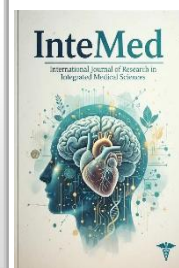




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### Review Article

## Role of *Nasya Karma* in Preventing Seasonal Allergies: A Critical Integrative Review

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### ABSTRACT

Seasonal allergies, commonly manifesting as allergic rhinitis, are highly prevalent immunological disorders characterized by nasal congestion, sneezing, rhinorrhea, and itching triggered by environmental allergens. Despite the availability of antihistamines, intranasal corticosteroids, and immunotherapy, recurrence and long-term dependency on medications remain challenges. In Ayurveda, allergic rhinitis can be correlated with *Vata-Kaphaja Pratishyaya*, and *Nasya Karma*—the administration of medicated substances through the nasal route—is advocated as a primary preventive and therapeutic modality for diseases of the head and neck region. This review critically evaluates the role of *Nasya Karma*, particularly *Pratimarsha Nasya*, in preventing seasonal allergies by integrating classical Ayurvedic concepts with modern immunological mechanisms. A structured literature review was conducted using classical texts (*Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*) and modern databases including PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Science. Evidence suggests that *Nasya* may enhance mucosal immunity, improve mucociliary clearance, and reduce allergen sensitivity through anti-inflammatory and barrier-protective effects. Commonly used formulations include *Anu Taila* and *Shadbindu Taila*. Although preliminary studies and clinical observations indicate potential benefits, high-quality randomized controlled trials are limited. While modern treatments provide effective symptomatic relief, *Nasya Karma* offers a

preventive, holistic approach. Integrative strategies combining both modalities may improve long-term outcomes and reduce recurrence, warranting further scientific investigation.

## Keywords

Seasonal allergies, allergic rhinitis, *Nasya Karma*, *Pratimarsha Nasya*, Ayurveda, mucosal immunity, *Pratishyaya*

## 1. Introduction

Seasonal allergies, particularly allergic rhinitis, affect a substantial proportion of the global population, with increasing prevalence due to environmental pollution and lifestyle changes [1]. The condition is characterized by hypersensitivity reactions to airborne allergens such as pollen, dust, and mold.

In Ayurveda, allergic rhinitis is closely associated with *Pratishyaya*, especially *Vata-Kaphaja Pratishyaya*, involving imbalance of *Doshas* in the upper respiratory tract [2].

*Nasya Karma* is considered the treatment of choice for disorders above the clavicle (*Urdhvajatrugata Roga*). Among its types, *Pratimarsha Nasya* is especially recommended for daily preventive use [3].

The concept of preventive nasal therapy aligns with modern interest in mucosal immunity and barrier protection.

### Aim and Objectives:

- To analyze seasonal allergies from modern and Ayurvedic perspectives
- To evaluate the role of *Nasya Karma* in prevention
- To explore underlying mechanisms
- To identify research gaps and future directions

## 2. Methodology of Literature Review

**Databases searched:** PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar

**Keywords used:** “Nasya Karma”, “allergic rhinitis Ayurveda”, “seasonal allergies prevention”, “nasal immunity Ayurveda”

## 3. Historical Perspective / Conceptual Background

*Nasya Karma* is elaborately described in *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita* as a key therapeutic intervention for diseases of the head and neck [3].

*Pratimarsha Nasya*, a subtype involving daily administration of small doses of medicated oil or ghee, is considered safe and beneficial for long-term use.

Seasonal allergies are correlated with *Pratishyaya*, which is described as recurrent nasal disorder due to *Dosha* imbalance, particularly *Kapha* and *Vata* [4].

## 4. Review of Literature

### 4.1 Pathophysiology of Seasonal Allergies

#### Modern Perspective

- IgE-mediated hypersensitivity reaction
- Allergen exposure → mast cell activation
- Release of histamine and inflammatory mediators
- Symptoms: sneezing, itching, rhinorrhea

Chronic inflammation leads to mucosal hyperreactivity [5].

## Ayurvedic Perspective

- *Kapha* → mucus accumulation
- *Vata* → sneezing and irritation
- Weak *Agni* → reduced immunity

Involvement of *Pranavaha Srotas* leads to recurrent symptoms [6].

## 4.2 Concept and Types of *Nasya Karma*

- *Marsha Nasya* (therapeutic, larger dose)
- *Pratimarsha Nasya* (daily, small dose)

For prevention, *Pratimarsha Nasya* is preferred.

## 4.3 Drugs Used in *Nasya*

### 1. *Anu Taila*

- Polyherbal oil
- Indicated in rhinitis and sinus disorders

### 2. *Shadbindu Taila*

- Stronger formulation
- Used in chronic conditions

### 3. *Goghrita*

- Mild, nourishing
- Suitable for children

#### 4.4 Dosage and Procedure

##### Pratimarsha Nasya

- **Dose:** 1–2 drops per nostril
- **Frequency:** Once or twice daily
- **Time:** Morning and evening

##### Procedure:

- Patient in supine position
- Head slightly extended
- Oil instilled gently

#### 4.5 Mechanism of Action

##### Ayurvedic Explanation

- Clears *Dosha* accumulation
- Strengthens nasal pathways
- Enhances *Vyadhikshamatva* (immunity)

##### Modern Interpretation

- Improves mucociliary clearance
- Forms protective barrier on mucosa
- Reduces allergen penetration
- Anti-inflammatory action

Nasal route allows rapid local and systemic effects [7].

#### 4.6 Clinical Evidence

- Reduction in frequency of allergic episodes
- Improved nasal symptoms
- Enhanced quality of life

However:

- Limited randomized trials
- Small sample sizes

#### 4.7 Comparison with Modern Preventive Strategies

Aspect	Modern Medicine	<i>Nasya Karma</i>
Mechanism	Antihistamines, steroids	Mucosal protection
Use	Symptomatic + preventive	Preventive
Evidence	Strong	Limited
Side effects	Possible	Minimal

#### 4.8 Critical Analysis

##### Advantages of *Nasya*:

- Safe for long-term use
- Preventive approach
- Low cost

##### Limitations:

- Lack of standardization

- Limited scientific validation

Modern medicine provides strong evidence but focuses mainly on symptom control.

## 5. Research Gaps and Limitations

- Lack of high-quality RCTs
- Limited mechanistic studies
- Variability in formulations
- Insufficient pediatric research

## 6. Future Perspectives

- Clinical trials comparing *Nasya* with nasal sprays
- Studies on mucosal immunity biomarkers (IgE, IgA)
- Integration into preventive healthcare programs
- Microbiome research

## 7. Conclusion

*Nasya Karma*, particularly *Pratimarsha Nasya*, represents a promising preventive strategy for seasonal allergies by enhancing nasal mucosal defense and maintaining physiological balance. While modern treatments offer effective symptomatic relief, *Nasya* provides a holistic and preventive approach. Integrative strategies combining both systems may improve long-term outcomes; however, robust scientific validation is essential for wider acceptance.

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