A REVIEW ON SIDDHA EXTERNAL THERAPY –NASIYAM (NASAL INSTILLATION)

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ABSTRACT

Siddha system of medicine, one of the ancient, traditional Indian systems of medicine has unique diagnostic methods, therapeutics and treatment procedures. It has a vast range of external modalities of treatment for health management. This external management is classified into 32 types. They include minor surgical procedures and treatment procedures. These therapies are used both as mainstream and supportive therapies – both curative and prophylactic. Most of the therapies are aimed to maintain the equilibrium of the three humours (Vatham, Pitham, Kabam). Among them Nasiyam (Nasal instillation) is one of the external therapies which is a non-invasive procedure. Nasiyam is the process by which the drug is administered through nostrils. This is the treatment procedure to balance the Thirithodam in its normal level. This paper documents the efficacy of Nasiyam, methods of application, shelf life, effect of Nasiyam in treating various diseases, the list of single drug and compound drug formulations that can be used as Nasiyam, Indications and contraindications are discussed in detail. Nasiyam therapy is used to treat the diseases of vitiated Kabam such as migraine, sinusitis, bronchial asthma, nasal polyp etc.

KEYWORDS: Siddha, Nasiyam, External therapy, Nasal drops, Nasal Instillation.

INTRODUCTION

In Siddha system of medicine, disease is caused by the deviation of Uyirnthathus namely, Vali, Azhal and Iyyam.[¹] Hence, Siddhars classified 64 varieties of treatment modalities or dosage forms into two major categories, namely Agamarunthu (Internal medicines) and Puramarunthu (External medicines).[²] Puramarunthu play an important role in the Siddha system of medicine. Among these treatment methods, Nasiyam (nasal instillation)[³] plays an important role particularly in unconscious patients and conditions like trauma, snake bite, which is still a staggering problem in rural India. It is very clear from such literature that the ancient physicians knew that the connections between the brain and sense organs and chose these routes to administer drugs accordingly. They also knew that oral route is sluggish and not the effective one for certain conditions.

“Thaerumathi yonrraikkor tharanasiyam peruvom”[⁴]

If Nasiyam is done properly and regularly it will keep the person's eye, nose and ear functions unimpaired.[⁵] The nose is the direct route to the brain and also the doorway to consciousness. It is the entrance for Pranan, the life force, which comes into the body through the breath. Healthy un congested breathing is important to ensure proper flow of Pranan throughout the head and body. When an excess of bodily fluids accumulates in the sinus, throat, nose or head areas, it is best eliminated through the nose.

“Othiya nasiyath thaaley uyarkbam theerumey”[⁶,⁷]

According to above poetry lines, Nasiyam is recommended for Kabam and Kabam related diseases. Nasiyam oil soothes and protects the nasal passages and helps to relieve the sinus congestion. Daily nasal lubrication helps to release tension in the head and relieve accumulated stress. Balancing for Vatham, Pitham and Kabam, Nasiyam is also traditionally said to improve quality of voice, strengthen vision and promote mental clarity.

Nasiyam Definition [²,⁵]

Fresh plants are cleaned thoroughly or blanched, crushed and juice extracted, filtered and instilled into the nostril. Depending upon the plant material, it is essential oil content and irritation characteristic one or more drops are used. Sometimes medicines are made into pill form and the pills are dissolved either in water or breast milk or plant juice and instilled in the nostril. The prepared medicines, particularly oils are also used as nasal drops depending upon seasonality and availability of fresh plant materials.

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**Procedure of Nasiyam**

- The patient is asked to lie in a bed in supine position.
- Patient's head is maintained at a lower position by keeping the pillow below the neck.
- This position will facilitate the direct passage of the drug.
- Placing the medicine in a water bath makes it lukewarm.
- This lukewarm medicine is made to flow in one nostril, while the other is kept closed.
- The same process is carried out in the other nostril also.
- For the administration of the drug a cotton swab or dropper can be used.
- The shoulders, neck, ears, soles, and palms are gently massaged after the administration of the drug.
- The patient is advised to rest in supine position for 3 minutes after the medicine is instilled to avoid leakage of the medicine through the nostrils.
- The patient should be asked to spit out the medicine and impurities that reach his/her mouth.
- For spitting out, the patient is not allowed to get up suddenly from supine position. He/she should be asked to turn to his/her side and spit the medicine out, so that to avoid leakage of the medicine through the nostrils.

**Benefits of Nasiyam**

- The therapy enhances the activity of sense organs and protects the person from diseases pertaining to head.
- Early aging process is effectively prevented by the regular administration of Nasiyam.
- Nasiyam ensures the proper and healthy growth of hair.
- Nasiyam improves the circulation.

**Shelf Life of Medicines Used in Nasiyam**

12 Months

**Types**

According to the physical nature and administration, it is classified into 3 types.

- Juices or decoctions of medicinal plants used as Nasiyam
- Medicated oils used as Nasiyam
- Dry powder or pill dissolved in mother’s milk or cow’s urine and used as Nasiyam

**Table 1: Medicated Oils for Nasiyam**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Medicated Oil</th>
<th>Indication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Chukkuthylam</td>
<td>Sinusitis, headache[9]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Birungamalagathylam</td>
<td>Diseases of head and eyes, deafness[9]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Amirtha kumara thylam</td>
<td>Diseases of head, eyes and eyebrows and Unmatham[9]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Boothigaathylam</td>
<td>Karnasoolai, sinusitis[9]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Paththoorathy lam</td>
<td>18 types of sinusitis[9]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Peenisathylam</td>
<td>Sinusitis[9]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Peenisakirutham</td>
<td>Raththa, Sala, Seezh Naasigarogam[9] (Diseases in general of the nose)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Alalahavishathylam</td>
<td>Abasmaram[10]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Musurumuttaithylam (oil preparation from the egg of Fornica smaragdina)</td>
<td>Moorchai (unconsciousness)[10]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Powder of Milagu (Piper nigrum) is ground with castor oil and filtered.</td>
<td>Fever with delirium[12]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Logitthaandathylam</td>
<td>Delirium, Poisoning[13]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Juices or Decoctions of Medicinal Plants for Nasiyam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Plants Juices or Decoctions</th>
<th>Indication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Leaf juice of Vembu (Azadirachta indica)</td>
<td>Delirium, fever, epilepsy(^{[14]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Leaf juice of Notchi (Vitex negundo)</td>
<td>Elimination of excess Kabam, headache, sinusitis, and chest congestion(^{[15]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Juice of seeds of Samudhrapalai (Argyreia speciosa)</td>
<td>Sanni(^{[14]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Seeds of Elam (Elettaria cardomomum) are soaked in water with or without Milagu (Piper nigrum)</td>
<td>Severe thirst, Scrotal swelling(^{[14]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Leaf juice of Umathai (Datura metel)</td>
<td>Azhal diseases, to treat all type of poisonous bites, 18 types of maniac illness, fever with chills and rigor (^{[14]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Leaf juice of Thumbai (Leucas aspera)</td>
<td>Eliminating excess Kabam, Headache, Sinusitis, Rigor, fever with chills, Parkinsonism (^{[16-18]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Leaf juice of Kattuthulasi (Ossimum grattissmum)</td>
<td>Cough, Headache, Sinusitis, Eliminating excess Kabam(^{[14]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Leaf juice of Vila (Feronia elephantum)</td>
<td>Jaundice(^{[19]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Clear juice of Inji (Zingiber officinale)</td>
<td>Scorpion stings and venom of red centipede(^{[14]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Juice of Manathakkali (Solanum nigrum)</td>
<td>Ascites (^{[14]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Leaf juice of Chitramutti (Sida cordifolia)</td>
<td>16 types of viper poison(^{[20]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Leaves juice if Thumbai (Leucas aspera) and Kuppaimei (Acalypha indica)</td>
<td>Headache(^{[14]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Leaf juice of vellerukku (Calotropis gigantea)</td>
<td>Sinusitis(^{[14]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Flower buds of Kirambu (Syzygium aromaticum) are soaked with breast milk and filtered</td>
<td>Sanni (delirium)(^{[19]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Juice of flowers of Pungu (Pongamia glabra)</td>
<td>Delirium and Convulsion due to Mukkutram disorders(^{[13]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Leaves of Murungai (Moringa olifera) and Inji (Zingiber officinale) are grinded with breast milk</td>
<td>Delirium(^{[21]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Thippili (Piper longum) powder is mixed with leaf juice of Veliparuthi (Daemia extensa)</td>
<td>Fever with delirium(^{[11]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>The root of Ponnankani (Alternethra sessilis) grinded with breast milk</td>
<td>Head diseases(^{[11]})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Medicated Pills and Other Compound Drug Preparation Used as Nasiyam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Preparations</th>
<th>Indication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Equal quantity of flowers of Maadhulai (Punica granatum), Erukkku (Calotropis gigantea) and Kumkumapoo (Crocus sativus) are grinded with breast milk</td>
<td>Sinusitis(^{[22]})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Seeds of Murungai (Moringa olifera) and Nayuruvi (Achyranthes)</td>
<td>Migraine(^{[14]})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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aspera) are triturated with the leaf juice of Neeli (Indigofera tinctoria) and heated with sesame oil

3. Each of the following materials are ground with breast milk and added to clarified butter. This is exposed to sunlight for three days and stored in a vessel. Saaranai (Trianthema monogyana), Thippili (Piper longum), Piper nigrum (Milagu), Alum (Padigaaram), crystal sugar

4. Sulphur is triturated with butter and spread uniformly on cloth. This cloth is rolled over the tip of an iron rod and lit. Oil drops dripping from the flame is collected in a porcelain vessel, cooled and stored

5. For treating migraine, make a poultice by adding equal quantity of the fruit of Samuthra Pazham (Bartingtonia acutangula) and Perungayam (Ferula asafoetida) along with breast milk. Roll it into small pills and as and when required, small portion of the pill is rubbed with breast milk and instilled into the nostrils

6. Crush and extract the juice of the leaves of Siru Thumbai (Leucus procumbens), Milagu (Piper nigrum) and Vellai Poondu (Allium sativum) and instill the juice in the nostrils

7. Old oil cake if Iluppi (Madhuca longifolia) is made into a fine powder and kept in cloth bundle. This cloth bundle is soaked in juice of banana stem and the fluid so obtained after dissolution of the Iluppi (Madhuca longifolia) is instilled into the nostril

8. Equal quantity of vellaiPoondu (Allium sativum), Oil cake of Iluppi (Madhuca longifolia), and Vasambu (Acorus calamus) are triturated with leaf juice of Avuri (indigofera tinctoria) and instilled in both nostrils

9. Powders of Vediuppu (Potassium nitrate), Induppu (Rock salt), Milgu (Piper nigrum), Seeragam (Cuminum cyminum), Omum (Trachyspermum ammi), are triturated with the juices of the flower Thumbai (Leucus aspera), tender leaves of Nachi (Vitex negundo) and Thulasi (Ocimum sanctum) and instilled as a nasal drops

10. Equal quantity of Chukku (Zingiber officinale), Alum (Seenakaram), Borneol (Pachaikarpooram), Kungumapoo (Crocus sativus) are triturated with breast milk and six drops are instilled in each nostril

11. Jaggery is added to the flower juice of Venpoosunai (Benincasa hispida) along with the powder of three pungents- Chukku (Zingiber officinale), Milagu (Piper nigrum), and Thippili (Piper longum). The resultant liquid is used as nasal drops

12. The powder of three pungents- Chukku (Zingiber officinale), Milagu (Piper nigrum), and Thippili (Piper longum) is added to the leaf juice of Leucusaspera (Thumbai) and the resultant liquid is used as nasal drops

13. Lotus flower or leaf (Thamarai), Thulasi (Occimum sanctum), Milagu (Piper nigrum), Sodium chloride (Kariuppu). These drugs are triturated well and made into tablets. The tablet mixed with mother’s milk and instilled into the nostrils

14. Equal amount of Poondu (Allium sativum), Vasambu (Acorus calamus), Kuppaimeni ver (Acalypha indica) triturated with breast
milk and instilled into the nostrils

15. *Brahmathandu kolunthu* 1 part, purified arsenic one forth part grinded well and pills were made out of this, then shade dried. Again grinded with cow's milk and mixed with boiling ghee. Then this ghee should be instilled into the nostrils  

| *Neelakaasam, Peenisam, headache* [27] |

16. Distillate made out of *Iluppai Pinnakku* (*Madhuca longifolia*) should be instilled into the nostrils  

| *Sanni* [24] (Delirium, *Kabavatha Noigal*) |

17. Tender leaf of *Arugu* (*Cynodon dactylon*) was ground and mixed with flower juice of *Maadhulai* (*Punica granatum*), cow's ghee then instilled into nostrils  

| *Pitha diseases* [7] |

18. *Samuthira Pazham* (*Baringtonia acutangula*) and *Chukku* (*Zingiber officinale*) should be ground well in mother’s milk and 5 drops should be instilled in each nostril  

| *Headache* [28] |

19. Sacred lotus (*Nelumbium speciosum*), tender leaves of holy basil (*Ocimum sanctum*), common table salt and pepper (*Piper nigrum*) are taken in equal amount and made into pills form then dry. This tablet should be soaked in the breast milk and squeezed into the nostrils  

| All kinds of fever, *Unmatham* (frenzy state), *Sanni* (Delirium) and hoarseness of voice [29] |

**Mechanism of Absorption** [30]

- **Para cellular Transport**
  - Aqueous route of transport
  - Slow and Passive

- **Trans cellular Transport**
  - Transport through lipoidal membrane
  - Active transport occurs via carrier mediated transport

**Contraindications Immediately After Nasiyam** [8]
- Exposure to dust
- Exposure to smoke
- Intake of fatty substances
- Exposure to sun
- Alcohol consumption
- Excessive intake of fluids
- Head bath
- Excessive travel

**Contra Indications of Nasiyam** [8]
- CSF Rhinorrhea
- Hemophilia

**Time**
- Evening time should be preferable
- Should not be done on rainy days [5]

**Symptoms of Good Nasiyam Procedure** [31]
- Breathing without difficulty
- Good sleep
- Improved strength of sense organs

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DISCUSSION

According to Siddha system of medicine diseases are caused by vitiated humours. Restoring the vitiated humours to normal position is necessary in the line of treatment. Maximum efficacy of the treatment is achieved by judicious approach of using internal medicine, dietary regimen, detoxifying therapies like Vamanam, Virechanam as well as the external therapies. External therapies particularly, administration of drugs through routes other than oral. These procedures are as important as the internal medicines in the management of health and disease. In several instances, only the procedure without any drug is sufficient and these procedures are already systemized. Great stress is laid by Siddhars, the founders of the medical system, on these procedures not only in prevention and cure of disease but also the promotion of health. Most of those therapies are aimed at maintaining a healthy balance of the three physiological factors or humours (Thirithodham) Vatham, Pitham and Kabam and also seven tissue types of the body (7 Udarkattugal). Nasiyam is one of the external therapies which is employed where administration of oral medicines become impossible. The nasal application is one of the key treatment procedures instituted for restoring the equilibrium of Thirithodham. Nasiyam is usually done in the case of deranged Kabam, particularly for the head and neck disorders, as this is the region pertaining to Kabam. It alleviates diseases like coryza, sinusitis, headache, chest congestion due to chronic bronchitis, diseases of nose and also neuro-skeletal conditions like cervical spondylitis, facial paralysis, hemiplegia frozen shoulder, mental disorders, Parkinsonism and skin complaints. This is very helpful in treating an unconscious patient particularly due to derangement of all three Dosham or in case of poisonous bites. Nasiyam will enhance the activity of sense organs and prevent the diseases of the head. It also prevents the early greying of hair. Nasiyam prevents the hair fall and ensures the growth of hair.[5]

CONCLUSION

Though 32 dosage forms of internal medicines are listed in Siddha medical System, External therapies are also needed at different stages to control the affected Dosham or mitigating them. Among them Nasiyam which is one of the external therapies could be instituted largely with locally available resources and therefore is accessible and affordable to the entire society. Even though Nasiyam is one of the non-invasive procedures; unfortunately it is not being practiced in full swing in institutional setups mostly. This review will be more helpful for further research.

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