

“Eyesight Enrichment: Unlocking the Power of Yoga Mudras”

Chandana Virkar¹, Sanika Abhay Virkar¹

¹Department of Shalakya Tantra, College of Ayurveda and research centre, Akurdi, Pune- 411044 Maharashtra, India.

Corresponding Author

Chandana Virkar

E-mail ID: drvirkarchandana@gmail.com



Submission: 08.07.2024

Acceptance: 22.07.2024

Publication: 30.08.2024

https://www.doi.org/10.63778/PDEASIJRAAS-ARJCPL/2024_8307

Abstract:

In pursuit of preserving and enhancing eyesight; various methods explored such as eye exercises, padabhyanga, yogic kriyas like trataka and bhrumari pranayama. However, a lesser-known yet potent avenue for eye health lies in 'Yoga Mudra'. These symbolic hand gestures, rooted in Ayurveda, harness the elements of the body to redirect energy and promote healing. By understanding the elemental composition of our hands and eyes, we can utilize mudras to prevent and alleviate eye ailments. This article provides an overview of common Yoga Mudras, elucidating their benefits for eye diseases and eyesight improvement. Delving deeper into the nuanced practice of Yoga Mudras and their potential to unlock new dimensions of eye care and vision improvement. Accessible to individuals of all ages, mudras require no equipment other than the fingers themselves, making them a convenient and powerful tool for preserving eyesight and promoting overall wellness.

Key Words: Yoga Mudras, *Panch Mahabhoota*, Eye Diseases, Eyesight.

Introduction:

Practices like eye exercises and yogic techniques are performed for acquiring optimal eye sight. Yet, the realm of Yoga Mudra offers a nuanced approach to enhancing vision and overall well-being. Derived from Ayurveda, these symbolic hand gestures wield the elemental forces within our bodies to foster healing and balance. Understanding the elemental composition of both our hands and eyes unveils the potential of mudras in preventing and mitigating ocular ailments.

This article delves into the efficacy of various Yoga Mudras, shedding light on their profound impact on eye health and visual acuity. Yoga Mudra is a lesser known, more subtle branch of yoga which has many benefits for mind and body. 'Mudra' is a sanskrit word, means a symbolic hand gesture.⁽¹⁾ Yoga Mudras are the symbolic hand, eyes & body gestures that are based on the principle of Ayurveda to heal and redirect energy in the different organs of the body. Five fingers in our hand represent the different elements (*Panch Mahabhootas*).

Thumb represent *Agni* (Fire), index finger- *Vayu* (Air), middle finger- *Aakash* (Space), ring finger- *Prithvi* (Earth) and little finger represents *Jala* (Water). It underscores the profound connection between the fingers and the five elemental energies, highlighting the therapeutic potential of Mudras in restoring balance within the body.⁽²⁾

Furthermore, the intricate relationship between Mudras and ocular anatomy, emphasizing the dominance of the five elements in different areas of the eye. This sets the stage for understanding how Mudras, by harmonizing these elemental

energies, can effectively address various eye-related ailments.

By introducing the concept of Mudras as a means to link the mind, body and spirit; a compelling foundation for exploring their role in promoting ocular health and well-being can be established.

Aim & Objective:

- To understand the concept of Yoga Mudras.
- Intricate co-relation between Yoga Mudra and *Panch Mahabhoota*.
- Highlight the therapeutic potential of Yoga Mudras for ocular health and well-being.

Material & Method:

For reviewing Yoga Mudras, *Ayurvedic samhita* and modern literature was considered.

Study of Yoga Mudra:

Yoga mudras serve as symbolic gestures rooted in Ayurveda, channelling energy to different organs of the body for healing and equilibrium. Each finger represents one of the five elements and by harmonizing these elements through specific hand configurations, we can restore balance and vitality.

Each finger represents one of the 5 elements. The thumb (*Angushtha*) represents the element of fire (*Agni*), the forefinger (*Tarjani*) symbolizes the element of air (*Vayu*), middle finger (*Madhyama*) stands for the sky (*Akash*), the ring finger (*anamika*) for the earth (*Prithvi*) and little finger (*Kanishtha*) represents water (Jal).⁽³⁾ Equilibrium in all these five elements maintains peace in the universe and health is the physical body including Netra.

By practicing Yoga Mudras, the free nerve endings of finger gets connected that create a subtle connection with the instinctual patterns in the brain and influence the unconscious reflexes in these areas. The internal energy is in turn balanced and redirected, affecting change in the sensory organs, glands, veins and tendons.⁽⁴⁾

There are hundreds of mudra variations, some include using head, hand and body; each one helping with different ailments. The subtle connections formed through mudras influence brain patterns and unconscious reflexes, fostering internal harmony and healing.⁽⁵⁾ From gyan mudra to shoonya mudra, each gesture holds unique therapeutic benefits for eye health and overall well-being.

Gyan Mudra

Procedure- Oppose the index finger with the thumb keeping other fingers straight.

Action- As the name suggests, this mudra sharpens brain power, memory and concentration.⁽⁶⁾

Stimulates *Vayu* (air element), Pituitary gland and nerves.

Helps to control psychological disorders like anger, stress, anxiety, depression, sleep disorders.

Benefits in Netra- Helps to improve *chakshurendriya shakti* (eyesight)

Beneficial in *vataj netra roga*, neurological eye disorders like *vatahat vartma*, ptosis, lagophthalmos, nerve palsies. Helps in preventing psychological *netra roga hetu*.

Gyan Mudra



Pran Mudra

This is a very important mudra as it activates the energy in your body. Prana means life and this mudra activates life by activating the dormant energy inside our body. For better vision this pran mudra is very much helpful.

Procedure- Bend ring finger and little finger and touch the tip of both these fingers with the tip of your thumb.

Actions- This mudra improves immune system. It reduces fatigue and tiredness, muscle spasm, painful sensation and weakness by improving blood circulation⁷ It is helpful in case of headache, migraine. It also increases eye power and reduces oxidative stress.

Benefits in Netra-Asthenopia, computer vision syndrome, refractive errors, Age related macular degeneration, Vascular occlusions.

Prithvi Mudra

Procedure- Oppose the ring finger with the thumb, keeping the other fingers straight.

Actions- Earth element is a vital component of bones, cartilage, skin, hair, nails, muscles, tendons, internal organs, etc. Practice of Prithvi mudra builds and invigorates these tissues and strengthens the bones. It produces stability, confidence and strength. It is useful to increase body strength and remove the weakness and fatigue from the body.⁽⁸⁾

Benefits in Netra-Ocular muscle weakness, Asthenopia, accommodation deficiency, latent squint.



Vayu Mudra

As the name suggests Vayu mudra; it balances the air element within the body.

Procedure- Bend index finger and touch the thumb as given in the picture. (touch the portion of skin above the nail of the index finger by the pad of the thumb).⁽¹⁰⁾

Actions-Vayu Mudra improve stiffness in the neck, joint pain, gout, Vata vyadhi.

Benefits in Netra-Nimesh, anyatovat, vataviparyay, Blepharospasm, Vatahat vartma, Neck pain in Computer vision syndrome & smart phone syndrome.

Shunya Mudra

Procedure- Press the first phalanx of middle finger with the thumb. Keep the other 3 fingers straight.⁽¹¹⁾

Actions- As karna is organ of Aakash predominance, it is very useful for ear ailments. It is recommended to do this mudra for deafness, ear discharge, earache, Hearing loss due to old age or some disease.⁽¹²⁾ Chronic underlying problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure or brain disorders, stress, anxiety, thyroid and hormonal imbalances.

Benefits in Netra- In diseases of ashrumarga, Naso lacrimal duct block, Eye strain, Epiphora.



Duration for Mudras- In the initial phase mudras should be performed for at least 10 minutes and then can be extended to

30 minutes to one hour.⁽¹²⁾ In each yoga mudra take at least twelve breaths and closely observe the flow of *prana vayu*.

Table 1: summary of Yoga Mudras

Mudra	Elements	Action on Netra	Benefits
Gyan Mudra	Angi Vayu	Chkshurendriya, visual pathway, Nerves	improve chakshurendriya Shakti (eyesight) Helpful in vataj, neurological eye disorders like vatahat vartma, ptosis, lagophthalmous, nerve palsies.Helps in preventing psychological netraroga hetu.
Pran Mudra	Prithvi, Jala, Agni	Coordination in netra & indriya	Asthenopia, computer vision syndrome, refractive errors. Age related macular degeneration. Vascular occlusions.
Prithvi Mudra	Prithvi	Muscles. Fibrous part	Ocular muscle weakness, Asthenopia, accommodation deficiency, latent squint
Varun Mudra	Jala	Shukla mandal	Dry eye syndrome, xerosis, Burning sensation in eyes
Surya Mudra	Agni	Blood circulation, aalochakagni	Helps in functioning of Aalochaka pitta, improves blood circulation. Improves eyesight
Vayu Mudra	Vayu	Krishna mandal	Nimesh, anyatovat, vatviparyay, Blepharospasm Vatahat vartma. Neek pain in Computer vision syndrome & smart phone syndrome. Heaviness in lids
Shoonya Mudra	Akash	Ashrumarg	In diseases of ashrumarga, Naso lacrimal duct block. Eye strain, Epiphora

Discussion:

Ayurveda and Yoga teach us that our bodies are composed of five elemental forces: fire, air, space, earth, and water. When these elements fall out of balance, disease ensues. Mudras serve as a conduit for restoring equilibrium, harnessing the power of elemental forces to heal and rejuvenate.⁽¹³⁾ By stimulating specific brain centres and directing energy flow, mudras facilitate the free flow of *prana*, or life force, promoting harmony within the body and mind. Physiologically, mudras calm the nervous system, activating reflexes and promoting overall health and vitality.

Physiologically, Mudras stimulate the nervous system through the manipulation of hand nerves, resulting in the regulation of glandular secretions.⁽¹⁴⁾ This mechanism plays a pivotal role in maintaining bodily functions and promoting overall well-being. According to the principles of hand reflexology, the top part of thumb corresponds to the brain part. The pineal and pituitary glands which are considered as the master glands governing the body gets regulated when the tip of the thumb is gently pressurized.

The elements connected with the other fingers get the impact when they meet the thumb and gently pressurized. The strength of the element enhances when the top of the thumb touches the base part of a finger. The strength of the element reduces when the corresponding finger is bent to touch the

base of the thumb. The practice of this science brings about a change in the flow of elements in the body. Additionally, Mudras are shown to induce a state of inner tranquillity, offering relief from stress and anxiety, which are known contributors to ocular disorders. Furthermore, therapeutic potential of Mudras in addressing various eye conditions, such as asthenopia, dry eye syndrome, and refractive errors better understood.

By enhancing the flow of *prana* (life force) and balancing the elements within the body, Mudras contribute to the improvement of *chakshurendriya shakti* (eyesight) and the prevention of ocular diseases.

Conclusion:

Yoga Mudra offers a holistic approach to eye health, aligning the elemental forces within the body to prevent disease and enhance visual acuity. By harmonizing the elements like *prana*, and mind, mudras serve as a potent adjunct therapy for ocular ailments.

Accessible to individuals of all ages, mudras require no equipment other than the fingers themselves, making them a convenient and powerful tool for preserving eyesight and promoting overall wellness.

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: Nil

Copyright © 2024 International Journal of Research in Ayurved and Allied Sciences (PDEAS-IJRAAS). This is an open access article, it is free for all to read, download, copy, distribute, adapt and permitted to reuse under Creative Commons Attribution Non Commercial-ShareAlike: CC BY-NC-SABY4.0 license.

References:

1. Sastri Kasinath, Charak Samhita, Vidyotini Hindi Commentary, Sutrasthan 5/58, Choukhamba Sanskrit Pratisthan, Editon Reprint, 2012; 85
2. Bir S. Handspring Publishing Limited; 2016. Principles and Practice of Yoga in Health Care.
3. Ashtanga Samgraha of Vriddha Vagbhatta, Edited by Dr. Shivprasad Sharma, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series office, Edition. 2008, Shareera Sthana 2/40 <https://www.arhantayoga.org/blog/complete-guide-to-mudras-and-benefits/4>.
5. Tripathi Brahmananda, Astang Hridayam of Vagbhatta, Hindi commentary, Sutrasthana 2/17, Choukhamba Sanskrit Pratisthan, New Delhi, Edition-Reprint, 2014; 32
6. Gherand Sanhita Mudra Prakaran 1-25 mudras
7. Yoga Mudra and All Its Benefits: 8 Basic Mudras-Book Yoga Teacher Training.com
8. Sunitha S, Sharma CP. Mudra therapy and its classification. International Journal Health Science Res.2021; 11(1):118-126. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5934951/9>.
10. kriya Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and Siddhas Govindham Pages 185–209.
11. Ajay Kumar and Neelam Kumari (2017) Effects of yoga mudras in daily life, International Journal of Yogic, Human Movement and Sports Sciences; 2(2): 202-205.
12. Akhtar P., Yardi S., Akhtar M. Effects of yoga on functional capacity and well being. Int. J. Yoga. 2013;6(1):76.
13. Venkatesh H., et al. Molecular signature of the immune response to yoga therapy in stress-related chronic disease conditions: an insight. Int. J. Yoga. 2020;13(1):9. Doi: 10.4103/ijoy.ijoy_82_18.
14. Yang K. A review of yoga programs for four leading risk factors of chronic diseases. Evid. Based Complement. Alternat. Med. 2007;4(4):487–491. Doi: 10.1093/ecam/nem154.