

In shashtras before practising Yogas six actions are shown in order to purify the body. In Aayurved-Shashtra different five types of karmas are prescribed in order to remove 'Doshas' (disorders) of the body Vata, Pitta and Cough of the disease, They are called Panchkarmas In the same way in Yogshashtra for purification of the body of a person description of Shatkarmas is seen. In Panchkarmas various medicines particularly are used while in Shatkarmas there is nothing like medicine. Shatkriyas are to be performed according to the guidance of proper guide, expert.

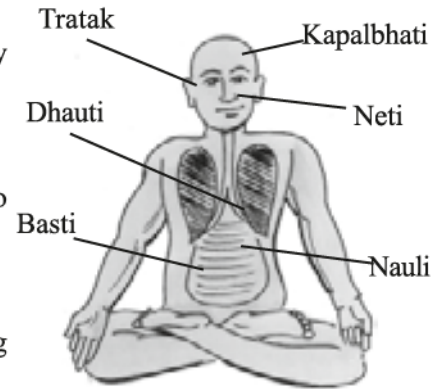
As shown in Hath Yoga Pradeepika

“द्योतिर्वस्तिस्तथ नेतिस्वाट कं नौलिकं तथा ।
क पालभातिश्चैतानि षट् क माणि प्रचक्षते ॥”

- i.e. (1) Dhauti
(2) Basti
(3) Neti
(4) Tratak
(5) Nauli
(6) Kapalbhathi

These six activities are called Shatkarmas. It is known as Shodhanpadhati (purification methods) as it purifies body. Each activity purifies certain part of various organs of the body. It is a specific characteristic of this Shatkriyas which action affects on which organ can be understood by this figure (picture).

- (1) **Dhauti** : Purifies upper part of the body like gullet, belly (stomach).
(2) **Basti** : Purifies (cleanses) rectum below large intestine.
(3) **Neti** : Purifies (cleanses) respiratory system from neck to nasadwar.
(4) **Tratak** : Cleanses eyes and makes them bright.
(5) **Nauli** : Cleanses all the organs of stomach including small and large intestines.
(6) **Kapalbhathi** : Purifies complete respiratory path (mode).



Shatkriyas

Method, benefits and things to bear in mind of various karmas :

(1) Dhauti :

Dhauti means 'to wash or clean'. This process cleanses organs like gullet and stomach and removes disorders of cough and pitta. In Gherand sanhita thirteen types of dhauti have been discussed, but mainly three types of dhauti are important in practice.

- (1) Vaman Dhauti (2) Vastra Dhauti (3) Dand Dhauti.

- (1) **Vaman Dhauti** : In this process stomach is washed through water and vomiting is done.

Method :

- (1) Take about two litres of warm water. Add 2.3 spoon-ful of salt.
- (2) Quickly drink six to eight glasses of water.
- (3) After drinking water upto neck completely, feeling like nausea or vomiting may be. Then sit on legs neither quite standing nor sitting position (ubhadak). Then try to vomit admitting your three fingers in mouth upto neck.
- (4) In this way vomit frequently and draw out, the taken water completely.

Benefits :

- (1) Vaman Dhauti increases the digestive power.
- (2) It gives relief in pitta or acidity and gaseous, trouble.
- (3) It becomes useful in diseases of cough like old colds and asthma.

Things to bear in mind :

- (1) Keep nails of fingers of hands trimmed (cut), so that it may not cause any injury to the throat.
- (2) It is essential to practise Vaman Dhauti in the morning, with empty stomach.
- (3) In this process, water is to be drunk quickly. Continue vomiting, till all the water comes out.
- (4) If you have ulcers in throat or stomach or any heart-disease or high blood pressure, then avoid doing this activity.
- (5) After doing this process, cleanse mouth nose and teeth properly and nothing to be eaten upto half an hour.



Vaman Dhauti

- (2) **Vastra Dhauti** :

In this process stomach and gullet are cleansed with cloth. In each Shashtra, only Vastra Dhauti is mainly described.

Method :

- (1) Strip of soft and very thin cloth, four inch broad and twenty two feet long is used. It is called Dhauti in Yogic language.
- (2) Soak this strip of cloth in hot water. It is used, while it is slightly warm.
- (3) Take out the tongue and put one end of the strip deep inside and then set down the strip slowly from neck - go on bringing down the strip.
- (4) On swallowing strip, it would enter in stomach. When 1 foot (33 cm) strip remains out, cleanse inside the stomach through naulikriya i.e. the strip is to be turned round in the stomach.
- (5) Finally at the end, strip of cloth should be taken out slowly.



Vastra Dhauti

Benefits :

- (1) This Karma removes all types of diseases pertaining to cough including coughing colds and asthma.
- (2) This gives relief in diseases of stomach like acidity and gas. It helps in reducing, fat by the stomach and gullet being cleansed. It enhances the digestive system.

Things to bear in mind :

- (1) Perform Dhautikriya in morning with empty stomach.
- (2) Vastra dhauti is rather a difficult process. So in the beginning try to swallow two to three foot cloth-strip and gradually it may be increased.
- (3) Vastra dhauti gives bodily exertion less as compared to Vaman dhauti. Even then those who have ulcers in stomach or neck should not perform this process.

(3) **Dand Dhauti :** In this process a long stick (Dand) or soft rubber tube 70 cm long is being used.

Method :

- (1) Drink two to three glasses of warm salty water.
- (2) Like Vastra dhauti, admit the rubber tube inside the neck and slowly through swallowing process move and slip the tube towards stomach.
- (3) As the tube reaches into the stomach polluted water of the stomach begins to come out.
- (4) After all the water getting out of the tube, it is drawn out slowly.

Benefits :

- (1) Dand dhauti process yields all the same benefits as of Vaman dhauti and Vastra dhauti.
- (2) Cough diseases like asthma gets rid of.
- (3) Acidity and gaseous trouble of the stomach are removed and the digestive-power increases.
- (4) In dand dhauti water comes out rather easily as compared to Vaman dhauti and draws out of stomach cough, pitta and gas.

Things to bear in mind :

- (1) He who has chest-ache due to excessive cough or ulcers in neck and stomach should not perform Dand dhauti.
- (2) Let not the tube go excessively in the stomach. Clean the tube properly before using it.
- (3) All the water taken in finally should be drawn out. This should be strictly watched.

(2) Basti :

Basti region means part of stomach under navel. This process cleanses large intestine and rectum. Basti is of two types :

- (1) Jala basti
- (2) Sthala basti or dry basti

(1) Jala Basti :

Method :

- (1) Sit in as much water so that the navel remains in water. Then let the rectum contract toward inside and then let it loose. Perform this nauli kriya frequently. Water goes inside rectum and large intestine through anus. Shake the stomach forcefully and draw out some water forcibly through anus.

Benefits :

- (1) This process is like an unfailing medicine for constipation.
- (2) It improves digestive power by increasing activeness of the intestine.
- (3) Diseases like piles, hemorrhoids fistula in anus. (occurring in anus) are get rid of.

(2) Sthal or Shushka (Dry) Basti :

Method :

- (1) Shushka means dry. This is also known as Vayu (gas) Basti. Lower part of the stomach is cleansed through air. Like Mulbandha process of frequently stretching muscles of the anus and letting them loose. It is called Ashvinimudra.

Benefits :

- (1) Makes senses strong.
- (2) Makes the body powerful.
- (3) It increases activeness of all the organs contained in the stomach like spleen, liver.

Jala Basti or Shushka Basti is sparingly used in modern times. Modern method i.e. use of enema is seen nowadays, but the ancient method is more beneficial than the modern method. Bastikriya is the best process for eradication of gastric diseases.

Things to keep in mind :

- (1) Practising basti with empty stomach is always beneficial.
- (2) When excessive illness prevails, never perform basti.
- (3) In Shushka basti by performing paschimottanasana anus has to be frequently contracted and expanded.

(3) Neti :

The process purifying the respiration path from nose to neck is called Neti. It is mainly of two types : (1) Jal neti (2) Sootra neti.

(1) Jal neti :

Method :

- (1) For Jal neti special type or Netipot is used.
- (2) Warm salty water is filled in the netipot.
- (3) While sitting or standing lean slightly forward. Admit the funnel of the Netipot into the right nostril and bend head on left side.



Jal neti

- (4) Water of Netipot enters through right nostril and comes out through left nostril. This type of process is practised.
- (5) Continue this activity for about a minute. Then the process be repeated for left nostril. Thus both the nostrils are to be purified.
- (6) Like frequent sneezing all the path from neck to nostril is required to be cleansed and then dried.
- (7) At the end, Kapalbhati is required to be practised.

Benefits :

- (1) This process gives very much relief in colds - coughing, head-ache and migraine.
- (2) It makes nerve endings contained in nose more efficient. It makes sense of smell more efficient.
- (3) Piles of nose, weakness of eyes and diseases of head are get rid of.
- (4) Memory power becomes bright.

Things to bear in mind :

- (1) When suffering from severe colds or ulcers in nose or neck this process should not be done.
- (2) After doing Jal neti avoid doing Asanas like Shirsasana.
- (3) Bear in mind that in Jal neti jaldhara (water current) is to be in fixed proportion for constant one minute.
- (4) At the end, it is very essential to make nose completely dry.

(1) Sootra neti :

Sootra means string of cotton. Put it in the nose and allow it to go so that it reaches the neck. Then open mouth and stretch out its hard part out of mouth and practise it doing forward-backward. After some time stretch the string out and repeat the activity through other nostril.

(2) Now, in practice, for sootra neti catheter of rubber is used. It is preferable.

Benefits :

- (1) It purifies the part from nostril (nose) to the neck.
- (2) It is very beneficial for frequent colds and chocking up of nose.
- (3) It gives relief in all the diseases of the parts above the chest. Gives relief in the diseases of Urdhvajatrugata.
- (4) Eyes become healthy and they get brightness.
- (5) It gives relief in headache and migraine.



Sootra neti

Things to bear in mind :

- (1) Catheter tube or sootra is to be stretched out through nose only.
- (2) Sootraneti is to be practised after Jal neti.
- (3) End of the tube of catheter is to be stretched out by admitting index (first) finger and the middle finger of the right hand in the mouth.
- (4) Holding both the ends do massage (rubbing) by stretching slowly inside and outside.
- (5) Catheter should be used after it is boiled in hot water. In the beginning Sootra neti should be practised in presence of a proper guide.

(4) Tratak :

The process of keeping attention (sight) firm on certain determined thing is called Tratak. It removes impurity of eyes.

Method :

- (1) Sit in Sukhasana. Arrange a table of the same height in front of the mouth.
- (2) Arrange a burning candle and put on a table at the same height so that sight of eyes fall one and half or two feet away from the face.
- (3) Make the sight firm on the flame of the candle without moving eyelashes.
- (4) Let little water flow from eyes, Slowly close your eyes, when burning sensation or water comes out of eyes. Imagine the flame with closed eyes.
- (5) After some time, open your eyes and do Tratak again.



Tratak

Benefits :

- (1) This process increases activeness of tear-glands and eyes become strong. The eyesight becomes bright.
- (2) Concentration increases by removing all the disorders of eyes.
- (3) Indirectly Tratak makes the head (brain) vigilant and thereby will-power increases.
- (4) Mind and Chitta become pure and this has a good mental effect.
- (5) This is an easy way to go ahead toward the Meditation path.

Things to bear in mind :

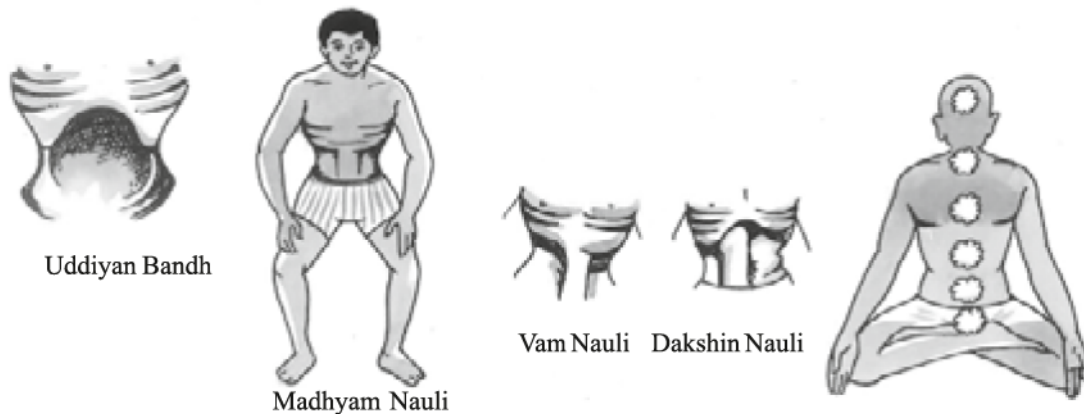
- (1) Take care that there is no unnecessary pressure or stress on eyes.
- (2) Increase time-period of Tratak without any twinkling, through frequent practice.
- (3) Tratak is a joyful process. Mind well that it does not become troublesome or painful.
- (4) At the end of the process of Tratak it is necessary to make eyes loose. For that rub both the palms of hands with each other quickly and produce heat through friction. Put both the hands on eyes without applying pressure on eyes and have heat collyrium. Massage slowly the muscles around eyes.

(5) Nauli :

Nauli means massage of organs of Stomach, Nauli is a higher stage of uddiyan Bandh. Generally, vertical two muscles of the stomach are called Nal. The process of separating both the muscles and moving them is called Naulikriya. It is essential to understand uddiyan Bandh before practice of Nauli.

Method :

- (1) Keep distance of about one foot between two legs, bend a little from the waist. Keep both the hands on thigh.
- (2) Take a deep breathing once. Stretch the stomach completely inside. Exhale completely. At this time stretch navel and stomach towards back as much as possible and stretch the diaphragm upside making a pit as much as possible in stomach.
- (3) While the diaphragm goes upward, there is hollowness in the stomach, which makes a bandh. It is called Uddiyan Bandh.
- (4) Now apply pressure on both the thighs with palms of hands and separate muscles of the navel and to move them forward or backward. This process is called Nauli.

**Types of Nauli :**

- (1) Madhyam Nauli
- (2) Dakshin Nauli
- (3) Vam Nauli
- (4) Nauli Chalan.

In the process of Uddiyan Bandh by stretching out the muscles in between the stomach staying motionless nauli is created. During Naulikriya, if muscles of right side of the stomach are stretched out by applying pressure on thigh on right side with right hand, then it would be Dakshin Nauli. In the same way stretching muscles out of the left side would be Vam Nauli. Nauli of these three types can be moved round and round towards right side or the left side. The process of making muscles of the stomach moving in round is called Nauli chalan.

Benefits of Nauli :

- (1) This process activates all the organs of the stomach.
- (2) Intestine being washed, excreta moves towards rectum. Hence Nauli is an effective remedy of the hardened constipation.
- (3) The digestive system improves due to blood-flow towards stomach becoming regular. All the diseases pertaining to the digestive system get rid of.
- (4) On getting internal massage to organs of the stomach and navel extra fat deposited on the stomach is removed.

Things to bear in mind :

- (1) Nauli is a complex process. Hence its practice minutely is necessary.
- (2) After attaining mastery over Uddiyan Bandh, thereafter only gradually Madhyam Nauli, Dakshin Nauli, Vam Nauli and at the end, Nauli chalan should be practised.
- (3) In pregnancy, high B.P. heart-disease or ulcer in stomach, hernia - such persons should not practise Nauli.
- (4) In the beginning this process should be done only under the presence and guidance of experienced Yoga teacher.

(6) Kapalbhathi :

Kapal means mastishka (head) and bhati means to be enlightened, to be brilliant. This process flashes head (and brain). Hence it is called Kapalbhathi. Kapalbhathi yields very effective results, like Pranayam. Hence certain people call it Kapalbhathi - Pranayam. But in fact, Kapalbhathi is the best shodhankriya.

Method :

- (1) Sit in Padmasana or Sukhasana. Keep body erect.
- (2) Make gnyanmudra through palms. Keep both the hands on knees.
- (3) Close eyes and concentrate on process of respiration.
- (4) Now push muscles of stomach inside and exhale breath through both the nostrils speedily.
- (5) Let muscles of the stomach loose little. Again push the stomach inside and exhale breath.
- (6) In this way frequently exhaling breath - process means Kapalbhathi.
- (7) When you get tired by constant exhaling (breathing out) stop the process and experience the change occurred in speed of breath. At this time Meditate on Gyan Chakra in between both the eye brows and experience it.
- (8) After rest for proper time period, repeat Kapalbhathi three to five times.

Benefits :

- (1) Due to this process, poisonous elements like carbondioxide (CO₂) in lungs are breathed out completely and the respiratory path is purified.
- (2) On getting internal massage to all the organs of stomach, diseases like gas, acidity, constipation are removed and it enhances the digestive power.
- (3) It yields effective results in diseases of diabetes, liver and spleen.
- (4) It makes physical structure beautiful by removing excessive fatness or thinness.
- (5) Face become bright and beautiful.
- (6) All diseases of lungs, even ashthama are recovered.
- (7) It activates all the cells of head. In view of Yoga, Gyan Chakra is awakened.

Things to bear in mind :

- (1) At the end of Kapalbhathi, important thing is that process of respiration stops for some time (few moments) and there is no desire to breath. This conditon is called 'Keval Kumbhak'. In Keval Kumbhak, mind becomes totally quiet and delightful experience of Prasannata (eternal joy).
- (2) While doing Kapalbhathi, no movement to be done and attend that the body may not bend forward or backward.
- (3) In this action, breath is forcefully exhaled then one has not to breathe in. Sadhak has to do only Rechak. Only Rechak form means Kapalbhathi.
- (4) In the initial stage, begin with 60 strokes in one minute. Then while practising on a regular basis, gradually maximum upto 120 strokes can be reached.

Without performing Shatkarma if Pranayam is done, then pain or labour is experienced to get achievement. After removing impurities of body through Shatkarma further practice of Yoga makes the body more matured.

EXERCISE

1. Answer the following questions :

- (1) What is Shatkarma ? Explain its importance.

2. Write short notes :

- (1) Dhautikriya (2) Basti (3) Neti
(4) Tratak (5) Nauli (6) Kapalbhata.

3. Answer the following questions in short :

- (1) Give names of six kriyas of Shatkarma.
(2) State types of Dhautikriya. State its two benefits.
(3) Write types of Basti. State things to bear in mind therein.
(4) State main types of Neti and its two benefits.
(5) What should be done at the end of Tratakkriya ?
(6) State benefits of Tratakkriya.
(7) State types of Nauli. Describe each in one line.
(8) State benefits of Naulikriya.
(9) State the method of Kapalbhata.
(10) State the things to bear in mind at the time of Kapalbhata.
(11) State four main benefits of Kapalbhata.

4. Select Proper Choice :

- (1) Which kriya of Shatkarma is known as pranayam ?
(A) Nauli (B) Basti (C) Kapalbhata (D) Tratak
- (2) Give name of the Shatkarma cleansing small-big intestines.
(A) Dhauti (B) Basti (C) Neti (D) Nauli
- (3) Which Karma cleanses the lowest part of the digestive system ?
(A) Nauli (B) Dhauti (C) Neti (D) Basti
- (4) Generally how many types of Dhauti are there ?
(A) Five (B) Nine (C) Four (D) Three
- (5) To which Karma Ashvinimudra connected ?
(A) Tratak (B) Basti (C) Dhauti (D) Neti
- (6) How many main types of Basti are there ?
(A) Two (B) Three (C) Four (D) Six
- (7) In Basti which Asana is used ?
(A) Padmasana (B) Pawanmuktasana
(C) Sukhasana (D) Pashchimottasana
- (8) Which Karma is essential to do at the end of Jal neti ?
(A) Tratak (B) Dhauti (C) Nauli (D) Kapalbhata
- (9) Which Shatkarma gives benefit in Urdhvajatrugata diseases ?
(A) Nauli (B) Neti (C) Kapalbhata (D) Tratak
- (10) Nowadays in which Karma the thin catheter of rubber is used ?
(A) Jal neti (B) Sootraneti (C) Dand dhauti (D) Vastra dhauti
- (11) Which bandh is used in Nauli karma ?
(A) Janubandh (B) Mulbandh (C) Galabandh (D) Uddiyanbandh

- (12) Which organ is specially benefitted by Tratak kriya ?
 (A) Nose (B) Mastishka
 (C) Eyes (D) Organs of the stomach
- (13) Which of the following is not a type of Naulikriya ?
 (A) Madhya nauli (B) Urdhva nauli (C) Vam nauli (D) Dakshin nauli
- (14) The process of moving muscles of the stomach round and round along with uddiyanbandh. What is it called ?
 (A) Jal dhauti (B) Vastra dhauti (C) Madhya nauli (D) Nauli chalan
- (15) Which asana is the best for Kapalbhathi ?
 (A) Paschimottasana (B) Shavasana (C) Padmasana (D) Vajrasana
- (16) In which Shatkarma Keval Kumbhak is experienced ?
 (A) Tratak (B) Nauli (C) Kapalbhathi (D) Neti
- (17) How many main types of Neti are ?
 (A) Two (B) Three (C) Four (D) Six
- (18) Which Shatkriya purifies carbon dioxide of breathing path ?
 (A) Jal neti (B) Sootra neti (C) Dhauti (D) Kapalbhathi
- (19) Which Shatkriya makes the face naturally beautiful ?
 (A) Kapalbhathi (B) Tratak (C) Dhauti (D) Neti
- (20) During Kapalbhathi how many maximum strokes are to be done in one minute ?
 (A) Hundred (B) Sixty
 (C) Eighty (D) One hundred twenty
- (21) Kapalbhathi is the process of which form only ?
 (A) Steadiness (B) Unsteadiness (C) Speedy respiration (D) Joy of mind
- (22) What is the specific experience in Keval Kumbhak ?
 (A) Steadiness (B) Activeness (C) Speedy breathing (D) Cheerfulness
- (23) Why Shatkarma is given more importance in Shashtra ?
 (A) For Yama-Niyam (B) Intellectual development of the body
 (C) For achievement (Siddhi) of Asana (D) To make the body mature for Pranayama
- (24) Like Shatkarman how many karmas are there in Ayurved Shashtra ?
 (A) Two (B) Tri karma (C) Shatkarma (D) Panchkarma

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