathways (*srotas*) in this region but also disrupts the normal physiological functions of sensory and motor organs. *Nasya* therapy is designed to alleviate these conditions by addressing the root cause of dosha imbalance and restoring equilibrium.⁴

The mode of action of *Nasya* is well articulated in classical texts such as *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita*, which describe its ability to cleanse (*Shodhana*) and nourish (*Brahmana*) the channels, thereby promoting overall health in the head and neck region.⁵ The nasal mucosa's high vascularity and proximity to the brain and cranial nerves allow for rapid absorption and targeted action of medicated oils, powders, or herbal decoctions used in *Nasya*. By clearing obstructions, pacifying vitiated doshas, and enhancing neurological functions, *Nasya* has been established as a cornerstone therapy for *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras*.⁶

Modern research has corroborated the efficacy of *Nasya*, highlighting its neuroprotective, anti-inflammatory, and mucolytic properties.⁷ Studies have demonstrated its ability to improve sinus drainage, reduce inflammation, and enhance oxygenation in the cranial

region, thus providing symptomatic relief in chronic conditions like sinusitis and migraines. Furthermore, the integration of *Nasya* therapy with other Ayurvedic and contemporary treatment modalities has shown promise in managing complex head and neck disorders.⁸ This article aims to explore the multifaceted therapeutic effects of *Nasya* in the management of *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras*.⁹ It delves into its classical and contemporary relevance, mechanism of action, and clinical applications, supported by evidence-based insights and case studies. By bridging traditional wisdom and modern science, the study underscores the potential of *Nasya* as a safe and effective intervention for head and neck disorders.¹⁰

Aim and Objectives

Aim

To evaluate the efficacy of *Nasya* therapy in managing *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras* by analyzing its role in dosha balance, symptom relief, and overall quality of life.

Objectives

1. Assess the physiological and pharmacological mechanisms of *Nasya*.
2. Evaluate its clinical efficacy in *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras*.
3. Analyze its role in pacifying *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha doshas*.
4. Measure symptomatic relief in conditions like headaches and sinusitis.
5. Examine the safety and procedural standardization of *Nasya*.
6. Compare classical insights with modern evidence.

Materials and Methods

Data Source

The literary references for this study were obtained from the following classical Ayurvedic texts and contemporary scientific resources:

1. Classical Ayurvedic Texts

- *Charaka Samhita* – Chapters on *Nasya Karma* and *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras*.
- *Sushruta Samhita* – Detailed descriptions of *Nasya* procedures and indications.

- *Ashtanga Hridaya* – Guidelines for the administration of various types of *Nasya* and its benefits in head and neck disorders.
- *Bhavaprakasha Nighantu* – Information on medicated oils, powders, and herbs used in *Nasya*.

2. Commentaries

- *Chakrapani Teeka* on *Charaka Samhita* for explanatory details of *Nasya* therapy.
- *Dalhana Teeka* on *Sushruta Samhita* for practical insights into its clinical applications.

3. Modern Scientific References

- Research articles from PubMed and indexed journals highlighting the pharmacological effects of nasal drug delivery systems.
- Studies on the neuroprotective and mucolytic properties of herbal formulations used in *Nasya*.
- Anatomical and physiological insights into nasal drug absorption and its proximity to the central nervous system.

4. Standards and Guidelines

- Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia of India (API) for the standardization of herbal ingredients used in *Nasya*.
- CCRAS (Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences) guidelines for Panchakarma practices.

Concept of Urdhvajatrugata Vikara

The term *Urdhvajatrugata Vikara* is derived from the Sanskrit words *Urdhva* (above), *Jatru* (clavicle), and *Vikara* (disorder). It refers to ailments occurring in the region above the clavicle, which includes the head, neck, face, and sensory organs such as the eyes, ears, and

nose. These conditions are collectively considered in Ayurveda due to their shared anatomical proximity, interconnected *srotas* (channels), and overlapping pathophysiology.¹¹ Ayurveda considers the *Shiras* (head) to be the seat of the brain and sense organs and emphasizes its functional importance. Any imbalance in the doshas (*Vata*, *Pitta*, or *Kapha*) in this region can manifest as *Urdhvajatrugata Vikara*.¹²

Table No. 1 Classification of Urdhvajatrugata Vikara

S.N.	Category	Specific Disorders
1	Shiro Roga (Head Disorders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ardhavabhedaka</i> (Migraine-like headache) • <i>Suryaavarta</i> (Headache triggered by sunlight) • <i>Anantavata</i> (Trigeminal neuralgia) • <i>Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, and Raktaja Shiro Roga</i> (Headaches based on dosha dominance)
2	Nasa Roga (Nasal Disorders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pratishyaya</i> (Rhinitis or sinusitis) • <i>Nasagata Arsha</i> (Nasal polyps) • <i>Nasagata Vidradhi</i> (Nasal abscess) • <i>Pinasa</i> (Chronic nasal congestion)
3	Karnaroga (Ear Disorders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Karnanada</i> (Tinnitus) • <i>Karna Shula</i> (Ear pain) • <i>Badhira</i> (Deafness) • <i>Karna Krimi</i> (Infections in the ear)
4	Netra Roga (Eye Disorders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Abhishyanda</i> (Conjunctivitis) • <i>Adhimantha</i> (Acute glaucoma-like condition) • <i>Timira</i> (Refractive errors or early cataracts) • <i>Drishti Nasha</i> (Loss of vision)
5	Mukha Roga (Oral Cavity Disorders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mukha Daurgandhya</i> (Halitosis) • <i>Oshtaroga</i> (Lip disorders) • <i>Dantamala</i> (Tartar or gum disease) • <i>Jivha Roga</i> (Tongue disorders)
6	Kantharoga (Throat Disorders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kantaka Roga</i> (Throat abscess) • <i>Galaganda</i> (Thyroid swelling or goiter) • <i>Tundikeri</i> (Tonsillitis)

Pathophysiology of Urdhvajatrugata Vikara

According to Ayurveda, the *urdhvajatru* region is highly influenced by all three doshas:

1. Vata Dosha¹³

- Governs movement, nerve function, and sensory perception.
- Aggravated *Vata* leads to pain, dryness, and sensory impairments.
- Examples: Migraine (*Ardhavabhedaka*), Tinnitus (*Karnanada*), and Facial Paralysis (*Ardita*).

2. Pitta Dosha¹⁴

- Responsible for metabolic and inflammatory processes.
- Aggravated *Pitta* causes burning sensations, inflammation, and redness.
- Examples: Rhinitis (*Pratishyaya*), Conjunctivitis (*Abhishyanda*), and Throat Inflammation (*Kantharoga*).

3. Kapha Dosha¹⁵

- Governs lubrication, cohesion, and structure.
- Aggravated *Kapha* results in heaviness, congestion, and secretions.
- Examples: Sinusitis (*Pinasa*), Chronic Nasal Congestion (*Pratishyaya*), and Thyroid Swelling (*Galaganda*).

Symptoms of Urdhvajatrugata Vikara¹⁶

- **Head:** Headache, dizziness, heaviness, or throbbing pain.
- **Nose:** Nasal congestion, discharge, loss of smell, or frequent sneezing.
- **Ears:** Ringing, reduced hearing, discharge, or ear pain.
- **Eyes:** Redness, watery eyes, blurring of vision, or pain around the eyes.
- **Throat:** Hoarseness of voice, difficulty swallowing, or throat pain.

Diagnosis of Urdhvajatrugata Vikara

1. Nidan Panchak:¹⁷

- *Hetu* (Etiological factors): Improper lifestyle, seasonal variations, or exposure to causative factors like allergens, stress, or infections.
- *Purvarupa* (Prodromal symptoms): Early signs like heaviness or discomfort in the head, congestion, or fatigue.
- *Rupa* (Clinical features): Manifested symptoms like headache, nasal discharge, or ear ringing.
- *Upashaya/Anupashaya* (Relieving/exacerbating factors): Response to therapies like *Nasya* or worsening due to exposure to triggers.

2. **Dosha Evaluation:** Identifying the predominant dosha causing the disorder.

Concept of Nasya

Nasya Karma, an essential part of Panchakarma therapy, is a therapeutic procedure in Ayurveda that involves the administration of medicinal substances through the nasal route. It is specifically designed to address disorders of the *urdhvajatru* region (head, neck, and shoulders). The nasal cavity is considered the gateway to the *Shiras* (head), and thus, *Nasya* is a pivotal therapy for conditions affecting the brain, sense organs, and cranial structures.¹⁸ The term *Nasya* is derived from the root word '*Nasa*', which signifies motion (*Gatau*) and pervasion (*Vyaptau*), highlighting its role in influencing the doshas within the head. Classical texts, including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya*, emphasize the therapeutic importance of *Nasya* in managing *Shiro-roga* (head disorders) and other *urdhvajatrugata vikara*.¹⁹

Purpose and Indications

Purpose of Nasya:²⁰

1. To eliminate vitiated doshas in the head region (*Shodhana* or cleansing).
2. To nourish and rejuvenate the tissues of the head (*Brahmana* or nourishing).
3. To pacify aggravated *doshas* (*Shamana* or palliative).

Indications of Nasya:²¹

Nasya is primarily indicated for the following conditions:

- **Neurological Disorders:** Paralysis (*Pakshaghata*), facial palsy (*Ardita*).
- **Psychiatric Disorders:** Anxiety, depression, insomnia.
- **ENT Disorders:** Sinusitis (*Pratishyaya*), rhinitis, nasal polyps, tinnitus (*Karnanada*).
- **Headache Disorders:** Migraine (*Ardhavabhedaka*), tension headache.
- **Eye Disorders:** Dry eye syndrome, vision disturbances.

Table No. 1 Types of Nasya²²

S.N.	Classification Basis	Types	Description	Indications
1	Mode of Action (<i>Charaka Samhita</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rechana Nasya (Cleansing): • Tarpana Nasya (Nourishing): • Shamana Nasya (Palliative): 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminates vitiated doshas from the head region. • Strengthens and nourishes tissues. • Pacifies vitiated doshas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sinusitis, migraines. • Degenerative conditions like facial palsy. • Mild and chronic conditions.
2	Administration Method (<i>Charaka Samhita</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navana Nasya: • Avapidana Nasya: • Dhuma Nasya: • Pratimarsha Nasya: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instillation of medicated oil. • Herbal juice instillation. • Medicated smoke inhalation. • Gentle application of medicated oil. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonly used for all head disorders. • Acute conditions. • Kapha disorders like nasal congestion. • Daily preventive care.
3	Effect (<i>Sushruta Samhita</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shiro-virechana: • Snehana Nasya: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanses and removes toxins from the head. • Lubricates and nourishes cranial tissues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kapha-related head disorders. • Chronic and degenerative conditions.

Terminology in Classical Texts

- *Sushruta* has referred to Nasya as *Shiro-virechana*, highlighting its cleansing action specific to head-related disorders.
- *Charaka* uses the term "*Nastah-prachradhan*", which implies purification of vitiated *Doshas* through elimination, achieved by Nasya therapy.

All classical Ayurvedic scholars, including *Charaka*, *Sushruta*, and *Vagbhata*, have emphasized the importance of *Nasya Karma* as a primary treatment for *Shiro-roga* (head disorders). By directly targeting the morbid doshas, *Nasya* provides symptomatic relief and addresses the root cause of the disease.

Classification of Nasya

Nasya is classified differently in various classical texts based on its mode of action, method of administration, or the effects of the medicines used:

Table No. 2 Classification of Nasya by Various Authors²³

S.N.	Author	Classification
1	Charaka Samhita	<p>By Mode of Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rechana (Cleansing) - Tarpana (Nourishing) - Shamana (Palliative) <p>By Administration Method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Navana - Avapidana - Dhamapana - Dhuma - Pratimarsha <p>By Part of Plant Used (Ashraya Bheda):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phala (Fruit) - Patra (Leaf) - Mula (Root) - Kanda (Bulb) - Pushpa (Flower) - Nirryasa (Exudate) - Twaka (Bark)

2	Sushruta Samhita	By Type: - Nasya - Shirovirechana By Administration: - Shirovirechana - Pradhamana - Avapida - Nasya - Pratimarsha
3	Ashtanga Hridaya	By Effect: - Virechana (Cleansing) - Brimhana (Nourishing) - Shamana (Palliative)
4	Kashyapa Samhita	By Effect: - Brimhana (Nourishing) - Karshana (Reducing)
5	Sharangdhara Samhita	By Effect: - Rechana (Cleansing) - Karshana (Reducing)

Procedure of Nasya Karma²⁴

The administration of Nasya follows a specific sequence as described in classical texts.

Pre-Procedural Phase (Purva Karma):

1. Preparation of the Patient:

- The patient is made to lie in a supine position with the head slightly lowered.
- Gentle massage (*Abhyanga*) is performed on the face and neck with medicated oils to relax the muscles and open the channels (*Srotas*).

2. Steam Therapy (*Swedana*):

- Mild steaming of the head and neck is performed to liquefy the doshas and prepare them for expulsion.

Main Procedure (Pradhana Karma):

1. Medicated oils, herbal juices, or powders are administered into each nostril using a dropper or nasal catheter.
2. The patient is advised to inhale gently while the medicine is instilled to ensure deep absorption.
3. The head is maintained in a downward position to facilitate retention of the medicine in the nasal cavity.

Post-Procedural Phase (Paschat Karma):

1. The patient is allowed to rest for a few minutes.
2. The expulsion of vitiated doshas is facilitated through gentle blowing of the nose or spitting.
3. Gargling with warm water or herbal decoctions may be recommended.

Mode of Action of Nasya

Nasya therapy works through the following mechanisms:

1. Direct Drug Delivery:

- The nasal cavity provides a direct pathway to the central nervous system, bypassing the blood-brain barrier. This ensures rapid and effective absorption of medicinal substances.

2. Effect on Doshas:

- *Shodhana Nasya* eliminates vitiated *Kapha* and *Vata doshas*, clearing blockages in the *urdhvajatru* region.
- *Brahmana Nasya* nourishes and strengthens the tissues, restoring balance in chronic and degenerative conditions.

3. Physiological Benefits:

- Improves blood circulation in the cranial region.

- Enhances oxygenation and reduces inflammation in the sinuses and cranial nerves.
- Regulates neurovascular functions, alleviating symptoms like headache and congestion.

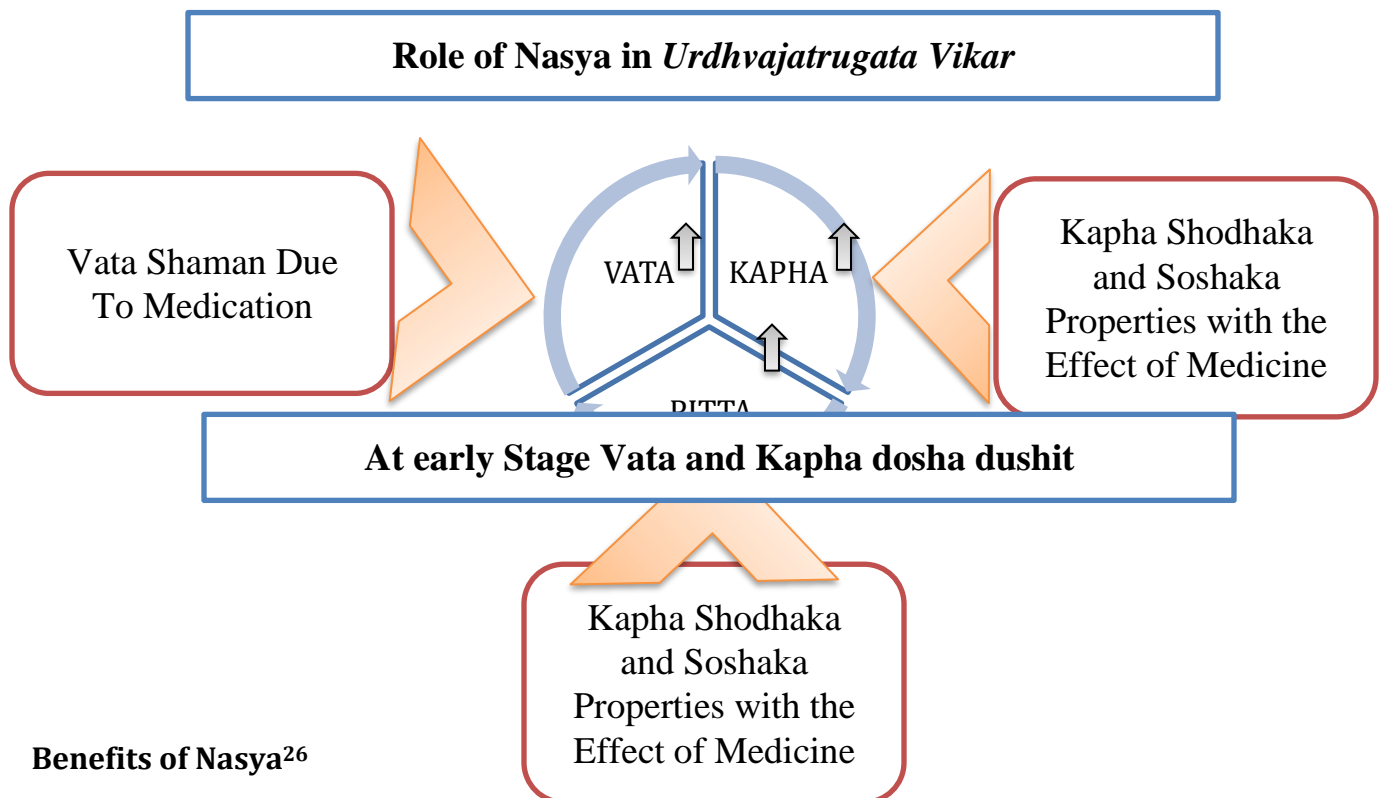
4. Psychological Effects:

- Calms the mind and reduces stress by influencing the neuro-endocrine system.

Timing of Nasya Administration²⁵

The efficacy of Nasya therapy depends on the time of administration, as specified in classical texts:

- **Morning (*Purvahana*):** For *Kapha* disorders (e.g., heaviness, congestion).
- **Noon (*Madhyahana*):** For *Pitta* disorders (e.g., inflammation, burning sensation).
- **Evening (*Aprahana*):** For *Vata* disorders (e.g., dryness, pain).



Benefits of Nasya²⁶

1. Therapeutic Benefits:

- Relieves congestion and blockages in the nasal passages and sinuses.
- Alleviates symptoms of migraines, chronic sinusitis, and headaches.
- Enhances sensory functions such as vision, smell, and hearing.

2. Preventive Benefits:

- Prevents the recurrence of head and neck disorders by addressing the root cause.
- Improves immunity and resistance to infections in the upper respiratory tract.

3. Holistic Benefits:

- Promotes mental clarity, concentration, and emotional stability.
- Rejuvenates the tissues in the cranial region, promoting overall well-being.

Discussion

Nasya therapy, as highlighted in the abstract, is a crucial intervention for managing *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras*, which include disorders of the head and neck region. The nasal route is uniquely significant in Ayurveda, as it is considered the gateway to the *Shiras* (head).²⁷ This feature enables Nasya to directly impact the brain, cranial nerves, and adjacent structures, offering rapid and effective results in conditions like chronic sinusitis, migraines, and other head disorders. The therapeutic action of Nasya is grounded in its ability to target dosha vitiation—primarily *Kapha* and *Vata*—and restore balance.²⁸

The abstract emphasizes the role of different *Nasya* formulations, such as *Shodhana Nasya*, *Brahmana Nasya*, and *Marshya Nasya*, in addressing the root cause of *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras*. These formulations not only cleanse obstructed pathways (*Srotas*) but also nourish and rejuvenate cranial tissues.²⁹ by enhancing dosha equilibrium and restoring physiological harmony, Nasya therapy provides significant relief from symptoms like headaches, sinus congestion, and sensory impairments. This multifaceted approach ensures both symptomatic relief and long-term therapeutic benefits.³⁰

The nasal cavity's rich vascularity and proximity to the brain play a pivotal role in the rapid absorption and targeted action of medicated substances administered through Nasya. As noted in the abstract, the therapy:

1. Clears accumulated *Kapha* through cleansing actions (*Shodhana*).
2. Nourishes tissues and restores strength through rejuvenative actions (*Brahmana*).
3. Alleviates inflammation and burning sensations by pacifying *Pitta dosha*.

These actions not only address the immediate symptoms but also improve overall neurological functions, making Nasya a cornerstone therapy for *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras*.³¹ Modern research, as corroborated in the abstract, validates the neuroprotective, anti-inflammatory, and mucolytic properties of Nasya. Studies have shown its ability to improve sinus drainage, reduce inflammation, and enhance oxygenation in the cranial region.³² These findings align with classical Ayurvedic insights and underscore the relevance of Nasya in contemporary clinical practice. Unlike conventional treatments that primarily offer symptomatic relief, Nasya targets the root cause, providing a holistic solution with minimal side effects.³³

Nasya therapy's therapeutic efficacy in alleviating symptoms such as chronic headaches, sinus congestion, and impaired sensory functions is well-documented in both classical texts and modern studies. Additionally, its preventive potential in reducing the recurrence of head and neck disorders is a significant advantage. By addressing dosha vitiation and strengthening the tissues of the head, Nasya therapy ensures long-term health benefits, reaffirming its role as a frontline therapy for *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras*.³⁴

Conclusion

Nasya therapy, a vital component of *Panchakarma*, emerges as a cornerstone treatment for managing *Urdhvajatrugata Vikaras*—a group of disorders affecting the head, neck, and related structures. By leveraging the nasal route as a direct gateway to the *Shiras* (head), it provides a unique and targeted approach to addressing vitiated *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha doshas*. The multifaceted actions of Nasya, including cleansing (*Shodhana*), nourishing (*Brahmana*), and pacifying (*Shamana*), effectively restore dosha balance, alleviate

symptoms, and promote overall cranial health. Clinical observations and modern research validate the efficacy of Nasya in conditions like *Ardhavabhedaka* (migraine), *Pratishyaya* (sinusitis), and *Karnanada* (tinnitus), offering significant symptomatic relief and long-term benefits. Its neuroprotective, anti-inflammatory, and mucolytic properties further enhance its therapeutic impact, making it a holistic intervention with minimal side effects.

Conflict of Interest – Nil

Source of Support –None

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