

REVIEW ARTICLE

Role of *Bhramari Pranayama* on Health: A Conceptual Study

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ABSTRACT

Yoga is a system of physical and mental exercise designed thousands of years ago to balance and unite the mind, body, and spirit. *Yoga* is essentially a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science, which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. *Pranayama* is the complete breathing exercise which is the part of *Yoga*. In all *Pranayama*, the breath plays an important role. *Bhramari pranayama* is the excellent breathing exercise for releasing agitation, frustration, and anger. It is the best breathing exercise in calming mind which promotes the good sleep. People with insomnia may have trouble falling asleep, many awakening during the night, with difficulty going back to sleep, fitful sleep, and daytime drowsiness. Sleep serves a critical role in health and well-being. Sleep is not just a time to rest our mind; our bodies need it, too. A lack of sleep can cause a bunch of health issues, such as higher blood sugar levels, liver problems, weight gain, and severe depression; other serious diseases; and illnesses. Therefore, it is being realized that it might be possible to exploring the role of above given *Bhramari Pranayama* on health.

1. INTRODUCTION

Maintenance of health is one of primitive objectives of *Ayurveda*. *Nidra* is non-suppressible urge and part of *Trayopastambha* (three Sub-pillars), i.e., *Ahara*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya*.^[1] These sub-pillars are necessary to maintain the *Samyavastha* of *Tridosha* (three pillars) that leads to health. *Nidra* is one the three sub-pillars of the body. The proper sleep provides health, happiness, nourishment, strength, virility, knowledge, and long life,^[2] while improper sleep leads to disease and sorrow, emaciation, weakness, sterility, ignorance and shortened life.

Yoga is an Indian spiritual and physical practice or disciplines whose origins date back to pre-historic times. Contrary to what some may think, *Yoga* is not just about exercise with the main purpose of improving health and well-being, but it is also about self-realization. The importance of *Yoga* in our lives cannot be underestimated. It is a science that focuses on improving not only physical health but also mental and spiritual well-being, which are the foundations of our life. *Yoga* is an age-old art, which has helped millions of people all over the world to attain a better state of physical and mental health.

In the realm of ancient Indian yogic practices, one powerful technique stands out for its transformative potential: *Pranayama*. *Pranayama*, which translates to “breath control” in *Sanskrit*, is a profound practice that harnesses the power of conscious breathing. *Bhramari Pranayama* is calming breath practice that can be performed anywhere. *Bhramari Pranayama* involves production of reverberating sound mimicking the sound of honey bee during *Rechaka* (exhalation). The vibrations produced during the procedure are believed to have various good effects on different system of body.^[3]

In this study, we will explore the significance of *Bhramari Pranayama* and how it can positively impact our physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A literary review regarding *Bhramari Pranayama* was done through various Ayurvedic classical texts, journals, and research papers. The collected references are critically assumed to frame the conceptual aspect of role of *Bhramari Pranayama* on Health.

2.1. Vital Energy and Life Force

According to yogic philosophy, *Prana* refers to the vital life force energy that permeates the universe and sustains all living beings. *Pranayama* serves as a means to harness and control this vital energy.

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By practicing conscious breathing techniques, we can enhance our *pranic* flow, ensuring a harmonious balance within the body and mind. Through *Pranayama*, we tap into the source of life, fostering vitality, and rejuvenation.

2.2. Stress Reduction and Relaxation

In our fast-paced modern lives, stress has become a common companion. *Pranayama* offers an antidote to this stress epidemic. By engaging in slow, deep, and conscious breathing, we activate the parasympathetic nervous system, triggering the relaxation response. This leads to a reduction in stress hormones, a decrease in blood pressure, and an overall sense of calmness and tranquility. Incorporating *Pranayama* into our daily routine can be a powerful tool for managing stress and promoting relaxation.

2.3. Improved Respiratory Health

In an era where air pollution and respiratory disorders are on the rise, maintaining healthy lungs is of utmost importance. *Pranayama* taught during breath detox *Yoga* provides a natural and effective way to enhance respiratory health. By expanding lung capacity and improving the efficiency of breathing, *Pranayama* helps clear the respiratory system, increase oxygen intake, and expel toxins. Regular practice of *Pranayama* can alleviate respiratory ailments such as asthma, bronchitis, and allergies, while strengthening the respiratory muscles.

2.4. Enhanced Mental Clarity and Focus

The breath and the mind are intricately linked. By regulating the breath through *Pranayama*, we can achieve greater mental clarity and focus. Shallow and erratic breathing patterns often accompany a scattered and restless mind. Through *Pranayama* techniques such as *Nadi Shodhana* (alternate nostril breathing) or *Kapalabhati* (skull shining breath), we harmonize the breath and steady the mind. This cultivates a sense of mental equilibrium, improves concentration, and enhances overall cognitive function.

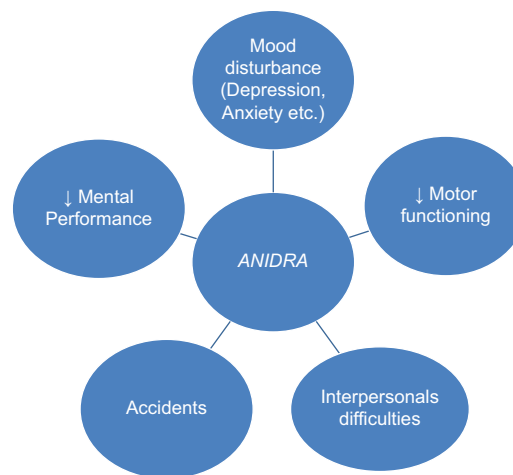
2.5. Balancing the Energetic Body

Pranayama serves as a bridge between the physical body and the subtle energy systems. It helps balance the flow of energy within the body, promoting a sense of overall well-being. Through practices such as *Bhastrika* (bellows breath) or *Ujjayi* (victorious breath), *Pranayama* clears energetic blockages and enhances the flow of vital energy through the *Nadis* (energy channels). This can lead to increased vitality, improved immunity, and a heightened sense of spiritual awareness.

2.6. Deepening Meditation Practice

Pranayama is an invaluable tool for those on the path of meditation. By practicing specific breathing techniques, we prepare the mind and body for the inward journey. Deep, rhythmic breathing helps calm the mind, settle the senses, and create an optimal state for meditation. When combined with mindfulness, *Pranayama* becomes a gateway to accessing deeper states of consciousness, self-awareness, and spiritual growth.

Insomnia is defined as difficulty initiating sleep, maintaining sleep, final awakening that occurs much earlier than desired or sleep that is non-restorative and of poor quality and result in impairment in daytime function. People with insomnia may have trouble falling asleep, many awakenings during the night, with difficulty going back to sleep, fitful sleep, and daytime drowsiness.



During the day, people with insomnia may be anxious and irritable, forgetful with difficulty concentrating.^[4]

3. DISCUSSION

3.1. Preventive and Therapeutic Role of *Bhramari*

3.1.1. *Bhramari* (Bee Breath)

The reference of *Bhramari Pranayama* found in *Gherand Samhita*^[5], and *Hathayoga pradipika*,^[3] and it is stated in that *samhita* that *Bhramari pranayama* does *Veerysuddhi*, *Raktasudhi*, *majjatanu suddhi*, increase concentration. *Bhramari* relieves stress and cerebral tension and so helps in alleviating anger, anxiety, and insomnia, increasing the healing capacity of body.

The word *Pranayama* comes from *Sanskrit*. It literally translates to, “extension of breath”. *Prana* is the life force that infuses our bodies with energy. It forms a strong association between the mind and consciousness.

Before sleep, it is important to calm our mind. *Bhramari Pranayama* teaches us to keep our breath still so that we can steady our mind. This is just one of the many *Bhramari pranayama* benefits. Practicing *yoga* before relaxing on bed helps mind relax and enters a calm state, enabling to get better sleep through the night as well. If we are not getting enough deep sleep, *yoga* for better sleep is the best way to go.

The *Bhramari Pranayama* finds its name from the Black Indian Bee, *Bhramari*. The sound make when we exhale while practicing this *Pranayama* resembles the humming sound of a bee in our throat cartilage and so, it is called *Bhramari Pranayama*. Whether anxious or angry, this breathing exercise can help release the negative emotions, while breathing in freshness and joy. A simple technique with miraculous benefits, the *Bhramari Pranayama* can be practiced anywhere to de-stress, especially as a part of our routine *yoga* before bed. There are several *Bhramari pranayama* benefits that can avail of once start practicing it every day.

Sit on *Padmasana* or *Siddhasanas*. Inhale rapidly through both nostrils making sound of *Bhramarah*, the Bee and exhale through both nostrils, making the humming sound. In the end of inhale through both nostrils, retain the breath. *Bhramari* is a calming *Pranayama* that involves creating a humming sound during exhalation. By gently closing the ears with the thumbs and placing the index fingers on the forehead, the practitioner produces a

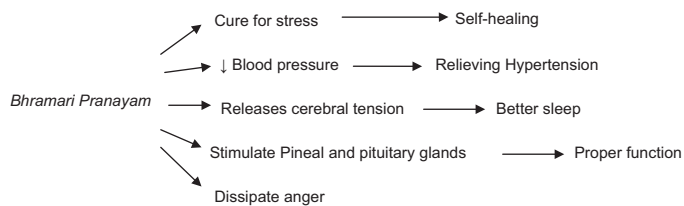
soothing vibration throughout the head. *Bhramari* is known for its ability to relieve anxiety, reduce blood pressure, and promote relaxation with healthy sleep.^[6]

The *Bhramari Pranayama* lowers one's blood pressure, thus relieving hypertension. It releases cerebral tension, hence it is recommended as a nightly routine *Yoga* for better sleep. It soothes the nerves.

Regular practice of *Bhramari Pranayama* has demonstrated a positive impact both on sleep and the autonomic nervous system through increased parasympathetic dominance. Finally, there is emerging evidence of the positive impact of *Bhramari* due to increased expression of nitric oxide (NO) and its impact on oxygen uptake. Human para nasal sinuses produce a large amount of NO continuously and humming sound vibrations create air oscillations which in turn increase the exchange of air between the sinuses and the nasal cavity.

Bhramari Pranayama incorporates many benefits of *Pranayama* through slow breathing since it involves slow inhalation followed by even longer exhalation while making the humming sound. The humming sound resembles repetitive mantra chanting practice which provides significant benefits on the physiological systems. It is an excellent simple practice for relaxing the mind. It can be practiced before sleeping. It directly impacts the brain and releases stress,^[7] cerebral tension and controls anger, anxiety all which directly impacts insomnia.^[8] It also impacts the healing capacity of the body.

3.2. Benefits of *Bhramari Pranayama*



It has positive effect on the endocrine system, hormonal imbalance,^[9] and pulmonary functions,^[10] effective in improving acoustic and aerodynamic parameters of voice.^[11]

4. CONCLUSION

Given the simplicity of practice and potential benefits through positive impact on heart rate (HR), HR variability (HRV), lung function, autonomic function, attention, and sleep quality, *Bhramari* practice promises to be a very powerful public health intervention. This simple practice helps decrease HR, increase HRV, and improve lung function for both healthy and chronic disease subjects (excluding cancer and chronic kidney disease where the lung function could already be impaired, making it difficult to do the practice). *Bhramari Pranayama* provides a means to individual peace and happiness and develops optimism attitude, self-esteem, and proper coordination between mind and body.

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6. AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All the authors contributed equally in design and execution of the article.

7. FUNDING

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8. ETHICAL APPROVALS

This study is not required ethical clearance as it is review study.

9. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

10. DATA AVAILABILITY

This is an original manuscript and all data are available for only review purposes from principal investigators.

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