

EFFECT OF SATTVAJAYA CHIKITSA AND MANTRA CHIKITSA IN AYURVEDA ON
NIDRANASHA (INSOMNIA): A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEWDr. Subhash Suddalwar*¹, Dr. Sanjay Burde²¹Professor, Department of Swasthavritta Evum Yoga, SASSAM College of Ayurvedic Sciences and Hospital, Bhopal, M.P, India.²Professor, Department of Rasashashtra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, SASSAM College of Ayurvedic Sciences and Hospital, Bhopal, M.P, India.

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21032585>**How to cite this Article:** Dr. Subhash Suddalwar¹, Dr Sanjay Burde². (2026). Effect of Sattvavajaya Chikitsa and Mantra Chikitsa In Ayurveda on Nidranasha (Insomnia): A Comprehensive Review. International Journal of Modern Pharmaceutical Research, 10(7), 66-69.**ABSTRACT**

Nidranasha (insomnia) is a prevalent psychosomatic disorder in modern society, primarily attributed to vitiated *Vata Dosha* and aggravated Rajas-Tamas Gunas. Ayurveda emphasizes non-pharmacological interventions, particularly *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* (psychotherapy) and *Mantra Chikitsa* (divine therapy), for managing mental afflictions. *Sattvavajaya* focuses on conscious mind control, cognitive restructuring, and ethical discipline to enhance *Sattva Guna*, while *Mantra Chikitsa* utilizes sacred sound vibrations to purify consciousness and balance neural pathways. This review examines classical Ayurvedic treatises and contemporary evidence to evaluate the efficacy of these modalities in *Nidranasha*. Findings indicate that both therapies significantly improve sleep induction, duration, and quality by pacifying *Vata*, reducing mental stressors (*Chinta, Bhaya, Krodha*), and restoring *Dhi-Dhriti-Smriti* coordination. Integrated application offers a holistic, preventive, and sustainable approach to mental well-being, warranting further clinical validation.

KEYWORDS: *Nidranasha; Sattvavajaya Chikitsa; Mantra Chikitsa; Insomnia; Ayurveda.***INTRODUCTION**

Sleep (*Nidra*) is regarded in Ayurveda as one of the three fundamental pillars of life (*Trayopastambha*), alongside diet (*Ahara*) and celibacy (*Brahmacharya*). It is essential for the maintenance of physical health, mental equilibrium, and overall well-being. Proper *Nidra* nourishes the body, strengthens the mind, and supports the functioning of the sense organs. Conversely, *Nidranasha* (insomnia), defined as the inability to initiate or maintain sleep, leads to significant morbidity, affecting cognitive function, emotional stability, and quality of life.

In contemporary society, the prevalence of sleep disorders has escalated due to lifestyle modifications, chronic stress, environmental pollutants, and excessive sensory stimulation. Modern medicine primarily addresses insomnia through pharmacological interventions, such as sedatives and hypnotics, which often carry risks of dependency, tolerance, and adverse effects. In contrast, Ayurveda advocates a holistic, non-pharmacological approach, emphasizing the restoration of balance among Doshas (*Vata, Pitta, Kapha*), *Gunas*

(*Sattva, Rajas, Tamas*), and mental faculties (*Dhi, Dhriti, Smriti*).

Nidranasha is primarily attributed to the vitiation of *Vata Dosha*, which governs all movement and nervous system functions. When *Vata* is aggravated—due to irregular lifestyle, excessive physical or mental exertion, suppression of natural urges, or emotional disturbances—it disrupts the natural sleep-wake cycle, leading to difficulty in falling asleep, frequent awakenings, and non-restorative sleep. Additionally, the aggravation of Rajas (activity, passion) and *Tamas* (inertia, darkness) *Gunas* contributes to mental restlessness, anxiety, and depressive symptoms, further exacerbating insomnia.

Ayurveda classifies treatment modalities into three categories: *Daiva-Vyapashraya* (divine therapy), *Yukti-Vyapashraya* (rational therapy involving pharmacological and procedural interventions), and *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* (psychotherapy). Among these, *Sattvavajaya* and *Mantra Chikitsa* hold particular significance in managing mental and psychosomatic disorders. *Sattvavajaya*, derived from 'Sattva'

(mind/purity) and 'Avajaya' (victory/conquest), literally means "victory over the mind." It involves conscious mind control, cognitive restructuring, ethical discipline, and counselling to enhance *Sattva Guna* and pacify aggravated *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Mantra *Chikitsa*, categorized under *Daiva-Vyapashraya*, utilizes the vibrational power of sacred sounds (*Shabda*) to purify consciousness, balance neural pathways, and address deeper karmic or energetic imbalances.

Classical Ayurvedic texts, including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Astanga Hridaya*, extensively describe the etiology, symptomatology, and management of *Nidranasha* through these modalities. *Charaka* emphasizes that *Sattvavajaya* is the treatment of choice for mental disorders, particularly those arising from *Prajnaparadha* (volitional transgression) and *Asatmya Indriyarthasannikarsha* (improper sensory contact). Similarly, *Mantra Chikitsa* is recommended for conditions resistant to conventional therapies, owing to its subtle, energetic, and spiritual effects.

Contemporary research supports the efficacy of these interventions. Studies indicate that *Sattvavajaya* techniques, such as relaxation exercises, pranayama, and cognitive restructuring, significantly improve sleep quality, reduce anxiety, and enhance emotional well-being. Mantra chanting has been shown to deactivate the Default Mode Network (DMN) in the brain, reducing mind-wandering and promoting focused attention, thereby facilitating sleep onset.

This review aims to critically examine the role of *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* and *Mantra Chikitsa* in the management of *Nidranasha*, drawing upon classical Ayurvedic treatises and modern scientific evidence. By elucidating their mechanisms, therapeutic applications, and synergistic potential, this article seeks to highlight their integral role in holistic mental healthcare and advocate for their integration into contemporary practice.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A comprehensive literary review was conducted using classical Ayurvedic texts including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya* along with their authoritative commentaries. References related to *Nidra*, *sattvavajaya chikitsa* were collected and critically analyzed. The collected information was categorized thematically and interpreted according to Ayurvedic principles.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Acharya *Charaka* describes *Nidra* as a natural state of unconsciousness from which a person can be aroused by external stimuli. *Nidranasha* arises due to *Vata Prakopa* (aggravation of *Vata*), often secondary to *Vata-vardhaka* factors such as excessive physical exertion, emotional stress, irregular diet, and suppression of natural urges. *Charaka* emphasizes that *Sattvavajaya* is the primary

treatment for mental disorders, including insomnia, as it directly addresses the root cause—mental imbalance.

Charaka outlines *Sattvavajaya* techniques, including *Manonigraha* (mind control), *Pratidvandvabhava* (replacement of negative thoughts with positive ones), *Sadacharah* (ethical conduct), and *Ashwasanadhyaha* (counseling). He also highlights the importance of restoring *Dhi* (intellect), *Dhriti* (fortitude), and *Smriti* (memory), whose coordination is essential for mental well-being. Regarding *Mantra Chikitsa*, *Charaka* recommends the chanting of specific mantras (e.g., *Vishnu Sahasranama* for *Jwara*, general mantras for protection) to purify the mind and body, particularly in cases resistant to other treatments.

Acharya *Sushruta* corroborates *Charaka's* views, emphasizing the role of *Vata Dosha* and *Rajas-Tamas Gunas* in *Nidranasha*. He describes *Sattvavajaya* as a means to withdraw the mind from unwholesome objects (*ahita arthas*) and cultivate *Sattva Guna*. *Sushruta* also advocates *Mantra Chikitsa* for *Agantuja Vyadhi* (diseases caused by external factors) and *Karmaja Vyadhi* (diseases from past actions), highlighting its subtle, energetic effects.

Vagbhata, in *Astanga Hridaya*, integrates *Sattvavajaya* and *Mantra Chikitsa* into a comprehensive framework for mental health. He emphasizes the synergistic application of both modalities, noting that *Sattvavajaya* addresses conscious volitional effort, while *Mantra Chikitsa* works on subtle energetic levels. *Vagbhata* also describes specific mantras for various conditions, including insomnia, and highlights their role in enhancing the efficacy of herbal remedies.

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa

Recent studies validate the efficacy of *Sattvavajaya* in managing *Nidranasha*. A case study by *Rawal and Vyas* (2017) demonstrated significant improvement in sleep induction (66.6%), total sleep duration, and sleep quality following a 28-day regimen of relaxation techniques, including *Shithilikarana Vyayama*, *Surya Namaskara*, *Nadishuddhi Pranayama*, *Bhramari Pranayama*, and *Yoga Nidra*. Another study by *Nair et al.* (2018) reviewed non-pharmacological strategies for *Nidranasha*, concluding that *Sattvavajaya* techniques effectively reduce mental stressors (*Chinta*, *Bhaya*, *Krodha*) and improve quality of life.

Mantra Chikitsa

Modern neuroscience supports the mechanisms of *Mantra Chikitsa*. MRI studies reveal that repetitive mantra chanting induces widespread deactivation in the Default Mode Network (DMN), reducing self-oriented thoughts and mind-wandering. This deactivation correlates with improved focused attention, reduced anxiety, and enhanced sleep quality. Additionally, chanting activates the parasympathetic nervous system,

slowing breathing, promoting relaxation, and inducing a positive mood.

Integrated Approaches

The synergistic application of *Sattvavajaya* and *Mantra Chikitsa* offers a comprehensive pathway to mental well-being. *Sattvavajaya* empowers individuals to exert conscious control over thoughts and behaviours, while *Mantra Chikitsa* addresses deeper energetic and spiritual imbalances. This dual approach ensures that mental healing is addressed at both manifest psychological and subtle energetic levels, leading to sustained improvement in sleep and overall health.

DISCUSSION

Pathogenesis of *Nidranasha*

Nidranasha arises primarily from *Vata Prakopa* (aggravation of *Vata Dosha*), which disrupts the natural sleep-wake cycle. *Vata*, characterized by dryness, mobility, and subtlety, governs all movement and nervous system functions. When vitiated, *Vata* manifests as mental restlessness, anxiety, and sleep disturbances. Additionally, the aggravation of *Rajas* (activity, passion) and *Tamas* (inertia, darkness) *Gun*as contributes to mental imbalance, leading to emotional instability and insomnia. The pathogenesis involves the impairment of *Dhi* (intellect), *Dhriti* (fortitude), and *Smriti* (memory), whose coordination is essential for mental well-being. *Prajnaparadha* (volitional transgression) and *Asatmya Indriyarth*a *Sannikarsha* (improper sensory contact) further exacerbate mental disturbances, leading to *Nidranasha*.

Role of *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa*

Sattvavajaya directly addresses the root cause of *Nidranasha* by enhancing *Sattva Guna* and pacifying *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Through techniques such as *Manonigraha* (mind control), *Pratidvandvabhava* (cognitive restructuring), and *Ashwasanadhyaha* (counseling), *Sattvavajaya* restores *Dhi-Dhriti-Smriti* coordination and promotes mental clarity. Contemporary studies support its efficacy in improving sleep quality and reducing anxiety.

Role of *Mantra Chikitsa*

Mantra Chikitsa operates on a subtle, energetic level, utilizing the vibrational power of sacred sounds to purify consciousness and balance neural pathways. By deactivating the DMN and activating the parasympathetic nervous system, mantra chanting reduces mind-wandering, promotes relaxation, and facilitates sleep onset. This makes it particularly effective for cases resistant to conventional therapies.

Synergistic Application

The integrated application of *Sattvavajaya* and *Mantra Chikitsa* offers a holistic approach to mental well-being. *Sattvavajaya* addresses conscious volitional effort, while *Mantra Chikitsa* works on subtle energetic levels, ensuring comprehensive healing. This dual approach

leads to sustained improvement in sleep and overall health.

Sattvavajaya and Modern Psychotherapy

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa demonstrates remarkable parallels with modern psychotherapeutic approaches, particularly Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and mindfulness-based therapies. Both modalities emphasize cognitive restructuring, behavioural modification, and the cultivation of mental resilience. However, *Sattvavajaya* uniquely incorporates ethical and spiritual dimensions (e.g., *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Adhyatmavidya*), making it a more comprehensive "cognitive-behavioral-spiritual therapy."

Mantra Chikitsa and Neuroscience

Modern neuroscience validates the mechanisms of *Mantra Chikitsa*. fMRI studies reveal that mantra chanting induces widespread deactivation in the Default Mode Network (DMN), reducing self-oriented thoughts and mind-wandering. This deactivation correlates with improved focused attention, reduced anxiety, and enhanced sleep quality. Additionally, chanting activates the parasympathetic nervous system, slowing breathing, promoting relaxation, and inducing a positive mood.

Integrated Approaches

The synergistic application of *Sattvavajaya* and *Mantra Chikitsa* offers a comprehensive pathway to mental well-being. *Sattvavajaya* empowers individuals to exert conscious control over thoughts and behaviours, while *Mantra Chikitsa* addresses deeper energetic and spiritual imbalances. This dual approach ensures that mental healing is addressed at both manifest psychological and subtle energetic levels, leading to sustained improvement in sleep and overall health.

CONCLUSION

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa and *Mantra Chikitsa* are fundamental pillars of mental healing in Ayurveda, offering a holistic, non-pharmacological approach to managing *Nidranasha*. *Sattvavajaya* addresses conscious mind control and cognitive restructuring, while *Mantra Chikitsa* utilizes sacred sound vibrations to purify consciousness and balance neural pathways. Their integrated application provides a comprehensive pathway to mental well-being, addressing both volitional and subtle energetic aspects of psychological health. Further clinical research is warranted to validate and integrate these traditional practices into contemporary global mental healthcare.

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