



**IJPPR**

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF PHARMACY & PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH  
An official Publication of Human Journals

ISSN 2349-7203



Human Journals

**Review Article**

September 2021 Vol.:22, Issue:2

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## Role of Vyayama and Yoga in Complexion Care: A Review



**IJPPR**  
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF PHARMACY & PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH  
An official Publication of Human Journals



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**Submitted:** 25 August 2021  
**Accepted:** 31 August 2021  
**Published:** 30 September 2021

**Keywords:** Skin Complexion, Yoga, and Vyayama

### ABSTRACT

Skin Care in Ayurveda is ancient. *Acharyas* have focused on skincare right from *vedickaala*. skin is the only largest visible organ, its care and maintenance were given importance right from maintaining healthy skin, maintain complexion, and also the treatment of many skin diseases from its root. Skincare and complexion go hand in hand. In Ayurveda, *tejomahabhuta* is responsible for an individual's complexion right from *garbha*. Various skin complexions are mentioned in Ayurveda. *Vyayama* and yoga help in complexion care by improving the nourishment to the skin and maintaining its function. Daily practice of *Vyayama* and yoga is not only beneficial in healthy skin complexion, but also individual's overall physical and mental health.



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## INTRODUCTION:

Complexion care was important since ancient times. Many methods of complexion care are practiced in folklore as well as Ayurvedic practices. Ayurvedic texts have mentioned many methods in both *dinacharya* (daily regimen) and various medications. The food is taken by the individual, the mental state, the physical activity, and his daily regimen also has influence one's complexion. Nowadays complexion care is of prime importance to all individuals and many methods like relaxing techniques, beauty regimens are widely in practice.

### Ayurveda and complexion:

In Ayurveda, the concept of complexion is explained right from when the individual is in *garbha*. The *maturaharavihara* plays an important role in the *panchabhoutik* composition of the *garbha*. *Tejodhatu* is responsible for the complexion.<sup>1</sup>

- *GauraVarna: Apdhatu*
- *KrsnaVarna: Prthvi dhatu*
- *KrsnasyamaVarna: Prthvi akasha dhatu*
- *GaurasyamaVarna: Ap akasha dhatu*

The different layers of the skin are also named according to colour:<sup>2</sup>

- *Avabhasini*: The first layer of skin can show all *varna*
- *Lohita*: Reddish *varna*
- *Sveta*: Whitish *varna*
- *Tamra*: Coppery *varna*

The individual's *sprakruti* also affects their complexion:

- *Kaphaprakruti*: Skin complexion of *Durva* (green grass), *indivara* (white lily), *nistrimsa* (durva grass), and *ardraaristaka* (soapnut). It is mentioned that the individual of this *prakruti* is *priyadarshi* (Pleasing to look at).<sup>3</sup>
- *Pittaprakruti*: The individual of this *prakruti* has *peeta* (yellowish complexion).<sup>4</sup>

- *Vataprakruti*: The individual of this *prakruti* is *Durbhaga*( not pleasing complexion).<sup>5</sup>

In *shadbhavatmakagarbha*, it is mentioned that the complexion of the *garbha* is maintained by *rasaja* and *satmyajabhava*.<sup>6</sup>

### **Vyayama and complexion:**

“Every cell in the human body benefits from *Vyayama*”. Many minute changes can be seen in the body as the benefit of regular *vyayama*. During *vyayama*, the circulation in the body increases, and more blood reaches the skin. It receives the required nourishment for a healthy complexion and also to repair the damage due to sun and environmental pollution. This nourishment also nourishes the fibroblast cells in the skin which maintain the skin tone. The sweating during *vyayama* helps eliminate the dirt and toxins from the skin. *Vyayama* also helps regulate the cortisol hormone which in turn regulates the inflammation in the body. All the *vyayama* should be done in moderation for a healthy body, skin, and complexion.<sup>7,8,9,25</sup>

**Yoga:** Yoga is also one of the best physical activities for a good complexion. Practicing yoga postures will help increase blood circulation to the head and face area. Inverted postures can stimulate our nervous system, bring more oxygen and blood flow to the brain, boost our metabolic rate, and up to our energy levels.<sup>10,24</sup>

One can practice yoga in *bramhmuhurtha* after relieving basic urges. In *Dinacharya*, where *vyayama* is mentioned, one can do mild physical exercise or yoga and *pranayama*.<sup>11,28</sup>

### **Yoga in complexion care:**

- a. *Suryanamaskar*: This **boosts blood circulation**, giving skin and face a radiant glow. It also helps **prevent wrinkles** and early aging.<sup>12</sup>
- b. *Sarvangasana*: This pose increases the blood flow to the neck and face, resulting in a healthy glow. It also stimulates the thyroid gland which improves the metabolism of the body.<sup>13</sup>
- c. *Shirsasana*: This pose increases the flow of blood and oxygen to the face. This helps in reducing dullness and brings out a healthy complexion.<sup>14</sup>
- d. *Bhujangasana*: This pose reduces the stiffness of the body, relaxes, and calms the mind hence relaxing the skin.

e. *Dhanurasana*: This yoga position regulates oxygen supply to the entire body and instantly revitalizes skin cells. It is one of the best yoga poses for getting rid of fine lines and harmful free radicals from the body.<sup>26</sup>

f. *Mayurasana*: Stimulates the metabolic processes which increase secretions from different glands. Hence removes toxins from the skin.<sup>27</sup>

g. *Gomukhasana*: This asana helps in stretching the whole body, calms the mind, removes stress, improves circulation, and results in complexion care.

h. *Shavasana*: Yoga *Nidra* or *Shavasana* helps in experiencing total relaxation and promotes healthy complexion.<sup>15,16</sup>

i. *Paschimottanasana*: This asana regulates the digestive system which in turn gives a glowing and radiant complexion.

j. *Virasana*: This stretches the muscles and helps improve metabolism, thus giving a healthy complexion.

k. *Pawanmuktasana*: This yoga pose flushes out the toxins by facilitating proper digestion and improving circulation, it helps to clear skin problems such as acne.

#### ***Pranayama in complexion care:***

*Pranayama* involves simple breathing exercises that supply more oxygen to your system and regenerates and rejuvenates the skin cells.<sup>17</sup>

i. *Sheetali* and *sheetkari*: This is also known as Cooling Breath, a breathing practice that very effectively helps cool the body and the mind. It soothes inflammatory skin conditions of the skin.<sup>18</sup>

ii. *Nadishodhana*: It is a breathing technique that helps clear blocked energy channels called *nadis* and thus calming the mind. Alternate nostril breathing helps to purify the blood and oxygenation resulting in a natural skin complexion.<sup>19</sup>

iii. *Kapalbhati*: This helps digestion and the process of blood purification. It helps to increase stamina and develop healthy and glowing skin. It also brings relaxation to the body.<sup>20</sup>

### **Shatkarma in complexion care:**

*Shatkarmas* are the yogic practices for internal cleansing and purification of the body. The word *shatkarma* consists of two words, “*shat*” meaning six and “*karma*” meaning activity.

*Shatkarmas* consist of six different practices that work on removing toxins from our respiratory and digestive systems which are the main root cause of the majority of diseases. It helps in the purification of the frontal lobes which promotes good concentration and creativity, also prevents many disorders related to our sense organs like the nose, ear, eye, and skin.<sup>21, 24.25.29</sup>

*Kapalbhati*: ‘*Kapal*’ meaning skull and ‘*bhati*’ meaning to shine. Traditionally yogis have believed it as an anti-aging technique and spiritually it helps in awakening *Manipura* and *Agyaachakra*. It purifies the blood bringing a healthy complexion.

*Neti*: This ensures that pure and in the right quantity air reaches the lungs for absorption of oxygen and proper functionality of organs. Rich oxygenated blood results in healthy skin.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The complexion is of prime importance in an individual’s life. According to Ayurveda, the complexion of the individual is determined in the *garbha* predominantly by *maturaharavihara*. Changes in that complexion are difficult, but one can maintain a healthy complexion through *vyayama* and yoga. Daily practice of *vyayama* and yoga not only takes care of a healthy skin complexion but also helps in the maintenance of good physical and mental health.

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