



# Therapeutic Impact Of Trataka Kriya: A Review

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## Abstract:

Hatha yoga is renowned for six cleansing techniques namely Dhauti, Basti, Neti, Trataka, Nauli and Kapalbhati; that help for maintaining equilibrium of tridoshas in the body. Trataka is a kriya well-known for improving concentration and controlling the mind- stuff. It is also renowned for its therapeutic application. Trataka kriya has the potential to induce a relaxation response and relieve tension, making it a useful tool for improving mental health.

**Key words:** Trataka, Hatha Yoga, Kriya

## Introduction:

Vata, pitta and Kapha are the three humors in the body. In yoga and ayurveda they are called tridosha. A healthy balance between these three promotes bodily functioning; however, when one is overdone and another is underdeveloped, the body overheats or underheats, leading to illnesses. Hatha yoga is renowned for six cleansing techniques namely Dhauti, Basti, Neti, Trataka, Nauli and Kapalbhati; these are known shat-karmas each has a variety of practices. These are known as Shat-karmas that can never be learned from books or taught by inexperienced people. Trataka is a process of concentrating the mind and curbing its oscillating tendencies.

## According to Hathapradipika and Hatharatnavali,

niriksyā niscaladrsā süksmalaksyam samāhitah  
asrusampätaparyantamäcäryaisträtkarn smrtm//<sup>1</sup>

Looking intently with an unwavering gaze at a small point until tears are shed is known as trataka by the acharyas (teachers).<sup>2</sup>

## According to Gheranda Samhita,

Nimeshonmeshakam tyaktvaa sookshmalakshyam nireekshayet

Patanti yaavadashrooni traatakam proch�ate budhaih.

Without winking one should gaze a minute at an object until tears begin to fall from the eyes. This is called the Trataka by wise<sup>3</sup>

Evamabhyasaayogena shaambhavee jaayate dhruvam  
Netrarogaa vinashyanti divyadrishtih prajaayate.

By constant practice of this trataka the Shambhavi mudra is verily facilitated, diseases of the eyes are cured and acute vision is acquired.

### Types of Trataka practice:

Antaranga, or internal trataka, and bahiranga, or outer trataka, are the two variations of the discipline. Bahiranga is simpler to practice because all you have to do is glance at a symbol or object. Anaranga trataka, on the other hand, necessitates a clear and consistent interior image of an object. Trataka is the practice of gazing at something until its delicate shape emerges before closed eyes. A symbol or object that has the power to concentrate the mind and awaken the inner potential is typically the focal point of attention. The most frequently used item is a candle flame since it makes practicing antaranga trataka simple because the flame's imprint lasts for a long time even when the eyes are closed. Fixing one's gaze on an external object aims to stabilize internal vision by stimulating it and stopping eye movement.

### Therapeutic benefits of trataka:

All eye disorders, as well as fatigue and sluggishness, are eradicated by Trataka. Like a golden coffin, it should be kept under wraps. In addition to the eyes. Trataka is good for many other mental and physical processes. Anxiety, allergies, melancholy, sleeplessness, memory loss, posture problems, and poor focus can all be helped by it. Its primary effects are on the brain and the ajna chakra. It is said to foster clairvoyance, or the ability to perceive subtle manifestations, in the Gherand Samhita.

The practice of trataka aims to focus the mind and reduce its erratic impulses. The goal is to focus the mind entirely on one object and awaken inner vision. Single-minded mental focus is called ekagrata. Ekagrata can be distracted by a lot of things. In actuality, distraction only occurs when the senses are acclimated to the external environment, indicating an energy leak. Association and connection with the eyes and sight are among the primary sources of this leakage. The entire optic tract is essential to vision. The lens serves as the medium for external visual perception, projecting the image into the retina. After a while, the image of an external object stabilizes on the retina, causing perception of the image to totally vanish and mental processes to be suspended.

It is essential to maintain the inner awareness during the practice of trataka because when the mind is suspended, only the awareness remains. In all the practices of concentration, when the awareness is restricted to one unchanging sense stimulus, the mind is 'turned off.' Complete absorption in a single perception induces withdrawal of contact with the external world. Thus, the present review summarizes some of the research that has taken place using trataka from 2020 to 2023.

### Methods:

This review was conducted exclusively based on the articles published during 2010 to 2024. The authors searched the Google Scholar database with various possible key words in varying combinations. The search strategy was as follows: "Trataka", "effect of trataka", "jyoti trataka". This search was conducted to obtain general information regarding trataka's therapeutic effects in the existing literature.

### Inclusion criteria:

The following criteria were used for including studies in this review:

- Published between the years 2020 and 2023.
- The intervention had to incorporate Trataka technique.
- Effects of trataka on some outcomes were measured.
- Studies published in the English language.

## Exclusion criteria:

- Meta-analyses, case studies, case series, conference abstracts, and letters to the editor).
- Studies with yoga and other complementary therapies (such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction) and other shat karmas.
- Study protocols Studies without a reported outcome those published in languages other than English.

In order to select the articles included in this manuscript, several steps were taken.

First, the title was read. If the article appeared appropriate to the examination of the therapeutic effects of Trataka, it was saved to a folder. The articles describing interventions that utilized Trataka as a means to achieve some health outcomes were chosen for further review. Each of the articles chosen were then thoroughly read and reviewed. The articles chosen include a broad spectrum of the benefits, application, and therapeutic effects of Trataka.

## Literature Review:

- **Effect of Trataka on Stress:** Following seven days of Jyoti Trataka sessions, the participants' stress levels were assessed again using the same questionnaire. When the participants practiced "Jyoti Trataka" on a regular basis, their stress levels and associated symptoms significantly decreased. The systematic application of "Jyoti Trataka" by the participants resulted in a notable decrease in their stress levels and associated symptoms. (4). Trataka is helped with stress reduction, mental clarity, and other advantages.<sup>5</sup>
- **Effect of Trataka on Memory:** The result suggests that the Trataka session improves working memory, spatial memory, and spatial attention.<sup>6</sup>
- **Effect of Trataka on Blood pressure:** The practice of Trataka leads to significant reduction in blood pressure and heart rate in patients with primary hypertension.<sup>7</sup>
- **Effect of Trataka on Insomnia:** Trataka may be considered as a treatment modality in reducing insomnia severity and in improving QoS in people with Insomnia.<sup>8</sup>
- **Effect of Trataka on Visual Strain:** According to the current study's findings, IT workers with computer vision syndrome who use a cold and Trataka eye pack for 14 days report feeling less tired and under visual strain.<sup>9</sup> The study concludes that there was an improvement in the subjects with digital eye strain after performing Trataka kriya.<sup>10</sup>
- **Effect of Trataka on Visual Acuity:** This study concludes that there is significant increase, decrease and no changes in the subjects with visual acuity after practicing Trataka.<sup>11</sup> Junior level players' shooting performance was positively and significantly impacted by Trataka training.<sup>12</sup>
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## Discussion:

There are numerous physiological and psychological effects that can be found by the practice of Trataka such as enhancing memory and cognitive performance. Trataka needs prolonged attention in a single object, it improves your focus and concentration. Trataka cultivates self-awareness and introspection, helping to gain a deeper understanding of thoughts and feelings. Practicing Trataka promotes relaxation and a sense of calm, which can help reduce tension and anxiety. Regular practice of Trataka improves sleep and reduces insomnia. The physiological beneficial effects of Trataka on eye health are well-known. Constantly looking at an object reduces eye fatigue and increases focus. It is said to improve vision and strengthen eye muscles. For people who spend a lot of time in front of screens, regular exercise can help relieve common vision problems like dry, tired eyes.

## Conclusion:

Trataka has great therapeutic promise in a wide range of ailments and can be used to prevent, treat, and promote wellbeing in a variety of illnesses. The greatest and only way to genuinely manage the mind is by regular, dedicated, and focused practice with mindfulness, consciousness, and purity of thought, word, and deed. Trataka has the potential to induce a relaxation response and relieve tension, making it a useful

tool for improving mental health. Trataka is often used as a bridge between more sophisticated meditation techniques and can aid in the development of spirituality and self-awareness.

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