



Review Article

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CONCEPTUAL REVIEW OF PRATIMARSHA NASYA IN THE FRAMEWORK OF DINCHARYA

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ABSTRACT

Pratimarsha Nasya is a unique and gentle form of *Nasya Karma* described in *Ayurvedic* classics, advocated for daily use as a part of *Dincharya* (daily regimen). Unlike *Marsha Nasya*, *Pratimarsha Nasya* involves the administration of a very small dose of medicated oil or ghee into each nostril, making it safe, simple, and suitable for all age groups in almost all seasons. The nose is regarded as the gateway to the head ("*Nasa hi Shiraso Dwaram*"), and regular practice of *Pratimarsha Nasya* helps in maintaining the health of *Urdhvajatrugata* organs by nourishing the sense organs, strengthening *Prana Vayu*, and balancing *Vata* and *Kapha Dosha*. From the perspective of *Dincharya*, *Pratimarsha Nasya* plays a significant role in disease prevention and health promotion. It aids in improving respiratory function, voice quality, vision, mental clarity, and sleep, while also preventing disorders such as headache, sinusitis, allergic rhinitis, hair fall, premature graying, and neurological disturbances. This conceptual review aims to compile and analyze classical references from *Brihatrayi* and *Laghutrayi* along with contemporary interpretations to elucidate the preventive, promotive, and therapeutic significance of *Pratimarsha Nasya* when practiced daily. Emphasis is laid on its mechanism of action, indications, contraindications, and relevance in present-day lifestyle disorders, highlighting its importance as an integral component of *Ayurvedic Dincharya* for holistic well-being.

KEYWORDS: - *Pratimarsh Nasya, Uttamanga, Dincharya.*

INTRODUCTION: -

Ayurveda emphasizes prevention of disease and promotion of health through the practice of *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya*, and *Sadvritta*. *Dincharya* consists of daily activities that help in maintaining physiological balance and preventing lifestyle disorders. Among these, *Nasya Karma* holds a special place for maintaining the health of the head and neck region.

Nasa is one of the five sensory organs (*Gnanendriyas*), whose functions are not only limited to olfaction and respiration but also considered as a pathway for drug administration since it is described as a gateway for the *Shiras* [1]. The sensory and motor impulses that the *Shiras* send through their channels and sense organs are like the sun's rays. The medication can treat disorders by reaching the brain, eyes, ears, upper respiratory tract, oral cavity, and neck region when it is inhaled [2].

Nasya karma is the best treatment for *shirogata roga* and specially the *nasagata roga*. According to Ayurveda and ancient literature, *Nasya* therapy is also indicated in the disease of *mukha karna* and *netra roga*. In *Ayurveda*, the word *Nasya* has been taken specially to mention the route of administration of drug.

Pratimarsha Nasya is a type of *Nasya* that can be administered daily in minimal dosage without strict restrictions. *Acharya Charaka* and *Acharya Vagbhata* have highlighted its importance in routine practice for preserving sensory and neurological health. In the current era of pollution, stress, irregular sleep, and excessive screen exposure, the relevance of *Pratimarsha Nasya* has increased manifold.

Objectives: - The objectives of the present conceptual review are -

1. To explore the concept of *Pratimarsha Nasya* as described in classical *Ayurvedic* texts.
2. To evaluate the role of *Pratimarsha Nasya* within the framework of *Dincharya*.
3. To understand the preventive and promotive health benefits of daily *Pratimarsha Nasya*.
4. To analyze its mechanism of action from an *Ayurvedic* perspective.

Materials and Methods: -

1. Classical texts and various commentaries of *Ayurveda*.
2. Study material available on internet.

Classification of *Nasya*: - Classification of *nasya* is done in various manners depending upon various factors like form of drug, mode of action etc as shown in the table.

Table No. 1

Sr. No.	Authors	Types	Names
1	<i>Charak</i>	3	Mode of action <i>Rechana, Tarpana, Samana [3]</i>
		5	Methods of administration: <i>Navana, Avapidana, Dhamapana, Dhuma & Pratimarsha [4]</i>
		7	Accordingly, to various parts of drugs utilized: <i>Phala, Patra, Mula, Kanda, Pushpa, Nirryasa, Twaka [5]</i>
2	<i>Sushrut</i>	5	<i>Shirovirechan, Pradhamana, Avapida Nasya, Pratimarsha [6]</i>
3	<i>Vagbhatta</i>	3	On the basis of Functions: <i>Virechan, Brimhan, shaman [7]</i>
		2	On the basis of Dose [8]: <i>Marsha Nasya, Pratimarsha Nasya.</i>
4	<i>Kashyapa</i>	2	<i>Shodhana, Poorana [9]</i>
5	<i>Sharangadhara</i>	2	<i>Rechana, Snehana [10]</i>

Pratimarsha Nasya: -

Pratimarsha Nasya is administered by dipping a clean little finger in medicated ghee or oil and gently inserting it into each nostril. Following insertion, the nasal passages are lubricated and gently massaged. This procedure facilitates the opening of deeper nasal tissues. According to *Ayurvedic* texts, regular practice of *Pratimarsha Nasya* is recommended as a part of daily regimen (*Dincharya*) to maintain the health of the nasal passages.[11]

Pratimarsha Nasya is well tolerated, associated with minimal complications, and is a highly convenient procedure. It can be administered to individuals of all age groups at any time, without specific restrictions. The standard dose of *Pratimarsha Nasya* is two drops in each nostril, which does not produce adverse effects; hence, it is considered an ideal preventive therapy, particularly for long-term use in reducing allergic conditions. *Acharya Vagbhata* has stated that *Pratimarsha Nasya* is beneficial from birth until death.[12]

When *Nasya Karma* is performed properly and regularly, it helps in maintaining the normal functioning of the eyes, nose, and ears. It also aids in preventing hair fall and premature greying of hair. *Pratimarsha Nasya* is useful in various conditions such as cervical spondylosis, headache, facial paralysis, hemiplegia, frozen shoulder, Parkinsonism, mental disorders, and nasal diseases. Additionally, it helps in delaying the process of premature aging.[13]

The differences between *Marsha Nasya* and *Pratimarsha Nasya* are described in Table 1.[14]

S. NO.	Parameter	<i>Marsha Nasya</i>	<i>Pratimarsha Nasya</i>
1	Definition	Therapeutic <i>nasya</i> administered in a larger dose for treating specific diseases.	<i>Nasya</i> administered in a very small dose for daily use.
2	Purpose/type	<i>Shodhana</i> , <i>Shamana</i> and <i>Brimhana</i>	<i>Shamana</i> and <i>Brimhana</i>
3	Dose	6, 8, 10 drops is advised in <i>Hina</i> , <i>Madhyama</i> and <i>Uttama Matra</i> respectively.	It should be given 2 drops in each nostril.
4	Frequency	Given occasionally, not daily	Can be given daily
5	Age	Not suitable for children, elderly, weak, or pregnant women.	Suitable from birth to old age.
6	Time of administration	Given at a specific time, considering season, dosha, and patient strength.	Can be given at any time.
7	<i>Purva karma</i>	Required	Not required
8	Role in <i>Dincharya</i>	Not included in daily regimen	Included in <i>Dincharya</i>
9	Complication	Possibility of complications if done improperly.	No complications
10	Supervision	Should be administered under supervision	Can be self-administered

Dose of *Pratimarshya Nasya*: - It should be given 2 drops in the morning and evening time.[15]

Indications of *Pratimarshya Nasya*: - *Pratimarshya Nasya* is indicated both for *Swasthasya Rakshanam* and for the management of mild disease conditions. [16]

1. As a *Dincharya*
 - To maintain the health of nasal passages.
 - For nourishment of *Urdhva Jatrugata Pradesha*.
 - To prevent *Vata* predominance.
 - *Indriya Prasadanam*
 - *Jara Nivritti*.
2. Nasal and ENT Disorders
 - *Pratishyaya*
 - *Nasanah*
 - *Nasashosh*
3. Eye, Ear, and Throat Disorders
 - *Akshishosha*
 - *Karna shola, karna nada*
 - *Kanthshosha*
 - Recurrent ENT infections
4. Hair and Scalp Disorders
 - *Khalitya*
 - *Palitya*
5. Neurological and Musculoskeletal Condition
 - *Ardita*
 - *Pakshaghata*
 - *Kampa vata*
 - *Vataj shirashool*
6. Psychological
 - Stress, anxiety, disturbance of sleep
7. General preventive and supportive uses
 - *Durbala* (weak patient)
 - *Trishna* (thirsty), *Pidita* (tired),

Contra-indications of *Pratimarsha Nasya*: -

It is contraindicated in *Dushta - Pinasa* (chronic sinusitis), in *Madhyapi* (those who has consumed alcohol), *Badhirya* (deafness), *Krimija Shiroroga* (head infested with worms), *Utklishta Dosha* (in whom, in the *Dosha* are greatly imbalanced and moving from place to place) and also in *Bahudosha*. It should not be given them because in *Pratimarsha Nasya*, *Sneha Matra* is quite insufficient to eliminate *Dosha* and already aggravated *Dosha* may get vitiated further.

Kala of Pratimarsha Nasya (Time to administration): -

Sushruta and *Sharangdhara* have described 14 suitable times for *Pratimarsha Nasya*, while *Vagbhata* has mentioned 15 Kala.[17]

S. No.	Sushrut	Vagbhata
	प्रतिमर्शश्चतुर्दशसु कालेषूपादेयः; तद्यथा- तल्पोत्थितेन, प्रक्षालितदन्तेन, गृहान्निर्गच्छता, व्यायामव्यवायाध्वपरिश्रान्तेन, मूत्रोच्चारकवलाञ्जनान्ते, भुक्तवता, छर्दितवता, दिवास्वप्नोत्थितेन, सायं चेति ॥ (सु.चि. 40/51)	निशाहर्भुक्तवान्ताहः स्वप्नाध्वश्रमरेतसाम् शिरोभ्यञ्जनगण्डूषपत्रावाञ्जनवर्चसाम् दन्तकाष्ठस्य हासस्य योज्योऽन्तेसौ द्विबिन्दुकः । (अ.ह.20/28)
1	<i>Talpouthitena</i> (After getting up in the morning from bed)	Night or day
2	<i>Prakshalita Dantena</i> (After tooth cleaning)	After food
3	<i>Grihanirgachchhatah</i> (When to go out for daily works)	After emesis
4	<i>Vyayamouttara</i> (After exercise)	After day sleep
5	<i>Vyavayouttara</i> (After coitus)	After waking / travelling
6	<i>Adhvaparishrantena</i> (After long waking/travelling)	After coitus
7	<i>Mutratiyagopranta</i> (After micturition)	After shiroabhiyang
8	<i>Malatyagopranta</i> (After defecation)	<i>Gandush</i>
9	<i>Kavala</i> (After gargling of mouth)	After urination
10	<i>Anjana</i> (After collyrium application)	After defecation
11	<i>Bhuktavata/Bhojanouttara</i> (After food)	<i>Anjana</i>
12	<i>Chharditvata</i> (After emesis)	After tooth brushing
13	<i>Diva Swapna Utathena</i> (After day dreaming /after getting up from day sleep)	After laughing
14	<i>Saya Kala</i> (In the evening time)	<i>Dinantha</i>
15		After heavy work

Benefits of Pratimarshya Nasya: -

तत्र तत्पोत्थितेनासेवितः प्रतिमर्शी रात्रावुपचितं नासास्रोतगतं मलमुपहन्ति मनः प्रसादं च करोति, प्रक्षालितदन्तेनासेवितो दन्तानां दृढतां वदनसौगन्ध्यं चापादयति, गृहान्निर्गच्छता सेवितो नासास्रोतसः क्लिन्नतया रजो धूमो वा न बाधते, व्यायाममैथुनाध्वपरिश्रान्तेनासेवितः श्रममुपहन्ति, मूत्रोच्चारान्ते सेवितो दृष्टेर्गुरुत्वमपनयति, कवलाञ्जनान्ते सेवितो दृष्टिं प्रसादयति, भुक्तवता सेवितः स्रोतसां विशुद्धिं लघुतां चापादयति, वान्तेनासेवितः स्रोतोविलग्नं श्लेष्माणमपोह्य भक्ताकाङ्गामा-पादयति, दिवास्वप्नोत्थितेनासेवितो निद्राशेषं गुरुत्वं मलं चापोह्य चित्तैकाग्रं जनयति, सायं चासेवितः सुखनिद्राप्रबोधं चेति ॥(सु.चि. 40/52)

Condition / Time of Administration	Effect of Pratimarsha Nasya
When administered at night	Removes accumulated impurities (mala) from the nasal passages collected during the day and promotes mental clarity and calmness.
When administered after brushing teeth	Strengthens the teeth and produces freshness and pleasant odor of the mouth
When administered before going out of the house	Prevents disturbance from dust and smoke due to lubrication of nasal passages.
When administered after exercise, sexual activity, or long walking	Relieves fatigue and exhaustion.
When administered after urination	Alleviates heaviness of the eyes and improves ocular comforts.
When administered after Gargling (Kavala) and collyrium (Anjana)	Enhances clarity and sharpness of vision.
When administered after taking food	Promotes cleanliness and lightness of the body channels (srotas)
When administered after Emesis (Vamana)	Removes residual kapha adhered to the channels and improves appetite.
When administered after walking from daytime sleep	Removes residual drowsiness, heaviness, and impurities, and promotes mental concentration.
When administered in the evening	Induces comfortable sleep and pleasant awakening.

Administration of Nasya: -

The individual should be made to sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Gentle massage of the forehead and face is performed, followed by mild *Swedana* (sudation). Slightly warm oil is then instilled into each nostril in the prescribed dose. When the oil reaches the throat, the person should expel it by spitting. Finally, gargling with warm water is advised, and *Dhoomapana* (medicated fumigation) through the mouth may be administered.[18]

Effect of Nasya - Nasya is an important Panchakarma procedure that exerts both curative and preventive effects by acting directly on the organs and structures above the clavicle (*Urdhva Jatrugata Pradesha*). Since the nose is considered the gateway to the head (*"Nasa hi Shiraso Dwaram"*), medicines administered through *Nasya* reach the *Shira*, *Indriya*, and *Manovaha Srotas*.

Curative Effects of Nasya

Nasya is therapeutically effective in various disorders of the head and neck region. It helps in:

Elimination of vitiated *Doshas*, especially *Vata* and *Kapha*, accumulated in the head. Management of diseases such as headache (*Shirashoola*), sinusitis (*Peenasa*), rhinitis (*Pratishyaya*), cervical stiffness (*Manyastambha*), facial paralysis (*Ardita*), and disorders of the eyes, ears, nose, and throat. Improvement in voice quality, smell perception, and sensory functions. Strengthening of hair roots and prevention of premature greying and hair fall. Enhancement of mental functions by improving memory, concentration, and clarity of mind.[19]

Preventive Effects of Nasya

When practiced regularly, especially in the form of *Pratimarsha Nasya*, it acts as a preventive measure by: Maintaining the normal physiology of the organs above the clavicle. Preventing accumulation of *Kapha* and pacifying *Vata* in the head region. Improving local immunity and resistance against recurrent ENT disorders. Delaying ageing changes such as wrinkles, hair fall, and greying. Promoting overall well-being and maintaining balance of *Doshas* as a part of *Dincharya*. [20]

Discussion: - According to *Charaka Samhita* (Cha. Si. 9/88), the nose is regarded as the sole gateway to the head, and therefore medicines administered through the nasal route can easily reach and act upon the head. *Acharya Vagbhata* also stated that drugs instilled through the nostrils reach the *Shringataka Marma*, as the nose serves as the entrance to the head [21].

As per *Indu*, the commentator of *Ashtanga Sangraha*, *Shringataka* is situated internally in the central region of the head. *Acharya Sushruta* described *Shringataka Marma* as a *Shira Marma*, a vital structure formed by the confluence of *Siras* that nourish the nose, eyes, ears, and tongue. From an anatomical perspective, the nose is connected to the brain through the olfactory nerve plexus, the ophthalmic and maxillary branches of the trigeminal nerve, as well as an extensive vascular network [22].

The mechanism of action of *Nasya* can be explained as follows: the *Nasya Dravya* administered through the nasal route first reaches the *Shringataka Marma* (corresponding to the cavernous venous sinuses). From there, it enters the *Murdha* (intracranial circulation). Subsequently, the drug reaches the junctions of the *Netra* (eyes), *Karna* (ears), and *Shiras* (head) by diffusion. In this process, *Nasya* eliminates the morbid *Doshas* from the supraclavicular region, similar to the removal of *Munja* grass from its stem [23].

Advantages of Nasal Drug Delivery: - [24]

Nasal drug delivery offers several therapeutic and pharmacokinetic advantages, especially for drugs intended to act locally or on the central nervous system.

- Rapid onset of action
- Bypasses first-pass metabolism
- Direct access to the brain
- Non-invasive and painless
- Suitable for unconscious or uncooperative patients
- Lower dose requirement
- Reduced systemic side effects
- Local therapeutic effects
- Ease of self-administration
- Applicable for both curative and preventive use

According to modern: - Probable mode of action can be understood in these following ways;

(1) Diffusion mechanism, (2) Neurological pathway, (3) Vascular pathway.

Diffusion mechanism - In *Nasya Karma*, drugs diffuse through the nasal mucosa via two main pathways: the olfactory nerve pathway (direct neural route to the brain for lipophilic drugs via cells) and the trigeminal nerve pathway (for hydrophilic drugs, between cells or via transcytosis), bypassing the Blood-Brain Barrier (BBB) for localized or systemic effects, targeting head/brain disorders by clearing *Doshas* and improving neurovascular function.

This absorption is rapid due to rich blood supply, allowing for CNS access and systemic absorption, making it effective for *Urdhwajatrugata* (above collarbone) ailments.

Olfactory Nerve: - Drugs can directly access the central nervous system (CNS) via the olfactory nerve pathway. Lipophilic (fat-soluble) drugs, like the medicated oils commonly used in *Snehana Nasya*, passively diffuse across cellular membranes through this route, reaching the limbic system and hypothalamus to affect neuroendocrine functions.

Trigeminal Nerve: - The trigeminal nerve also innervates the nasal cavity and provides an alternative route to the CNS. This pathway often involves paracellular diffusion (transport between cells) and transcytosis (transport via vesicles), making it suitable for hydrophilic (water-soluble) substances like herbal juices (*swarasa*) or decoctions (*kwath*).[25]

Neurological pathway - Chemoreceptors make up the olfactory nerve. It is known that this nerve connects to the limbic system and hypothalamus, which regulate endocrine secretions, via the olfactory pathway. Moreover, hypothalamus is considered to be responsible for integrating the functions of the endocrine system and the nervous system. In animals, electrical stimulation of the brain can cause the anterior pituitary to secrete. Therefore, the medications administered here stimulate the brain's higher regions, which act to regulate endocrine and nervous system activities [26].

Vascular pathway - The vascular pathway of *Nasya Karma* involves drugs absorbed through the highly vascularized nasal mucosa, entering channels (*Srotas*) to the *Shringataka Marma* (skull's middle fossa), connecting via ophthalmic/facial veins to the cavernous sinus, and directly reaching the brain/meninges, allowing lipid-soluble substances to bypass the Blood-Brain Barrier (BBB) for systemic effects, influencing cranial nerves, sinuses, and systemic circulation.

Vascular routes are – 1. Direct Intracranial (Olfactory Nerve Route) 2. Venous Drainage (Vascular Route) 3. Paranasal Sinus Route [27]

CONCLUSION –

Pratimarsha Nasya is an essential daily practice within the framework of *Dinacharya*, serving as a powerful, yet gentle, preventive and health-promoting measure in *Ayurveda*. By facilitating the administration of medicated oils or ghee in a minimal dose, it safely lubricates the nasal passages, balances the *Doshas* in the upper body, and nourishes vital structures of the head and neck without the risk of complications associated with more intensive *Nasya* therapies. Its ease of self-administration, applicability across all ages and

seasons, and dual benefits of local hygiene and systemic wellness make it a cornerstone of holistic health maintenance in the modern world, helping to mitigate the effects of stress and environmental pollution on the sensory and nervous systems.

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