

# Therapeutic Aspects of Yoga in *Urdhwajatrugata Vyadhis* - A Review

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## ABSTRACT

Shalaky Tantra is a significant branch of Ayurveda that addresses ailments arising above the clavicle, referred to as Urdhwajatrugata vyadhis. It engages the majority of the body's sensory organs. Due to a hectic schedule, modernisation, an imbalanced diet, and mental stress, we are unable to adequately attend to our health, resulting in the occurrence of numerous Urdhwajatrugata disorders. Yoga is a comprehensive practice encompassing physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions, useful in both disease prevention and treatment. Yoga, encompassing Shatkarmas, Asanas, Mudras, and Pranayama exerts therapeutic effects on ailments addressed by Shalaky tantra. Neti is a nasal hygiene practice that purifies and cleanses the nasal passages. Trataka is effective in treating ocular disorders including eye strain, myopia, astigmatism, and the initial stages of cataract. Numerous Asanas are beneficial in the prevention of various ailments. Mudras has therapeutic benefits for Urdhwajatrugata disorders. Pranayama is a technique of breath control that alleviates numerous Urdhwajatrugata ailments. This article describes the therapeutic aspects of yoga in Urdhwajatrugata vyadhis.

**Key Words** *Netraroga, Yoga, Pranayama, Mudra, Trataka*

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## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda and Yoga are ancient practices aimed at achieving equilibrium and wellness throughout the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of the individual. Yoga is frequently represented figuratively as a tree and consists of eight components namely Yama (universal ethics), Niyama (individual ethics), Asana (physical postures), Pranayama (breath regulation), Pratyahara (sense withdrawal), Dharana (focus), Dhyana (meditation), and Samadhi (enlightenment). An increasing amount

of study evidence substantiates the notion that specific Yogic methods may enhance physical and mental health by down-regulating the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis and the sympathetic nervous system (SNS). The HPA axis and SNS are activated in response to a physical or psychological stressor resulting in a series of physiological, behavioural, and psychological repercussions principally due to the secretion of cortisol and catecholamines (epinephrine and norepinephrine). This response triggers the mobilisation of energy required to

## REVIEW ARTICLE

address stress via the traditional "fight or flight" mechanism. Chronic hypervigilance, stemming from the persistent activation of the HPA axis and SNS, can result in system dysregulation and ultimately contribute to diseases such as obesity, diabetes, autoimmune disorders, depression, substance misuse, and cardiovascular disease.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that yoga, particularly Pranayama, exerts an immediate downregulating effect on the SNS/HPA axis response to stress. Research indicates that Pranayama yoga reduces salivary cortisol, blood glucose, plasma rennin, and 24-hour urinary norepinephrine and epinephrine levels. Pranayama markedly reduces heart rate as well as systolic and diastolic blood pressure. Pranayama mitigates the adverse effects of stress on the immune system by elevating levels of immunoglobulin A and natural killer cells. Pranayama has been shown to reduce inflammatory indicators including high sensitivity C-reactive protein and inflammatory cytokines such as interleukin-6 and lymphocyte-1B. This project aims to investigate the impact of Nadi Shuddhi Pranayama on hypertension seeking to identify gaps and explore related possibilities for safe and effective management through adherence to Dincharya and Ritucharya informed by contemporary scientific principles.

**Shatkarmas:**

Shatkarma is a method for the purification of the body and psyche. It equilibrates the Tridosha, namely Vata, Pitta, and Kapha, within the body. An imbalance among the Tridoshas will result in

various ailments within the body. Shatkarmas are performed before to Pranayama and Yogasanas to purify the body and mind facilitating the attainment of the objectives of other Yogas. The six varieties of Shatkarmas are Dhauti, Basti, Neti, Lauliki, Trataka, and Kapalbhathi.

**Neti**

Neti is a method for cleansing the nasal passages. It is a purifying procedure pertaining to the upper respiratory tract. Neti is categorised into Jala neti and Sutra neti. Jala neti is predominantly practiced. It is often performed with a Neti pot containing lukewarm saline solution. Neti purifies the cranial cavity, enhances vision and alleviates Urdhwajatrugata disorders. It eliminates foreign substances such as allergies and dust while facilitating sinus drainage by reducing mucus accumulation. It also enhances blood circulation and the functional effectiveness of the nasal mucosa. Neti induces a soothing and cleansing effect on the eyes by activating the tear ducts and glands. The consistent practice of Neti effectively maintains the secretory and drainage mechanisms of the entire ear, nose and throat.

**Trataka**

Trataka involves maintaining a fixed gaze on a single object without blinking until tears are produced. It remedies all ocular ailments.

Trataka consists of three varieties.

**Bahya trataka:** Focussing on distant objects such as the moon, trees, sculptures and stars.

**Antar trataka:** This practice involves closing the eyelids while concentrating the thoughts on a certain object.

## REVIEW ARTICLE

**Adho trataka:** This technique involves the partial opening or closure of the eyelids.

**Advantages**

Remedie of all Netrarogas ,offers Divyadrusti ,enhances ocular clarity and fortifies the ocular muscles through focused exercises ,rectify myopia ,Enhances visual acuity, focus and treats sleep-related disorders, including insomnia, nightmares and headaches.

**Kapalbhati**

It entails a particular breathing rhythm. It cleanses the Pranamaya kosha. Assume a cross-legged position on the floor. Position your hands on your knees with palms orientated upwards. Shut the eyes and relax the entire body. Expel air via both nostrils while engaging the abdominal muscles forcefully. Upon releasing your abdomen you will perceive your lungs inflating with air.

**Advantages**

It enhances the oxygen supply to Urdhwajatrugata regions. Enhances the delivery of oxygen and nutrients to the eyes. Enhances the expulsion of impaired doshas and safeguards the eyes against Kaphaja ailments. It increases the luminosity of the face.

**Pranayama:**

It is a yogic discipline centred on breath awareness. It is the technique of breath control.

**Suryabhedhi Pranayama**

Surya denotes the Sun and vedana signifies the act of passing through or piercing. Suryavebhedana pranayama denotes the sun-piercing breath technique.

**Procedure:** Assume a comfortable meditative position and adopt Vishnu mudra with the right hand. Position the mudra near the face while occluding the left nostril using the ring finger. Gently apply pressure with your thumb against the right nostril to obstruct it. Inhale through the right nostril. Maintain the internal breath. Subsequently, exhale via the left nostril. Continue the cycle for as long as it remains comfortable.

**Advantages**

**Clears sinuses:** cleanses the frontal sinuses during the frigid winter season. Stabilises Vata dosha.

**Bhramari Pranayama**

It is accomplished by generating a humming bee sound. Assume a relaxed posture. Softly shut the lips, maintaining a tiny separation of the teeth and position the tip of the tongue beneath the top front teeth. Subsequently, occlude each ear with the thumbs. Inhale deeply through the nose, allowing the breath to reach the abdomen. Lower the chin to the chest and commence a gradual exhalation, producing a consistent, low-frequency 'hmmm' sound from the throat, like to the hum of a bee.

**Advantages**

It exerts beneficial effects on the eyes. The vibrations generated in the body during Pranayama facilitate the nourishment of the ocular muscles. It alleviates ocular strain. Enhances vocal quality and alleviates throat disorders.

**Sitali Pranayama**

## REVIEW ARTICLE

Assume Padmasana or Siddhasana. Open the mouth and shape the lips into a 'O'. Curl the tongue and inhale through the curled tongue while producing sound until the lungs are fully inflated with air. Execute Jalandhara bandha following complete inhaling. At this juncture, retain breath for 6 to 8 seconds. Prior to exhalation, elevate the chin, retract the tongue, and seal the mouth. Exhale thoroughly through the nostrils.

### Advantages

Regulates the system, alleviates discomfort in the eyes and ears. Assists in regulating appetite and hydration.

### Mudra (Hand gestures):

A mudra is a spiritual gesture. Mudras are employed alongside Pranayama, typically while seated in Padmasana, Sukhasana, or Vajrasana to stimulate bodily areas associated with respiration and to influence the flow of Prana inside the body.

### Khechari Mudra

Shut your eyes and retract your tongue upwards and backwards. It ought to contact the soft palate of your mouth. It enhances the olfactory capability of the nose.

### Prana Mudra

Flex the ring and little fingers, positioning their tips against the tip of the thumb. It enhances immune system functionality, ocular strength and visual acuity. Mitigates weariness and addresses ocular problems.

### Vayu Mudra

Apply the tip of the index finger to the base of the thumb and gently press the thumb close the index finger. Advantageous for auditory and visual faculties. It may assist in normalising ear function. Alleviates involuntary eyelid twitching and ocular dryness.

### Shambhavi Mudra

Softly shut the eyes and release the facial muscles, easing the eyebrows and smoothing the forehead. Open your eyes and gradually direct your sight towards the middle of your eyebrows without moving your head. It contributes to the fortification of the ocular muscles. Facilitates the alleviation of pressure in the ocular area.

### Viparitkarani Mudra

It is an inverted posture executed on a level surface.

While lying on your back, make sure the backs of your legs are touching the wall. Press the buttocks against the wall or place them a little bit away from it. Raise your hips and move under them. Keep the neck and head in a neutral position.. It alleviates the headache treatment modality for Pratishtyaya. Beneficial for throat ailments.

### Asanas:

#### Simhasana

Assume the Vajrasana posture. Place the hand on the matching knee, extend the tongue forth, and extend the body forward while keeping the back straight. Focus your gaze on the middle of your eyebrows and hold it there for 30 seconds while taking deep breaths. Return to the normal position after slowly extending the legs and retracting the tongue.

## REVIEW ARTICLE

### Advantages

Eliminates halitosis and purifies the tongue, Speech becomes more articulate and Beneficial for stuttering.

### Sarvangasana

Recline while maintaining alignment of the head, spine and legs with the feet positioned together. Elevate the hips from the ground while exhaling and position the hands on the hips by flexing the elbows. Exhale and elevate the torso vertically while extending the knee joint. Only the occipital region, cervical area, shoulders, and posterior aspects of the arms should contact the ground. Maintain this position for a duration, then gently descend, release the hands, and rest supine to relax.

### Advantages

Advantageous in pharyngeal disorders, Alleviates nerve tension, proving advantageous for chronic headaches, Advantageous in Pratishyaya.

### Halasana

Assume a supine position. Elevate the hips and provide support to the lumbar region of the back. Subsequently, make contact with the earth using your toes. Extend your arms straight, positioning them on the floor behind your back and sustain the posture for a duration.

### Advantages –

Identical to Sarvangasana.

### Sirsasana

Assume a seated position with knees bent on the floor, lower your forearms to the ground and interlace your fingers. Position the crown of your head on the floor with your hands supporting the

back of your head. The entire body is there after inverted gradually, aligning the bodily parts one on top of another in a singular plane. If one is unable to invert themselves, assistance from the trainer is advisable.

### Advantages

Augments blood circulation to the organs in the head, particularly the pituitary and pineal glands, which are crucial to growth regulation, Advantageous in Anidra, Pratishyaya, Kasa, Tundikeri, and halitosis.

### Surya Namaskar

Surya Namaskar is an homage to the Sun. The Sun symbolises energy, strength and vigour. The yogic practice of Surya Namaskar was initially executed by the embodiment of strength, Shree Hanuman, as a tribute to the Sun God, his tutor and master. The Surya Namaskar comprises the following postures: Pranamasana, Hastauttanasana, Hastapadasana, Ashwa Sanchalasana, Dandasana, Astanga Namaskara, Bhujangasana, Adho Mukha Svanasana, Ashwa Sanchalasana, Hastapadasana, Hastauttanasana, and Tadasana.

### Advantages

Surya Namaskar is the optimal practice in yoga for the eyes, mind and body. It is a very dynamic exercise that yields exceptional outcomes. It includes Asanas that enhance blood circulation to the face and eyes, hence increasing vision and promoting overall ocular health.

## REVIEW ARTICLE

### DISCUSSION

Numerous Yogic practices, such as Yoga, Asana, and Pranayama, are designed to enhance the functionality of various organs in the body. Many ocular issues in older life result from a decline in the tone of the ocular muscles. The muscles grow rigid and this lack of flexibility diminishes the lens's capacity to focus at varying distances. It also results in diminished eyesight.

Secondly, any ocular stress will likely induce a pervasive sense of tension, owing to the eye's connection to the brain through the optic nerve. This ocular strain results in heightened nerve impulses within the eye muscles. This surge in nerve impulses traverses the optic nerve and inundates the brain, resulting in a pervasive sensation of tension and worry.

These non-pharmacological therapies (Asana, Pranayama, Mudra, Kapalbhathi, Trataka, Neti) alleviate ocular muscle tension and diminish overall stress. They also strengthen the ocular muscles and maintain their elasticity. Consequently, they enhance ocular function, assist in addressing numerous ophthalmic issues and are beneficial in disease prevention and the mitigation of the ageing process.

The primary objectives of yoga are to attain mental tranquility and foster a sense of well-being, relaxation, enhanced self-confidence, improved efficiency, heightened attentiveness, reduced irritability and a positive outlook on life. The practice of yoga cultivates balanced energy, essential for the proper functioning of the

immune system. Yoga results in the suppression of the posterior or sympathetic region of the hypothalamus. This inhibition enhances the body's sympathetic responses to stressors and reinstates autonomic regulating reflex systems linked to stress. Yoga enhances blood circulation and elevates haemoglobin and red blood cell counts, facilitating increased oxygen delivery to bodily cells and improving their functionality. Yoga enhances cardiovascular efficiency and homeostatic regulation, leading to benefits in autonomic balance, respiratory function and overall well-being. The practice of yoga cultivates balanced energy essential for the immune system's functionality. Practices such as Neti, Trataka, Kapalbhathi, and Pranayama.

Mudras and Asanas possess therapeutic properties for many ailments affecting the Urdhwajatrugata regions. Yoga facilitates the optimal functioning of particular organs. Our hectic lifestyles hinder us from adequately attending to our health. The consistent practice of yoga enhances our immune system. Shatkarmas facilitate the purification of both body and mind. It equilibrates the Tridoshas, namely Vata, Pitta and Kapha, within the body and averts ailments. Various types of Asanas, Mudras and Pranayama invigorate the sensory organs of the body. The sequence of yoga positions in Suryanamaskara comprises a series of forward and backward bends, stretches and inversions that enhance blood circulation to the eyes and activate the optic nerve. They assist in the treatment of numerous ailments. Yoga facilitates the

## REVIEW ARTICLE

attainment of Ayurveda's objectives, namely the treatment and prevention of ailments, particularly those affecting the Urdhwajatrugata regions, while also augmenting bodily, mental and spiritual wellbeing.

## CONCLUSION

Yoga exerts therapeutic effects on the sensory organs, including the eyes, nose, ears, and regions above the collarbone. Consistent yoga practice combined with a nutritious diet might yield beneficial impacts on health. It also aids in mitigating the danger of diseases and addressing ailments originating above the collarbone. The optimal functioning of sensory organs is essential for a high quality of life. Yoga raises quality of life, boosts immunity and improves the functionality of many sensory organs in the body.

## REVIEW ARTICLE

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