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A DISCRIPTIVE STUDY ON THE EFFECT OF ANTER DHAUTI AS PER GHERAND SAMHITA ON HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

This study has been conducted to explore the physiological effect of anter dhauti on human body. Like any other yogic practice, cleansing practices also have their special effect. In Gherand Samhita, six major cleansing processes are mentioned which includes Dhauti, Vasti, Neti, Loliki, Tratak and Kapalbhati. Among which Dhauti is one of the most important cleansing process. It is further classified into four - Antar dhauti (internal), Danta(teeth), Hrid (cardiac), and Moola shodhana (root). Which cleans the entire body mainly though means of air, water and fire (digestive fire).

Here we will study anter dhauti, which is further of four subtypes vaatsar (air cleansing), varisar (water cleansing), agnisar (fire cleansing) and bahiskrit (air cleansing). All these types of dhauti are helpful in cleansing of complete gut from mouth to anus and are stated for complete transformation of body also divine revelation (in few yogic text). In Gherand Samhita, this dhauti is called as a solution against all disease (*sarva rog chayakaram*).

Key words – dhauti, physiology, air cleansing, water cleansing, agnisar.

INTRODUCTION:

Anterdhauti means internal cleansing. Cleansing is done using air, water and heat (stomach fire). Body becomes serene. It is further divided into four subtype vaatsar dhauti, vaarisar dhauti, vahnisar dhauti and bahiskrit dhauti.^[1] Vaatsar dhauti (air cleansing) is process of cleansing of internal organs including stomach. On accumulation of toxins, air is intake to stomach through food pipe, which cleans the foul smell and toxic air of the stomach grooms our digestive system. Vaarisar dhauti (water cleansing), in this technique stomach is filled with water which wash out the extra kapha & phlegm present in stomach. When water is excreted out through the intestine it removes the accumulated toxic particles of both small and large intestine.

Vahnisar, cleansing through fire. Also known as agnisar i. e cleansing through digestive fire (jathar agni). This makes digestive fire stronger and hence our digestive system. Which further helps in proper assimilation of food and development of body. Bahiskrit dhauti is quite similar to vaatsar dhauti as here also cleansing is carried out through air. Only difference is air is excreted out through anal region. This is best for the cleansing of intestine.

In gherand samhita maharishi gherand defined mainly 4 types of dhauti with their subtypes.

"Antardhautirddantadhautirhiriddhaautimoolashodhanam;

Volume-9, Issue-1 Jan-Feb-2022

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E-ISSN 2348-6457 P-ISSN 2349-1817 Email- editor@ijesrr.org

Dhautim chaturvidhaam kritvaa ghatam kurvanti nirmalam " $||^{[2]}$ (GS): (I/ 13)

Antar dhauti, danta dhauti, hrid dhauti and moola shodhana are the four types of which keep the body clean and healthy. Vatsara, Varisara, Agnisara and Bahishkrita are further subtypes. ^[3]

Vatsara dhauti

Meaning-Vata means vayu or air and sara means to activate to move forward. Vatasara dhauti means to cleanse the stomach and intestine using air.^[4]

Process

"Kaakachanchuvadaasyena pibedvaayum shanaih shanaih Chaalyedudaram pashchaadvartmanaa rechyechchhanih. '' $\$ "G. s (1\15)

Shaping the lips like a crow's beak, slowly suck in as much air as possible, circulate it inside the abdomen and then gradually expel it completely.

Physiology

Vatsara is a process of subjecting the internal mucosa of the whole alimentary canal to the current of air swallowed by mouth and evacuated. This practice removes gas and wind and stimulates the digestive system. It is very useful in relieving from gas and for complaints of bloating. It is specially effective for the patients of acidity and heartburn.

When air is sucked in to the stomach & kept inside for one or two minute in the mouth.

Normal respiration continue. Respiration goes on while the air is kept inside the stomach. After one or two minute the air is slowly released by bleaching. If the stomach is in unhealthy state the expelled air is foul smelling, but in rare case. The experience of lightned is felt after bleaching. ^[6]

Importnce of vatasara dhauti in hatha yoga

"Vaatsaraam param gopyam deha nairmalakaarakam Sarva rogakshayam dehnalavivrddhanam,"G. S (1,16)^[7]

Vatsara is very secret technique for purifying the body. It destroys all diseases and activates the gastric fire, which helps to digest food. ^[8]

It has been observed when the stomach is filled with air, it reduces gastric acidity Vatsara is a very secret technique for purifying the body. No amount of air can go down the diaphragm and unite with apana. The only way the air can go down the diaphragm is through the esophagus. In hatha yoga a process known as vatasara involves internal cleansing of stomach. Large quantity of air passes through the gut, it inhibits all foul smell producing anaerobic bacteria, and the air that is discharged is totally odorless.^[9]

It is simple practice, which may be done sometimes knowingly or unknowingly, when eating the air is often swallowed. It enters the stomach. Sometimes it comes out through anal region, but mostly come out from mouth in terms of belching. Vaatsara dhauti can be performed at any time of the day except immediately after meals. Practice it once or twice a day before meals, with a maximum of 4 to 5 times a day. ^[10]

In Ayurveda ranjaka pitta is remained in the stomach. During not proper bile secretion gastric fire cannot increase properly. It create gastric problem and acidity. After vatsara dhauti gas comes

Volume-9, Issue-1 Jan-Feb-2022 www.ijesrr.org E-ISSN 2348-6457 P-ISSN 2349-1817 Email- editor@ijesrr.org

out through belching. And prevent from gas and acidity, that's why it increase gastric fire in stomach and improves appetite and convert food into rasa, rasa in to rakta dhatu, rakta in to mansa, mansa into meda, meda into asthi, asthi into majja and majja into shukra. Shukra is an oja of whole body. Which is helpful in deha nirmalakarakam means make body cure due to proper digestion. Through better digestion it increase purification of blood and prevent from all diseases. ^[11]

In this practice, the air swallowed into the stomach by closing the epiglottis. Here the yogi trains himself to close his epiglottis and, with a sudden push with the neck gesture (kaki mudra), pushes a little volume of air to the stomach. He rests for a second and repeats the same process until his stomach is filled with air. Then he slowly belches the air along with the foul gases from the stomach.^[12]

So, in vatsara dhauti the metabolism becomes better and prevent from metabolic disorder and helps for better digestion.

Varisara dhauti

Vari means water and sara means activate, to move forward, to give motion. Varisara is cleansing the digestive system with the help of water. Also called as Sankhaprakshalana. Sankha means conch (small intestine), prakshalana means to clean. The abdomen is then moved and the water evacuated through the anus.^[14]

Process

"Aakudantham poorayedvaari vaktrena cha pibechchhanaih; Chaalayedudarenaiva chodaraadrechayedadhah\\"[15]G. s (1\17)

Drink water slowly through the mouth up to the throat. The abdomen is then moved and the water evacuated through the anus. The first practice vatasara dhauti cleaning the stomach by unwanted gas, mucus and digestive juices. But varisara dhauti is expulsion of feces from digestive system.

Physiology

The digestive tract consist of long tube from mouth to anus. Our alimentary canal, which include the esophagus, stomach, small intestine and large intestine. The walls of digestive tract are made of specialized muscles arranged in layers. This also mean that the particles of semi digested food or feaces can lodge within the intricate folds of the intestinal lining and decay. The absorption of water take place 90 percent in the small intestine. Most of the people never clean intestines and stools become hard and they create constipation. When a bowel movement occurs the delicate lining of the intestinal walls may be scratched by the hard stools, which can be painful and even cause bleeding. This may cause diseases. Varisara dhauti overcome this diseases. ^[16]

This practice includes the practice of few yogic postures after intake of luke warm water.

Tadasana

It stretches the stomach and colon. The stomach and abdomen contract and expand alternatively. During inhalation diaphragm go down and create pressure on abdominal organs.

Volume-9, Issue-1 Jan-Feb-2022 www.ijesrr.org E-ISSN 2348-6457 P-ISSN 2349-1817 Email- editor@ijesrr.org

During exhalation the diaphragm release and pressure on the abdominal wall relaxes. The pyloric sphincter open and allow water to pass in the duodenum. ^[17]

Tiryak tadasana

It acts on the small intestine and colon. Expansion on one side of the body and contraction in other side of the body. When a person bend left side a pressure is created first in right side of the abdomen and it and small intestine expand. When a person bend to the right, right side of the small intestine contracts. The folded intestines are massaged and water is pushed through them flushing out the decaying particles. ^[18]

Katichakrasana

The twisting asana massage the abdominal organs. Twist the small intestinal folds in the left and right side. The Water pushed through the intestine and wash the particles in the small intestine.

Tiryak bhujangasana

This asana squeezes and massage the stomach and intestines, opens the ileocecal valve. And water flow to the large intestine. ^[20]

Udarakarshanasana

First twist should be on right side to compress ileocecal valve, cecum, ascending colon and right colic flexure. Then to the left side to compress left colic flexure, descending colon and sigmoid colon. So, pressure is created stimulus comes to defecate. ^[21]

Importance of varisara dhauti in hatha yoga

Vaarisaram param gopyam dehanirmalkaarakam; Saadhayettaprayatnena devadehm prapadyate. $\mathbb{N}^{[22]}G.s(1\backslash 18)$

The technique of varisara dhauti is most secret. It purifies the body. A yogi who perfects this technique attains a divine body.

The weather plays important role in the practice of shankhaprakshalana, it must not be performed during extremely cold or extremely hot or not even rainy weather. Kapha dosha accumulates in the body during winter and evacuated when winter is over. This practice is helpful when kapha develops in the chest after winter. In India it is best to perform in spring, the March and the September. Whole gastrointestinal tract is flushed out through the water. The food particles that decay in intestinal wall and stomach that also passes out. It also reduces bile acid pool that is useful for digestion absorption of fats and fat solvable vitamins. So, both triglyceride and cholesterol absorption reduce thus it can helps to reduce obesity. Temporarily the blood cholesterol level may also down. Any sludge present in the gall bladder, is also washed out and thus formation of gall stone is postpone.^[23] It removes the waste materials which are poisonous to the body.

It helps to keep away from most of the disorders and keeps oneself clean & healthy and provides feeling of lightness. Purify the blood and alleviates skin problems such as pimples, eczema etc. Increase urination and it filter the kidney. It helps to prevents urinary infections and formation of kidney stones. Beneficial for those suffering from asthma, obesity, diabetes, constipation, hyperacidity etc.

Tekur P concluded that Spinal flexibility was found better after LSP (laghu shankhaprakshalana, a yogic colon cleansing technique) than BST (Back pain special technique) sessions in a self as control study on 40 inpatients between 25 and 70 years with CLBP and he found significant result on it. ^[24]Gayathri, A (2019)

Volume-9, Issue-1 Jan-Feb-2022 www.ijesrr.org E-ISSN 2348-6457 P-ISSN 2349-1817 Email- editor@ijesrr.org

Effect of Laghoo Shankaprakshalana on Lipid Profile and Anthropometric Measurements in Obese Persons. Master's thesis, Government Yoga and Naturopathy Medical College, Chennai. And she found lipid profile parameters viz, decrease in total cholesterol, LDL, triglycerides, VLDL and increase in HDL in study group as compared to control group. It is concluded that the yoga and certain asanas have positive and useful effect on certain cardiovascular risk factors viz, obesity, hypertension and dyslipidemia. ^[25] So, through purify whole body it gives lightness and relaxation. So, it gives lightness in the body and relaxation in the mind. So, we can achieve a divine body.

Shankha Prakshalana is an easy and effective technique for cleansing the gastrointestinal canal, thereby removing all the autointoxicants present in the alimentary canal. Moreover, it is a very economical procedure which can be performed by the patients at his own residence. The role of Shankha Prakshalana from our own experience is very effective in overcoming the irritable bowel syndrome. Shankha Prakshalana may also be given to the patients of anxiety neurosis with satisfactory results. Its role in the treatment of renal disorder is encouraging in early cases only. However, in the second and third degree chronic renal failure cases its role is yet to be established and needs further investigation. ^[26]

Agnisara

Agni means fire and sara means activate. Agnisara means to activate digestive fire in the body.

Process

"Naabhigranthim meruprishthe shatavaaram cha kaaryet Agnisaaramiyam dhautiryoginaam yogasiddhidaa\\"^[28]**G. s (1\19)**

Retaining prana vayu, pull the navel against the spinal column one hundred times. This enables agnisara dhauti to be performed. ^[29]

Physiology

Agnisara kriya massage and tones the abdominal muscles & organs. It promotes the correct secretion of digestive jucies. It increases digestive power and digestive fire. The preceding practices utilize air and water to make the body free from diseases. In agnisara kriya rectus abdominus muscle is contract and expand. It allows optimum assimilation of nutrients from food. Stomach worms can also be destroyed. It prevents and removes disorders of the digestive system such as constipation, indigestion, hyperacidity, hypoacidity, irritable bowel syndrome, pitta and vata imbalance. ^[30]

It also prevents from diabetes, adipokineas, inflamation and oxidative stress in adults and also prevents from cardiovascular diseases and cholesterol. Forceful inhalation and exhalation involved which prevent from lungs diseases. It plays a vital role in rejuvenating the organs and hinders the ageing process. This helps in retaining the youth. As it reduces aging process. Nauli kriya is the next level to Agnisar kriya that involves churning of belly muscles at a greater level which helps in increased blood flow in the body. It helps one regulate the fire element and keeps the body energetic and warm all day. This helps in curing sleepiness. It also stimulate thoraco-abdominal nerves (T7-T11), subcostal nerves, ilio hypogastric nerve and ilio-inguinal nerves. ^[31]

Importance of agnisara in hatha yoga

Volume-9, Issue-1 Jan-Feb-2022 www.ijesrr.org

"Esha dhautih paraa gopyaa devaanaamapi durlabhaa;

Kevalam dhautimaatrena devdeham bhaveddhruvam '' $||G. s(1|20)^{[32]}$

This cleansing practice is most secret and is unknown even to the divine beings. By merely doing this practice the body becomes healthy and beautiful, there is no doubt about that. ^[33] In hatha yoga it have very important place in the area of prana and kundilini yoga because it awakens manipura chakra. With the practice of agnisara kriya the nerves and glands of the navel region are stimulated. When this activation occurs in the solar plexus at manipura chakra, it directly affects the brain and pranic activity experienced in the body. Laxity, Laziness and distress

are no more. [34]

Mental health-Agnisara kriya is ideal for people with mental disturbance which cause a high degree of introversion. It activates the nervous system, so performing this practice moderately will remove depression for three or four hours.^[35]

It strengthens the abdominal muscle which helps to perform uddiyan bandha in hatha yoga, that is very important bandha.

Bahishkrita dhauti

Bahishkrita means to remove or wash out side.

Process

"Kaaakeemudraam shodhyitvaa poorayedudaram marut;^[36] Dhaarayedardhayaamam tu chaalayedadhovartmanaa; Eshaa dhautih paraa gopyaa na prakaashyaa kadachana"\\ (1\21)

Shaping the lips like the beak of a crow, take in air through the mouth, filling the abdomen. Retain the air for one and a half hours in the abdomen, then circulate it and expel it through the rectum.^[37]

Physiology

When air is retained, in the abdomen for one and half hours it is imperative that the practitioner has full control over the stomach, esophagus and intestines, otherwise the air will leak out of the body through the anus or in the form of belching.^[38]

While the air is retained, it is important to perform four the asanas in shankhprakshalana.

<u>Tadasana</u>

It stretches the stomach and colon. The stomach and abdomen contract and expand alternatively. During inhalation diaphragm go down and create pressure on abdominal organs. During exhalation the diaphragm release and pressure on the abdominal wall relaxes. The pyloric sphincter open and allow air to pass in the duodenum.

<u>Tiryak tadasana</u>

It acts on the small intestine and colon. Expansion on one side of the body and contraction in other side of the body. When a person bend left side a pressure is created first in right side of the abdomen and it and small intestine expand. Then when a person bend right side of the small intestine contract. The folded intestines are massaged.

<u>Katichakrasana</u>

Volume-9, Issue-1 Jan-Feb-2022 www.ijesrr.org E-ISSN 2348-6457 P-ISSN 2349-1817 Email- editor@ijesrr.org

The twisting asana massage the abdominal organs. Twist the small intestinal folds in the left and right side. The Water pushed through the intestine and wash the particles in the small intestine. **Tiryak bhujangasana**

This asana squeezes and massage the stomach and intestines, open the ileocecal valve. And air flow to the large intestine. ^[39]

This asana will push the air down the intestines just as water is pushed down in shankhprakshalana. After performing the asana as it is important to go toilet, because the air pressure which is build up inside the body is released very quickly and waste product is expelled. In this way, through the medium of the air, the intestines are cleaned and diseases of the digestive tract can be removed.

A normal person cannot practice bahishkrita dhauti. In reality, it is true to call it a secret practice. This dhauti is very secret practice. Which should never be taught to the general public. So, there is also an another practice of bahishkrita dhauti, which is also called Maha dhauti. Another practice of bahishkrita dhauti.^[40]

Procedure

"Naabhimagnajale sthitva shaktinaadeem visarjayet;^[41] Kaarbhyaam kshaaalayennadeem yaavanmalavisarjanam. \\ Taavatprakshaalya naadem cha udare veshyetpunah; Idam prakshaalanam gopyam devaanaamapi durlabham; "\\G. s (1\22)

Standing in water up to navel, Push out the rectum (shakti nadi) and wash it, removing the waste produces. When the nadi is clean, draw it in again.

This last practice of antar dhauti by sage gherand is also called mahadhauti, the great dhauti called prakshalana dhauti, washing the rectum, but it is extremely difficult to practice. ^[42]

Physiology

<u>This practice must be undertaken in river where clean water is flowing</u>. After gaining proficiency in the first stage of the practice, the second half of the technique involves standing in water up to the navel and sucking water in through the anus by means of ashwini-vjroli mudra. When water enters, it is retained and then expel so that ant waste product in the bowel and around the anus is removed.^[43]

Importance of bahishkrita in hatha yoga

"Kevalam dhautimaatrena devadeho bhaved dhruvam.^[44]G. s (1\23) Yaamaardha dhaarnaashakteem yaavanna dhaarayennarah;^[45] Bahishkritam mahaddhautistaavachchaiva na jaayate"\\G. s (1\24)

Just by practicing this dhauti, one attains a body like that of a divine being. It is not possible to practice bahishkrita mahashauti until the ability to retain air in the abdomen for up to one and half hours has been developed.

When the finger is inserted and ghee is applied, a little water also enters with the finger so the rectum is cleaned and with this practice sensation takes place in shakti nadi which awakens pingala nadi. After the awakening of pingala nadi, the prana are awakened in the body, which is

Volume-9, Issue-1 Jan-Feb-2022 www.ijesrr.org E-ISSN 2348-6457 P-ISSN 2349-1817 Email- editor@ijesrr.org

called pranotthana. Thereafter kundalini is awakened. According to yogic physiology, there are 72, 000 nadis inside the body, through which a subtle form of prana shakti flows. Vajra nadi starts on the left side of the anus and is directly related to the sexual and digestive system, and also to the sciatic nerve. In sciatica pain starts from the lower back and radiates down one or both legs. Sciatic pain indicates that there is an obstruction or blockage in vajra nadi, and that the sensation are not flowing as they should. So, bahishkrita dhauti also helps to remove blockage in vajra nadi.

Shakti nadi is translated as meaning the rectum and bahishkrita dhauti is primarily a practice for cleansing shakti nadi. shakti nadi starts from the right side of the anus and goes up to mooladhara and swadhisthana, joining pingala nadi at swadishthana chakra. Pingala nadi carries the solar force or prana shakti. So, the bahishkrita dhauti is also called mahadhauti.

Conclusion:

All these four practices of anterdhauti are enough for keeping the body free from all kinds of disorders. As most of the diseases take place in body because of impurification and malfunctioning of the gut. Our whole body is made up of our food, from to the very first day until the last breath all our activities , thoughts feelings are totally dependent upon the food we take, as each and every cell is the ultimate product of the food we intake and energy of the foods leads our deeds. That's the reason why all the great ancient seers have shown their great concern on the diet. This cleansing practice is mainly related to groom the annamaya sheath of the body. Further cleaning practices will groom the other sheaths of body from manomaya to anandmaya sheath. Hence it can be regarded as the foundation for all the further practices of yoga that's why maharishi Gherand mentions this practice as the very first practice of his blissful text Gherand Samhita.

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Volume-9, Issue-1 Jan-Feb-2022 www.ijesrr.org

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