

International Research Journal of Ayurveda & Yoga

Vol. 5 (6),54-56, June, 2022

ISSN: 2581-785X; <https://irjay.com/>

DOI: [10.47223/IRJAY.2022.5607](https://doi.org/10.47223/IRJAY.2022.5607)



Trataka: the Serene Consciousness

Sushmita¹ , Anjali²

1. PG Scholar, Department of Panchkarma, Dayanand Ayurvedic College, Jal. (Pb.)
2. Assistant Professor, Department of Shalaky Tantra, Dayanand Ayurvedic College, Jal (Pb.)

Article Info

Article history:

Received on: 15-05-2022

Accepted on: 21-06-2022

Available online: 30-06-2022

Corresponding author-

Anjali, Assistant Professor,
Department of Shalaky
Tantra, Dayanand Ayurvedic
College, Jal (Pb.)

Email: dranjali30j@gmail.com

ABSTRACT:

Trataka is a *Yogic* practice, which means to gaze steadily. It is the practice of meditation that involves staring at a single point such as a small object, black dot or candle flame. It is primarily used to purify the mind and provides the strength to concentrate but it also improves eyesight and stimulus the brain via optic nerve. It acts as stepping stone between physically oriented practices and mental practices which lead to higher states of awareness. *Trataka* is explained in *Shatkarma*. *Shatkarma* is combination of six *karmas* of purification. The six types of *karmas* are: *Dhauti*, *Basti*, *Neti*, *Trataka*, *Nauli* and *Kapala Bhati*. Among those *Shatkarma*, *Trataka* destroys the eye diseases and removes sloth, etc. It is traditionally associated with *Hath Yoga* but it can also be used to achieve *Raja Yoga*. It forms a bridge between *Hath Yoga* and *Raja Yoga*. *Yoga* is a traditional method of meditation of ancient India which has explained about *Shatkarma*.

Keywords: *Trataka*, *Yoga*, *Shatkarma*, *Hath Yoga*, *Raj Yoga*

INTRODUCTION

Trataka is gazing steadily without blinking at an object placed directly in front of the eyes such as a minute object, black dot or candle flame, without winking, until tears begin to flow. *Trataka* is explained in *Shatkarma*. *Shatkarma* is combination of six *karmas* of purification. The six types of *karmas* are: *Dhauti*, *Basti*, *Neti*, *Trataka*, *Nauli* and *Kapala Bhati*.¹ Among those *Shatkarma*, *Trataka* destroys the eye diseases and removes sloth, etc.² It is traditionally associated with *Hath Yoga* but it can also be used to achieve *Raja Yoga*. It forms a bridge between *Hath Yoga* and *Raja Yoga*. *Yoga* is a traditional method of meditation of ancient India which has explained about *Shatkarma*.³

Trataka can improve vision by promoting mental focus and

by strengthening and relaxing our eyes muscles. Such muscles are responsible for controlling the eyeballs movements towards the upward, downward, left and right directions. The main issue of the present period is stress and undesirable ways of living. Excessive use of computers, cell phones and television screen lead to strain on eyes which leads to Refractive errors. Refractive error (RE) is one of the most common ocular conditions affecting all age groups. Most REs can be easily corrected at the primary care level with spectacles. Spectacles are only palliative. *Trataka* is beneficial to one's vision. It avoids refractive error and the need for spectacles in everyday life if practiced on a regular basis.

Trataka has ability in gaining mental health and eye vision



enhancement. At the time of practicing *Trataka*, the eyeballs should remain steady and the eyelids should not flicker. No object except the one on which *Trataka* is to be performed should be seen, and the mind should not wander hither and thither but be merged in observation of the object. 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 centres, 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.

Trataka is a Sanskrit word which means “to look” or “to gaze”⁴. It serves as the bridge between physically focused activities and mental practices that contributes to higher level of consciousness. As, it can help in eye problems. It will avoid refractive errors and the need of spectacles in everyday life if practiced on regular basis.⁵ In this article the preliminary practice of *Trataka* are discussed that could be practiced by every *Yoga* seeker and even by every individual for better eye and mental health.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Reference of *Trataka* is very limited in ancient literature. This review article is based on a literary review compiled from the classical book of *Yoga, Hath Yoga Pardipika, Swasthwritha* textbooks and various journals.

DISCUSSION

Trataka types ⁶

Trataka is of three types:

1. External *Trataka* or “*Bahiranga*”
2. Internal *Trataka* or “*Antaranga*”
 1. External *Trataka* or “*Bahiranga*”

1. External *Trataka* consists of gazing at a particular symbol or object with eyes opened and focusing on the same stimulus until tears drop from the eyes. The point of concentration is usually a symbol or object which activates the inner potential and can absorb the mind. The object most commonly used is candle flame for External *Trataka*. The purpose of focusing the eye during External *Trataka* is to arouse the internal vision and to make that vision steady by stopping the eye movements. It also builds *Dharna*.

2. Internal *Trataka* or “*Antaranga*”

When the practice of external *Trataka* is mastered, then the practitioner able to gaze into the void; it’s the internal

Trataka. Practicing *Bahiranga Trataka* on candle flame is beneficial to practice *Antaranga Trataka* because even after closing the eyes, the impression of the flame remains for some time and *Trataka* can easily be practiced. In this *Trataka*, the Practitioner concentrates the mind on an internally imagined object with closed eyes.

Guidelines and technique for *Bahiranga Trataka*⁷

- Practice in a dark room which is free from dirt and insects.
- Place a candle 2-3 feet away in front of you with the flame at eye level.
- Ensure the flame is still and does not flicker at all.
- Sit in a comfortable meditative pose, preferably in *Siddha Yoni Asana*, and place the hands on the knees in either *jnana* or *chin mudra*.
- Relax your whole body and close your eyes.
- Practice *Kaya Sthairyam* (steadiness of the body) for a few minutes. Then open your eyes and gaze at the middle portion of the candle flame, just above the wick.
- Try to keep the eyes perfectly steady. Do not blink. Try to keep the mind empty.
- Lower the eyelids if the eyes become tired. When tears begin, close the eyes and again start with full concentration at the candle flame.
- Keep the mind completely devoid of thought. Only be aware of the object of concentration. When thoughts come, let them pass and remain uninvolved.
- Practice for fifteen to twenty minutes unless the guru has advised you to do it for a longer period.
- *Trataka* can be done at any time, but it is more effective when performed on an empty stomach. The most suitable time is between four and six a.m. after *asana* and *pranayama* practice.
- If you want to delve deeper into the mind, *Trataka* should be done late at night before going to bed and before meditation.

Guidelines and technique for *Antaranga Trataka*⁸

- Prepare yourself in the same way as for *Bahiranga Trataka*.
- Keep your eyes closed throughout the practice and concentrate on your symbol.
- If you have no symbol, then try to visualize a point of light, like a twinkling star.
- Try to see the object clearly and steadily in the dark space in front of the closed eyes. Practice for 5-20 minutes.
- This practice has to be cultivated and it can take a long time.

Benefits of Trataka

Some of the benefits associated with *Trataka* are:

- Improves vision
- Improves memory and intelligence.
- Enhances self-confidence.
- Calms the mind as it provides inner peace.
- Helps to overcome mental, behavioural and emotional ailments.
- Helps to overcome stress and gives deep relaxation.
- Helps in sleep-related disorders such as headache, insomnia, nightmares, etc.

CONCLUSION

Trataka is a process of curbing the mind's oscillating tendencies. It benefits not only the eyes as well as beneficial for physiological and mental functions. The purpose of the *Trataka* is to make mind completely one pointed that is *ekagrata*. *Ekagrata* unlocks the inherent energy of the mind and channelizes it to the dormant area of consciousness. One pointedness of mind results into strong will power, improve memory and concentrative ability. Physiologically *Trataka* relieves eye ailments such as eyestrain and headache, myopia, astigmatism and even early stages of cataract. The central principle of *Bahiranga* and *Antaranga Trataka* is to disconnect the mind from the distractions and to achieve relaxation of mind as well as to enhance vision.

Acknowledgements - Nil

Conflict of Interest - None

Source of Finance & Support - Nil

ORCID

Sushmita , <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9086-2752>

REFERENCES

1. Agrawal S “Hathyogapradipika”, chapter 2, chaukhambhaorientalia Varanasi, first edition, 2017.pp. 34
2. Agrawal S “Hathyogapradipika”, chapter 2, chaukhambhaorientalia Varanasi, first edition, 2017.pp. 34
3. G. Gopinathan et.al “A clinical study to evaluate the efficacy of *Trataka Yoga kriya* and eye exercises (non-pharmacological methods) in the management of timira” Ayu. 2012 Oct-Dec; 33(4): 543–546
4. Saraswati S “Asana Pranayama MudraBandha”, Yoga publication trust, munger, Bihar, India, 2013, pp. 523
5. Panjabrao PK “Efficacy of *Trataka* in improvement of vision in myopic and hypermetropic children” IJAAR VOLUME II ISSUE, 6 MAR-APR 2016.732-737
6. Muktibodhananda S “Hathyoga Pradipika” Chapter 2, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger, Bihar, India ,2006, pp.208
7. Muktibodhananda S “Hathyoga Pradipika” Chapter 2, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger, Bihar, India ,2006.pp.209-210
8. Muktibodhananda S “Hathyoga Pradipika” Chapter 2, Yoga Publication Trust, Munger, Bihar, India ,2006.pp. 211

How to cite this article: Sushmita, Anjali “Trataka: The Serene Consciousness”

IRJAY.[online]2022;5(6);54-56.

Available from: <https://irjay.com>

DOI link- <https://doi.org/10.47223/IRJAY.2022.5607>