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Tratak – A Yoga Kriya For Eye Sight And Stress In Modern Era

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ABSTRACT: -

The way to solid life is having a sound brain. We are living in a quick moving age. Contamination, stress and undesirable way of life are basic issues of the present period. Refractive Error occurs when the eyes are unable to focus images clearly on the retina. These eye disorders are most common in children, but they can affect people of any age. Because of today's lifestyle, which includes increased use of computers, television, and cell phones, the eyes are subjected to a great deal of strain. As a result, now is the time to shield and save your eyes from refractive errors (such as myopia, hypermetropia, presbyopia, astigmatism). Stress can be felt anywhere we go and whatever we do. What's more, since wellbeing and stress are connected, we may feel certain repercussion on body i.e.- gloom, headache, hypertension, heart issues and so on. Reflection is an incredible method to accomplish pressure the board, which manages psychological well-being than physical. They have numerous physical and mental complexities, which can be managed by refinement strategies of yoga. The *Shatkarmas of Yoga* are vital to clean body and brain. *Trataka* (to gaze steadily at a fixed point) is one of the six *karmas of yoga* (The *Shatkarma*) for filtration of body and brain. *Trataka* (to gaze steadily at a fixed point) is additionally a kind of contemplation which includes ceaseless looking at any article or point. It can help us see better by encouraging mental concentration and strengthening and calming our eye muscles, which are in charge of regulating our eyeball movements.

Keywords: *Trataka*, eye sight, stress, meditation.



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INTRODUCTION:

Hatha yoga is mentioned in the *Upanishads* of *Yoga* for the first time, and it explains *Shatkarma* for the first time. It is a systematic and precise science. The word '*shat*' means 'six,' and the word '*Karma*,' means 'action.' Six purificatory rituals make up the *Shat karmas*.^[1]

An imbalance of the *Doshas*, according to both *Hatha yoga* and *Ayurveda*, causes sickness. The three *Doshas* or humours in the body are also balanced using *Shatkarma* (Six purificatory ritual). These methods are used to rid the body of contaminants and ensure a healthy and fruitful spiritual journey.^[2]

Trataka is a Sanskrit word that means "to look" or "to gaze."^[3] It is the last *shat karma*. It serves as a bridge between physically focused activities and mental practices that contribute to higher levels of consciousness. The third eye meditation is known as *Trataka*. The *Ajna chakra*, or third eye, is affected. *Trataka* is a form of *Shatkarma* (Six purificatory ritual) that can help with eye problems. It is beneficial to one's vision. It will avoid refractive error and the need for spectacles in everyday life if practiced on a regular basis.^[4] *Trataka* is the connection that connects *Hathyoga* and *Rajyoga*. *Trataka* is traditionally associated with *Hathayoga*, but it can also be used to achieve *Rajyoga*.^[5]

Refractive Errors are becoming more common as people's lifestyles change and they use more electronic instruments. The Refractive Error Program was introduced in India in 2006. As a result, Vision 2020's key goal is to fix refractive errors with minimal infrastructure.^[6] In this era of

changing lifestyles and increased speed, the sense organ that is most misused is the eye, which is *mithya* or *atiyoga* of *chaksurendriya*. The ayurvedic community's primary responsibility is to inform society about the proper use of this sense organ. A daily schedule in this regard for rapid eye relaxation is not only helpful to such refractive issues, but it can also help to avoid several degenerative conditions.^[7]

In yoga, there are six procedures known as *Shatkarma* that are very useful for cleaning and storing wellbeing. *Trataka* is one of them, and it's great for eye problems. *Trataka Yoga Kriya*, when practiced on a regular basis, can help to preserve eye health and avoid refractive errors and stress in daily life.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The study's goal is to examine the meditational effects of *Trataka* from various books and journals.

METHODS AND MATERIALS:

This article is based on a literary review compiled from the classical book of yoga, *Hathyoga pradipika*, *Swasthritta* textbooks, and various journals.

Mechanism Of *Tratakakriya*:

Rapid eye movement (REM) is a form of eye movement that occurs when the brain and mind are active (REM). Our Acharyas had known for a long time that there was a reverse bond. The mind and brain are stimulated by calming rapid eye movement (REM) or gazing. As a consequence, it leads to concentration and inner harmony.^[8] When

we use a candle flame to perform *Trataka*, the light passes through the retino-hypothalamic tract, activating the suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN).^[9] The suprachiasmatic nucleus is a small brain region located just above the optic chiasm in the hypothalamus. The circadian clock, or biological clock, is regulated by SCN. The SCN also communicates with other hypothalamic nuclei and the pineal body to regulate body temperature and hormone output such as cortisol and melatonin. Melatonin controls the biological clock or sleep-wake cycle, while cortisol aids in the control of stress and mood disorders.^[10]

Trataka is a meditative technique that uses focus (*Ekagrata*) to switch off sensory feedback to the brain. Throughout this process-The eye receives light and converts it into energy. A picture created on the retina at the back of the eye during the time of gazing. The optic nerve transports it to the visual cortex, which controls the visual side of the brain and is located in the occipital region. It stimulates inactive brain centers, charges neurons, and connects them to the rest of conscious consciousness. The relation between the eye muscles and the brain helps to enhance vision and concentrating ability. The mind comes to rest when you keep your attention on one thing at a time.^[11]

Procedure Of *Trataka*:

A mark (such as the OM symbol), a black dot, a clarified butter (ghee) lamp flame or at plain candlelight, or any point may be used to focus the practitioner's attention. Hold his head and spine upright in every relaxed meditative *asana*. *Trataka* is best performed in a meditative sitting posture like *Siddhasana*, *Padmasana*, *Sukhasana*, or *Vajrasana*. Up and down, right and left, lateral, and rotational eyeball movement as a warm-up. When tears begin to flood, keep the eye fixed on the flame's tip or a drawn dot far away but closely in line with the usual visual axis. The central fixation area should be decreased gradually, as the smaller the area, the better the fixation.^[12]

The body should be at ease. The object should be 3-4 feet away and level with the eye. Close your

eyes and relax your whole body and mind. Throughout the drill, keep the body completely still. Now open your eyes and look at the flame without blinking or moving your eyeballs. Close your eyes gently when they become tired or watery, and focus on the following picture. When you can no longer retain the visual, gently open your eyes and look at the object again. Repeat the process 3-4 times or for 5-15 minutes.^[13]

Contraindications And Precautions^[14]

- *Trataka*, like other complex yogic exercises, can only be learned under the supervision of a qualified instructor; otherwise, eye muscles and the nervous system can be harmed.
- Following the *Trataka* tradition, the eyes should be splashed and cleaned with cold water.
- After you've done *Trataka* and rubbed your eyes, don't use any external eye medication or solution.
- *Trataka* should not be performed in direct sunlight. It is recommended that you sit with your eyes closed and facing the sun for improved eye protection.
- Early morning and late afternoon are the best times to do *Trataka* on the sun with open eyes.
- To revitalize the tissues and nerves, some body exercises are needed before and after *Trataka*.
- If you get a headache while practicing *Trataka*, stop.

Trataka Style^[15]

1. *Anatrang* (internal) *Trataka*- It is the practice of visualising the *ajna chakra*, or internal flame, with closed eyes between two brows.

2. *Bahirang*(external) *Trataka*- It entails looking at a candle flame, a sign such as om, black dot, stars, moon, or sun at the time of sunrise or sunset.

Advantages Of *Tratakakriya*

Trataka aids in the creation of *Sambhavi mudra* perfection. It aids in the treatment of eye conditions and the attainment of spiritual vision/intuition. *Trataka* relaxes the cranial nerves and helps you

focus your thoughts. It vanishes unsteadiness of mind. Regular practice of *Trataka* stimulates parasympathetic nervous system and as a result respiratory rate and heart rate goes down and peripheral blood circulation increases. *Trataka* also helps to take out suppressed thoughts and emotions in subconscious mind which helps to attain emotional stability. It improves concentration, memory and will power. It eliminates mental shakiness. Regular *Trataka* practice activates the parasympathetic nervous system, lowering respiratory and heart rates while increasing peripheral blood circulation. *Trataka* also aids in the release of suppressed thoughts and feelings from the subconscious mind, allowing for emotional equilibrium.^[16] It enhances concentration, memory, and willpower. It is used to treat eye problems, insomnia, tension, and anxiety disorders.

Trataka exercises, such as nose tip gaze, eyebrow center gaze, right and left shoulder gaze, and so on, focus on strengthening and conditioning the eye muscles, especially the four pairs of muscles that regulate the upward, downward, right, and left movements of the eyeballs. *Trataka* treats vision problems and other eye problems that require people to wear glasses or contact lenses. Gazing at various natural objects acclimates the eyes to the various effects of light, environment, and other factors. In normal use of the eyes, the eye muscles behave asymmetrically, causing eye strain or fatigue, which exacerbates vision problems. All of these can be corrected by systematic and routine application of various *trataka* eye exercises. *Trataka* has the ability to magnify vision to the point that even the tiniest particle in the middle of night can be seen. *Trataka* can be used to treat eye inflammation, styes, astigmatism, myopia, hypermetropia, and presbyopia, to name a few. *Trataka* improves vision by increasing blood supply in and around the eyes, and it also helps to heal eye infections by killing microbes through tears. The olfactory nerves and optic nerves are activated when the attention is directed at the eyebrow centre, which awakens the autonomic and central nervous systems. Since the mind and vision are inextricably

linked, *Tartaka* not only helps to preserve the physical health of the eyes, but it also aids in the regulation of the mind. It has a calming effect on the cranial nerves, allowing the mind to focus on one thing. It helps to achieve perfection in *Samyama* (i.e. *Dharana*, *Dhyana*, *Samadhi*) as defined in Patanjala Yoga by improving memory and willpower. *Trataka* has been shown in laboratory experiments to put those repressed memories back to consciousness.^[17]

DISCUSSION:

Anxiety and depression are common issues in today's society. *Trataka* has been shown in several studies to be effective in the treatment of depression and other mental illnesses. *Trataka* has been shown to increase focus and attention when practiced regularly.

Hathayoga and *Rajyoga* are said to be linked via *Trataka*. *Hathayoga* is primarily concerned with physical activity, while *Rajyoga* is concerned with the reintegration of the *Atma* (self) with the *Paramatma* (universe). *Hathyoga* is regarded as a means of achieving *Rajyoga*. *Trataka* is a type of physical exercise that aids in the improvement of focus and mental stability. As a result, *Trataka* serves as a bridge between *Hathayoga* and *Rajyoga*. On the basis of concentration point, there are several *Trataka* variations.

- *Jyoti Trataka* is when an individual concentrates on the tip of a candle's flame.
- *Bhrumadhya Drishti Trataka* is the name for the concentration point that is located between both brows.
- The *Nasagra Drishti Trataka* focuses on the tip of the nose.
- The om symbol is used in the *Om Trataka* for focus.

There are many variants of *Trataka*, but the central principle remains the same: to disconnect the mind from the outside world in order to achieve inner harmony and mental relaxation.

CONCLUSION:

Our sensory organs and minds are inextricably linked. When we restrict one or more of our senses, we allow our minds to relax. Our minds and vision are inextricably linked. Concentrating on a single point or object for a long time tends to focus the mind and block out the outside world. A strong type of relaxation is a partial or complete shut down of the brain for a brief period of time. *Trataka* is one of *Yoga's* six purification techniques (*Shatkarma*), and it purifies the unconscious mind's thoughts and provides emotional equilibrium, which aids in the management of frustration, anxiety, stress, and other mental issues.

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