NETI - AN EFFICACIOUS MEASURE IN MANAGING CHRONIC RHINOSINUSITIS

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ABSTRACT

Allergic rhino sinusitis is a growing problem in the metropolitan cities. It is also a challenge to medical science in terms of managing/curing it. Neti is one among the six purification methods (Shatkarma) of Yoga mentioned in Gheranda Samhita by Gheranda. This therapeutic measure is considered one among the effective nasal cleansing technique. Rhino sinusitis is one among the secretory disorders involving paranasal sinuses. Stasis of secretions from the sinus mucosa being the prime causative factor of the condition, which if cleansed is believed to relieve the condition and provide ease to the patient. Reduced sense of smell which is one among the prime clinical feature is also said to relieve the condition after a due course of fifteen days of regular practice of Neti. Mainly Sutra Neti and Jala Neti are in practice.

Keywords: Rhino sinusitis, Sutra Neti, Jala Neti

INTRODUCTION

Neti kriya is the third purification practice under Shatkarma. There are many variations of Neti in Hatha yoga, but in Gheranda Samhita, only one of these techniques, Sutra Neti is described. The main purpose of this is cleansing the head region and sensitizing the internal Naadi. It is believed that the Naadi related to sight and inner parts of the nose are purified through practice of Neti¹. Use of saline solution improves the mucocilliary clearance and helps in removal of crusts². Rhino sinusitis is a condition where there is an inflammation of the nasal mucous membrane and mucosa of paranasal sinuses³ owing to infection, allergy and trauma with following presentation at different stages of the disease⁴.
Ischaemic stage - Burning sensation in the nasopharynx, irritation, dryness in the nose, sneezing paroxysmally, shivering, malaise.

Hyperaemia stage – profuse watery discharge, blocking of nose, anosmia.

Secondary infection stage - Watery nasal discharge thickens with yellow/green colour secondary infection which demands medico-surgical intervention with the incidence rate of 35% in India. Approximately 20% of patients with chronic sinusitis have nasal polyposis.

Materials and methods

Procedure of Sutra Neti

Preparation

Two types of materials may be used as a Sutra. Nowadays, a long, thin rubber tube called catheter of size 2 or 3 or 4 is used. It should be put in boiling water added with a pinch of salt and dried using clean cloth. The tip should be lubricated using sesame/mustard oil/ghee.

The procedure can be performed in Vajrasana/Sukhasana/squatting position.

Contraindications: post nasal surgeries, nasal polyps, acute bleeding from nose/patients with bleeding disorders.

Pradhana Karma

A thin thread of 32 angulas (Thread prepared with cotton is lubricated with bee wax) is inserted through one nostril and taken out through the mouth [vithasthamaanam sookshma sutram naasanaale praveshayet mukhannirgamayetpaschat prochyate netikarmakam]. Once the thread is out of mouth, both of its ends are gripped in a way to enable mild friction in Naso-Oropharengial cavity by repeatedly pulling it out and in. In practice thin rubber tube is used. This possibly helps in elimination of any sticky mucus from the cavity and stimulates the inner cellular lining of the passage by direct friction as well as through improved circulation.

Procedure of Jala Neti

Preparation

In practice Jala is also used for the purpose of Neti. It is performed with the help of Neti pot.

Pradhana Karma

The pot is filled with lukewarm water + pinch of Saindhava salt (boiled water reduced to lukewarm temperature) and nozzle of the pot is inserted in one nostril and is directed towards the other nostril and head is slightly tilted to opposite side. There should be a continuous flow of water without any break in the stream; it should be repeated by the other nostril by slightly tilting the head to opposite side.

Pushchat Karma of Neti

Kapaala Bhaathi (Vata Krama) - forceful expiration has to be performed for 15-20 minutes till the nasal cavity is devoid of water drops.

DISCUSSION

Probable mode of action

In Suta Neti the thread/Catheter massages and strengthens the mucus membranes, enhancing their efficacy. The blood flow to the nose increases by this. The gentle movement of the thread/catheter exerts pressure on the glandular lining of nostrils, reducing swelling and inflammation. Any abnormal growth like polyps is reduced. This practice reduces rhino sinusitis.

Jala Neti is a variant of Nasya Karma (Shamana variety) of Ayurveda in which when lukewarm water passes through the nostrils, its influence is first felt by the tissue lining the nasal passages and sinuses. Salt itself is having the
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property of Kledana (hydration) and Chedana (dissociation). During Jala Neti two processes take place simultaneously.

1. Waste products or mucus comes out along with water through the other nostril cleaning the nasal cavity
2. Usually the eyes water with this practice. This is due to nasolacrimal duct. Thus dry eyes get benefitted.

Psychic benefits

The spiritual benefits of Neti include stimulation/awakening of Ajna Chakra located in between the eyebrows. By this the mind becomes calm; there is experience of one-pointedness and concentration. Sage Gheranda has described three benefits of Neti. The first is the attainment of Khechari(Mudra)siddhi, second is the elimination of excess Kapha Dosha and the third is attainment of Divyadrishti. Khechari Siddhi is a state of attainment. After perfecting Khechari mudra, A Yogi is free from all diseases and achieves complete control over the body. As per some authors it helps in attainment of astral travelling. Divyadrishti is the clarity in vision/sight.

Neti is very effective and simple procedure which should be practiced under the supervision of the expert initially.

CONCLUSION

Neti is helpful in rhino sinusitis and a number of other diseases pertaining to ENT. In western countries, an increased interest in nasal irrigation has been shown and it is recommended as an adjunct to the conventional therapy of common cold and sinusitis. This is one of the most recommended therapies and has proved to be worth in management of number of nasal disorders including common cold, allergic rhinitis, and sinusitis. There is scope for further research where many other conclusions can be drawn with extensive human experimentation.

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JALA NETI

SUTRA NETI

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