ROLE OF SAMANA VAYU IN SWASANA PRAKRIYA

Dr. Vaishali Manohar¹, Dr. Jotiram Maske-patil², Dr. Parameshwar H.³


ABSTRACT
A science which is understood properly can be used properly. There are many topics in Ayurveda which still need to be explored to gain the proper understanding of ayurvedic concepts. Ayurvedic Swasana Prakriya is one among them.
Swasana kriya is an vital physiological process necessary for existence of life. The Bruhatrayes didn’t avail a detailed description of Swasana Prakriya, but in later compendium (Sharangadhara Samhita) verses are given to explain Swasana kriya.
Vayu is having prime role in the Swasana Prakriya. Role of Prana Vayu, Udana Vayu & Apana Vayu in Swasana Prakriya is well established. Although not having any direct explanation, scattered references are seen showing the role of Samana Vayu in the Swasana Prakriya. Hence In this study an attempt is made to understand the role of Samana Vayu in the process of Swasana Prakriya. The study will help to understand basis for various diagnostic and treatment modalities used in various Swasa vikaras.

Keywords: Samana Vayu, Swasana Prakriya, Prana Vayu, Udana Vayu, Apana Vayu.

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INTRODUCTION:
Dictionary meaning of Swasana is breathing. Swasana Prakriya therefore means the process of breathing (Respiration).¹ Respiration has been recognized as a symbol of life. It is an important physiological process necessary for the existence of life.

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According to Ayurveda, Prakrut Vata dosha performs the function of Swasana (respiration). But detailed explanation of this process is not given in Bruhatrayes. As Yoga science was routinely practiced in Charaka era and control on respiration i.e., Pranayama is one of 8 division of Yoga practice. Common person was aware of this knowledge. This may be the reason why Charaka Samhita didn’t avail detail description of normal respiration. Yet in later compendium “Sharangadhara Samhita”, verses, which may be considered parallel to today’s respiratory mechanism, are read.

Apart from Sharangadhara, Yogic science also gives some explanations about respiratory process. Some reference are also found in Yajurveda & Bhagvat Geeta.

According to the classics the basic mechanism of Swasana kriya is based upon the well-coordinated movements of Prana & Apana Vayu. It is carried out in three stages, namely Puraka, Kumbhaka & Rechaka. Out of the three, the Puraka stage is carried out at the site of Manipura chakra situated at Nabhi, under the influence of Samana Vayu & Agni situated there. Thus, the Samana Vayu represents balance between flow of Prana & Apana Vayu. The Agni present at Nabhi burns adequately when Prana & Apana unites in Samana. This Agni along with Vayu does Sharira vardhana.

**AIMS & OBJECTIVES:**

1. Study of physiology of respiration as described by Ayurvedic scholars in ancient time.
2. Possible role of Samana Vayu in the process of respiration as per Ayurveda.

**MATERIALS & METHODS:**

Materials related to this topic have been collected from different journals, Ayurveda text books, Samhitas, Websites, Literatures, Manuscripts, Sanskrit dictionary.

Acharya Sharangadhara explained the process of respiration. It states that the Prana Vayu located at umbilicus, touches inside of heart. From neck, it passes outside & gets back in a very short time, though same route after assimilating Vishnu Padamruta or Ambarapiyusha in itself. This Prana Vayu maintains entire body & it nourishes Jatharagni.

Bhagvat Geeta explained the process of Swasana in terms of 3 stage i.e. Puraka, Kumbhaka & Rechaka.

अपानं अधोवृत्तौ प्राणमूर्ध्ववृत्तं पूरके ण जुह्वति पूरककाले प्राणमपानेनैकीकुवर्यै तथा कुम्भकेन प्राणापानयोरुर्ध्वधोगतीरुद्ध्र्धा रेचककालेसपानं प्राणे जुह्वति। एवं पूरककुम्भकरेचके: प्राणायामपरायण अपरे इत्यथ। भ. गी. 4/29

Apana has the tendency to move downwards & Prana is having tendency to move upwards. During Puraka, the Prana and Apana becomes one. During Kumbhaka, Prana and Apana both are maintained in their urdhva and adho gati respectively. During Rechaka Prana along with Apana is moving upwards through Nasika. Regulation in the processes of Puraka, Kumbhaka & Rechaka is nothing but Pranayama (proper breathing exercise).

प्राणापानयोरुर्ध्वधोगतीरुद्ध्र्धा रेचककालेसपानं प्राणे जुह्वति। एवं पूरककुम्भकरेचके: प्राणायामपरायण अपरे इत्यथ। भ. गी. 5/27

Prana Vayu together with Apana Vayu moves in Nasa abhyantara pradesha
**Manipura chakra** is the point where the energies of Prana Vayu & Apana Vayu are connected together. This chakra is the home of Agni [metabolism] & the vital Samana Vayu. Thus the Samana Vayu helps us to take in what we need & release what we don’t in an even balance. So, it represents balance between Prana & Apana during the process of Swasana.

**DISCUSSION:**

Based on the references the classical mechanism of Swasana kriya can be understood as –

The Swasana Prakriya involves 3 stages namely, 1) Puraka  2) Rechaka  3) Kumbhaka. During Puraka (inhalation) stage Prana Vayu (atmospheric air) moves inside the body. It gets combined with Apana Vayu at Nabhi under the influence of Samana Vayu. During Kumbhaka (retention) stage both the Prana Vayu & Apana Vayu together they are restricted in their urdhva & ado gati respectively. During Rechaka (exhalation) stage Apana Vayu along with Prana Vayu moves upward to the Nasa abhyantara pradesha. Prana Vayu is then expelled out of the body.

It clearly states that along with Prana Vayu & Apana Vayu, Samana Vayu also plays an important role in Swasana Prakriya.

References are also seen in Bruhatrayes showing the involvement of Samana Vayu in the respiratory functions. As –

Acharya Susruta quoted Swasa Roga as Amashaya Samudbhava Vyadhi. Swasa is the disease caused due to obstruction of Vayu by vitiated Kaphadosha and this obstructed Vayu later produces vyadhi lakshanas. Here we can considered that the Amashayashrita Samana vayu also gets obstructed along with Prana, Udana & Apana vayu.

Swasa Roga Samprapti includes Annavaha Srotas along with Prana & Udakavaha Srotas.

Some of Udaragata vata lakshanas like Anaha etc. appears in the Purvaroop a of Swasa Roga. On the appearance of these particular lakshanas one may think that the Samana vayu vikruti is the reason for the pathology, & treatment protocol can be adapted accordingly.

Charakacharya has explained that the vitiation of Koshtashrita Vayu leads to Swasa Roga. Koshtashrita Vayu can be taken as Samana Vayu here. So, any vitiation in Samana Vayu will lead to the disturbance in the Puraka stage & in terms other stages of respiration leading to various Swasa rogas.

Tamaka Swasa Chikitsa states the use of Virechana. Correction of Koshtashrita Samana vayu can be one of the criteria.

**CONCLUSION:**

Study shows that there is an apparent role of Saman Vayu in Swasana kriya. The role may not be direct but important enough to consider. This relation of Samana Vayu with the Swasana Prakriya can be utilized for Anukta, leshokta, & Sandigdharth prakashana.

**REFERENCES:**

