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IMPORTANCE AND EFFECT OF PADABHYANGA IN PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF NETRA ROGAS – A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT
In Ayurvedic science, the eyes are regarded as the most significant among the five sense organs, fundamental to overall wellness. With increasing screen exposure and changing lifestyles, visual health is under growing threat. Ayurveda advocates daily practices (Dinacharya) to uphold systemic and sensory health. Among these, Padabhyanga – therapeutic foot massage – is emphasized for its nourishing effects on the eyes, being categorized as Chakshushya (eye-rejuvenating). Ancient Ayurvedic texts cite specific foot veins (Siras) directly connected to ocular pathways, which rationalize the impact of Padabhyanga on eye health. Incorporating this practice regularly is believed to restore systemic equilibrium, thus establishing its value in disease prevention and holistic care, particularly in the realm of Shalakya Tantra.

KEY WORDS: *Padabhyanga, Chakshushya, Swasthavritta, Dinacharya*

INTRODUCTION

Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam[(1)], or maintaience of health, is the primary goal of *Ayurveda*. *Ayurveda* has placed greater emphasis on maintaining health and healing illness. It is crucial to adhere to a daily routine that includes exercise, organ care, and personal hygiene in order to achieve optimal physical and mental health. In *Brihatrayee*, *Padabhyanga* (foot massage) is mentioned as a *dinacharya* (daily ritual) element and its advantages are explained. *Padabhyanga* is a therapeutic approach that promotes general well-being and is often used in Ayurveda as a kind of self-care. The feet have a large number of *Marma* points that are associated with various organs and systems, including the eyes. Daily Practicing may influence the pertinent organs and systems, such as the eyes, by using *Padabhyanga* to activate these locations. In *Ayurveda,* the body is seen as a unit, where every component has an impact on the whole. As a result, taking care of the feet and stimulating specific *Marma* points associated with the eyes may improve eye health and general well-being.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This review was compiled through a qualitative assessment of classical Ayurvedic texts including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya*, along with contemporary research articles and online journals. Electronic databases like PubMed, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar were searched using terms like "*Padabhyanga*," "eye health," "*Chakshushya*," and "foot reflexology." References from peer-reviewed journals and online Ayurveda platforms were evaluated for relevance, authenticity, and scientific value.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ABHYANGA IN DINACHARYA [(2)]

Abhyanga is advised to be done daily to whole body, and special importance to be given to *Shiras* (Head), *Shravana* (Ears) and *Paada* (Feet). Its benefits are

- *Jaranashana* (Slows aging)
- *Shramahara* (Reduces fatigue)
- Vatahara (Normalises vatachalana)
- *Dristhiprasadana* (Improves vision)
- *Pushtikara* (Nourishes the body)
- *Ayushkara* (Extends lifespan)
- *Swapnakara* (Induces good sleep)
- *Twakdaryakara*(Noursishes skin)

IMPORTANCE OF PADABHYANGA [(3)]

Padabhyanga as a separate entity has been special importance as it induces,

- *Nidra* (Good Sleep)
- *Dehasukha*(Pleasure to the body)
- *Chakshushya*(Good vision)
- *Paadamrudukari* (Softens the feet)

It's also indicated to alleviate *Paada Kharatva*(Roughness), *Sthabdadtva*(Stiffness), *Rouksya*(Dryness), *Suptata*(Numbness) *Sphutana*(Cracks), *Gridhrasi*(Sciatica), *Sira* and *Snayu Sankocha* [(4)] (Vascular and tendon disorders).

NADIS RELATED TO EYE AND FEET

According to *Nadi vigyana, Nadi darpana*, there are 10 *Nadis* (Nerves) in the head, two of which are related to eyes. *Pushya* and *Alambusha* are two nadis connecting to the retinas and eye-balls, carrying ocular perceptions to the brain

- *Gandhari* - surrounds *Ida Nadi* (Type of nerve), which extends from pada and ends in left eye.
- *Hastijihwa* - surrounds *Pingala Nadi* (Type of nerve), which extends from *pada* and ends in right eye. [(5)]

Acharya Vriddha Vagbhatta mentions *siras*, or vessels, which are located in the middle of the foot and are connected to the eyes. These Nadis are activated during *Padabhyanga*, which results in the *Chakshushya* effect. According to Ayurveda, both

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Pada and Netra have their roots in *Rajas-Ahamkara* (passionate source of creation) and *Vaikarika* (modified source of creation), and they both emerge in the same month of intrauterine existence. Because of their shared ancestry, we can therefore apply therapy to *Paada* and have its effects on *Netra*.[6]

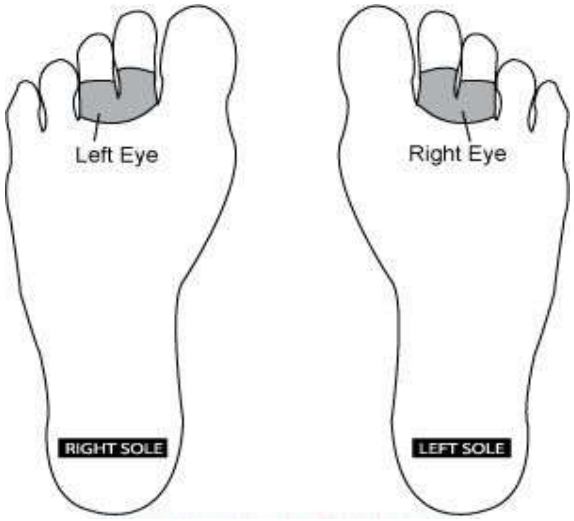


Fig 1 : *Gandhari nadi* on right sole
***Hastijihwa nadi* on left sole of feet**

***PADASHRITHA MARMA* – 4**

i) ***Kshipra*** – *Snayu* and *Kalantar pranahara marma*
ii) ***Kurcha*** – *Snayu* and *Vaikalyakara marma*
iii) ***Kurchashira*** – *Snayu* and *Rujakara marma*
iv) ***Talahridaya*** – *Mamsa* and *Kalantara pranhara marma*

These are vital points situated in *Paada* where muscles, bones, vessels, ligaments join each other where *prana* resides.



Fig 2: Sites of *Padashritha Marma*[7]

These *marma* points directly influence on functioning of the internal organs. Any dysfunction or injury to these *marmas* can lead to imbalances that affect not only physical movement but also emotional and psychological states. It's the influence of *marmavignana* in ayurveda is the base of origin on reflexology, acupressure and acupuncture methods of healing.

REFLEXOLOGY AND ACUPRESSURE [8]

Is an ancient therapy used by Chinese, Egyptians, North American tribes for healing It works on the principle saying that each area of hands and feet represent each part of the body, Such as eyes, heart, liver, spleen, lungs, kidneys and other internal organs, When various areas of hands and feet are massaged, it stimulates energy, blood circulation, nerves resulting in therapeutic effects including relieving mental stress, promoting blood circulation, delaying aging, detoxifying body. The energy meridians in body cross over each other at the neck, so reflex points for left eye is on right foot and vice-versa. Foot reflexology is being widely practiced in treating many systemic disorders.



Fig 3: Foot Reflexology Chart [9]

ACUPUNCTURe

Is a traditional Chinese medicine which has been used for over 5000 years, for various degenerative and psychosomatic disorders which increases the blood flow in several organs by modulating central circulatory and autonomic nervous system dysfunction. It has been reported that acupuncture targeting the vision-related acupuncture points around the orbits and on the limbs increased blood flow through supratrochlear, which is a branch of ophthalmic artery, by inducing changes in vascular resistance.[10]

Connection between foot massage and vision enhancement

- *Padabhyanga* may stimulate the somato sensory area in the cerebral cortex which has eyes and feet in the same area, its stimulant effect may reach the eyes and may act by improving the functioning of eyes. [11]
- According to *Vaishistha Samhita*, there are are 10 types of *vayu*, among those *vyana* and *kurma vayu* within the *nadi* system are responsible for eye function, by directly

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connecting the feet to eyes, *Padabhyanga* impacts vayu balance, ensuring proper eye function. (12)

- Acc to *Charaka samhita*, it has been stated that *vayu* predominantly resides in *twak*, this *vayu*, flows throughout the body via *nadis,* carrying the tactile sensations.

RESULTS

Several clinical and observational studies, although limited, support the efficacy of Padabhyanga in relieving eye strain, improving sleep, reducing stress and enhancing visual performance. Reports also suggest its effectiveness in managing Computer vision syndrome, dry eyes and refractive error such as myopia, hyperopia and astigmatism when practiced consistently as a preventive measure. Case studies from Ayurvedic OPDs have noted improvement in *Timira*, *Abhishyanda* and *Adhimantha* when *Padabhyanga* is administered as an adjunct therapy.

DISCUSSION

Padabhyanga is a self practicable therapy which can be practiced by an individual daily and can be included in everyday as a routine. Every individual from pediatric to geriatric population can practice it daily. In present era, adopting it can prevent many diseases mentioned above. It aligns with *Ayurvedic* principles, which emphasize the balance of mind, body, and spirit for optimal health. It involves massaging the soles of feet with processed oils of medicated ghee used according to the individual constitutions. It can be practiced as a complimentary therapy for various health conditions due to its add on effects on the whole body, aiding in betterment of the life.

CONCLUSION

Practicing *Padabhyanga* daily can promote the the eye health by bringing *vata* to equilibrium balancing the *doshas* in the body. Balancing the *shareerika* and *manasika* doshas aids in imbalance impacting the eye health. It reduces the fatigue experienced by the eyes throughout the day through relaxation. it complements the existing eye care techniques but can't be replaced with professional eye care. Individuals should consult an ophthalmologist for complete evaluation and appropriate treatment.

Further clinical research and large scale studies are needed to establish standardized protocols and confirm its role in mainstream ophthalmic care.

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