

YOGA AND EXERCISE FOR EYES TO IMPROVE VISION

Dr. Aruna S. Thool (Deogade)

H.O.D. of Physical Education

S.G.B. Mahila Mahavidyalaya

Tumsar

Abstract:

Our senses are our windows to the world; our vision the strongest of them all, to see, to know, to communicate, and relish every bit of the world around us. The more the light to our eyes, the better the vision and clearer the image. Eyes is one of the five jnanendriyas with a very high importance. The main dosha responsible for netra vikaras is the 'Pitta Dosha'. It's lusture, colour, visual perception & image absorption is controlled by the 'Alochaka Pitta' (subtype of Pitta). There are certain procedures and yoga benefiting for proper nourishment and better vision of the eyes in ayurveda. In this study importance of netra, yoga and its preventive measures are briefed along with some theoretical as well as cinical treatment.

Keywords: *Yoga, Vision, Exercise, etc*

The Benefits of Yoga for the Eyes:

Many age-related vision problems stem from a gradual loss of flexibility and tone in the eye muscles, which get locked into habitual patterns and lose their ability to focus at different distances. If you have the good fortune of excellent vision, and don't want to lose it—or, like me, you hope to improve your fuzzy eyesight—evidence suggests that yoga may have a solution. Any student of the Sivananda lineage would recognize the core exercises taught by the late celebrated ophthalmologist William H. Bates. Bates claimed he could improve visual perception with palming, eyeball rotations, and vision shifting—the same Sivananda exercises I once treated with indifference.

Did you know that just blinking your eyes could do you good?

Other than a few conditions of the eye such as glaucoma and cataract, which occur due to bacterial infections, many eye disorders are related to the malfunctioning of the ocular muscles. Interestingly these may be caused by chronic mental or emotional tension. Yogic techniques for relaxation of the eyes help alleviate disorders such as myopia and hypermetropia that are caused primarily due to defects of the eye muscles. It also provides relaxation for those suffering from conditions such as age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and uncorrected refractive errors.

Introduction:

Eyes as considering one of the most important among the five sense organs so it becomes more important to take proper care of it.

Definitely yoga will improve eyesight, definitely it will take time. The lack of sight is one of the very common problems in te society. There are certain aasanas and some therapies in ayurveda that can help to regain aur improve eyesight by relaxing the muscles around the eye provided with the proper lusture & nourishment to them.

Eye treatments in ayurveda maintains a proper balance between the doshas. Ayurvedic treatments shows best results naturally being holistic in nature offers successful treatments to various eye disorders (of nerves and retina).

Ayurvedic therapeutic procedures like (Shirobasti), Padabhynaga (Foot massage), Nasya (instillation of medicines in the nostrils), Pichu (eye pads), Tarpana & Putapaka (Retaining of medication above the eyes) are useful. Ayurvedic therapies like Netradhara, Netradhara, Anjanam, Shirodhara, Tarpana, Basti etc., are done in a specialized manner to

get better results. The major procedures that can be added in dinacharya includes Nasya, Anjanam, Aschotam, Snehapanam. Other therapies are done to be under professional guidance such as Shirovasti, Netra tarpan, Netra basti, Netra dhauti etc. In this article we have discussed the importance of eye care, its yoga and certain theoretical and clinical treatments related to it.

Exercise 1: Trataka Asana

Trataka is an ancient Yogic technique to cleanse the eyes and to improve the concentration for meditation. with regular practice of tratak one can achieve greater state of concentration and memory. it has been listed under six major cleansing techniques of hath yoga.

Best time to practice trataka is early in the morning or in the evening. It should be done in a room which is dark and with no wind which can disturb the candle flame.

People who are suffering with glaucoma should take care in this practice.

Exercise 2: Palming Method

These asana relaxes and revitalizes the eye muscles and stimulates the circulation of aqueous humor, which is the liquid that goes from the cornea to the lens of the eyes, helping to correct the defective vision.

1. It can be done standing or sitting on a chair.
2. Place your hands over your eyes, gently, letting the warmth of your hands pass to your eyes. You can blink to let heat enter the eye. Make sure that the eyes are in contact with the palms of the hands and not with the fingers.
3. Breath relaxed, until all the heat has been absorbed.

This exercise helps to recover the spontaneity of the blink, relaxing the eye muscles.

1. Sit with your eyes open.
2. Blinks 10 times quickly.
3. Close your eyes and relax while doing 6 breaths.

4. Repeat the action 5 times.

Netra tarpana:

Netra tarpana is an ayurvedic purification and rejuvenation treatment. It is provided with the special part in the pachakarma treatment in ayurvedic facilities. In this procedure lukewarm medicated sarpi (ghee) is made to stay on the eyes surrounded by a frame made up of a dough of flour for a particular time to clean the eyes. It gives good results in various ailments of eyes and also for the dryness and relaxation of the eyes.

It nourishes eyes and helps to improve and strengthen eye sight. It is seen that it is a preventive, effective and very effective treatment in vataja and pittaja vikaras.

Netra Dhauti:

A traditional eyewash is a cleansing technique in Ayurveda & Yoga. For centuries Acharyas & Yogis have understood the importance of removing dirt, toxins and heat, which builds up in the eyes. Over-time build up leads to loss of eyesight, glaucoma, etc., if not removed (surgically) and cleansed with this simple technique.

You will feel cool awake and relaxed instantly. It should be done every morning upon waking up clean, distilled, fluoride-free (that may affect your neuro-muscular system) water.

- **Cleansing liquids used-**

1. Triphala for eye wash
2. Lukewarm water

- **Key features and benefits-**

1. Cleanses and refreshes your **eyes**.
2. Soothes burning, stinging, irritated **eyes**.
3. Removes pollen, ragweed and dust.
4. Removes chlorinated water.
5. Keep on hand to flush irritants from **eyes** for emergencies.
6. Contoured cup design.

Preventive measures for eye Disorders: -

- **Conjunctivitis:** Amla is exceptional in treating ocular problems. It can bring relief in both Conjunctivitis and Glaucoma. A decoction prepared from Coriander can be used as eyewash for people with conjunctivitis.

There will be immediate reduction in the burning, redness and swelling of the eyes

- **Burning sensation pricking sensation in eyes:** Soak a cotton pad in rose water, milk or Aloe Vera juice and apply to closed eyes for about 10-20 minutes. OR 5 drops of each Castor oil and Milk should be mixed well in the palms and applied above and around the eyes.
- **Stressed and dry skin around the eyes:** A drop of Almond oil gently rubbed above and under the eyes keeps the skin smooth, Regular application is a good preventive measure. Jasmine, Marigold taken as a cold infusion for washing eyes brings about cooling effect.
- **Redness of the eyes:** Application of a paste of Sandal and milk, milk with castor oil helps.
- Chandrodaya varti is one important ayurvedic preparation used in eye care. It is made into a paste in water and then applied externally over the eyes in cases of allergic conjunctivitis and cataract.
- Combination of Triphala + Ghee + Honey and Saptamruta Loha are used as eye tonics in many diseases.
- Applying few drops of almond, coconut or sesame oil around the eyes prevents dark circles.

yoga:

Regular practice of yoga eye exercises helps to relax eyesight and facilitate normal functioning of our eyes.

Before starting these exercises, it is always recommended to splash your eyes with cold water a few times. Remember to keep the head and spine straight throughout the exercises.

Up and down viewing:

- Sit with legs straight in front of your body.
- With both the thumbs pointing upwards, place both the fists on the knees.
- Slowly raise the right thumb keeping the arms straight. Follow the motion of the thumb upwards with the eyes.
- When the thumb is raised to the maximum, gradually bring it down to the starting position. Continue to keep the eyes focused on the thumb while keeping the head still throughout.
- Repeat the same process with the left thumb.
- Practice these five times with each thumb. The head and the spine should be kept straight throughout. Preliminary nose tip gazing
- Sit in a cross-legged pose.
- Lift the right arm straight directly in front of the nose.
- Making a fist with the right hand, keep your thumb pointing upward.
- Focus both eyes on the tip of the thumb.
- Now bend the arm and gradually bring the thumb to the tip of the nose, all the while having the eyes focused on the tip of the thumb.
- Remain in this position for a while with the thumb held at the tip of the nose with the eyes focused there.
- Continuing to gaze at the tip of the thumb, gradually straighten the arm.
- This constitutes a single round.
- Perform at least five such rounds.
- Close the eyes and relax.

Side-ways viewing

- Sit with legs straight in front of the body.
- Now lift the arms, with fists closed and your thumbs pointing upward.
- Look at a point straight in front of you in level with your eyes.

- Keep the head in this fixed position, focus on the following one after the other, by shifting your vision to the:
 - * Space between the eyebrows
 - * Left thumb
 - * Space between the eyebrows
 - * Right thumb
 - * Space between the eyebrows
- Repeat this exercise 10 to 20 times.
- After completing this exercise, close your eyes and rest.

Observe the following breathing pattern as you perform the above exercise:

- Inhale in a neutral position.
- Exhale while looking to the side.
- Inhale and come back to the center.
Front and sideways viewing
- Sit with legs straight in front of the body.
- Now, close the left fist and place it on the left knee ensuring that the thumb points upwards.
- Look at a point straight in front of you and in level with your eyes.
- Keep the head fixed in this position.
- Breathing out, focus your eyes on the left thumb.
- Breathing in, focus your eyes at a point in front of you and in level with your eyes.
- Repeat the same process with the right thumb.
- Close your eyes and rest.

Observe the following breathing pattern as you perform the above exercise:

- Inhale while raising the eyes.
- Exhale while lowering the eyes.

Preliminary nose tip gazing

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- Lift the right arm straight directly in front of the nose.
- Making a fist with the right hand, keep your thumb pointing upward.
- Focus both eyes on the tip of the thumb.
- Now bend the arm and gradually bring the thumb to the tip of the nose, all the while having the eyes focused on the tip of the thumb.
- Remain in this position for a while with the thumb held at the tip of the nose with the eyes focused there.
- Continuing to gaze at the tip of the thumb, gradually straighten the arm.
- This constitutes a single round.
- Perform at least five such rounds.

Observe the following breathing pattern as you perform the above exercise:

- Breathe in while the thumb is pulled to the tip of the nose.
- Retain inside while holding the thumb at the tip of the nose.
- Breathe out as the arm is straightened.
Near and distant viewing
- Stand or sit by an open window with a clear view of the horizon. Keep the arms by your side.
- Focus on the tip of the nose for 5-10 seconds.
- Repeat this about 10-20 times.
- Close and relax the eyes.

Observe the following breathing pattern:

- Inhale during close viewing.
- Exhale during distant viewing.

After completing all the above exercises, relax in Savasana for a few minutes. Breathe gently and normally, and do not resist any thoughts or sensations.

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