



## DINACHARYA FOR MAINTANCE OF HEALTH OF EYE ACCORDING TO VAGBHATA

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### ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, the traditional system of medicine indeed emphasizes a holistic approach to health that includes both prevention and cure. In ophthalmology, the preventive measures play a crucial role in maintaining eye health and reducing the risk of developing various eye diseases that can lead to vision impairment. The ability to see clearly and perceive the world around us is crucial for various activities, from navigating our environment to appreciating the beauty of the world. The term Swasthavritta refers to a lifestyle or regimen followed to maintain health and prevent the occurrence of diseases. It encompasses a set of practices and principles that are aimed at promoting overall well-being and preventing imbalances in the body and mind. All the Acharyas have mentioned the mandatory practice of Dinacharya for health maintenance. Hence here an attempt has been made to compile the procedures to improve the health of the eye through which the various diseases of eye can be prevented. The daily regimens like Anjana, Nasya, Dhumapana, Kavala, Gandusha, Abyanga, Padatra dharana, Snana etc are included for maintaining eye health. The eyes should be always protected from the external factors like dust, heat, radiations, excessive screen time, over straining the eyes like in dim light reading, gadget use in dim light etc. Most of the Netraroga in the current scenario can be prevented by healthy Dinacharya and by avoiding negligence.

**KEYWORDS:** Nethra Swasthya, Dinacharya, Anjana, Nasya, Snana.

### ➤ INTRODUCTION

*Ayurveda*, the traditional system of medicine indeed emphasizes a holistic approach to health that includes both prevention and cure. It focuses on maintaining a balance in various aspects of life, including diet, lifestyle, and mental well-being, to prevent diseases and promote overall health. Prevention is often considered the most effective and cost-efficient approach to healthcare. In ophthalmology, the preventive measures play a crucial role in maintaining eye health and reducing the risk of developing various eye diseases that can lead to vision impairment.

The definition of a *Swastha* (healthy individual) in Ayurveda is based on the balance of three *Doshas* (biological energies), proper *Agni* (digestive fire), balanced *dhatu*s (body tissues), and a harmonious state of mind, senses, and soul.<sup>[2]</sup> The term *Swasthavritta* refers to a lifestyle or regimen followed to maintain health and prevent the occurrence of diseases. It encompasses a set of practices and principles that are aimed at promoting overall well-being and preventing imbalances in the body and

mind. *Swasthavritta* involves adopting *Dinacharya* (daily routines), dietary habits, and lifestyle practices that align with an individual's constitution (*Prakriti*) and help maintain the balance of *Doshas*, *Agni*, *Dhatu*s, and other physiological components. Hence creating awareness among the people regarding these concepts is necessary in this era of excessive and improper use of sense organs especially the eyes.

### Maintainance of Eye health with Dinacharya

All the Acharyas have mentioned the mandatory practice of Dinacharya for health maintainance. Among these, Special mention of certain daily regimen is important. These are practices which can be done easily on a daily basis.

### ➤ Abhyanga (Oil massage)

Sarva Daihika Abhyanga -Whole body oil massage: The word Drushti Prasadani mentioned in Ashtanga Hrudaya stating that daily oil massage to the body before taking bath is essential in maintaining and improving the vision.

### ➤ Padabhyanga

*Acharya Vagbata* mentions that oil massage on the body especially the massage over *Shira* (head), *Shravana* (ears) and *Paada* (foot) leads to *Drushti Prasadana* and is essential in maintaining and improving the vision. The regular massage of feet is said to be beneficial to the eyes. Applying oils over soles through massages can have a positive impact on eyes by influencing the *Siras* (veins) connected to the eyes. In the book *Nadi Darpana*, it is explained that there are ten *Naadis* (channels) in the head. Among these, *Gandaari* and *Hastijivha* are associated with the left and right eyes, respectively. *Gandhari* is surrounding the *Ida Naadi*, extending from *Pada*, and ending in the left *Netra* (eye). Similarly, *Hastijivha* surrounds the *Pingala Naadi*, extends from *Pada*, and ends in the right eye.

This reflects the indicated network of *Naadis* believed to be connected to eye function in Ayurveda.

### ➤ Anjana

The procedure of application of collyrium on the lower eye lids from inner canthus to outer canthus and vice versa is called as *Anjana*.<sup>[5]</sup> *Acharya* mentions the daily use of *Sauviranjana* for *Sleshma Sravanartham* (drainage or elimination of excess *Kapha*). The purpose of *Anjana Karma* is *Kapha Nirharana*.

Collyrium (application of kohl) There are basically 2 types of *Anjanas* mentioned in the classics. Them being *Sauviranjana* and *Rasanjana*. *Sauviranjana* is a special collyrium, which is to be applied on a daily basis which makes the eyelids look unctuous and beautiful.

*Rasanjana* - This is to be applied on a weekly basis to reduce the *Kapha* increased in the eye due to daily usage of *Sauviranjana* In our day to day life.

### ➤ Snana

Bathing, special mention has been given to the usage of hot and cold water for bathing. The *Acharyas* have specifically mentioned that the usage of hot water is for the trunk and not for the head. Hot water over the head can prove detrimental to the eye health. This is clinically seen as most of the people in cold territories have a practice of pouring hot water for head wash. These particular people also end with poor eye sight. Also *Acharya Vagbata* mentions that bath is contraindicated if a person has any eye diseases.

### ➤ Nasya

One among *Panchakarma* is a procedure in which the medicated oils or herbal juices are instilled in to the nostrils. In *Pratimarsa Nasya*, medicament is dripped in to the nose in lesser quantity and it never causes complications and can be practiced daily. According to *Acharya Vagbata*, it is advisable and good to practice daily from birth to death of a person.<sup>[7]</sup> It prevents the

disease of eyes, nose, ears and also causes *Indriya Prasadana*.<sup>[8]</sup> Nose is the gate way to the *Shira* and medicines used in various forms cure the diseases of *Shira*. It causes *Srotomukha Visodhana* and *Akshilaghuta* and found to be effective in *Madhyama Margaroga*. This highlights the preventive aspect of nasal administration to maintain overall health in these sensory organs. The administration of drugs through *Nasya* (nasal drops), with potential absorption through mucus membranes, may facilitate entry of therapeutic compounds into general blood circulation.

### ➤ Dhumapana (inhalation of smoke)

The inhalation and exhalation of medicated fumes from the medicated *Dhumavarti* is called *Dhumapana*. The fumes from the ignited Medicines have *Ushna* and *Tikshna Guna* and *Vata Kapha Shamana* property. It helps in the evacuation of excessive *Kapha Dushti* in *Shiras*. It helps to get lightness of head and clarity of sense organs (*Indriya Samsuddhi*). *Prayogika Dhumpana* is advised for daily use and it prevents disorders of head and neck region caused by imbalances in *Vata* and *Kapha*. This daily practice is said to cure *Netrasula* (eyeache) and discharge i.e., *Kapha* from the *Sirah Pradesha*, contributing to overall health of eye.<sup>[10]</sup>

But this procedure is contraindicated in *Timira Netraroga*. The excessive *Dhumapana* practice causes complications like blindness, deafness etc. *Tikshna Gandusha*, *Nasya* and *Dhumapana* are advised in the prodromal phase of *Abishyanda Roga* where the aim of *Dhumapana* is nothing but the *Kaphashamana*.

### ➤ Kavala & Gandusha

In *Gandusha* procedure, the medicated oil or *Kwatha* is completely filled in the oral cavity and retained till *Dosha* gets filled in the mouth or watering from the eyes. Whereas the movement of the *Dravya* inside the mouth constitutes *Kavala*. These procedures are more effective in treating local inflammatory and degenerative diseases of oral cavity, nose and ears. However, the *Samyak Lakshana* of *Kavala* and *Gandusha* explains *Indriya Prasadana* which mentions the importance of these procedures. The absorption of medicines may happen through ophthalmic branches of facial artery.

### ➤ DISCUSSION

The above mentioned practices and foods can be incorporated in our modern life to avoid lifestyle diseases as well as improve eye health. The practice of *Padabhyanga* has clinically proven to be effective in promoting eye health. The practice of *Anjana Karma* on a daily basis has been proven to show improvement in vision. The practice of *Kriyakalpas* have shown statistically and clinically significant results in promotion of eye health and as treatment for various eye diseases.

### ➤ CONCLUSION

The prime factor or the basic pathological change behind the eye disorders is *Abishyanda. Pitta (Alochaka)* the functional factor along with Kapha has inevitable role in *Netra Swasthya*. Hence the measures to prevent the *Pitta* and *Kaphadushti* along with the maintenance of normal function of Vayu should be adopted for proper healthy functioning of eye. *Abishyandi Ahara*, which refers to heavy and unctuous foods that can contribute to excess secretions, should be avoided from the diet to prevent eye disorders. The eyes should be always protected from the external factors like dust, heat, radiations, excessive screen time, over straining the eyes like in dim light reading, gadget use in dim light etc. Most of the *Netraroga* in the current scenario can be prevented by healthy *Dinacharya* and by avoiding negligence. In *Neetisataka* of *Chanakya*, it mentioned that *Shiras* is important among the whole body and eyes are most important among all the sense organs. Hence by incorporating healthy diet, use of protective eyewear, taking breaks during screen time, avoidance of straining the eyes in dim light, adopting regular eye care practices, such as eye exercises and washing the eyes with clean water, ensuring sufficient and quality sleep along with practising *Dinacharya* eyes can be protected.

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