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REVIEW ARTICLE

Brahma Muhurta Jagrana and its Effects on Lifestyle Disorders: An Ayurvedic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Background: Lifestyle disorders such as obesity, type 2 diabetes mellitus, hypertension, and stress-related illnesses have shown a steady rise in recent decades, largely due to irregular sleep-wake patterns, delayed waking hours, and disturbed circadian rhythm. Ayurveda, through its concept of Dinacharya (daily regimen), has long emphasized Brahma Muhurta Jagrana, that is, waking during the last quarter of the night, approximately one and a half hours before sunrise, as a fundamental preventive practice for maintaining Dosha balance, optimal Agni, and overall health. This structured review explores the classical basis of Brahma Muhurta Jagrana and examines its probable role in the prevention of modern lifestyle disorders.

Aim: To critically review the Ayurvedic concept of Brahma Muhurta Jagrana and correlate it with contemporary scientific understanding of circadian rhythm, so as to evaluate its role in the prevention of lifestyle disorders.

Objectives: To study the classical description of Brahma Muhurta and Dinacharya as mentioned in Ayurvedic texts. To understand the Doshik and Agni-related basis of Brahma Muhurta Jagrana. To correlate the Ayurvedic concept with modern knowledge of circadian rhythm and sleep physiology. To analyze the probable preventive role of Brahma Muhurta Jagrana in common lifestyle disorders.

Material and Methods: Classical Ayurvedic texts and contemporary scientific literature on circadian rhythm and lifestyle disorders were reviewed. The gathered information was compiled and analyzed in a narrative format.

Result & Discussion: Brahma Muhurta Jagrana appears to support metabolic and psychological health through mechanisms aligning with modern chronobiology. Its neglect may contribute to the rising burden of lifestyle disorders.

Conclusion: Brahma Muhurta Jagrana is a simple, cost-free, time-tested practice with considerable preventive potential. Its wider adoption, supported by further research, may offer a valuable public health strategy.

Keywords: *Brahma Muhurta; Dinacharya; Lifestyle Disorders; Circadian Rhythm; Agni; Ayurveda*

INTRODUCTION

Lifestyle disorders, including obesity, type 2 diabetes mellitus, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and stress-related illnesses, have emerged as a major public health concern worldwide. Noncommunicable diseases, many of which are closely linked to unhealthy lifestyle patterns, now account for a large proportion of deaths and disability each year[1]. Irregular sleep-wake timing, late waking hours, and reduced physical activity are increasingly recognized as important contributing factors to this growing burden.

Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, places strong emphasis on preventive healthcare through the concept of Swasthavritta, or the science of healthy living. Central to this is Dinacharya, the daily regimen prescribed for maintaining balance of the three Doshas, that is, Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. Among the practices described under Dinacharya, Brahma Muhurta Jagrana, or waking during the last quarter of the night, roughly one and a half hours before sunrise, has been given particular importance by classical Acharyas as the ideal time to begin the day[2].

While this practice has been followed traditionally for centuries, modern society has largely moved away from early waking due to changing work patterns, artificial lighting, and digital screen exposure. At the same time, contemporary chronobiology has shown that alignment of the body's internal clock with the natural light-dark cycle plays an important role in metabolic and psychological health[3]. This structured review was therefore undertaken to examine the classical Ayurvedic basis of Brahma Muhurta Jagrana and to correlate it with current scientific understanding, in order to evaluate its possible role in the prevention of lifestyle disorders.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

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- To study the classical description of Brahma Muhurta and Dinacharya as mentioned in Ayurvedic texts.
- To understand the Doshik and Agni-related basis of Brahma Muhurta Jagrana.
- To correlate the Ayurvedic concept with modern knowledge of circadian rhythm and sleep physiology.
- To analyze the probable preventive role of Brahma Muhurta Jagrana in common lifestyle disorders.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This is a structured review article based on a narrative compilation of classical and contemporary literature. Classical Ayurvedic texts, namely Charaka Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, Sarngadhara Samhita, and Bhavaprakasha, were reviewed in detail for references related to Dinacharya and Brahma Muhurta. Relevant contemporary scientific literature on circadian rhythm, sleep physiology, and lifestyle disorders was additionally collected from standard search platforms such as PubMed and Google Scholar, using keywords including Brahma Muhurta, Dinacharya, circadian rhythm, and lifestyle disorders. The information gathered from both classical and modern sources was compiled, compared, and critically analyzed to draw meaningful correlations.

AYURVEDIC REVIEW

Concept of Dinacharya and Brahma Muhurta

Dinacharya literally means the regimen to be followed daily, and it forms one of the foundational pillars of Ayurvedic preventive medicine. The day, according to Ayurveda, is divided into specific time periods, each dominated by a particular Dosha, and activities are recommended accordingly to maintain harmony between the body and nature. Brahma Muhurta refers to the last Muhurta, a unit of time equal to approximately forty-eight minutes, of the night, which falls roughly one and a half hours before sunrise. It is considered a Kapha-dominant yet exceptionally calm and pure period, ideal for awakening and beginning the day's activities[4]

Brahma Muhurta Jagrana - Classical Reference and Rationale

Classical texts recommend that a healthy individual should wake up during Brahma Muhurta in order to maintain Ayu, Bala, and Aarogya. This time is believed to be free from environmental disturbances, with clean and Sattvika qualities of air, making it ideal for physical cleansing, study, meditation, and spiritual practice. Waking late, beyond sunrise, is specifically discouraged, as it is said to increase Kapha Dosha and reduce bodily lightness and mental alertness through the day[5]

Dosha, Agni and Brahma Muhurta - Physiological Basis

During the early hours of Brahma Muhurta, Kapha Dosha, though dominant, is in its lightest and most stable state, while the mind is naturally calm. Waking at this time allows Vata Dosha to initiate normal bodily movements, such as elimination and circulation, in a smooth and timely manner. Delayed waking, on the other hand, allows Kapha to dominate further into the morning, which classical texts associate with heaviness, lethargy, and sluggish Agni[6]

Lifestyle Disorders (Jivanashaili Janya Vikara) - Ayurvedic Understanding

Lifestyle disorders can be understood in Ayurveda as conditions arising predominantly from Mithya Ahara-Vihara, that is, improper diet and improper daily or seasonal routine, leading to Dosha Vikruti and Agni Mandya, which in turn results in the formation of Ama, improperly digested metabolic toxins. Over time, this Ama circulates through the body and settles in weaker tissues, producing conditions that closely resemble modern lifestyle disorders such as obesity, diabetes, and hypertension. Disruption of Dinacharya, including neglect of Brahma Muhurta Jagrana, is considered an important contributing cause in this disease process[7]

Effect of Brahma Muhurta Jagrana on Vata-Pitta-Kapha Balance

Regular waking during Brahma Muhurta is believed to support balanced functioning of all three Doshas across the day. It allows Vata to govern the early morning activities of elimination and sensory alertness, prevents excess accumulation of Kapha that would otherwise occur with prolonged sleep, and sets the stage for balanced Pitta-governed digestion later in the morning. This early alignment is considered protective against the gradual Dosha Vikruti that underlies most lifestyle disorders[8]

Effect on Agni and Metabolism

Waking early and engaging in light physical activity during Brahma Muhurta is said to stimulate Jatharagni ahead of the first meal of the day, thereby supporting efficient digestion and metabolism. A well-functioning Agni reduces the likelihood of Ama formation, which is considered central to the development of metabolic lifestyle disorders such as obesity and Prameha[9]

Effect on Manasika Bhava (Mental Health) and Nidra

Brahma Muhurta is traditionally regarded as a period of heightened Sattva Guna, associated with mental clarity, calmness, and reduced Rajasika and Tamasika tendencies. Waking during this period, combined with practices such as meditation and Pranayama, is believed to reduce Manasika stress and improve the quality of subsequent Nidra, both of which are closely linked to the prevention of stress-related lifestyle disorders[10]

Correlation with Modern Circadian Biology

Modern chronobiology describes a central biological clock located in the suprachiasmatic nucleus of the brain, which regulates the sleep-wake cycle, hormone secretion, and metabolic processes in coordination with the natural light-dark cycle. Waking in the early pre-dawn hours, as advised in the concept of Brahma Muhurta, is thought to support entrainment of this internal clock with external time cues, a process known to favourably influence metabolic and psychological health[11]

Samprapti

Brahma Muhurta Jagrana Tyaga (Avoidance of Waking during Brahma Muhurta) / Ati-Nidra (Prolonged Sleep)

↓

Dinacharya Vighata (Disruption of Daily Regimen) leading to Kapha-Vata Prakopa

↓

Agni Mandya (Weakened Digestive Fire)

↓

Ama Utpatti (Formation of Metabolic Toxins)

↓

Dhatu Dushti and Srotorodha (Tissue Vitiation and Channel Blockage)

↓

Manifestation as Jivanashaili Janya Vikara: Sthaulya, Prameha, Hridroga, Anidra, Manodaurbalya

RESULT AND FINDINGS

- Classical texts uniformly recommend waking during Brahma Muhurta for maintenance of Ayu, Bala, and Aarogya.
- Brahma Muhurta Jagrana supports balanced Vata-Pitta-Kapha function across the day.
- Early waking correlates with improved Agni and reduced Ama formation, both central to the prevention of metabolic disorders.
- The practice supports a Sattvika mental state and may reduce stress-related disorders.
- Neglect of Brahma Muhurta Jagrana and prolonged sleep are associated, in classical understanding, with Kapha-Vata Prakopa and subsequent lifestyle disorders.
- Contemporary chronobiological research similarly links early, consistent wake times and circadian alignment with reduced risk of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and mental health disorders[12].
- A clear conceptual parallel exists between the classical Ayurvedic emphasis on Brahma Muhurta and the modern scientific understanding of circadian entrainment.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this review indicate a notable conceptual convergence between the classical Ayurvedic practice of Brahma Muhurta Jagrana and modern scientific understanding of circadian health. Ayurveda's description of Brahma Muhurta as a period ideal for awakening, owing to its calm, Sattvika, and Kapha-light qualities, appears consistent with the physiological principle that waking in alignment with the natural light-dark cycle supports optimal functioning of the body's internal clock[13].

From a preventive standpoint, the Ayurvedic model offers a logical and mechanistic explanation for how neglect of this practice could contribute to lifestyle disorders, through the pathway of Dinacharya disruption, Dosha vitiation, Agni Mandya, and Ama formation. This is broadly comparable to the modern understanding that disrupted sleep and misaligned circadian rhythm contribute to systemic inflammation and metabolic dysfunction, both of which underlie many chronic lifestyle disorders[14].

However, it must be acknowledged that this review is conceptual and narrative in nature, drawing correlations between classical descriptions and modern scientific literature rather than presenting direct experimental evidence. Well-designed clinical and physiological studies specifically evaluating Brahma Muhurta Jagrana as an intervention are still limited, and future research in this direction would help establish its preventive role on a stronger evidence base[15].

CONCLUSION

Brahma Muhurta Jagrana, a simple and cost-free practice rooted in classical Ayurvedic Dinacharya, appears to offer a plausible and logical preventive strategy against modern lifestyle disorders, when viewed through both classical Doshik principles and contemporary circadian science. While further scientific validation through well-designed clinical studies is needed, its wide accessibility and absence of adverse effects make it a valuable practice worth encouraging as part of a comprehensive, lifestyle disorder-preventive approach in present-day healthcare.

DECLARATIONS

Conflict of Interest: Nil

Source of Support: None

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