

A Literature Review of *Netraswastha Rakshnopay* for Better Eye Sight

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an unequivocally holistic tradition that reaches far beyond the realms of physical health and prevention of disease. *Ayurveda* is system that uses the inherent principles of nature to help in maintenance of body mind and spirit in perfect equilibrium with nature. *Ayurveda* is *sanskrit* term made up of word “*ayus*” and “*veda*”. *Ayus* means life and *veda* means knowledge or science.

Ayurveda medicine is system of medicine with historical roots in the Indian subcontinent. Globalized and modernized practice derived from *Ayurveda* traditions are type of complementary or alternative medicine. At its root, *Ayurveda* is a way of life that can help each of us to claim and celebrate our capacity for a fully embodied sense of wellness. *Shalakyatantra* is one of the important branches of *Ayurveda* dealing with the diseases and treatment of organ situated above the clavicle. We should always make efforts to protect our eyes and keep them healthy, for that different *Aacharyas* mentioned various ocular therapeutics just like *Kriyakalpas*. That should include in our *Dincharya* to maintain the ocular health.

Key Words *Netraswasth, Kriyakalp, Dincharya, Drushti*

Received 16th August 2025 Accepted 28th September 2025 Published 10th November 2025

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is found to describe ocular health and hygiene about certain factors like daily routine (*Dincharya*) and seasonal (*Rutucharya*) regimens. Procedures like *Kriyakalpa*, *Snana* (bath), *Padabhyanga* (foot massage with oil), *Nasya* (nasal route of drug administration), *Abhyanga* (oil massage), *Padatran Dharan* (footwear), *Dhoompana*, *Mukhlepa* (application of medicine on face), *Chhatra Dharan* (use of umbrella), *Nidra* (sleep), and *Vega Dharan* (suppression of natural urges) are important to retain ocular health. *Rutucharya* is also a very important aspect of preventive medicine as mentioned in the *Ayurvedic* texts. A faulty lifestyle has been linked to many diseases. *Ayurvedic* texts explain

Kriyakalpa procedures for healthy eyes as well as for the treatment of various eye diseases.

Kriyakalpa is a combined word of two distinct concepts which are *Kriya* which means therapeutic procedure and *Kalpa* which means medicinal formulation¹. The action of *Kriyakalpa* can be correlated with *Panchkarma*. It is used for *Sharir Parimarjan* which is the detoxification of the body and settling *Tridosha*. *Kriyakalpa* acts similarly locally. It settles the raised level of *Doshas* and improves the health of the eyes. Before *Kriyakalpa* whole body *Shodhana* with the help of *Panchkarma* is important, as that enhances the action and absorption of the drug. There are 7 numbers of *Kriyakalpas* in *Netra Vigyan* explained by different *Acharyas*.

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Acharya Sushruta mentioned 5 types of *Kriyakalpa*². Sharangdhara added two *Kriyakalpas* into it named *Bidalaka* and *Pindi*.

Importance of *Srotāñjana*³:

Anjana of *Srotonjana*, obtained from the bank of *Sindhu* River, should be applied regularly to eye to get rid of burning, itching, watering and pain. This will enhance the acuity of vision and helps to withstand sun, heat and heavy wind and eye diseases.

Cold water bath⁴:

Hot water bath over head is harmful to eye whereas cold water bath over head is good for eye.

Eye wash:

Eye should be washed with *ksirivriksa kashaya* or mixing it with milk, decoction of *Amalaki* or with cold water.

Padprakhshana:

Regular oil massage of feet protects the eyes.

Chatradharana⁵:

Holding an umbrella during summer is beneficial to eye.

Use of *Triphala*:

Triphala is useful in all visual disturbances in the form of paste, decoction or powder. In *kaphaja* diseases, it should be taken with honey; in *pittaja* diseases, with ghee; and in *vataja* diseases with oil.

Palming:

After taking food, briskly rub the two palms with one another and keep it over the closed eye lids so as to cover them. This will cure the dimness of eye sight

*Tarpana*⁶:

The word means a feeling of satisfaction. In this procedure, medicated *Ghrita* is held over the eyeball with continuous blinking action of the eyes for a stipulated time according to the intensity and nature of aggravated *Dosha*

Putpaka:

This procedure is similar to that of *Tarpana vidhi*, except the drug used for this procedure is medicinal juice extracted with *Putpaku vidhi* instead of *Ghrita*

Aschyotana:

It is the instillation of drops on an open eye from 2 *Angula* height. The drops used may be in the form of *Kwath*, *Ksheer or*, *Sneha*

Seka/Parisheka:

With the eye closed, medicine is poured on the eye in the form of *Dhara* from the height of 4 *Angula*

Anjana:

In this procedure paste or powder of medicines is used and applied over the inner margin of the lower lid with the help of an applicator or fingertip. *Charakacharya* has described *Sauviranjana* or *Prasadan Anjana* which can be applied every day to prevent eye diseases and maintain ocular health. *Rasanjan* can be used once a week or 5th day. *Charakacharya* and *Acharya Vagbhat* suppose that the eye being a *Tejo pradhon* organ is endangered by *Kapha* because of the opposite qualities. *Kapha* vitiation in the eye becomes responsible for eye diseases. Hence keeping the eyes in good physiological condition, *Anjana* is advised

Pindi/Kavalika:

This is nothing but a medicinal bandage. The paste of medicine is tied by a cloth and this pack is bandaged over the eye.

Bidalaka:

Ridol means cat's eye. In this *Kriyakalpa* paste of medicine is applied over eyelids and periorbital area except eyelashes. The eye looks like a cat's eye hence called "*Bidulaka*,

Other daily regimens for healthy eyes as given in texts are as follow:

Dhoompana:

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The process in which medicine fumes are inhaled through the nose or mouth and exhaled through the mouth. Those fumes go in the minute channels (*Sukshma srotasa*) and clean them in a way that accumulation of *Kapha* in *Srotaso* is prevented and ocular health is maintained. It is also mentioned that the fumes should be exhaled by mouth and if exhaled through the nose they may cause harm to the eyes. Apart from this *Dhoompana* is mentioned as a part of treatment for many ocular diseases like *Kaphotklishtha Kukulaka Pakshmakopa, Kruchchronmilan, Abhishyanda*, etc.

Nasya:

The process in which the route of drug administration is through the nasal cavity in the form of medicine oil, ghee, or powdered form. The drug acts on Srotasa through minute pores and drains out the *Kapha dasha* improving general ocular health. The nose acts as the door to *Uttamanga*⁷ i.e., head.

Padabhyang:

Oil is best drug for *Vata dosha*. In *Padabhyunga*, oil is applied and massaged over the foot. *Acharya Charaka* says that *Padabhyanga* is *Drushti prasadaka*. The foot is supplied with sympathetic and parasympathetic nerves. When we apply oil to the foot the stimulates nerves which is beneficial for ocular health.

Padatrandharan:

Footwear should be used regularly. In *Ayurveda* according to *Acharyas*, *Padatrandharan* has the *Chakshushya* effect

Nidra:

Sound sleep is necessary for the eyes. Normally 6 to 8 hours of sleep is necessary. When the natural urge to sleep is held it leads to heaviness and fatigue in the eyes. Less than 6 hours of sleep leads to dry eye and asthenopic symptoms.

Vegadharan:

Suppression of the urge of lacrimation leads to many eye diseases. Suppression of the urge to sleep causes heaviness of the eyes. It is always useful to avoid *Vegadharan*. *Bhavaprakasis* explained in his texts that intake of water in the morning through the nostrils improves vision and general ocular health.

Pathya Ahaar:

Pathya ahaar is a diet that is beneficial for the eyes, food that keeps the balance of *Tridosha* and does not aggravate the disease.

1. Intake of *Puran*-Medicated ghee
2. Food prepared with *Triphala, Shatavari, Mudga, Patol, Yava, Rakta shali, Kulatha yasha, Peya, Vilepi*
3. Vegetables like- *Surana, Patola, Vartaka, Karkotako, Karvellaka, unripe Mocha, unripe Mulaka, Punarnava, Markava, Kakamachi, Pattura, Kumarika, Draksha, Kustumbaru*
4. *Saindhava lavana*.
5. *Madhu* (Honey)
6. Breast milk, cow's ghee, cow's milk. *Godhuma*
7. *Shaka panchaka (Jivanti, Vastuka, Matsyakshi Meghnada, Punarnava)*

Pathya Vihar:

Seasons are classified by different features that express different effects on the body well as the environment. The prime principle of the *Ayurvedic* system of medicine is preventive aspects can be achieved by a change in diet and practices in response to changes in the climate.

Pitta accumulates during the rainy season due to acidic conditions of the atmosphere and weak digestion. It is aggravated when the heat return in the *Sharada rutu*. According to *Acharya Vagghat*, *Netra* is the main *Sthana* of *Alochak pitta*. As there is a *Prakop* of *Pitta dosha* in *Sharad rutu*, this aggravated

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Pitta dosha may affect the eyes and can cause eye diseases. *Virechana karma* is described as a preventive as well as curative treatment for *Pitta dosha* in *Samhita*.

According to *Ayurveda*, *Kapha dosha* has increased during *Shishir rutu* and starts liquefying during *Vasant rutu*. According to *Aacharya Vagbhat*, eyes predominant in *Tej-mahabhoot*, they should be protected from *Kapha dosha*. Hence *Vaman karma* is advised as preventive therapy to be done in *Vasant rutu*.

EYE EXERCISES-

1. *Deep breathing*- Breathing exercise helps to increase concentration.
2. *Neck exercises*- These help in neck rigidity increasing now a day in cell phone users.
3. *Face massage*- It increases blood circulation and provides nutrients and oxygen-rich blood to sense organs.
4. *Palming*- It gives relaxation to extra ocular muscles
5. *Tossing balls* -Increases concentration and elasticity of muscles
6. *Washing of eyes*- Wash out dirt particles and helps in dry eyes
7. *Shifting and swinging*- This swinging eye movement is done to improve extra ocular muscle action.
8. *Scale reading*- In patients with presbyopia, scale reading improves near reading and accommodative power.
9. *Trataka*- This is a procedure explained in yoga as eye exercise to improve the accommodative power of the eye and delay presbyopic age.
10. *Colour buttons*- Different coloured buttons or pebbles are mixed and separated, this motivates cone cells.

CONCLUSION-

We should always try to prevent eye disorders with a few efforts, adopt some routine activities, yoga, food habits, a few lifestyle modifications, *Achara Rasayana*, etc. Diseases of the eye affect psychological and developmental well-being, hence affecting the quality of life. That is why *Netra swasthya* very important part of *Swastha vrutta*. These all measures of *Dincharya* and *Rutucharya* are found closely associated with ocular health. Also, *Dincharya* and *Rutucharya* with modified lifestyles may help considerably reduce the impact of ocular diseases in the general population. *Kriyakalpa* as a part of local therapeutics cure the disease but equally improves the health of the eyes.

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