



Review Article

ROLE OF NASYA KARMA IN NASAL POLYP: A NARRATIVE REVIEW

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Article info

Article History:

Received: 07-02-2026

Accepted: 19-03-2026

Published: 06-05-2026

KEYWORDS:

Nasal polyp, Allergy, Panchakarma, Nasya Karm.

ABSTRACT


Nasal polyps or nasal polypi consists of non-neoplastic masses of oedematous nasal or sinus mucosa. Most of the cases of nasal polypi are linked with allergic condition. Often nasal polypi is associated with sinusitis, rhinosinusitis, asthma. Antihistaminic and steroids are mostly used in nasal polypi and in surgery 'Functional Endoscopic sinus surgery' (FESS) is more common nowadays for removal of nasal polypi. Ayurvedic treatment of nasal polypi include: Nasya Karm (nasal therapy), Kshar Karm (application of alkaline paste), steam inhalation, Jal Neti (cleansing of nasal passage using lukewarm water), use of Samshaman drugs (internal medications), and Pathya-Apathya Aahar and Vihar (advised of healthy and unhealthy diet and lifestyle). Samshodhan or Panchakarma therapies are emerging as a new hope for curing diseases these days. Panchakarma have five purificatory therapies, Vaman, Virechan, Basti, Nasya and Raktamokshan. Nasya is one of the most preferred therapies for nasal polypi. In Nasya Karm, medicated liquid, powder or oil is administered in the nasal cavity. As nasal cavity is called the root of head, medicines are given through this route are more effective for supraclavicular region or diseases of eyes, nose, throat and teeth or diseases of head. Mostly Tail (oil) is preferred in the procedures in Nasya Karm.

INTRODUCTION

Nasal polyp consists of non-neoplastic mass of oedematous nasal or sinus mucosa. They are divided into two varieties: Antro choanal polyp and bilateral ethmoidal polypi. The exact cause of Antro choanal polyp is unknown, majority are linked with nasal allergy and it arises from the mucosa of maxillary antrum near its accessory ostium, comes out of it and grows in the choana and nasal cavity. They are most commonly affecting the children and young adults and they are single and unilateral. The primary symptom of Antro choanal polyp is unilateral nasal obstruction, obstruction may become bilateral when polyp grows into the nasopharynx and start obstructing the opposite choana. Aetiology of bilateral polypi is very complex and not well understood. They may arise in inflammatory conditions of nasal mucosa, disorders of

ciliary motility or abnormal composition of nasal mucus. Various disease associated with the formation of nasal polypi are: chronic rhinosinusitis, asthma, aspirin intolerance, cystic fibrosis, allergic fungal sinusitis, Kartagener syndrome (bronchiectasis, sinusitis, situs inversus and ciliary dyskinesia), young syndrome (sinopulmonary disease and azoospermia), Churg-Strauss syndrome (asthma, fever, eosinophilia, vasculitis and granuloma). Multiple polypi can occur at any age but are mostly seen in adults and symptoms includes: nasal stuffiness leading to total obstruction, partial or total loss of sense of smell, headache, sneezing, watery nasal discharge and mass protruding from the nostril [1].

Allergy have significant contribution for developing nasal polypi[2,3]. Chronic allergy leads to inflammation of the nasal mucosa which triggers polypi. The cardinal symptoms of nasal allergy include paroxysmal sneezing, ten-twenty sneeze at a time, nasal obstruction, watery nasal discharge and itching in the nose, itching may also involve eyes, palate or pharynx, some may get bronchospasm. The duration and severity of symptoms may vary with the season. Symptoms of perennial allergy are not so severe as

Access this article online	
Quick Response Code	https://doi.org/10.47070/ayushdhara.v13i2.2579
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that of the seasonal type. They include frequent colds. Persistently stuffy nose, loss of sense of smell due to mucosal oedema. Postnasal drip, chronic cough and hearing impairment due to eustachian tube blockage or fluid in the middle ear. Nasal allergy may cause recurrent sinusitis because of obstruction to the sinus ostia, formation of nasal polypi in about two percent, serous otitis media, orthodontic problems and other ill-effects of prolonged mouth breathing especially in children. Patients of nasal allergy have four times more risk of developing bronchial asthma. Twenty to thirty percent of patients of rhinitis have asthma. If a polyp is red and fleshy, has granular surface, especially in older patients, associated with epistaxis and orbital symptoms, than it may suspects malignancy. Multiple nasal polypi in children may be associated with cystic fibrosis.

Antihistaminic and steroids are given for conservative treatment. Functional Endoscopic sinus surgery (FESS) is popular now days for removal of polypi. [1] Ayurvedic treatment of nasal polypi include: *Nasya Karm* (nasal therapy), *Kshar Karm* (application of alkaline paste), steam inhalation, drugs for internal medications, and dietic restrictions. Now days people are showing faith in Ayurveda treatment due to its holistic approach of treatment. Ayurveda mainly believes in maintaining the health of a healthy person. It's natural approach towards health and its treatment methodology based on *Rog* and *Rogi Pariksha*, [4,5] means that in Ayurveda, a drug not only cures the disease, but it also improves the *Agni* (digestive power), *Oja* (immunity) and *Bal* (strength) of a patient. [6] Ayurveda works on diet, lifestyle and mental health. In Ayurveda, treatment is mainly divided into two types, [7] *Samshodhan* and *Samshaman*. *Samshodhan* treatment is also known as *Panchakarma*. It includes five purificatory therapies that are, *Vaman* [8], *Virechan* [9], *Basti*, [10] *Shiro Virechan* [11] and *Raktamokshan* [12]. In Ayurveda there is also description of triad of treatment [13] as, *Poorva Karm*, *Pradhan Karm* and *Paschat Karm*. *Poorva Karm* includes preparatory measures like uses of digestives, oleating and unctuous drugs before the main procedure. *Pradhan Karm* includes the main procedure of *Vaman*, *Virechan*, *Basti*, *Shiro Virechan* and *Raktamokshan*. *Paschat Karm* includes, advised of special diet, external application and internal administration of medicines, uses of rejuvenating drugs and information of dietic and non-dietic restrictions [14] to the patients.

Shiro Virechan is also known as *Nasya Karm*. The administration of medicines or medicated *Sneh* [15] (oils, ghee etc.) through the nostril is called as *Nasya Karm*. Nose is said to be the root of head and hence medicines are given through nasal route is more effective and remove disorders quickly. [16] *Shiro*

Virechan, *Shiro Virek*, *Murdha Virechan*, *Navan* and *Nastah Karm* are the synonyms of *Nasya*. *Nasya* is a purificatory procedure of *Panchakarma* where medicines are administered through nasal route to remove the diseases of supraclavicular region or head. Its causes nourishment of eyes, ear and nose, and also nourishes the bone, joints muscle, nerve of head and supraclavicular region and make them healthier. Moreover, it decreases hair loss and controls the diseases of *Manyastambha* (torticollis), *Shirah Shool* (head ache), *Ardit* (facial paralysis), *Hanu-Stambha* (lock-jaw), *Penas* (chronic rhinosinusitis and nasal polypi). [17]

Upper part of the body is called as the seat of *Kapha Dosh* [18] and there is involvement of *Kapha Dosh* in disorders of supraclavicular region or head, so *Nasya Karm* balances and removes the excessive *Kapha Dosh* and helps in treating of a disease.

In *Nasya Karm*, when medicine is used in the form of powder, it is called *Pradhaman Nasya*, when liquid (in the form of fresh leaves juices) are used, it is known as *Avpeed Nasya*, when medicated fumes are inhaled through nose is called as *Dhoom Nasya*; and when unctuous substances (ghee, oil) are used, it is known as *Pratimarsh Nasya*. [19] This is represented in table 1.

Table 1: Types of Nasya Karm

Form of Medicine	Types of Nasya Karm
Powder	<i>Pradhaman/Dhvapan</i>
Liquid	<i>Avapeed</i>
Fumes	<i>Dhoom</i>
Oil	<i>Pratimarsha</i>

Tail is said to be the best for head because oil does not increase the *Kapha Dosh* and *Kapha Dosh* can be increased by using other unctuous substances. [20] *Anu Tail*, *Shadbindu Tail*, *Narayan Tail*, *Mashadi Tail*, *Hingvai Tail* are used in the process of *Nasya Karm*. *Anu Tail* is most preferred oil for *Nasya* procedure. *Anu Tail* [21] is prepared from *Til Tail* processed in *Chandan* (*Santalum album*), *Agar* (*Aquilaria agallocha*), *Tejpatra* (*Cinnamomnm zeylanicum*), *Daruhaldi* (*Berberis aristata*), *Mulethi* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), *Bala* (*Sida cordifolia*), *Ela* (*Elettaria cardamomum*), *Vayavidang* (*Embelia ribes*), *Neelkamal* (*Nymphaea stellata*), *Bilva* (*Aegle marmelos*), *Dalcheeni* (*Cinnamomnm zeylanicum*), *Nagarmotha* (*Cyperus rotundus*), *Sariva* (*Hemidesmus indicus*), *Jeevanti* (*Ledtadenia reticulata*), *Satavari* (*Asparagus racemosus*), *Kamal* (*Nelumo nucifera*). There are various drugs which have been enumerated for the process of *Nasya Karm*, as mentioned in table 2. [22,23,24]

Table 2: List of some important drugs used for the procedure of Nasya Karm

Drugs	Botanical name
Apamarg	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>
Pippali	<i>Santalum album</i>
Marich	<i>Piper nigrum</i>
Vacha	<i>Acorus calamus</i>
Vidang	<i>Embelia ribes</i>
Sarshap	<i>Brassica campestris</i>
Tulsi	<i>Ocimum santum</i>
Haridra	<i>Curcuma longa</i>
Brahmi	<i>Centella asiatica</i>
Sunthi	<i>Zingiber officinale</i>
Ela	<i>Elettaria cardamomum</i>
Jyotishmati	<i>Celastrus panniculatus</i>
Lodhra	<i>Symplocos racemosa</i>

Importance of time and season in Nasya Karm

Most common preferred seasons for *Nasya Karm* are *Pravritt* (mid-June to mid-August/early monsoon or rainy season), *Sharad* (autumn/mid-September to mid-November) and *Basant* (spring season/February, April, March). But in emergency situations it can be done in *Hemant* (pre winter /mid-October to mid-December), *Gresma* (summer season/mid-April to mid-June) and *Varsha* (monsoon season/mid-July to mid-September). In summer season it can be given in morning, in winter it can be given in daytime and in rainy season it can be given in the days when sky is clear of clouds. In summer *Nasya* should be given in cold places, while in winter it should be given in hot places.^[25] *Nasya* may be given before meal in *Kapha* dominant and may be given in the morning, in *Pitta* predominant it may be given at mid-day in *Vata* dominant given at night.^[26]

Dose and duration of Nasya Karm

Acharya Vagbhat has described three doses^[27] of *Nasya Kam*, as shown in Table 3. The smallest dose of *Nasya Karm* is known as *Pratimarsha* and it's dose is two *Bindu*^[28] (2 drops), but it is not suitable for polyps as this is very small amount and will not be able to remove *Doshas* and cure the diseases.^[29] According to Acharya Sushruta, *Nasya Karm* should be performed after three- days interval.^[30], while according to Acharya Vagbhat, *Nasya Karm* may be performed for seven days.^[31] For better result *Nasya Karm* should be repeated (for a period of two months to four months). To stop the recurrence of diseases/symptoms, it should be performed consistently for a longer time.

Table 3: Doses of Nasya Karm

Name of dose	Dose in drops
<i>Uttam</i> (maximum)	Eight drops
<i>Madhyam</i> (medium)	Six drops
<i>Kanistha</i> (minimum)	Four drops

Procedure of Nasya Karm

Step 1: History taking and examination: Firstly, we have to prepare the patient for the *Nasya karm*. Examine the patient thoroughly and explain the patient about the procedure of the *Nasya karm* to remove the anxiety of the patient.

Step 2: Proper position of the patient: Lay down the patient comfortably on the massage table keeping face up/supine position.

Step 3: Local message: Gentle massage of whole face, forehead, arounds the nose and eyes in circular motion around eyes and nose is given with the lukewarm medicated oil for few minutes (nearly three to four minutes).

Step 4: Local fomentation: Local fomentation given with a towel dipped in lukewarm water.

Step 5: Drug administration into the nasal cavity: Administration of medicated liquid or oil in the nasal cavity, dose is decided according to the patient's health and disease, starting with 4 drops in each nostril.

Step 6: Whole face message given: Whole face is massaged by stroking the cheeks to nose for about 5-10 minutes.

Step 7: Kept in same posture: Patient has to be kept in the same position for few minutes (approximately 30-35 minutes, then gradual turning to the comfortable position.

Step 8: Dhoompan^[32] (inhalation of medicated fumes): After *Nasya Karm*, cleansing of face with lukewarm water, gargles with lukewarm water and medicated fumes are to be inhaled with nose to complete the procedure of *Nasya Karm*.

Step 9: Patient is advised to take some rest and feel comfortable.

Step 10: Dietic restrictions and physical activities are to be advised.

Precautions: *Nasya Karm* should be done under medical supervision. A consent of procedure must be taken from the patient., lukewarm oil (as much as the heat the respective patient can tolerate) should be taken for face massage. Indications and Contraindications must be kept in mind before commencing the procedure.

Indications: All diseases of head, eyes, nose, throat, disorders of teeth and as a revival in fainting.^[33]

Contraindications: *Ajeerna* (indigestion), *Navjwar* (early onset of fever), *Navpratishyay* (early stage of sinusitis), *Garbhini* (pregnancy), should not be performed below seven years of age and more than eighty years of age.^[34-37]

Methods

Primarily Ayurvedic classical texts, Charak Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Astang Samgrah and Astang Hriday, Bhel Samhita, Bhav Prakash, Yog Ratnakar, Sharangdhar Samhita, Vachaspatyam, Sabda Kalpa Drum and Gad Nigrah have been reviewed for the accomplishments of this article. Some books on medicinal plants such as Bhav Prakash Nighantu, Dravya Guna Vigyanam and Indian Materia Media have also been concerned along with some books on *Panchakarma*. Several books on *Kaya Chikitsa* and books on *Shalaky Tantra* have also been viewed. For modern pathophysiology, diagnosis and treatment, some books on modern medicine and books on ear, nose and throat have also been concerned for the completion of this manuscript.

A number of articles published in various journals that are accessible through multiple databases such as PubMed, Science Direct, Scopus and Google Scholar have been accessed. The searches were performed using the keywords: '*Nasya Karm* in nasal polyp'.^[37,38,39]

Inclusion criteria: Clinical studies, case reports, and systematic reviews which showed the significance of *Nasya Karm* in reducing the symptoms of nasal polyps were included in this present article. Some research work which emphasised the development of nasal polyposis post COVID -19 were also included for the present study. As most cases of nasal polyps are linked with allergies, research papers which revolved around this have also been considered for the article.

Exclusion criteria: Cases under high risk and complicated cases were excluded for the article. Articles related to this study were excluded the languages other than English.

DISCUSSION

Mode of action of *Nasya Karm*: *Nasya karm* is a therapeutic and purificatory procedure of Ayurveda, where medicine or medicated oil are administered through the nose. *Nasya Karm* removes toxins and excessive *Doshas* from the supraclavicular part of the body or head. The procedure of *Nasya Karm* stimulates the olfactory and nervous system, nourishes the olfactory and sensory system, promote the cognitive power and also improves the sensory perception and the senses.

Nasal therapy clears the nasal passage as mucociliary clearance trap pathogens and debris and clear mucus and it reduces the congestion and

infection. Nasal therapy dilates the blood vessels, enhancing blood flow to the head. It delivers oxygen and nutrients to tissues and reduces the inflammation. Nasal therapy stimulates the trigeminal nerve that carry the sensation from head and neck and regulate the pain perception.^[40,41,42]

The exact cause of nose polyps is unknown; however, a pattern has emerged where it can be seen that the majority of patients suffer from low immunity and allergies. This pattern became more noticeable after COVID 19 pandemic, as the virus weakened many people's immune systems, respiratory problems surged. This explain why nasal polyp cases are rising now, as the weakened systems have caused the symptoms to become more frequent. After COVID 19 there has been an increase in cases of rhinosinusitis with polyps.^[43]

Future outcomes: There is need of more research on *Nasya* therapy in patients of polyps along with a need of screening of allergic patients developing nasal polyps.

CONCLUSION

Nasya Karm can be the best therapy for disorders of nose, if combined with other procedures like *Jal Neti* (nasal douching) and oral medications (like *Haridrakhand*, *Chitrak Haritaki*, *Mahalaxmivilas Rasa*, *Shatyadi Churn* etc.) as it helps in relieving the symptoms of polyps, and nourishes the nasal mucosa and power the sense organs and also boosts the immunity of the patient. *Nasya Karm* is a localise treatment, gentle and non-invasive option for relieving inflammation and congestion of nose in patients having polyps.

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Cite this article as:

Anjana. Role of Nasya Karm in Nasal Polyp: A Narrative Review. AYUSHDHARA, 2026;13(2):331-336.

<https://doi.org/10.47070/ayushdhara.v13i2.2579>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

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