

ROLE OF KAPALBHATI IN NETRA ROGA

Dr Nidhi Gupta¹ Dr Manish Agarawal²

¹Assistant Prof. Dept. of Swasthvritta, ²Associate Prof. Dept of Rasashastra,
G.S.A.M. College, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, India

ABSTRACT

Kapalbhati is one of *shatkarmas* i.e. yogic purification technique. *Kapalbhati* involves specific breathing pattern. It dries up all the disorders arising from the excess of *kapha*. Eyes or *chakshu indriya* is *pitta pradhana* in nature. Acharya charaka says that *kapha* is *pradhan dosha* which irritates eyes or causing eye diseases.(1) *Kapalbhati* increases the blood supply to *urdhvajatrugata* organs. It also releases the *srotorodha* and decreases the *kapha*. Hence *kapalbhati* helps eyes as it increases oxygen supply and nutition to the eyes, it increases elimination of vitiated *doshas*, & prevents eyes from *kaphaj* disorders.

Keywords: *kapalbhati, shatkarmas, kapha, chakshu, indriya, urdhvajatrugataroga,*

INTRODUCTION

Sufferings which are yet to come or are unarrived (*Anagatam*) can be prevented through *Yoga*. *Yoga* is the science of living righteously and it should be incorporated in daily life as it works on all the aspects of a person: Physical, Vital, Mental, Emotional, Psychic, & Spiritual. *Yoga* is an essential need of today and will be the culture of tomorrow.

Yoga therapy creates balance between the nervous and endocrine systems which directly influences all the systems and organs of the body. *Shatkarmas* Creates harmony between the two major flows, *ida* and *pingala* and balance the three *doshas* in the body: *Vata, Pitta and Kapha*. The cleansing and strengthening effects of *shatkarmas* are beneficial therapeutically as it promotes the health of healthy and diseased both. *Kapalbhati* is one of six *karmas* of *shatkarmas*, which is, a breathing technique.

Technique of *kapalbhati*(5) is to Sit in a comfortable meditation *asana*. The

head and spine should be straight with the hands resting on the knees in *jnana mudra*. Close the eyes and relax the whole body. Exhale through both nostrils with a forceful contraction of the abdominal muscles. The following inhalation should take place passively by allowing the abdominal muscles to relax. Inhalation should be due to effortless spontaneous recoil of the abdominal muscles.

After completing 10 rapid breaths in succession inhale and exhale deeply. Allow the breath to return to normal. This is practiced from one round up to five rounds. Beginners may take several free breaths between rounds. The number of inspiration may be increased from 10 to 50, as the abdominal muscles become stronger. Advanced practitioners can increase up to 100 breaths per round.

The rapid breathing should be from the abdomen; the shoulders and face should remain relaxed.

Physiological Effects

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During *Kapalbhati* prolonged *Rechaka* is not expected. Generally a little more air than in the normal gradual breathing (approximately 500 to 600 cc) is inhaled and exhaled in *Kapalbhati* (about 550 to 650cc). In this process particularly stomach muscles movement is more important.

There is no involvement of ribcage in *Rechaka*, a little movement is there. The muscles between the ribcage are pulled. This facilitates free movement of the stomach muscles as well as the diaphragm. The air is expelled through the nose after a push, so nostrils should be flared up and not contracted.

The strong *Rechaka* helps to create pressure of air which pushes the impurities from the breathing tube till they are thrown out of the body, also stimulate the different *nadies* of abdomen to improve their function and also increase the efficiency of the brain and nervous system. *kapalbhati* also stimulated *drashti nadis*

The pushes awaken *Kundalini* Power which is a dormant power residing near the *Muladhar Chakra*. That means this divine power starts climbing up the *Sushumna Nadi*.

During the process carbon dioxide is thrown out of the body in large quantity and in the same proportion oxygen is absorbed into the body. This increases the oxygen in the blood, hence the need for oxygen is lessened, this messages breathing center to calm down. The center becomes calm and reduces its instructions to

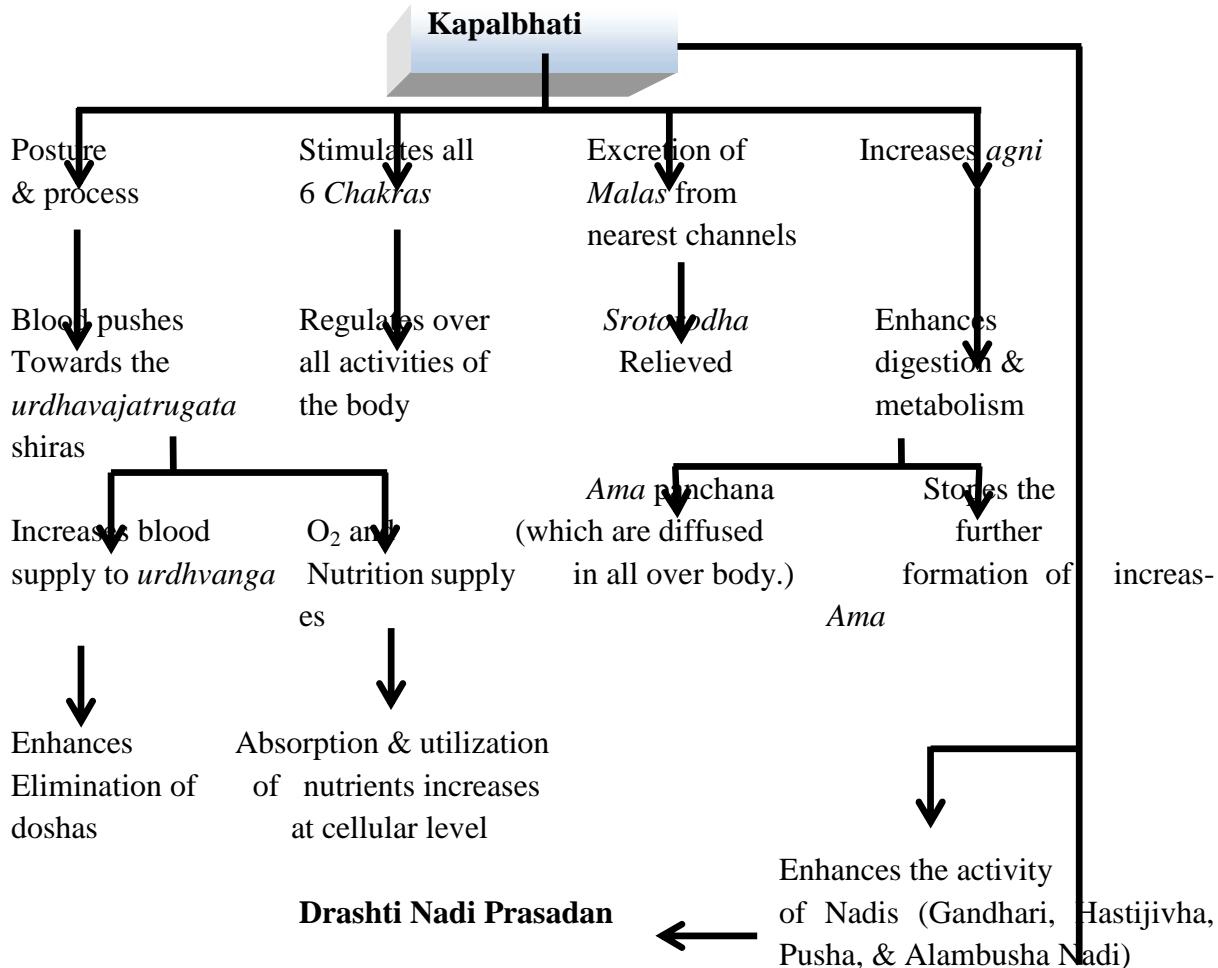
the breathing organs. This facilitates control of the breathing organs.

Precautions: *Kapalbhati* should be performed empty stomach, 3 to 4 hours after meals. If practiced late at night it can decreases sleep. If pain and dizziness are experienced, stop the practice and sit quietly for some time.

Contra-indications: *Kapalbhati* should not be practiced by those suffering from heart disease, high blood pressure, vertigo, epilepsy, stroke, hernia or gastric ulcer. It is not recommended during pregnancy.

Benefits: Has cleansing effect on the lungs and is a good practice for respiratory disorders. It balances and strengthens the nervous system, stimulates the six chakras in body, tones the digestive organs, purifies the *nadis*, energizes the mind for mental work and removes sleepiness.

Probable mode of action



DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Eyes are dominant in *tejo mahabhuta*, so there is fear of being afflicted with *kapha*. Hence the process *Kapalbhati* which is *kaphahara* in nature is good and protective for eyes. *Kapalbhati* improves digestion. It stimulates six Chakras in body which regulates all over activity of Body. According to yogic literature, *Hata Yoga Pradipika* and *Ghairanda Samhita kapalabhati* is *kaphahara* in nature (2,3,4). It strongly eliminates the *dushita kapha* and *vijatiya*

tatva from body. Also stimulates *jatharagni*, stops formation of *ama* and enhances activity of *drashti nadis*; Relieves *srotorodha* and eliminates *vijatiya tatvas* from body, decreases *kapha* and it increases oxygen & nutrition supply to *urdhvanga*. So, according to above discussion *Kapalbhati kaphahara* in nature, it protects eye from *kaphaj vikara*. Because it increases oxygen and nutrition supply to *urdhvanga* and it also enhances the activity of *drushti nadis*, it promotes vision.

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CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

Dr Manish Agarwal

Associate Professor

Dept of Rasashastra,
G.S.A.M. College, Bareilly,
UttarPradesh, India

Email: drmanishayu@yahoo.co.in

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