



ROLE OF YOGA THERAPY IN NETRAROGA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is one of the greatest gift to mankind. *Ayurveda* divided into 8 Branches, among this *Shalaky* is one of the important branch. Eye is the most precious organ of the body. *Ayurveda* has given utmost importance to eye as an organ by quoting. 'Sarvedriyaanam Nayanam Pradhaanam', So it is duty of every person to take care of his eyes. Day to day human life becomes hazardous due to pollution, mental stress, unbalanced diet, nature of jobs, changes in *Aahar vihar* but in today's busy life we should always give importance to eye health, its regular servicing and maintenance, for this we need regular healthy diet and regular *Yoga* eye exercises. In *Ayurveda* for prevention of *Netrarogas* Drug therapy and Non drug therapy is described. Non Drug therapy includes *Yoga* i.e. *Pranayam*, *Mudra*, *Aasanas*, *Shatkarmas* like *Trataka* which are helpful to prevent various eye diseases, helpful to provide strength to eyes and improvement of vision to some extent. Diet and *Yoga* Contributing important role to cure various eye diseases along with drug therapy. It can minimize the use of drug and also minimize the side effects of drug therapy and improve the better eyesight.

KEYWORDS: *Netraroga*, *Yoga*, *Pranayama*, *Mudra*, *Trataka*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is one of the oldest scientific medical system in the world with a long record of clinical experiences. Eye is the most precious delicate organ of the body, so its care should be taken carefully. For this *Ayurveda* explains the Preventive therapy like proper diet and *Yoga* therapy.

Now a days due to fast lifestyle, diseases of eye increases day by day by excess use of laptops, computers, and smart phones most of the research in modern ophthalmology is going on developing surgical techniques for every eye disease which is very costly and beyond the reach of common man. In Such a situations normal functions of eye maintained properly with proper diet and Non drug therapies like *Yoga*, *Pranayama*, *Mudra*, *Aasana* and *Trataka*, it can be helpful to prevent many eye diseases. It provide strength to the eyes and also improve vision to some extent.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

To access the role of *Yoga*, *Asana*, *Mudra* in *Netraroga*.

❖ *Yoga*

Yoga therapy may be defined as the application of yogic

principles to a particular person with the objective of achieving a particular spiritual, Psychological or Physiological goal. Potential benefits from *Yoga* therapy includes stress reduction, Psychological well-being, Improved diet, and efficient functioning of bodily systems.

Yoga therapy includes the educational teachings of *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *Pratyahara*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana*, *Samadhi*.

❖ *Pranayama*

Of the many benefits that *pranayama* has on the body, improving eyesight is one of them.

➤ *Bhramari Pranayama*^[1]

- It involves imitating a humming bee, has positive effects on the eyes.
- The vibrations created in the body during *pranayama* help nourish the muscles of the eyes, among others. All kinds of *pranayama* benefit the eyes as they relax them and reduce the strain.

❖ *Mudra*^[2]

A *Mudra* Means seal, mark and gesture.

➤ Definition- A *mudra* is a spiritual gesture, on

energetic seal of authenticity employed in iconography and spiritual practice of Indian religions.

In *Yoga*, *Mudras* are used in conjunction with *pranayama*, generally seated in *Padmasana Sukhasana*, or *Vajrasana*, to stimulate parts of the body involved with breathing and to affect the flow of *Prana* in the body.

➤ *Vaayu Mudra*

- Place thumb down index finger and keep all remaining three fingers comfortably straight.
- Do this 3 times a day before meals for 15 minutes to release *Vayu* from eyelids. Uses-
 - ✓ For eradicating feeling of heaviness in eyes and to prevent loss of eyelashes.
 - ✓ Useful for Eyelid Problems.

➤ *Prithvi Mudra*

- Place the tip of the ring finger on the top of the tip of the thumb.

- Sit straight with knees folded and palms started out on knees and practice this mudra facing east for at least 10 min thrice a day.

Uses-

- ✓ For curing cataract problems in eyes slowly.
- *Varuna Mudra*
 - Join your little finger to the tip of your thumb, keep other fingers comfortably straight.
 - Sit in *Dhyana* posture and practice mudra without stretched palms placed on knees for 10-15 min, thrice a day.

Uses

- ✓ It removes vitiated air from eye and gives relief from burning sensation and dry eyes.

➤ *Jalodhara Nasha Mudra-*

- Place thumb down on little finger and keep all remaining 3 fingers comfortably straight. Practice this *mudra* 2-3 times a day at least 15 min per session.

Uses

- ✓ For stopping excess tears (lacrimation).

➤ *Dhyaan Mudra*

- The thumb and index finger are brought together gently while all the other fingers remain upright.

- Practice this in sitting posture as for above *mudras* for 15 min, thrice a day. Uses

- ✓ Due to over exposure to lights, pollution, television screens, and computer monitors in dark rooms, so retina becomes weak and people lose eye sight at young stage. So it is useful in weak eyesight and retinal problems.

➤ *Prana Mudra*

- Touch the tip of little finger and ring finger to tip of the thumb. Rest 2 fingers comfortably straight.

Uses

- ✓ *Prana mudra* activates life by activating dormant energy inside our body helps in low vision and improves sleep.

❖ *Aasana*^[3]

➤ *Shirsasan/ Headstand*

➤ *Shirsasan* involves a person to 'stand' on their head with their feet pointed upwards.

➤ This inverted position, increases the flow of oxygenated blood directly to the brain and eyes, of course.

➤ In this *yoga* for eyes, there is an increased blood flow which helps in preventing macular degeneration and other eye disorders resulting in improved vision. This is one must try *yoga* for eyesight.

➤ *Sinhasan/ Lion pose*

- It requires the person to sit either in *Padmasana* and place their hands in front of their ankles. In this type of *yoga* for eyes, the body is leaned forward with the hip raised and the weight of the body is supported on the hands and knees.

1. The tongue is stuck out and stretched, the eyes are widened as much as possible.
2. This stretches the muscles of the face and helps the skin remain firm and prevents sagging. The widened eyes have their muscles stretched, which helps exercise them in a way that doesn't occur in normal day to day routine and keeps them functioning better.

➤ *Shavasana*

- Easiest to perform but most difficult to achieve effective form of *yoga* for eyes. Person is required to lie down on his back and relax the entire body focusing his attention on breathing without falling asleep.

- This helps relax all the muscles of the body including eyes. After a busy day helps reduce the strain on the mind, body and the eyes.

❖ *Shatakarma*

'*Shat*' means six and '*karma*' implies Action. It consists of the six purificatory procedures. It should be practiced when *Medas* and *Kapha* were in excess.

Shatkarma includes 6 cleansing processes.

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|------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <i>Dhauti</i> | 4. <i>Trataka</i> |
| 2. <i>Basti</i> | 5. <i>Nauli</i> |
| 3. <i>Neti</i> | 6. <i>Kapalbhati</i> |

❖ *Kapalbhati*

- *Kapalbhati* is one of *shatkarmas* i.e. yogic purification technique.

- *Kapalbhati* involves specific breathing pattern. It

dries up all the disorders arising from the excess of *kapha*.

- *Acharya Charaka* says that *kapha* is *pradhan dosha* which irritates eyes or causing eye diseases. ^[4]
- *Kapalbhati* increases the blood supply to *urdhvjatrugata* organs. It also releases the *srotorodha* and decreases the *kapha*. Hence *kapalbhati* helps eyes as it increases oxygen supply and nutrition to the eyes, it increases elimination of vitiated *doshas*, & prevents eyes from *kaphaja* disorders.
- According to Yogic Literature, *HathaYoga Pradipika*, *Ghairanda Samhita* *Kapalbhati* is *Kaphahara* in nature. It protects eye from *Kaphaja Vikara*. ^{[5][6][7]} **Procedure-**
- Technique of *kapalbhati* is to Sit in a comfortable meditation *Asana*.
- The head and spine should be straight with the hands resting on the knees in *jnana mudra*.
- Close the eyes and relax the whole body. Exhale through both nostrils with a forceful contraction of the abdominal muscles.
- The following inhalation should take place passively by allowing the abdominal muscles to relax. Inhalation should be due to effortless spontaneous recoil of the abdominal muscles.

❖ *Trataka*- Means to Gaze.

There are three types of *Trataka*.^[8]

1. *Antar Trataka*
2. *Madhya Trataka*
3. *Bahya Trataka*

1. *AantarTrataka*- In this *Trataka*, concentrate in between two eyebrows or heart, navel or any other such internal organ with closed eyes.
2. *Madhya Trataka* - In this *Trataka*, concentrate on *Bhrumadhaya* (between two Eyebrows) or *Nasagra* (tip of Nose) or any near object made of metal or stone even on Om written on paper, or single dot in black colour, with open eyes.
3. *BahyaTrataka* - In this *Trataka*, concentrate on the distant object like moon, rising sun or planets.

Benefits of *Trataka*^[9]

- The eye muscles generally act asymmetrically in the ordinary use of the eyes, and thus produce eye strain, which further aggravates visionary troubles. The regular and systematic practice of various eye exercises of *Trataka* can correct all these.
- It increase the vision so much so that even smallest particle in the dead darkness becomes visible.
- *Trataka* vitalizes vision by accelerating blood circulation in and around the area of the eyes, and also naturalizes eye infections by destroying the microbes through tears.
- By directing the gaze at the eyebrows center, the olfactory nerves and the optic nerves are stimulated,

as a result the central and autonomic systems are awakened. There is a close relationship between the mind and vision, thus *Trataka* not only maintains the physical health of eyes but also helps in controlling the mind.

- It causes soothing effect on the cranial nerves, thus enabling the mind to become one-pointed.

❖ *Neti*^[10]

Neti is the process of cleaning the nasal cavity, using either water or a catheter.

2 types of *Neti*-

- *Jala Neti*
- *Sutra Neti*.

Jala Neti

To perform *Jala neti*. A *Neti* pot is used. The *Neti* pot has a conical spout and is often made of ceramic. The pot is filled with warm salt water.

- The head is tilted to the side, and the pot's spout is inserted into the nostril and it is allowed to drain the lower nostril. The same process is then repeated on the second side.
- When both sides have been cleansed, the excess water is blown out of the nostrils using.
- *Kapalbhati*, a *Kriya /Pranayama* breathing technique.

Sutra Neti

In *Sutra Neti* a length of wet string or thin surgical tubing is carefully and gently inserted through the nose and into the mouth and while holding both ends at once the string is alternately pulled in and out of the nose and sinuses.

Benefits

- Cleanses the nasal Passage.
- Stimulates the sensory organs in the head.
- Stimulates tear ducts.
- Improves vision.
- Relieves headaches.
- Improves focus and Boosts memory power.

DISCUSSION

Many of Yogic poses like *Yoga*, *Aasana*, *Pranayama* etc. are aimed at in improving the functioning of specific organ of our body.

A lot of eye problem in later life are due to a loss of tone in the eye muscles.

These muscles become rigid and this loss of elasticity reduces the ability of the lens of the eye to focus at different distances. It also causes the eyesight to become weaker.

Secondly, any eye tension present will tend to produce a general feeling of tension, due to eye's connection to the brain via the optic nerve. This eye tension produces an

increase in the nerve impulses in the eye muscles. This increase in nerve impulses travels along the optic nerve and bombard the brain, causing a general feeling of tension and anxiety.

These non-drug therapies (*Asana, Pranayama, Mudra, Kapalbhata, Trataka, Neti*) reduce the tension in eye muscles, as well as reduce general tension. They also tone the eye muscles up and keep them elastic. Thus, they improve functioning of the eyes and help to overcome various eye related problems and also useful in prevention of other diseases and delaying the aging process.

CONCLUSION

In Literature, it is mentioned that nondrug therapies like *Yoga, Mudra, Pranayama, Asana & Trataka* are much effective in *Netraroga* as it helps in maintaining the normal functions of eye.

Along with a healthy diet and regular exercise, these therapies will help in protecting vision from the stresses of light, tension and environmental toxins. So, practicing these therapies regularly can go a long way in facilitating the normal functioning of eyes.

In this paper an attempt has been done to access *Yoga, Mudra, Pranayama, Asana & Trataka* which can be used as a part of *Chikitsa* (treatment) in *Netrarogas* as well as in the prevention of eye diseases which can occur in later stage of life.

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