

A CONCEPTUAL STUDY ON VIPAREETA KARANI MUDRA – A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Mudra therapy is an age-old effective therapy pioneered by ancient sages. Mudra is used to signify a gesture, a seal or even a symbol. The majority of Mudras are performed using the hands and fingers; however, certain forms necessitate the engagement of entire body. One such Mudra is Vipareeta Karani Mudra, commonly called as the “legs up the wall pose” or the “Restful Inversion. It is a profoundly restorative Yoga posture. Its purpose is to direct Kundalini energy upward through the body. Through the practice of Vipareeta Karani Mudra we are directly concerned with reversing the flow of a fluid from the brain centre. The process is reversed by reversing the natural upright body position. In the Samhitas, it is mentioned that by practising Vipareeta Karani Mudra daily, old age and death are eliminated. It promotes both physical and mental health. **Material and method:** Reference from various books and research articles. **Result:** Vipareeta Karani Mudra underscore its significant role in promoting physical, mental, and potentially spiritual well-being. This Mudra effectively enhances blood circulation, especially to the brain, and support the functioning of internal organs such as the thyroid. **Discussion:** Exploration of Vipareeta Karani Mudra from both Ayurvedic and scientific perspective reveals its various health benefits and physiological impacts and affirms its respected role in Ayurvedic and Yoga practices.

KEYWORDS: Mudra, Vipareeta Karani, Yoga posture, Kundalini energy, old age.

INTRODUCTION

Mudra therapy is an age-old effective therapy pioneered by ancient sages. In Hinduism and Buddhism, a Mudra (Sanskrit: lit. "Seal") is a ceremonial or symbolic act. The Sanskrit word Mudra is translated as 'gesture' or 'attitude'. Mudras can be described as psychic, emotional, devotional and aesthetic gestures or attitudes. Yogis have experienced Mudras as attitudes of energy flow, intended to link individual Pranic force with universal or cosmic force. The word Mudra literally meaning seal.^[1] Most mudras are performed with the hands and fingers, although some require the use of the entire body. It has a number of different connotations in Yoga, which include Bandhas (locks) and meditation practises. The different types of Yoga Mudra aid in person achieve better health and mental condition through proper and regular practice. Mudra is a specific body position which channelizes the energy produced by Asana and Pranayama into the various centres, and arouses particular states of mind. Some Mudras are done separately after Asana and Pranayama and others are performed with Asana and Pranayama to help awaken the Chakras and arouse Kundalini Shakti. They can also arouse specific emotions. When the Pranic level is increased and the conscious mind withdraws, Mudras occur spontaneously.^[2]

Vipareeta Karani Mudra, commonly called as the “legs up the wall pose” or the “Restful Inversion”. The name comes from the Sanskrit words Vipareeta, “inverted” or “reversed”, and Karani, “a particular type of practice”. With the navel region above and the palate below, the sun is above and the moon below. This is Vipareeta Karani, the reversing process. When given by the guru's instructions it is fruitful.^[3] The sun plexus is located at the root of the navel and the moon plexus is located at the root of the palate. A person dies when the sun consumes nectar secreted by the moon, but when the Chandra Nadi consumes the nectar, there is no fear of death. Therefore, the sun is to be brought up and the moon is to be brought down. This is Vipareeta Karani Mudra, which is secret by all standards. Place the head on the ground, provide support with both hands and raise both legs; this is Vipareeta Karani Mudra.^[4] The moon emits its nectar and due to the natural body processes, it falls into the sun. The moon not only represents Bindu but also consciousness. The sun not only represents Manipura but also Prana, the body. From this it can also be understood that the consciousness streams into the body and is wasted through the sense organs. Through the practice of Vipareeta Karani Mudra we are directly concerned with reversing the flow of a fluid from the brain centre. The process is reversed by reversing the

natural upright body position. The force of gravity naturally pulls all body fluids down to the lower parts. By inverting the body so that the head is down and the feet are up, all the fluids flow back towards the head without undue force or pressure.^[5] By practising it daily, old age and death are eliminated. The practitioner of this Mudra attains Siddhi (perfection) in all the Lokas (worlds) and is not grieved even at the time of dissolution (of the universe).^[6] It also promotes both physical and mental health. Improves blood circulation in the entire body and has a cleansing effect on the lungs, bladder, and intestines.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is literary study, for fulfilling the above aims, the literary resources were collected from Hath Yoga Pradipika, Gherand Samhita, Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha by Swami Satyananda Saraswati and related information from various research papers, journals, articles and internet.

A SCIENTIFIC LOOK AT MUDRAS

In scientific terms, Mudras provide a means to access and influence the unconscious reflexes and primal, instinctive habit patterns that originate in the primitive areas of the brain around the brain stem. They establish a subtle, non-intellectual connection with these areas. Each Mudra sets up a different link and has a correspondingly different effect on the body, mind and Prana. The aim is to create fixed, repetitive postures and gestures which can snap the practitioner out of instinctive habit patterns and establish a more refined consciousness. The Yoga Mudras can be categorized into approximately five groups, which are Hasta (hand mudras), Mana (head mudras), Kaya (postural mudras), Bandha (lock mudras), Adhara (perineal mudras).^[7]

Vipareeta Karani Mudra is included in Kaya (postural mudra) category. The practice of this Mudra utilizes physical postures combined with breathing and concentration.

PHYSIOLOGICAL ASPECT OF VIPAREETA KARANI MUDRA

One of the initial positive effects of Vipareeta Karani is an increased capacity to digest and assimilate food. Digestive secretions and appetite are definitely increased and, therefore, moderate diet should be taken at regular intervals. Vipareeta Karani has a powerful draining influence on the visceral organs. Due to the force of gravity, the lower dependent parts of these organs tend to pool blood, and the body fluids also aggregate in the dependent parts of the body such as pelvis and legs. Vipareeta Karani flushes these dependent parts, returning pooled cellular fluid to the circulation. This cannot be induced in the upright or lying positions, and this is why inversion is so powerful physiologically.

Inversion of the body also contracts visceroptosis (protrusion of the abdominal organs), haemorrhoids,

varicose veins and hernia, all of which are mediated by the downward force of gravity. The inverted position, while draining the lower body, simultaneously enhances blood flow to the brain, especially the cerebral cortex and the intracranial glands, i.e. the pituitary and pineal. Cerebral insufficiency and senile dementia are counteracted. However, elderly people are not advised to commence inversion in later life because of the possibility of stroke.

Inversion also profoundly influences the entire vascular network. The constant dragging force upon the arteries and veins continues throughout life, but is released completely during inversion. Regular practice prevents atherosclerosis (arterial degeneration) by restoring vascular tone and elasticity. Inversion also reverses the polarity of the electromagnetic field created within the upright body. The energy field generated by the electrical activity of the brain is integrated with the geomagnetic field of the earth's surface. This has a revitalizing influence upon the human aura.^[8]

TECHNIQUE OF VIPAREETA KARANI MUDRA

- Lie in a relaxed supine position on a blanket, i.e. shavasana.
- Then bring the legs together, palms of the hands on the floor beside the body.
- Raise the legs, bringing them a little behind the head so that the back rises, and support the back with the hands. Raise the legs in the air, feet towards the ceiling, not pointed, making the back at a forty-five-degree angle to the floor.
- Support the lower back with the hands, keeping the elbows behind on the floor.
- The hands can be adjusted so that you are steady. Either they should hold the buttocks or the sides of the waist.
- Remain in the position as long as possible, breathing normally. Concentrate on the throat center.
- When you come out of the position, slowly lower the back onto the floor, keeping the legs raised.
- Keep the palms of the hands on the ground and slowly lower the legs, keeping them straight.
- If this is too strenuous, bend the knees to the chest and place the soles of the feet on the floor, then slide the legs onto the ground. Completely relax the body in shavasana.^[9]

BREATHING

In this technique, awareness of the breath directed in a particular process is an essential part of the Mudra. The breathing process is as follows: while inhaling move the awareness from Manipura to Vishuddhi, while exhaling move the awareness from Vishuddhi to Bindu. Imagine that the awareness is flowing from Vishuddhi to Bindu just as a jet of liquid flows out from an injection. This is one round. Again, take the awareness to Manipura before inhaling for a second round.^[10]



DURATION

Practise five to seven rounds. If pressure builds up in the head, end the practice. Gradually increase the number of rounds up to 21 over a period of months. The length of inhalation and exhalation will increase spontaneously over time as the practice becomes more comfortable.^[11]

TIME OF PRACTISE

Time of practice: Vipareeta Karani Mudra should be practised at the same time each day, preferably in the early morning.^[12]

BENEFITS

It balances a hypoactive thyroid and acts as a preventive for coughs, colds, sore throat and bronchial disorders. It stimulates the appetite and digestion, so a healthy and plentiful diet should be taken. It helps relieve constipation. Regular practice prevents atherosclerosis by restoring vascular tone and elasticity. It relieves prolapse, haemorrhoids, varicose veins and hernia, all of which are exacerbated by the downward pull of gravity. Circulation to the brain is enhanced, especially to the cerebral cortex and pituitary and pineal glands. As the practice is perfected, the flow of Prana in Ida and Pingala Nadis becomes balanced. This state manifests as an equal flow of breath in the nostrils. The balancing effect of the practice also helps prevent disease from manifesting on the physical and mental planes. Sage Gheranda says that whoever practises the Sadhana of this Mudra daily attains victory over old age and death, achieves Siddhi in all the Lokas or dimensions and is not destroyed even at the time of dissolution.^[13]

CONTRAINDICATION

This is an inverted practice and should not be performed unless the body is healthy. People suffering from high blood pressure, heart disease, enlarged liver or spleen, enlarged thyroid or excessive toxins in the body should

not perform this practice. cervical spondylitis, slipped disc, thrombosis. It should not be attempted by anyone suffering from blood or weak blood vessels in the eyes. It is not recommended during pregnancy or during the monthly menstruation period.^[14]

DISCUSSION

Studying Vipareeta Karani Mudra from both Ayurvedic and scientific perspectives reveals its various health benefits and physiological impacts, affirming its respected role in Ayurvedic and Yoga practices. The Mudra may help reverse the natural effects of the aging process, enhance mental and physical vitality, and also harmonize the Doshas. This possibility is intriguingly supported by scientific studies that show benefits like improved circulation and hormonal balance due to the inversion posture. From a physiological standpoint, the posture enhances blood circulation toward the upper body and brain, aiding in the drainage of the venous network, which can alleviate symptoms of varicose veins and other related health conditions. The practice of this Mudra also presents contraindications for individuals with specific health issues, emphasizing the need for guidance from qualified practitioners. Practicing Vipareeta Karani Mudra is best achieved under the guidance of experienced practitioners.

CONCLUSION

Mudra is a significant component of Yoga practice, which helps to improve the physical, mental, and spiritual health of the practitioner. Vipareeta Karani Mudra aids in regulating the flow of energy, enhancing internal organ functions, and provide support to the body. Regular practise of Vipareeta Karani Mudra can help to improve the overall health and well-being of the practitioner.

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