

NETRA SWASTHYAKAR UPAKRAMA IN AYURVEDA ACCORDING TO AACHARYA
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of Ayurveda is firstly to maintain health of healthy individual and to treat the diseased individual accordingly. Therefore, 'Dinacharya' is a basic protocol given by Ayurveda Aacharyas to balance *Tridosha*, *Agni*, *Sapta Dhatu* and *Trimala*; by which an individual can maintain health with respect to *Desha*, *Kaal*, *Rutu*. In this article an effort is made to explore *Netra Swasthyakar Upakrama* mentioned in *Dinacharya Adhyay* by *Aacharya Vagbhata* and its importance in routine life. **Aim:** To study importance of *Netra Swasthyakar Upakram* in *Dinacharya Adhyay* given by *Aacharya Vagbhata* in *Ashtang Hridayam*. **Objectives:** To study in detail the action of *Netra Swasthyakar Upakrama* which is beneficial to maintain health of eyes mentioned in *Dinacharya Adhyay* by *Aacharya Vagbhata* in *Ashtang Hridayam*. **Material & Methods:** Literature search from *Ashtang Hridayam* and detail commentary given by *Aacharya Hemadri* and *Aacharya Arundatta*. **Discussion:** Benefits of *Netra Swasthyakar Upakrama* in daily life with convenient modifications. **Conclusion:** *Netrabala* can be restored by the *Upakramas* mentioned in *Dinacharya* when followed in routine lifestyle.

KEYWORDS: *Dinacharya*, *Netra Swasthyakar Upakrama*, Ayurveda, *Drushti Prasadana*, Visual acuity.**INTRODUCTION**

WHO defines health as, 'it is a state of complete physical, mental, social and spiritual wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease.' According to Ayurveda as the individual is said to be healthy when *Agni*, *Doshas*, *Dhatu*s are in equilibrium along with mental, sensory and spiritual pleasantness and hence Ayurveda firstly gives importance to maintain health status of healthy person then its emphasizes importance to cure the diseased individual with proper treatment protocols.

Ayurveda deals with the curative as well as preventive approach about the health status maintenance. Therefore some lifestyle strategies are given in Ayurveda are *Dinacharya* (regimen in daily lifestyle), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), *Sadvritta* (good moral conducts) etc.

Dinacharya is one of these preventive principles of Ayurveda. *Aacharya Vagbhata* has given sequence of *Upakrama* to be followed routinely as *Dinacharya* which is as follows^[1]

1. *Pratarutthana* – Waking up at *Brahmya Muhurta*
2. *Shauchavidhi* – Evacuation of *Mala-Mutra*
3. *Dantadhavana* – Brushing teeth

4. *Anjana* – Application of medicine over the margin of lower eyelids
5. *Navan – Nasya* – Administration of medicated oil / *Ghee* through nostrils.
6. *Gandusha* – Holding decoction in the oral cavity
7. *Dhoomapana* – Inhalation of medicated smoke through nose and its exhalation
8. *Tambool-Sevana* – Eating *Tambool Patra* (leaves) with other ingredients having medicinal properties.
9. *Abhyanga* – Oil application over the body / parts of body.
10. *Vyayama* – The physical exercise in adequate amount.
11. *Udvardana* – Application of medicated *Choorna* all over the body.
12. *Snana* – Taking bath.
13. *Sadvritta-Aacharana* – following basic protocols while interacting in the society.

Aim : To study importance of *Netra Swasthyakar Upakrama* in *Dinacharya Adhyay* given by *Aacharya Vagbhata* in *Ashtang Hridayam*.

Objectives : To study in details the action of *Netra Swasthyakar Upakrama* which is beneficial to maintain

health of eyes mentioned in *Dinacharya Adhyay* by *Aacharya Vagbhata* in *Ashtang Hridayam*.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Netra Balavardhak and *Netra Swasthyakar* activities are mentioned in *Dinacharya Adhyay* by *Aacharya Vagbhata* in *Ashtang Hridayam*.

Aacharya Vagbhata has suggested special *Upakramas* to be followed in daily routine which will be beneficial for the maintenance of eye health. Those are as follows -

- I) **Anjana**^[2]: Application of medicine over the margin of lower lid of both the eyes is known as *Anjana*. There are two types of *Anjana* mentioned to maintain physiology of eyeball and hence to improve vision.
 - (i) *Souvirañjana* – It is advised to be used daily. It is mentioned in the routine to be followed after *Dantadhavana Upakrama*. It is said as *Hitakar* (beneficial) for eyes. It acts locally and prevents individual from eye diseases by boosting local immunity and maintaining physiology of eyeball and its coats.
 - (ii) *Rasanjana* - Advised to use after every 7 days. The purpose is to evacuate excessive *Kapha Dosha*. Excessive *Kapha Dosha* is considered as an enemy for the eye because it is the most common causative factor in developing eye diseases according to Ayurveda.
- II) **Nasya (Navan)**^[3]: Routinely medicine is when administered through the nostrils, it is defined as *Nasya* or *Navan*. It prevents diseases of eyes, nose, ears and strengthen the body parts above neck region. After *Anjana Upakrama*, *Nasya* is to be done routinely. For daily use, *Anu Taila* is mentioned in the commentary given by *Arundatta Aacharya* for *Navan Upakrama*. Details of *Nasya* as a treatment is explained in separate *Adhyay* by *Aacharya Vagbhata* in *Ashtang Hridayam*.⁴ Some eye diseases like *Timira*, *Krucchavbodh*, *Krucchonmilan* etc. can be treated with *Nasya* as a treatment which is beneficial to improve visual acuity and strengthen muscles of eyeball.
- III) **Gandush**^[3]: Lukewarm decoction with medicated properties is asked to hold in the oral cavity known as *Gandush*. It is indirectly beneficial to restore eye health. It removes excess of *Kapha Dosha* and prevents from diseases of oral cavity & strengthens *Indriyas* (special senses). It is asked to be followed after *Nasya* procedure in daily routine. *Aacharya Vagbhata* explained in detail about *Gandush* in separate *Adhyay* of *Sutrasthan*⁵ as it is also used as therapeutic purpose.
- IV) **Dhoomapana**^[3]: *Dhoomapana* is a procedure in which medicated smoke is inhaled & then exhalation is done. It is also responsible to remove excess of *Kapha Dosha* and it also balances *Vata* because of which diseases of eyes can also be prevented. It is asked to be followed after *Gandush Upakrama*. *Aacharya Vagbhata* explained in detail about

Dhoomapana in separate *Adhyay* of *Sutrasthan*⁶ as it is also used as therapeutic purpose.

- V) **Abhyanga**^[7]: Application of medicated oil to all over body is called as *Abhyanga*. *Aacharya Vagbhata* advised *Abhyanga* to be done daily to achieve *Drushti Prasadana*. It means daily external application of oil done all over body enhances *Drushti* (Visual acuity). Also further it is mentioned that, specifically the oil massage externally at head region, auricular region and foot (sole) if routinely followed, is more beneficial.^[8]
- VI) **Padabhyanga**: It simply means foot massage. *Abhyanga* done at the sole (foot) region is termed as *Padabhyanga*. *Padabhyanga* is very beneficial procedure to enhance visual acuity. *Aacharya Vagbhata* has mentioned the connection between feet and eyes in *Uttarsthana*.^[9] It is mentioned that, the two *Siras* (vessels) situated in the centre of the foot are connected to *Shira Pradesh*, especially are carried to *Netra*. Because of which the *Upakrama* like *Abhyanga*, *Udvartana*, *Lepa*, *Dhavana* done at feet (sole) region are beneficial for eyes.^[10] Therefore, if health of sole (feet) is not maintained it is responsible for generating various eye diseases due to imbalance in various factors.
- VII) **Snana**^[11]: Taking bath with moderately cool water is beneficial to give strength to the eyes. It removes all impurities from body & refreshes the individual. These procedures are enlisted according to *Aacharya Vagbhata* in *Ashtang Hridayam* while exploring *Dinacharya* in detail.

DISCUSSION

In Ayurveda it is stated that, prevention is better than cure. *Dinacharya* is one of the preventive principles of Ayurveda. *Aacharya Vagbhata* has given these *Netra Swasthyakar Upakrama* detailed in *Dinacharya Adhyay*. These suggested special *Upakramas* to be followed in daily routine which will be beneficial for the maintenance of eye health. Though these procedures are mentioned to be followed routinely, some contraindications are also mentioned in classical texts by *Aacharya*. One can modify the lifestyle with the simple intervention through conduct of *Dinacharya* for the benefits and maintenance of eye health. Though *Snana* is advised beneficial for eyes, it is said that in case of any eye, oral or ear disease it should be avoided^[12]. Because eye diseases are more common when there is imbalance of *Kapha* though eyes are having dominance of *Teja* entity in the form of *Aalochak Pitta*.

CONCLUSION

A routine which one can set for himself makes his lifestyle. In today's era the eye disorders like computer vision syndrome, refractive errors are common. In such cases the power of eye itself, eye muscles, and vision acuity should be maintained properly. For this purpose individual can restore *Netra Bala* with these *Upakramas* or procedures mentioned in *Dinacharya*. Therefore prevention from other eye diseases also will be possible.

Further scope of study

To make intervention for the strength of eyes *Chakshushya Dravyas* can be studied. As to maintain eye health the medicine should be mainly *Kapha Shamaka* and *Pitta Vardhak*; and should keep *Pitta-Kapha Samyata*. Such intervention can be studied and will be used in the form of *Anjana*, *Nasya* and *Abhyanga* or *Padabhyanga* procedures. Apart from these procedures, some procedures like *Shiropichu*, *Shirobhyanga* are also beneficial for the improvement in visual acuity which one can study, as it has further scope in field of research.

Shalakyatantra also has separate scope because of *Kriyakalpas* mentioned in ancient Ayurveda. Those procedures can also be modified for our convenience and can be added in routine lifestyle for the betterment of eye health.

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