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CONCEPTUAL REVIEW ON *Divasvapna* IN *Greeshma Ritu*: AYURVEDIC RATIONALE AND THERAPEUTIC IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Objective: *To explore the Ayurvedic reasoning and physiological basis for allowing Divasvapna (daytime sleep) during Greeshma Ritu, evaluate its doshic and seasonal relevance, and relate these concepts to modern circadian physiology.*

Data Source: *The primary data originates from classical Ayurvedic texts by Sushruta and Charaka, providing foundational principles on sleep and seasonal regimens. Modern physiological concepts, such as circadian rhythm, are also briefly incorporated.*

Review Methods: *The methodology involves a descriptive and analytical review of Ayurvedic concepts concerning Nidra and GreeshmaRitu's characteristics. It systematically analyzes the reasons for Divasvapna's summer recommendation, focusing on reduced night duration, Vata accumulation, and the season's depleting effects. A comparative analysis highlights why other seasons contraindicate daytime sleep based on their unique doshic imbalances.*

Results and Conclusion: *Divasvapna, generally considered improper, is beneficial in Greeshma due to the season's intense heat (teekshnata), dryness (rukshata), and shorter nights leading to insufficient sleep and Vata accumulation. Being inherently unctuous (snigdha), daytime sleep counteracts dryness, pacifies Vata, and compensates for sleep deprivation, helping maintain Kapha and Agni. It is strictly contraindicated in other seasons due to Kapha accumulation/liquefaction, heightened moisture, and Rakta vitiation. Proper Divasvapna in Greeshma should be short (muhurta matra) and ideally on an empty stomach.*

Ayurveda's approach to Divasvapna reflects a precise understanding of physiology and environmental interaction. By providing unctuousness and compensating for sleep loss during summer, Divasvapna is crucial for maintaining health and balance.

***Key message*:** *The main takeaway is that while Ayurveda generally advises against daytime napping (Divasvapna) because it can cause imbalance, it becomes a crucial, healthy practice during the peak of summer.*

KEY WORDS: *Divasvapna, Greeshma Ritu, Nidra, Ritucharya, Vata Chaya, Sneha Kshaya, Circadian Rhythm, Ayurvedic Physiology*

INTRODUCTION

In *Ayurveda, Nidra* (sleep) is one of the three *Upastambhas* (foundational pillars) essential for maintaining health and vitality[1]. Among its various types, *Divasvapna* (daytime sleep) is typically considered *Akala Shayana* (untimely sleep) and is generally contraindicated due to its potential to vitiate *Kapha* and *Pitta doshas*[2]. However, Ayurveda's nuanced, context-based framework allows certain exceptions where *Divasvapna* becomes not only acceptable but therapeutically beneficial. One such exception is during *Greeshma Ritu* (summer season), a period marked by *Rukshata* (intense dryness), *Sneha Kshaya* (reduced unctuousness) and *Vata Chaya* (accumulation)[3,4]. In this season of *Apatarpana* (depletion), *Divasvapna* serves a vital compensatory role by replenishing lost *Sneha*, restoring *Kapha*, and preventing *Vata* aggravation. This article explores the physiological, pathological, and therapeutic dimensions of *Divasvapna* in *Greeshma Ritu*, drawing parallels with conditions like *Karshya Vyadhi* (emaciation). It emphasizes how Ayurvedic principles such as *Kala, Desha*, and *Prakruti* guide the individualized application of *Divasvapna* in both health and disease, illustrating Ayurveda's deep-rooted commitment to personalized well-being.

Divasvapna

Divasvapna (daytime sleep) is considered a form of *Akala shayana*, i.e., sleeping at an inappropriate time. However, when analyzing the *Ayoga, Atiyoga*, and *Mithyayoga* of sleep, both *Kale Atishayana (Atiyoga)* and *Akale Shayana (Mithya yoga)* can be considered under *Divasvapna*.[5]

Ati Yoga refers to sleeping for an extended duration even at night (*Kale ati-shayana*). Though the timing is appropriate, the quantity is excessive, resulting in increased *Snigdhata* and *Kleda*.

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Mithya Yoga refers to sleeping during the day (*Akale shayana*), which, despite possibly normal duration, is untimely and disrupts the biological rhythm, similarly leading to abnormal *Kleda*.

Sleep, by its inherent nature, is *Snigdha*, *Guru*, and *Manda*. However, when misused in either form, it results in pathological *Snigdhata*, which vitiates the *Snigdha Guna* of both *Kapha* and *Pitta*, leading to their aggravation and resulting in *Kapha-Pitta Vyadhi*.[6] It is paradoxically indicated as beneficial in specific pathological conditions and for healthy individuals during *Greeshma Ritu* (summer season)[7].

Physiology of *Nidra*

Nidra is considered one of the three *Upastambhas* (pillars) that support the body, along with *Ahara* (diet) and *Brahmacharya* (celibacy). When these three are appropriately balanced, the body maintains strength, complexion, and growth throughout life.[8] Proper sleep contributes to *Pushti* (nourishment), *Varna* (complexion), Bala (strength), *Utsaha* (enthusiasm), and *Vahni Dipti* (digestive fire) thereby it maintains *Dhatu Samyata* (equilibrium of bodily tissues).[9]

Both Acharya Sushruta and Charaka offer similar insights into the physiology of *Nidra*, despite using slightly different terminology. Acharya Sushruta points that sleep occurs when *Tamas* enters the *Hridaya*, the seat of consciousness. Acharya Charaka elaborates that sleep arises when the *Manas* (mind) becomes *Klanta* (fatigued) and the senses withdraw from their objects. When the mind is inactive, the senses also cease to function, suspending the *Atman*'s (soul's) perception and sensory engagement.[10] Adding to this, Acharya Vagbhata explains that sleep enters the embodied being when the *Srotas* (channels) are filled by *Shleshma* and the *Indriyas* (senses) have withdrawn from their respective functions due to fatigue.[11] In essence, while Sushruta points to *Tamas* obscuring the *Hridaya*, Charaka's focus on mental fatigue and sensory withdrawal, [12] along with Vagbhata's explanation of *Kapha* filling the channels and sensory withdrawal due to fatigue, together illuminate sleep as a state where conscious engagement with the external world is temporarily suspended through a combination of functional and energetic processes.

Importance of *Yukta Sevita Nidra*

Proper *Nidra* is crucial for maintaining bodily functions,[13] as it directly influences *Prakruta Kapha Karma* (physiological functions of *Kapha*) such as *Darḍhya* (stability and firmness to the body), *Upacaya* (nourishment and anabolic growth), *Utsaha* (enthusiasm), *Vṛṣata* (reproductive strength and virility), *Jnana* (knowledge), and *Buddhi* (discriminative intellect).[14] Sleep is considered as *Snigdha* (unctuous) and acts as a *Vriddhikara* (promoter of increase) for *Kapha*, not by directly increasing it, but by inhibiting activities that cause *Kapha Kshaya* (depletion), such as physical exertion. This aligns with *Samanya* principles, where sleep, though not a substance, is metaphorically considered *Snigdha* due to its effect of promoting *Saumya Bhava* (qualities like coolness and stability) like *Kapha* and other *snigdha dhatus*.[15,16] During the day, various activities lead to the loss of *Kapha* and *Sneha* (unctuousness). However, during night sleep, the heart becomes relaxed and the *Srotas* get covered, allowing the *Dhatus* (tissues) to become moist within the *Kostha*.[17] This period of reduced activity and the inherent *Saumya* (cooling) quality of the night facilitate the restoration of lost *Kapha* and *Sneha*, thereby supporting the continuity of *Dhatu Sneha Parampara* and maintaining *Agni* (digestive fire). This replenishment is essential for overall health, contributing to *Sukha* (happiness), *Pushti* (nourishment), *Bala* (strength), *Vrishata* (virility), and *Jnana* (knowledge).[18]

Physiology of *Greeshma Ritu*

In *Greeshma Ritu*, which is part of the *Adana Kala* (period of depletion of *Soumya Bhava* in *Jagat*), the sun's intense heat causes significant *Rukshata* in both the environment and the body.[19]This leads to a daily decrease in *Shleshma* and an increase in *Vayu*. The body experiences a reduction in *Snigdhatva* (unctuousness), and this decreased *Sneha Guna* is intrinsically linked to a reduction in *Agni* (digestive fire), as optimum *Sneha* is essential for maintaining *Agni's* strength.[20] The nights during *Greeshma* are also shorter. *Vata* accumulates due to the dry and light qualities associated with the season.[21.22] This overall process contributes to *Apatarpana* (general debility).

Indications for *Divasvapna* in *Greeshma Ritu*

1. Because of Reduced Duration of Night

During *Adana Kala*, spanning from *Shishira* to *Greeshma*, there is a gradual decrease in the duration of night, influenced by the dominance of *Agneya Bhava* (fiery qualities). This reduction in night time hours directly leads to a decreased duration of sleep, resulting in *Heenayoga* of *Nidra* (insufficient sleep). Consequently, the vital physiological functions of sleep are not fully fulfilled. The optimum amount of *Snigdhatva* (unctuousness) is not adequately provided to the *Srotas* (channels), leading to an improper *Dhatu Sneha Parampara* and an increase in *Rukshata* within the channels. This state of insufficient sleep, or *Nidra Ayoga*, closely resembles the symptoms observed in *Nidra-Vega-Dharana* (suppression of sleep), which include *Moha* (confusion), *Murdhakshi-gaurava* (heaviness in the head and eyes), *Alasya* (lethargy), *Jrimbha* (yawning), and *Angamarda* (body ache). Given that sleep itself is the prescribed treatment for *Nidra-Vega-Dharana,*[23] properly regulated day sleep (*Vidhi Yukta Divasvapna*) becomes a necessary intervention in *Greeshma* to counteract the ill effects of shortened nights.

2. Under the Circumstance of Increased *Vata*

In *Greeshma Ritu*, *Vata dosha* undergoes *Chaya* (accumulation). This accumulation is caused by the *Ushna* (hot) and *Ruksha* (dry) qualities prevalent in the environment.[24]

During summer, the intense solar heat dehydrates the body, and even substances like herbs and water, when consumed, become *Nissara* (devoid of essence), *Ati-ruksha* (excessively dry), and *Laghu* (light). These qualities contribute significantly to the accumulation of *Vata*. Although *Vata* accumulates, it typically does not become aggravated during *Greeshma* due to the season's inherent heat.[25] To manage this accumulated *Vata*, measures that possess *Snigdha* (unctuous) qualities are indicated, as *Snigdha*

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qualities are known to pacify *Vata*.[26] *Divasvapna* is inherently *Snigdha* , and thus serves as a beneficial intervention to reduce this accumulated *Vata*. By counteracting the *Ruksha* quality that predominates *Greeshma*, *Divasvapna* helps prevent future *Vata* aggravation and supports the body's balance.

3. *Kaala* (Time) as a *Nidana* for *Nidranasha*:

According to Charaka and Ashtanga Sangraha, *Kaala* (time) itself can be a *Nidana* (causative factor) for *Nidranasha* (loss of sleep).[27,28] Indu, while commenting on the same, specifically identifies the initial time of *Prabhata* (dawn) as such a factor.[29] In *Greeshma Ritu*, sunrise occurs earlier, leading to a premature awakening. This earlier awakening contributes to *Nidra Heenayoga* (insufficient sleep). To compensate for this quantitative deficiency of sleep caused by the early dawn and to fulfill the body's required sleep duration, *Divasvapna* becomes essential.

4. *Greeshma*: The Culmination of *AadanaKala*'s Depleting Effects:

Divasvapna becomes exceptionally crucial in *Greeshma Ritu* compared to *Shishira* (late winter) and *Vasanta* (spring), which also falls within the *Adana Kala* (period of depletion).[30] While all three seasons in *Adana Kala* are characterized by the sun's depleting influence and increasing *Rukshata* (dryness), *Greeshma* represents the culmination of these effects,[31] where the *Rukshata* progressively increases, reaching its peak. The *Agneya Bhava* (fiery qualities) of the *Adana Kala* are most intense in summer, leading to the maximum depletion of the body's *Saumya* (cooling/moist) qualities and vital *Sneha* (unctuousness).[32] This results in the most significant *Apatarpana* (debilitation) and *Ati Dourbalya* (extreme debility) in Greeshma. Furthermore, the nights are at their shortest during *Greeshma*, leading to the most severe *Heenayog* of *Nidra* (insufficient sleep) among all seasons. Given this combined and intensified impact of extreme dryness, maximum depletion, and severe sleep deprivation in *Greeshma, Divasvapna*, being *Snigdha* (unctuous), is most vital.

Conditions for Proper *Divasvapna* in *Greeshma Ritu*

While *Divasvapna* (daytime sleep) is generally recognized as a *Nidana* (causative factor) for the aggravation of both *Kapha, Pitta* [33] and *Rakta*,[34] in *Greeshma Ritu* (summer season), it is specifically indicated for healthy individuals. To prevent it from leading to *Raktaprakopa* (aggravation of blood) or other adverse effects, specific conditions must be observed.

Duration of Sleep

- ✓ For healthy individuals in *Greeshma* who are not compensating for night sleep loss, *Divasvapna* should be limited to a very short period, often referred to as *Muhurta matra*.
- ✓ For those who have experienced *Ratrijagarana* (night waking or sleeplessness), *Divasvapna* is recommended for a duration that is half of their lost night sleep. This principle applies equally during *GreeshmaRitu* to compensate for sleep deficiency. [35]

Condition of Intake

Divasvapna should ideally be taken on an empty stomach, meaning one should sleep without having consumed food.[36]

***Divasvapna*: Seasonal Contraindications and the *Greeshma* Exception**

Adana Kala (Depletion Period)-This phase is dominated by the sun's intensifying strength, leading to increased dryness, progressive reduction in bodily strength, and shorter nights.[37]

- *Shishira* (Late Winter): This season is characterized by long nights. While strength is high, *Kapha* accumulates in this season due to the cold. Day sleep would further accumulate *Kapha*, making the body heavy and prone to sluggishness and respiratory issues. The *Agni* is naturally strong due to external cold, and day sleep would dampen this active *Agni*.
- Vasanta (spring): *Kapha*, which accumulated in *Shishira*, liquefies due to the increasing warmth of *Vasanta*. Day sleep would significantly aggravate this already liquefied *Kapha*, leading to its spread throughout the body. The *Agni* is moderate, and day sleep would weaken it further when it needs to be active to process the liquefying *Kapha*.

Visarga Kala (Replenishment Period)-This phase is governed by the moon's cooling influence, bringing longer nights, increased unctuousness, and a gradual restoration of bodily strength.[38]

- *Varsha* (Monsoon): During *Varsha Ritu*, even though it marks the first *Kala* of *Visarga Kala* where the *Bala* (strength) and *Agni* (digestive fire) are naturally reduced, *Divasvapna* (day sleep) is strictly contraindicated. This is primarily because of the excess *Kleda* (moisture) present in both the body and the environment. Indulging in day sleep would further exacerbate *Kledadushti*, which in turn would lead to a greater *Agnidushti* (impairment of digestive fire).
- *Sharad* (Autumn): During *Sharad*, day and night durations are equal. *Pitta* becomes aggravated, often associated with *Kapha*, and this *K*
- *ala* is very prone to vitiate *Rakta* (blood). The body shows moderate unctuousness and moderate strength. If a person engages in *Divasvapna* during *Sharad*, it can easily lead to *Rakta Dushti*, as day sleep is considered one of the *Rakta Prakopaka Nidana* (direct causative factors for blood vitiation). Therefore, *Divasvapna* is strongly contraindicated.
- *Hemanta* (Early Winter): This season is marked by long nights. Similar to *Shishira*, *Kapha* accumulates, and *Agni* is strong. While the body has excellent strength, day sleep would still lead to an unnecessary increase in *Kapha*, potentially leading to heaviness and dampening of the strong *Agni*.

Misaligned Circadian Rhythm and its Effects in Summer Season

The circadian rhythm is an internal, natural process that regulates the sleep-wake cycle and repeats roughly every 24 hours. It is essentially the body's internal clock, responding primarily to light and darkness in an organism's environment. This biological rhythm governs various physiological processes, including

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hormone release, body temperature, metabolism, and immune function, influencing nearly every cell and organ in the body to operate optimally at specific times of the day.

The summer season, characterized by longer daylight hours and shorter nights, significantly impacts this internal clock, potentially leading to a state of circadian misalignment. This misalignment can have several physiological consequences:[39]

- Melatonin Suppression: Increased light exposure and reduced darkness during summer can suppress melatonin production, a crucial hormone for sleep regulation. This leads to poorer sleep quality and reduces the body's capacity for anabolic recovery (repair and building processes).
- Hormonal Imbalances:
  - Cortisol Dysregulation: Disrupted sleep-wake cycles can lead to prolonged elevation of cortisol, a stress hormone. This promotes a catabolic state, increasing protein breakdown and contributing to fatigue and weakness.
  - Weakened Insulin Response: Circadian misalignment can impair insulin sensitivity, potentially resulting in postprandial hyperglycemia (high blood sugar after meals) and less efficient glucose utilization, leading to a persistent sense of energy depletion.
- Impact on Cognitive Function: Beyond physical fatigue, circadian misalignment can significantly impair cognitive abilities, leading to reduced concentration, slower reaction times, diminished memory recall, and difficulties with decision-making.
- Compromised Immune Response: Chronic disruption of the sleep-wake cycle and hormonal imbalances can suppress the immune system, making the body more vulnerable to infections and reducing its ability to mount an effective defense.
- Overall Depletion: Collectively, these hormonal and metabolic shifts, coupled with impaired recovery and cognitive function, push the body into a state of catabolism, manifesting as general weakness, potential weight loss, and reduced vitality, similar to the Ayurvedic concept of *apatarpana* (debilitation) experienced in *Greeshma Ritu*.

Application to *Karshya Vyadhi*: Commonalities and Therapeutic Role of *Divasvapna*

There are notable similarities between the physiological state of *Greeshma Ritu* and the pathological condition of *Karshya Vyadhi* (emaciation), highlighting the therapeutic role of *Divasvapna* (daytime sleep) in both.[40] Both conditions involve *Sneha kshaya* (loss of unctuousness), increased *Rukshata* (dryness), and *Vata* accumulation due to dry, light qualities. In *Greeshma, Vata* accumulates due to heat, while in *Karshya*, it arises from depletion. Both states are marked by *Nidra-hani* (sleep loss), *Agni* weakening due to *Sneha* depletion, and overall loss of *Ojas* and *Bala*, creating an *Apatarpana* (debilitating) state.

Divasvapna, inherently *Snigdha*, addresses this shared dryness and compensates for *Nidra Ayoga*. It pacifies accumulated *Vata* in *Greeshma* and aids recovery in *Karshya* by enhancing *Santarpana* (nourishment). It is stated that by proper sleep, a man gets nourished like a wild boar, underscoring *Nidra's* anabolic effect.[40] Thus, *Divasvapna* serves as *Chikitsa* for both *Karshya* and *Greeshma*-related debility, replenishing *Sneha*, restoring *Kapha*, and supporting *Dhatu* and *Agni* recovery. By countering catabolism and aiding restoration, it strengthens the system.

Application of *Greeshma Charya* in *Vyadhi Avastha*

- The *Greeshma Ritu Charya* is highly beneficial and should be adopted in conditions primarily characterized by *Vata* imbalances. This regimen, focusing on sweet, unctuous, liquid, and cold foods and practices like ample rest and daytime sleep, directly counteracts *Vata's* inherent qualities. Therefore, in any disease condition where *Vata* is exclusively involved, the principles of *Greeshma Charya* are a suitable therapeutic approach to pacify the aggravated *Vata* and restore balance.
- Furthermore, this regimen is equally vital for *Vata-Pittaja* conditions.[41] In such states, *Vata* acts as *Yogavahi*, meaning it significantly enhances or intensifies the qualities of *Pitta*. Given that *Greeshma Charya* inherently provides strong cooling, nourishing, and hydrating effects while advising against heating and irritating factors, it directly mitigates *Pitta's* sharpness and heat. By effectively pacifying the *Pitta* component, the regimen also concurrently manages the *Vata* that is amplifying *Pitta's* effects, making it an appropriate treatment strategy for these combined *Dosha* imbalances.[42]

Individualized Approach to *Swaasthya Charya*

Ayurveda emphasizes that health practices, including *Divasvapna*, must be individualized rather than universally applied. This personalization extends beyond disease management to include *Swaasthya Charya*—daily and seasonal regimens. It is rooted in *Bhumi Pariksha*,[43] which considers an individual's geographical background—birthplace, upbringing, and current location. This evaluation integrates factors such as *Ahara* (diet), *Vihara* (lifestyle), *Achara* (behavior), *Bala* (strength), *Sattva* (mental constitution), *Satmya* (adaptability), current *Dosha* state, *Bhakti* (food preferences), and what is *Hita* (beneficial) or *Ahita* (harmful) in that setting. Thus, the appropriate *Matra* (duration) of *Divasvapna* in *Greeshma Ritu* must be tailored to an individual's *Desha, Prakruti, Satmya, Ahara*, and *Vihara*, reflecting Ayurveda's core principle of personalized wellness shaped by individual–environment interaction.

CONCLUSION

Divasvapna, though generally contraindicated due to its potential to vitiate *Tridosha*,[44] becomes an essential, therapeutic practice in *Greeshma Ritu* under specific conditions. The season's inherent dryness, shortened nights, and *Sneha* depletion create a physiological state akin to *Karshya*, leading to *Nidra-hani*, *Agni dushti*, and *Vata chaya*. *Divasvapna*, being naturally *Snigdha*, mitigates these effects by restoring lost unctuousness, preventing

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Vata aggravation, and supporting *Santarpana*. When practiced judiciously—tailored to one's *Prakriti*, *Satmya*, *Ahara*, *and Vihara*—it not only serves preventive and restorative roles in *Greeshma*, but also becomes applicable in various *Vata* and *Vata-Pittaja* conditions. This reinforces Ayurveda's foundational principle: all regimens, including sleep, must be individualized and seasonally adapted to sustain health and prevent disease.

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