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for aches and pains

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Your Health and Wellbeing Success Starts Here!

Are you a health-conscious consumer, looking to come into the industry or looking for a suitable treatment? Find out what the experts say and read.

Letter from the Editor

November will see the launch of the *Choice Health & Wellbeing* Radio

Show on The Barefoot Broadcast.

Choice is of course the leading publication for Complementary Health, Education & Wellbeing, and every week, we'll be looking at the latest news, issues and tips for getting and staying healthy - holistically. We'll be joined by members of the Choice team, as well as the writers and health experts featured in the latest issue.

"I'm so pleased Choice is joining forces with The Barefoot Broadcast," says Carl Munson, The Barefoot Broadcaster. "I see what we do as nutritious media - inspiring and supporting the listener to make positive choices about health and lifestyle with a big dose of humour." To find out the exact broadcast date, take a look at: www.blogtalkradio.com/carlmunson

Happy reading

Angela

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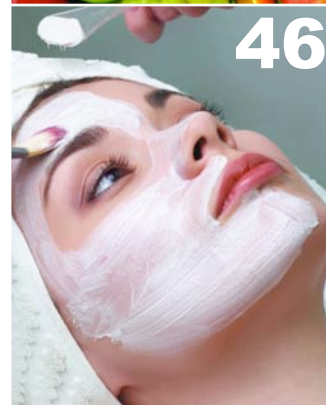
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Ayurvedic treatment

for conditions of the head and ENT

According to Ayurvedic scriptures, our body is made up of a network of channels (srotas) for example digestive or circulatory. Disease occurs when toxins accumulate and clog up these channels. Various factors such as inappropriate diet and lifestyle, stress and environment changes can lead to an accumulation of toxins (ama). These toxins need to be expelled out in order to maintain good health. In a three-stage process, the body first undergoes preparation for detoxification (purva karma), the actual detoxification process (pradhana karma) and the rejuvenation process through appropriate diet and lifestyle (paschat karma).

Ayurveda proposes five purification methods known as the pancha karmas (five processes). As the main detoxification process, the toxins are loosened and eliminated out of the body in one of five ways: ☺ Vamana (Emesis) ☺ Virechana (Purgation) ☺ Basti (oil/decoction) (Enema) ☺ Nasya (errhines/nasal administration) ☺ Raktamokshana (Blood letting)

The ayurvedic practitioner will assess the patient and choose the appropriate purification process according to the patient's constitution and disease.

In this article we will look at Nasya Karma, a Pancha Karma treatment that falls into one of the eight branches of Ayurveda, Shalakya Tantra (ENT - Ear, Nose & Throat). Also known as Shiro-virechana, Nasya is the therapeutic process where medicines are administered through the nasal passages. Since the nose is the gateway of the head, medicines can cross the blood-brain barrier and directly affect Prana (the life force) of the entire being. This therapy is very effective in treating conditions and cleansing, opening and nourishing the channels of the head.

Nasya Karma is indicated for a whole host of conditions including tonsillitis, stiff neck, head, teeth and jaw, headache, sinusitis, stammering, loss of taste or hoarseness of voice, dryness of mouth, thirst, wrinkles, rhinitis, dropsy, epilepsy healthy growth of hair, diseases of Kapha origin, skin diseases, fever, mental disorder, moles,

migraine, chronic coryza, goiter, cataracts, convulsions, loose teeth or toothache, tumour, facial paralysis, diseases of the eyelid, bronchitis, frozen shoulder, diseases of the nose, ear, eyes, mouth and head, multiple sclerosis and more.

Being an invasive treatment, care needs to be taken through the whole process of therapy, from before the patient arrives, during treatment and post-treatment care and there are conditions in which Nasya Karma would not be administered. For example, Nasya Karma is not performed when there is indigestion, intake of alcohol, worms, pregnancy, after meals, after fasting, in children under 8 years and adults over 80 years.

Nasya is administered in varying doses depending on the patient's strength, condition and constitution. Ayurvedic seers such as



Charaka and Sushruta advocates two types of doses, a daily dose of 2-3 drops (bindu) which is known as pratimarsha nasya, usually done as a self-treatment for good health as well as promoting healthy hair or to prevent greying of hair or a therapeutic dose starting with 4-8 drops known as marsha nasya, usually conducted by a qualified practitioner over a seven-day period.

Oil-based nasal administration is the most common form of nasya and there are two branches of navana nasya, rechana (purgative,

| Nasya therapy can be classified into four forms of medicine. These are: | Method of Nasya |
|---|--|
| Navana nasya | Medicated oil or ghee drops are inserted into the nasal passages |
| Avapidana nasya | Squeezed juice or prepared decoctions of herbs are administered mainly to treat vata/pitta or kapha/pitta type disorders |
| Dhuma nasya | Fumes of medicinal herbs are inhaled, quite often contain ingredients such as ghee, turmeric, manjistha |
| Pradhamana nasya | Fine herbal powders such as brahmi are inhaled or blown into the nose with the help of an instrument called a 'nadi yantra'. This form of nasya is used to treat mainly kapha types of diseases such as colds, heaviness of the head, sticky eyes, headaches |



where there is cleansing and expelling) and snehana (lubricating, where there is nurturing and growth). Traditionally, administration is done early, middle and latter part of the day depending on the dosha involved kapha, pitta and vata respectively. Purgative nasya could include ingredients such as jaggery, ginger, long pepper, black pepper, garlic, honey and rock salt

prepared in oil or ghee. Lubricating nasya would include ingredients such as saffron, milk, rock salt, ashwagandha, shatavari, bala, asafoetida amongst others.

Pre-treatment preparation for the patient would be to avoid:

- ☞ Breakfast before treatment

- ☞ Breakfast immediately after treatment
- ☞ Cold water or drinks, ice-creams
- ☞ Salty and spicy and acidic foods
- ☞ Dairy foods
- ☞ Exposure to sunlight, wind, cold, fans and air-conditioning
- ☞ Sleeping during the day
- ☞ Washing head/hair

The patient is prepared for Nasya Karma by a massage of the face and head with a medicated oil or herbal balm. Swedana (steam treatment) is given to the head and neck area. The patient is made to lie on his/her back with head reclined and tilted back to ensure a clear passage in the nasal cavity. The knees are raised and feet are brought towards the buttocks for extra comfort through the administration process. The nasal drops are then inserted in each nostril by the practitioner while the patient remains still, being careful not to shake, talk, cough or laugh. The patient is advised to take slow, deep breaths immediately after in order for the oil to reach to the base of the skull and take full effect. After resting the patient can expel any residue oil through the nose or mouth. At the end of the treatment process there should be a feeling of lightness, clearance of waste and clarity of the channels, calmness of the mind and sense organs.

The patient is thereafter advised to follow an appropriate diet according to their constitution. This would include avoiding cold water, heavy food stuff such as meats, curds, fried foods, polluted, dusty and cold environments and emotional stress.

Nasya is a very effective treatment as a preventative and curative measure for conditions pertaining to the head and ENT. **CHW**

© As a member of the APA, Geeta Vara is a fully qualified Ayurvedic Practitioner working in London & South East providing consultations, treatments and corporate workshops.

For more information about Nasya treatment or other health concerns, please email: geetavara@gmail.com or call: 07956 521601. www.geetavara.co.uk

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