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**Title: Benefits of *Padabhyanga* in maintaining ocular health w.s.r. to *Marma* therapy**

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**Authors: Sushma Yadav\*<sup>1</sup>, ChandanaVirkar<sup>2</sup>**

1. PG-II (Shalakya Tantra)
2. H.O.D (Shalakya Tantra)

CARC Nigdi Pune, Maharashtra.

\*Corresponding Author: [drsush2111@gmail.com](mailto:drsush2111@gmail.com) 9673480787 )

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**Abstract:**

Ashtanga Hridya identifies 4 major nerves in the feet that connect to the eyes. These nerves help in maintaining good eyesight and relieve eyestrain when subjected to soothing therapies like padabhyanga. Padabhyanga is a holistic therapy and a religious approach towards an effective psychosomatic healing. According to Charak and Vagbhatta it is described as drishtiprasadak and according to Sushruta *chakshushya*. It can be done with the help of ghrta or taila, eg- tila taila, ksheerbala taila, eranda taila, goghruta. Other than this kasya vati padabhyanga can also be done as it balances the tridoshas. Marma Vijgyana theory of Ayurveda is the base of Acupressure, Acupuncture and Reflexology treatments. These therapies include healing the diseases by massage on the marma points. The reflexology points of eye are situated on the undersides of second and third toes. Doing massage on these points maintains the eye health and benefits in digital eye strain, dry eye, computer vision syndrome, myopia, hypermetropia, presbyopia, astigmatism, amblyopia and many other eye diseases. The medicated ghrta or taila gets absorbed via the siras, reaches the structures of the eyes, pacifies the doshas, reduces strain and provides soothing effect by nourishing the eyes.

**Keyword:**

*Padabhyanga, ocular health, chakshushya, marma therapy, reflexology, kasya bowl.*

## Introduction:

Ayurveda explains that the human body is inverted trees wherein the roots lie at the top (head) and the branches (upper and lower limbs) attached to the trunk (trunk of the body) are directed downwards. The trees are nurtured at their roots but the fruits are obtained always in their branches.

Therefore it is our responsibility not only to enjoy the fruits (co-ordinated activities like walking, holding etc) also take care of our hands and feet without which none of our daily activities are possible.

There are many therapies and medicines oriented towards a comprehensive foot-care which have evolved over a period of time.

Padabhyanga explained in Ayurveda is the mother of all therapies.

AshtangaHridaya identifies 4 major nerves in the feet that connect to the eyes. These nerves helps maintain good eyesight and relieve eyestrain when subjected to soothing therapies like Padabhyanga.

### What is Padabhyanga?

Padabhyanga is a Sanskrit term made up of 2 root words

Pada – means foot

Abhyanga – means massage using medicated oils

Padabhyanga is much more than what its root meaning shows. It is a concept beyond massage. Padabhyanga is a holistic therapy and a religious approach towards an effective psychosomatic healing.

### Importance of Padabhyanga in ocular health:

According to su.chi.24- Anagatbadhpratishedh-

According to a.sng.su.3- Dinacharyaadhyaya Drishti prasada – Good and accurate vision, pleasantness of vision and eye health, Helps in improving and maintaining good eyesight (good foreyes).

## Materials and methods:

### Oils / ghee used for Padabhyanga:

- Tilataila (sesame oil)
- Go ghrita (Cow ghee) – useful in disorders with Vata and Pitta aggravation such as neuritis associated with burning sensation, diabetic neuropathy etc.
- Ksheerabalataila
- Erandataila(castor oil)

### Other forms / methods (variants of padabhyanga): Kasa bowl:

Metallic bowls called Kasa Bowl are used for Padabhyanga. These bowls are usually made up of metals like copper and tin.

The bowl is traditionally meant to contain seven metals that relate to the various body tissues. However it is mainly composed of 2 metals – copper(major part) and tin (minor part) – literally a bronze bowl. This is also called Kansa Vati Foot Massage. Massage with it balances the tridosha's.

### Marma Therapy:

This is a name given to the massage and reflexology techniques done on foot (padabhyanga) through the marmas.

The marma points directly influence the function of the internal organs of the body. They also influence the relationships between the organs.

It is the theory of Marmavijnana explained in Ayurveda that has become the base of the origin of acupressure, acupuncture and reflexology treatments. That means to tell that when we are conducting acupuncture, acupressure or reflexology therapies on the patients, we are only dealing with the marmas and trying to soothe them thereby re-establishing the free flow of energy in all the energy channels of the body.

Marma therapy is also said to detoxify and rejuvenate our system. So 'Through working on marma points, we can control Prana.



Through Prana, we can control our sensory and motor organs and eventually our entire mind-body complex.'

A combination where in reflexology is incorporated into the ancient Padabhyanga procedure is often called as 'Ayurvedic Reflexology'. The combination forms an effective combination towards ocular health.

### The Eye Reflexology Points

The eye reflexology points are located on the undersides of your second and third toes. It's like a U-shaped area below the toe pads. Because the energy meridians in the body cross over each other at the neck, the reflexology point for the LEFT eye is on the RIGHT foot. And conversely, the point for the right eye is on the left foot. To massage these points, use your thumbs to press and rub the U-shaped area in an up and down motion.

### Padabhyanga benefits on eye and ocular disorders:

- Digital eye strain
- Dry eye
- Computer vision syndrome
- Myopia (Short-sightedness)
- Hypermetropia (long sightedness)
- Presbyopia
- Astigmatism
- amblyopia (lazy eye)
- and many other eye disorders

### Pharmacological action of padabhyanga on eyes

Padabhyanga done with medicated oil or ghee, with the thumb rub and press the U-shaped

area under second and third toes. This oil or ghee gets absorbed into the siras via the skin of the foot (pada). Through the siras it reaches the structures of eyes pacifies the doshas, reduces strain and provides a soothing effect by nourishing the eyes.

### Aims\_and\_Objects:

**Aim-**To study the benefits of padabhyanga in maintaining ocular health w.r to marma therapy.

**Objectives-**1) To study the benefits of padabhyanga in maintaining ocular health.  
2) To study the concept of marma therapy and its relation to acupressure and reflexology.  
3) To study the benefits of above in ocular disorders

### Observations:

Padabhyanga done with taila or ghrita (snigdha dravyas) along with reflexology provides a soothing effect on the eyes.

### Results:

Padabhyanga is chakshushya and reflexology deals with the marma points of ayurveda.

### Discussions:

Padabhyanga pacifies the doshas through the siras which reaches the netra thereby nourishing them and soothing them. Also Ayurveda explains that the development of organs that Pada and Netra both have its origin from Vaikarik (modifying or modified source of creation) and Rajas Ahamkara (passionate source of creation), also both develop at same month in intrauterine life. Thus by therapy on Pada we can have its



effects on Netra because of their same origin. In pedal inunction the absorbed Taila, through Rasa (serum) in the skin and blood in the Siras gives nourishment to the eyes.

According to Physiology, by Padabhyanga the somatic sensory area in the cortex may get stimulation and as both feet and eyes are in the same area i.e. area II of cortex, its stimulant effect may go to the eyes and may act by improving the function of eyes and reducing the Eye Strain. Also by Padabhyanga there might be nourishing or stimulation effect on eyes through the interpretative (association) areas of feet and eyes, as both meets at Wernicke's area and improving the function of eyes.

Also marma therapy(reflexology and acupressure) enhances the action of padabhyanga done with medicated ghrita or taila.

### Conclusion:

Padabhyanga is dristiprasadak/chakshushya and hence is beneficial in maintaining ocular health.

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Sushma Yadav, Chandana Virkar

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