

A Description of the *Ayurvedic* notion in the Physiology of Vision and an Approach towards *Vihara*

Author: Aishwarya Pandey¹

Co Authors: Ashok Kumar Sharma² and Iqbal Goury Khan³

¹⁻³Madan Mohan Malviya Government Ayurved College, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India

ABSTRACT

In today's digital era, where screens have become an integral part of our lives, the health of our eyes is at stake in the current digital age because displaying everything has become an essential part of our lives. Both adults and children spend a large amount of time using electronic devices, which increases the probability of vision issues developing early in life. Conversely, a number of vision-related issues such as glaucoma, cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, and macular oedema etc. with technological gadgets, which causes an early rise in visual issues. By understanding the classical concept of the physiology of vision we may face new challenges emerging out from the technologies within IT and Digital sectors. A major challenge that threatens the health of the eye by overusing technology needs a lifestyle style inclusion to maintain the unavoidable work. Hence, *Ayurvedic* concept of physiology for understanding and changes in *Vihara* can be an optimal approach towards health.

Key Words *Alochak Pitta*, Vision, Lifestyle, *Vihara*, *Chakshu Indriye*

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INTRODUCTION

The Pitta that is responsible for vision is referred to as "*Alochak Pitta*". The site of *Alochak Pitta* is called "*Drishti*." Ayurveda has characterized this physiology of eyesight based on the qualities of *Vata* and *Pitta*. Acharya Sushrut has explained anatomy of *Netra* by *Mandals*, *Sandhis* and *Patal*s. Dalhan has mentioned that *Alochak Pitta* is situated in first *Patal* of *Netra* that is *Teja* which resides in the blood vessels of eye¹. Commentator Indu explains the site of *Alochak Pitta* - *Antah Taraka* (Retina) of

*Netra*². The pigments of the retina, rhodopsin, iodopsin, and melanin, represent nearby term for site *Alochak Pitta*.

"*Lochana*" is a synonyms word of "eye. *Alochana* means "to behold". *Alochak Pitta* is derived from eye as located in *DRIK* (the eye), and it means "Which aids in thinking" or "Something which aids in seeing" is *Alochaka*. Its function is to perceive the light and seek vision. *Alochak Pitta* is divided into two categories by Acharya Bhela i.e., *Chakshyu Vaisheshika* and *Buddhi Vaisheshika*³. *Chakshyu Vaisheshika* is

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used to see vision. *Buddhi Vaisheshika* is to distinguish between objects, judge them against one another, or store information for later use. The intellectual, the subjective critic, discerns the essence of the thing through the pitta intellect. Criticism of subjects, good and bad, analysis and decision of truth and false is its work.

Forsaking the intellectual errors, Calmness of sense organs, memory, sound knowledge of place, time and self and following the code of good conduct-this is the way shown for prevention of exogenous diseases. The wise should do quite early what he thinks wholesome for himself⁴.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is carried out through literature search and critical review of various *Ayurveda* classical texts, other reference book of *Sharir Kriya*, journals, websites and articles.

Vision as a Sensory Function

Optical means light in a form that can be perceived by the eyes and when Light (*Prakasha*) has *Sookshma Guna* to manifest until the retina's photoreceptors cross multiple layers.

The retina's photochemical activity is controlled by the *Ushna Guna* (Pitta) and *Chala Guna* (*Vata*) (change into Cis type). *Vata* helps in seeking knowledge through vision. *Pitta* governs the transformation and processing of visual information and *Kapha* provides structure and lubrication to the eyes.

Role of *Pitta* in Vision is firstly in transformation of light into electrical impulses that the brain can interpret as visual information. Regulates the metabolic processes that maintain the health and function of the eyes and visual system. For the perception and processing of visual stimuli.

Ayurvedic concept in Physiology of vision. When four components are coordinated, visual perception occurs. The things that we see, or *Chakshu Indriya Artha*, are these elements involved in visual perception.

The term "*Chakshu Indriya*" refers to the entire anatomical eye's componentry that is used to perceive an object's image; this includes both the structural and functional elements of the eye. The mind, or *Manas*, is a sensory and motor being. The mind makes a distinction between dangerous and useful items in the visual domain. A person's intelligence, or *Buddhi*, evaluates their perception. Either the visual perception is accepted or rejected. The perception is experienced by the *Atma*, or soul, after it is linked to the mind.

The *Ayurvedic* sequence of visual perception is as follows: Visual objects are perceived when the mind and soul are connected to the eye and the objects of vision. The eye, which is connected to the mind, is able to recognize and sense objects. Now, the perception is given to the *Chakshu Indriya Buddhi*, or the mental faculty connected to the organ of vision. Whether or if the perception is helpful will be determined by intellect.

Information about the visual object is transmitted

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to the soul after it is determined to be beneficial. The visual perception would therefore be experienced by the soul in conjunction with the mind, eye, and sense object.⁵

Chakshu Vaisheshika Alochak Pitta's function in visual perception of visible items, after it has been connected to the senses, the mind, and the soul. Once the soul and mind are united, the items seen with the eye are transferred to the intellect. The information from visual perception is transformed and transferred to cognition by the *Alochak Pitta*, also known as the vision pitta. This intelligence determines whether or not the information is acceptable. The *Alochak Pitta*, which is housed in the *Chakshu Indriya*, or the organ of vision, enters the act when the intellect chooses to accept the perception and gives us unique knowledge about the form, structure, color, and distinguishing characteristics of the object that we are seeing. Hence, the *Pitta* - confined vision.

Why only eye is responsible for vision?

Description of the senses step by step: The five sense organs which can be estimated according to their respective actions are each equipped with an excess of one *Mahabhuta* through which the intellect is activated. The abundance of *Mahabhutas* in them is due to the difference of senses and the entire sense meaning which can be known through inference in their object-grasp, although they are the community of results of the five *Mahabhutas*. Each *Mahabhuta* is predominant in each of the senses and that sense organ, which is made up of the *Mahabhuta*, gets

attracted towards the *Artha* which has the same dominance as that *Mahabhuta*, it accepts the subjects of those *Mahabhutas*. This is the nature of those senses and due to being *Vibhu*, the senses also receive their objects.

Among the existent sense organs which are comprehensible by inference and are composed of combination of the resultants of five *Mahabhutas* -the visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory and tactile organs-have predominance of *Tejas*, *Akasa*, *Prthivi*, *Aaph* and *Vayu* respectively. Thus the sense organs perceive the respective objects according to predominance of their constituent *Mahabhutas*, because of their similarity of nature and (specific) capability (for sense perception)⁶.

The five sense organs are composed of five *Mahabhutas* with pre- dominance of one in each. They are known by inference through their actions and it is they on the basis of which intellect proceeds⁷. According to Ayurveda Pupillary dilation and contraction takes place with the *Drishtigat Mandal*, *Krishna- Drishti gat Sandhi* and *second Mamsagat Patal*⁸.

Vihara encompasses social interaction, consumption, entertainment, and attire patterns. A lifestyle is an identifiable set of behaviors, such as social interactions, entertainment, and attire, that make sense to oneself and to others in a particular time and location.

Vihara for Alochak pitta

VIHARA

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One should take as a daily routine the articles which maintain health and prevent unborn disorders⁹.

Nidra (Sleep) –

When the mind is exhausted and the exhausted sense organs detract from their objects, the man sleeps¹⁰. Sound sleep of 7- 9 hrs. By avoiding late night sleep. One can practice yoga nidra.

Shiro Abhyanga –

By applying oil on head regularly sense organs become cheerful and the face with pleasant glow along with sound sleep and happiness¹¹.

Pada Abhyanga–

By massaging of oil on feet helps in clarity of vision and vata is pacified¹²

SHOWER/ BATH rituals –

Daily morning shower (can take both time)

Luke Warm/Normal Water

Shower can include flower n herb extract decoction, organic shower gel, bath salts, essential oil. Sponging properly.

Abhyanga after shower, apply proper oil on whole body.

Dress fabric - according to seasons, clean, neat, favourite color, etc.

Pada dharan - use of proper and comfortable footwear is beneficial for eye sight and tactile sense organ¹³

Anjana

Hereafter the bodily daily routine like collyrium etc. will be described in relation to their role in maintaining health. The useful *Sauvira Anjana* (collyrium) should be applied to eyes every five eight days for stimulating secretion. The vision is

predominant in *Tejas* and as such is especially susceptible to *Kapha*. Hence the measures alleviating *Kapha* are beneficial for clarifying the vision. A sharp collyrium should not be applied to eyes at day because the vision already weak due to evacuation is further depressed in the sun. Hence it is desirable certainly that the evacuative collyrium be applied only at night¹⁴.

Dhumpana - disorder of eyes

Nasya - one who practices snuffing as prescribed and in time, his vision is not affected from any discomfort.

Quantity, substances, heaviness and lightness in relation to quantity, substances the practice of which is undesirable and recommended, collyrium, smoking stick, three types of smoking stick, properties of smoking, its timings and measures, signs and symptoms of adverse use, treatment, the persons for whom smoking is contra-indicated, the method of smoking, materials and types of smoking pipe, properties of snuffing, mode and times of snuffing, properties of oil and head oil, properties of ear oiling, oil massage, massage of feet, rubbing over the body, bathing, clean clothes, use of footwear, umbrella and stick- all these should be under proper guidance¹⁵.

Avoid natural urges like –

The wise should not suppress the impending urges of urine, faeces, semen, flatus, vomiting, sneezing, cructation, yawning, hunger, thirst, tears, sleep and breathing after exertion¹⁶. Specially suppression of sneezing leads to weakness of sight and sense organs. The

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symptoms caused by suppression of tears are coryza, eye diseases, heart diseases, anorexia, giddiness for which sleep, wines and pleasing talks are prescribed¹⁷.

Yoga Asans / poses and Vyayama –

Hasta Vyayam, Sarvangasana, Tratak, Adhu Mukha Svanasana, Balasan and Bhrumri Pranayama.

Vyayam – 20- 30 mins daily exercise.

Chakshu Indriya Buddhi

Gyanutpatti

Atma

CONCLUSION

Today wide changes have been occurring in lifestyle among the population. All are adapting towards a digital era, which is a source of living. Hence we cannot make many changes here, but it is affecting the vision physiology and becoming more prone towards eye disorders. By acknowledging towards root mechanism of vision and understanding the concept physiologically. One can do lifestyle modifications and follow them. This little step in daily routine may lead to a disease-free life.

Chakshu Indriya Artha

Chakshu Indriya

Chakshu Vaisheshika Alochak

Rupa graham

Manas

Buddhi Vaisheshika Alochak

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