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Review on therapeutic uses of NETI

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ABSTRACT

Yoga is a part of general search for better health, vitality and awareness that is rapidly becoming an important part of one's culture. Internal cleansing is probably the first step towards a healthier life, which includes not only special detoxification measures of a clinical nature but daily hygienic practices that everyone can do. The Yoga tradition offers an important tool of self-healing, a special device called 'Neti pot' and a process of cleansing the nostrils or nasal irrigation that it is used for. The use of *Neti* procedure is not only common to Yoga practitioners but is extended in to the entire natural health community along with the use of herbs, massage, and other alternative therapies. Physicians suggest the *Neti* pot as a part of right lifestyle considerations both for the prevention of disease and for the attainment of optimal energy. The neti pot is an important tool of nasya therapies. Other nasya methods involve placing medicated oils into the nose with eyedroppers, snuffing powdered herbs, massage of the nasal region and other forms of steam therapy and massage to the head. The use of the neti pot can be enhanced by these other nasya methods and can be used along with them. With proper guidance from health care professional, one can practice *Neti* procedure on daily purpose to clear nasal passage.

Keywords: *Neti* pot procedure, Specific conditions, Therapeutic uses

INTRODUCTION

Neti

Yoga originally arose as a complete system of human development, showing how to balance and harmonize body, breath, speech and mind in order not only reach out full individual potential, but also

to take one beyond the body to a greater oneness with the entire universe. Traditional yoga generally regards *Prana*, breath or vital energy as its primary component, which is dealt with in great detail in various yogic texts. This is because *prana* is the prime force for healing the body, for controlling the senses and for concentrating the mind [1].

The *neti* pot derives from the tradition of Hatha yoga, which is first outlined its usage in detail. The *neti* pot is the most important device used in classical yoga. It's the main cleansing method performed preliminary to the practice of pranayama or yogic breathing exercises. The nostrils should be clear, for the proper pranayama or it will not be fully effective. For this reason, many yogis routinely practice *neti* for cleansing at the beginning of pranayama. Cleansing the nostrils with the *neti* pot also aids in asana practice, in meditation and with all other yogic methods, for which good circulation of *prana*, particularly to the head, is essential [2].

Ayurveda

Ayurveda is the sister science of yoga, healing both body and mind. Traditional yoga employs an Ayurvedic language and approach for diagnosing and treating both physical and mental diseases. It follows an Ayurvedic view for understanding the workings of both our physiology and psychology. Similarly, Ayurveda takes a yogic approach to heal the body and mind, relying on the same philosophy of working with nature and the methodology of promoting balance inwardly and outwardly. Acarya Vagbhata, mentioned usha paana in the early morning in the context of dinacharya. Acarya advised to cleanse the nasal passage through 8 prasrati of water daily morning just after waking up to prevent the diseases. Ayurvedic medicine contains an entire range of health therapies, which aim at treating the nose, sinuses and related regions of the head and throat. These are called 'Nasya' therapies [3].

METHODOLOGY

Size and Shape of *Neti* pot

In India *neti* pots made of steel or copper are common. They are usually large in size, with capacity of up to two cups when full. They can provide enough water to irrigate both nostrils, with a long narrow spout to pour the water. In America, most *neti* pots are ceramic and smaller in size with a capacity of one cup or less, which is enough to sufficiently irrigate one nostril at a time [4].

Procedure

The solution for the *neti* pot ordinarily consists of warm water with a little salt dissolved in it. Take

the filled *neti* pot to a bathroom sink or a wash basin that can drain away the used water. Begin with the right nostril. Tilt the head slightly to the opposite side. Insert the spout of the *neti* pot gently into the raised nostril. Slowly pour the water from the *neti* pot into the nostril until the water filters down, through and out the opposite lower nostril and into the sink. Blow through the nostril gently to complete the process and help drain all the water out. Close the other nostril gently with finger while doing the procedure. Once done the right nostril, refill the *neti* pot and proceed with left nostril, tilting the head in the opposite direction and repeat the same procedure [5].

The most important factor to care the *neti* pot is to keep clean by rinse out in hot water. Sometimes a little mucus gets into the *neti* pot and can adhere to the inside of *neti* pot. Therefore regular clean is needed.

Timings

The best time is early morning, shortly after one gets up. It should be an integral part of your morning elimination routine, along with scraping the tongue and brushing teeth. Before sleep also is advised.

Cautions

The *neti* pot can be used any time that one feels congested or blocked in the head and sinuses and wishes to breathe more freely. But in nasal bleeding, acute sinus infection, complete sinus block at most care should be taken [6].

RESULT

As a daily routine

Children

Children commonly suffer from sinus congestion and other problems of excess mucus. Childhood is the kapha phase of life in Ayurveda, which is why children often have mucus discharge from the nose. The *neti* pot is an excellent remedy for those childhood problems.

Elder

Elderly people suffer from dry skin and dryness of mucus membranes and nostrils, which can impair the breathing process. Old age is the vata phase according to Ayurveda, in which the mind continues to grow but the body begins to decline.

The use of the neti pot can help counter such conditions of dryness and debility. The neti is a great tool for the elderly who feel lethargic in the morning and can help them get going.

Women

The neti pot can safely use during pregnancy, menstruation or menopause. Soothing the flow of energy in the circulatory and nervous systems, it can help indirectly with the pain, blockage or other symptoms that can arise during these times.

Seasonal usage

In summer

In the summer allergies are more common since there is more abundant pollen in the air. The neti pot will help remove these irritants.

In winter

In the winter, coldness and dampness increase and can lodge in the head. This means that one should use warm water or a little spicy herb like calamus or ginger in the neti.

In spring

In spring time, it is the natural kapha season in which mucus will more likely accumulate or flow. The use of neti will aid in this seasonal discharge [7].

Therapeutic Usage

Table 1 – Specific conditions and usage of neti pot

SI No	Condition	Use
1	Deviated septum	If the deviation is minor neti pot is a good substitute for corrective surgery
2	Nasal polyps	Correct the nasal polyps by soothing the mucus lining of the nose and improving circulation in that region
3	Cold and Flu	With spicy herbs like ginger, is a good therapy for treating mild colds and flu. The pot is great for the congestion of initial head cold.
4	Swollen glands	By removing mucus from the head and opening up the circulation of energy and cleanse the entire lymphatic system and reduce swollen glands particularly of head, neck and chest regions
5	Sinus allergies	Neti pot will clear the nostrils, then body is able to filter out the pollutant which cause or aggravate the allergies.
6	Asthma	For patient suffering from asthma, particularly allergy type, it is very important to keep the nasal passage clear, which can achieve by daily usage of neti pot.
7	Headache	A good preventive measure for sinus headaches
8	Weak Digestion	Improving the power of breath or prana, is the helpful aid for improving digestion
9	Constipation	Promotes elimination
10	Obesity	Daily usage of neti pot along with stimulating herbs like ginger, cinnamon or calamus stimulates digestion and circulation, and removes the mucus, water and excess fat from the body.
11	Skin diseases	Neti pot helps in proper circulation, which helps in dealing with skin conditions, rashes or growths, particularly in the region of head, face or neck
12	Arthritis	Stimulates the flow of prana through the nervous system and circulation through the skeletal system which helps to remove the toxins from bones.
13	Heart disease	Promotes circulation and removes mucus and plaque from the respiratory and circulatory systems.
14	Insomnia	Due to sleep apnoea or failure to breath, the person will get insomnia; to correct the breathing neti pot is an aid.
15	Weak immunity	By strengthening the breath and the vital force in general, protecting the nostrils,

		guarding against the vulnerability to the outside pathogens the neti pot is helpful for low immune conditions.
16	Chronic fatigue	Poor breathing and blocked sinuses are the main cause for chronic fatigue, which can be prevented by regular use of neti pot.
18	Nervous system disorders	By improving the circulation in the head, brain and nervous system, neti pot helps in a general way for all nervous system disorders. Specially in post-stroke patients helps to regain the speech.
19	Depression	Neti pot is an important tool to treat the emotional depression
20	Anxiety	Anxiety is connected to difficulty in breathing or from breathing through the mouth. Neti pot facilitate better breathing.

DISCUSSION

Logic is one of the main criteria of Ayurveda system of medicine. So by using logic one can integrate two system of medicine to prevent the disease or any condition. Acharya Vagbhata mentioned ushah paana that is pouring water through nostrils as a daily routine after waking up. The water should be 8 prasruti and it should be luke warm. Acharya mentioned to keep water in copper vessel the whole night before using. By using daily the person will never suffer from any disease, the eyes will be sharp just like eagle's eyes, attains clear mind, prevents greying of hairs, and achieves a long life of 100years. On daily purpose practicing of ushah pana controls rectal disorders, agni related vikaara, jara, obesity, urdhwajatrugata vikara, specially kaphajanya roga.

Acharya told to drink the water, but neti pot is just limited to nostrils. By drinking water through nose it clears the nasal passage, gut, stomach, colon and rectum just like water clears the pipe. To reduce the kapha ushah pana is one of the important tools.

Kapha as mucus accumulates in the upper portion of the body from the stomach, where most of it originates according to Ayurveda, to the lungs, where it overflows, to the head, where it blocks up. Because of their value in dispelling mucus, nasya and neti therapies are primary methods for treating kapha disorders and removing kapha excesses. High kapha in the head dulls the mind and senses and reduces our capacity for concentration. It makes more sedentary in daily activities, which reduces overall functional activity. It results in oversleeping which in turn increases kapha further. By stimulating the movement and elimination of excess kapha dosha, nasya and neti help to treat all kapha conditions like cold, flu, asthma etc.

Vata dosha is the prime relating to prana and the vital force. When the sinuses are blocked, prana, the positive energy of vata dosha, is also blocked. Vata disease includes disease of bones, excretory system, nervous system and mind. Both neti and nasya therapy help to restore the organic equilibrium of the body and mind and hormonal secretions that are ruled by prana. For promoting the positive aspect of vata dosha, neti and nasya are primarily therapies.

Pitta disease includes most diseases of the blood, including many inflammatory and infectious conditions in the body. Keeping the energy in the head clear and cool through nasya and neti therapies can help alleviate all such conditions. They protect the eyes and help to promote vision

The neti pot is an important tool of nasya therapies. Other nasya methods involve placing medicated oils into the nose with eyedroppers, snuffing powdered herbs, massage of the nasal region and other forms of steam therapy and massage to the head. The use of the neti pot can be enhanced by these other nasya methods and can be used along with them.

CONCLUSION

Neti pot is always a useful tool for disease prevention and promoting greater health, vitality and awareness. The neti pot can reduce the need for antibiotics and other sinus medications and save people from the unnecessary visits to the doctor. Neti pot is a wonderful tool to help one to take control of one's own health, aiding in the deep breathing that can transform life. Neti pot is a simple method that helps to improve one's own health with long term benefits which can be as important as complex therapies and detailed medical procedures.

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