

NETRA SWASTHYA - AN APPROACH TO PREVENT EYE DISORDERS

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INTRODUCTION

The eyes are the windows to the soul. They allow us connecting with our surroundings and help maintain the sharpness of our mind. They also keep us safe, provide awareness of the danger around us. It is proved that about 80% of the knowledge we gain through the eyes. It is a source of direct knowledge¹. It is rightly quoted by *Acharya Vagbhatta* in *Ashtanga Samgraha* "For a blind person though he is rich, day and night are equal and entire world seems to be useless" so man should make consistent efforts to protect eye sight². In the present era due to many environmental factors, sedentary, stressful and faulty life style, eye disorders are quite common. In today's life style smoking, tobacco, liquor, junk foods, electronic gazettes, television, computer, mobile phones are part of population so eye sight will damage in early age. Many people not aware about their eye sight until they not feel any difficulty in daily life. Once people becomes blind, no therapy is much more effective to restore vision. According to World Health Organisation(WHO) estimate about 314million people are visually impaired worldwide, 45 millions of them are blind. It is estimated that number of blind persons in India in 2020 will be about 31.6 million. For the prevention of blindness WHO launched global initiative National Blindness Control Programme, VISION 2020-Right to Sight³. In addition to these initiatives we have to adopt some preventable measures in our daily routine for eye health. We can store proper vision for long time with help of *eye exercise, kriyakalpas, panchakarma therapy, marma*

therapy, chakshushya rasayana, yoga, ahara, vihara, sadvritta, pada-abhyanga, shiro-abhyanga e tc.

DISCUSSION

EYE EXERCISE:- Aimed at toning up of eye muscles. They also help for relaxation of the eyes (Bates)

1. Eye wash with *Triphala hima* (directly splashing or by dipping eyes in eye cups) useful to tone up the muscles and surrounding tissues. It is antiseptic and anti inflammatory in addition to *chakshushya* effect. Duration:-1 to 2mins.

2. Sunning:-Greatest nourisher of eyes. Duration:-5 to 10mins

3. Palming:-Enhances the efficiency of the nerves. If it is done with deep breathing it relaxes the mind and improves blood circulation.

4. Swinging:-Long swing induces the sleep and short swing helps to improve sight. It helps to relax the eye, correct the accommodative defects and maintains the rhythm of body.

5. Eye ball movement exercise:-upward, downward, complete a circle. Playing with ball helps in strengthening the extra ocular muscles by improving their coordination.

6. Candle light reading:-The flame stimulates the retinal cells, rods and cones, improves the blood circulation and gives a feeling of comfort, rest, and relaxation.

7. Blinking and breathing exercise helps to establish the correct tone of muscles of eyelids.

8 Relaxation of exercise:-For relieving the strain of eye we do *mridu swedana* than we place two cotton pads dipped in cold water on the closed eyes.vapourisation acts as decongestant and cotton pads soothen the eye after exercise⁴.

KRIYAKALPA

The drugs that given by *kriyakalpa* procedures can cross the blood aqueous,blood vitreous and blood retinal barriers to reach the target tissues of the eye.The topical drugs can reach there and achieve higher bio-availability. The tissue contact time of the drugs can be controlled ,and are selected depending upon the stage and severity of the disease.⁵

Purvakarman:-*Deha shodana* by *snehana,swedana,siramokshana,virechana,niruha basti etc.**shiro shodhana* by *virechana nasya*.

Mode of action:-The medicines are absorbed through *srotasa* via *shringataka marma* in the cranial region will expel *vitiated doshas*.⁶

The procedures like *tarpana,putapaka,seka, ashchyotana,anjana,pindi vidalaka*,and all other *kriyakalpas* are aimed at improving *netra bala*.For

beauty purpose we can use *vidalaka* for dark circles around eye.

*Anjana*⁷:-*Netra* has *tejas* property, can affected easily by *kapha dosha* so for preventive purpose we can use *sauveeranjana* daily and *rasanjana* is used once at interval of five or eight nights for stimulation and secretion with the help of *shalaka*.Daily application of *anjana* can make eyes clean just like shining moon in the clear sky.

NASYA⁸

Any medicine in the form of *taila,swarasa,kwatha,churna* is administered through nostrils in the nasal cavity is called *nasya*. “ *Dwaram hi shiraso nasa*”.So this medicine is absorbed through olfactory nerve fibers, covering sheath to cranial region(CSF) via *shringataka* (cavernous sinus).We can use *nasya* in age of 7 to 80 years in the form of *pratimarsha nasya*.Specially *Anu taila pratimarsha nasya* is advised in turn prevent the accumulation of *vitiated kapha* in the *srotasa* of eye.

MARMA THERAPY

Stimulation of vital points like *apanga marma,avarta marma,shringataka marma* one by one on a daily basis keeps eyes healthy.

AHARA-VIHARA IN NETRA ROGA⁹-

PATHYA(AAHARA)	APATHYA(AAHARA)
Intake of medicated <i>ghee(Mahatriphala ghrita)</i> before meal in evening	<i>Madhuka pushpa,</i>
Food prepared with <i>mudga,yava,rakta shali.</i>	Curd
<i>Kulatha yusha, Peya, Vilepi</i>	<i>Ati ambupanam</i>
Vegetables like- <i>surana,patola,vartaka,karkotaka,karvellaka, Unripe mocha,unripe mulaka,punarnava,markava,kakamachi,pattura, Kumarika,draksha,kustumbaru</i>	<i>Patra shakam ,kalinga pinyaka,viruda anna,masha,</i>
<i>Saindhava lavana.</i>	<i>Samudra lavana,</i>
Honey	<i>Sura, matasya</i>
<i>Chandana,karpura,lodhra,vara,tikta dravyas,laghu annapana</i>	<i>Sour, salty,vidahi ,katu,ushna,guru annapana</i>

Breast milk,cow's ghee,cow's milk,sita	<i>Katu taila</i>
<i>Godhuma</i>	<i>Fanita, vesvara,</i>
<i>Shaka</i> <i>panchaka(jivanti, vastuka, matsyakshi,</i> <i>meghnada, punarnava)</i>	<i>Ernala(sour gruel)</i>

<i>PATHYA (VIHARA)</i>	<i>APATHYA(VIHARA)</i>
<i>Ashchyotana,anjana,langhana,virechana,</i> <i>pratisarana,prapurana,nasya,rakta-</i> <i>mokshana,seka,mukha</i> <i>lepana,shiro</i> <i>lepa,kavala,gandusha</i>	<i>Krodha,maithunam,diva swapana,ratri jagarana,ahita</i> <i>darshan</i>
<i>Mano nivrati(mental peace),puja,</i> <i>Kombha havi</i>	<i>Vega dharana-ashru,vayu,vinmutra,nidra,vami</i>
<i>Pada-abhyanga,padatra dharana,</i> <i>pada prakshalana</i>	Looking at minute objects,exposure to bright light or moving lights
<i>Chatra dharana</i>	Excessive exposure to sun
Head bath with cold water	<i>Nisha bhojana(late night meal)</i>
<i>Netra vyayama,shiro-abhyanga,takra dhara,shiro dhara</i>	<i>Prajalpana(excessive talk-irrelevant talk),head bath</i> with hot water

SWASTHA VRITTA-

*Chatra dharana*¹⁰(holding an umbrella during summer is beneficial to eyes)

Pada-abhyanga,Pada-prakshalana,Padatra dharana^{11,12,13}

Regular *abhyanga* of feet with oil improves eye sight “*Shiro shravan padeshu tam visheshen shiliyeta*”. *Vayu* is predominant in *sparsha indriya* and it can be controlled by *abhyanga*. We have to clean our *pada tala* and protect to any injury because *acharya Dalhana* has explained that there is *Nadi* that transverses from feet to the eyes hence any application to *pada tala* is direct connected with eyes.

YOGA

Surya namaskara,Shata kriya specially *Trataka* and *Neti*,.Sun and eyes both. of *Tejo-mahabhoota pradhana Surya namaskara* supported to help *Alochaka pitta* healthy thus maintaining visual acuity. Importance of *Neti*¹⁴ is described in *Hathyoga*

pradipika and *Trataka*¹⁵ in *Gheranda samhita* that both of them helps in improve vision and prevent eye disorders

CHAKSHUSHYA RASAYANA

Rasayana is beneficial for healthy and diseased individuals both, because of *tridosha samyakara* effect. According to *Charaka Samhita* a person who use *rasayana* therapy gets many advantages like- longevity, sharp memory, intellect, disease free body, youth, excellence of lusture, complexion, and voice, excellent potentiality of body and sense organs, *vaka-sidhi, pranati, beauty* etc. *Rasayana* improves *vyadhi shamatva* (immunity power)¹⁶. It protect eyes by free redical damage. It gives strengthening to ocular tissues. It slow down the process of ageing along with degeneration of ocular tissue. We can use *Droni-praveshika rasayana*¹⁷, *Triphala rasayana, Achara rasayana, Chyavanprasha rasayana* etc for rejuvenating effect on eyes.

CONCLUSION

Life style changes are more closely associated with eye disorders. If a person is endowed with all other sensory faculties, strength, beautiful appearance etc, but without eye sight, he will be useless as an insect (*kudya*). We can't change everything in life for betterment of eyes but we can prevent eye disorders by few efforts, adopt some routine activities, *yoga*, food habits, few life style modifications, *achara rasayana* etc. Diseases of eye affects psychological as well as developmental factors, hence affecting the quality of life. That is why *netra swasthya* is very important. These all measures may help considerably reducing the impact of eye disorders in general population.

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