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Hasta Mudra's and respiratory system

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Abstract

The aim of present study was to find out some association between the gesture of hands with organs of circulatory system and also to get idea about that how different hand gestures improves the functioning of respiratory organs. Here we try to find out some hasta mudra which directly effects of circulatory system and also beneficial to overcome on many respiratory organs related diseases. Our hand contains about 100,000 nerves and each fingertip has about 3,000 nerve receptors, just under the surface of the skin. In the brain the hand takes up a very large proportion of the brain's cortex, and each area of the hand is linked to a different part of the brain. When we apply pressure to the fingers and hands, we stimulate related brain areas. So we use hasta mudras to activate pressure points, give messages to the body-mind energy system and change brain patterns. Here is a list of six common Hasta Mudra's which directly contribute in the improvement of our respiration. These hasta mudra's are Pushan, Asthma, Bronchial, Varun, Uttarabodhi and Ling mudra. Regular 10 to 15 minutes practice of each mudra for one hour will give positive results on respiratory system i.e., bronchial tube dilation, open the area of lungs, remove cough, avoid cold and also remove mucous congestion from the air passage. Because Mudras allow you to direct the developed awareness of the vital energy (prana) within your body. By using mudras in your yoga and meditation practice, you can facilitate healing, balance your energy levels, focus your mind, and deepen your meditation. Holding a mudra, or hand position, during an asana practice brings a powerful and profound steadiness and focus to your practice. You can even control your breath through mudras. The hand and finger positions of mudras or hand gestures make important connections in the nervous system and stimulate specific energy pathways (nadis). It is also said that mudras increase energy and blood circulation to different parts of the brain, to important nerve junctions and glands. Early yogis mapped out the hand areas and their associated reflexes which relate to the different areas of the body and brain.

Keywords: Hasta Mudra, elements and Respiration.

1. Introduction

तस्मात्सर्वप्रयत्नेन प्रबोधयितुमीश्वरीम् ।

ब्रह्मद्वारमुखे सुप्तां मुद्राभ्यासं समाचरेत् ॥३:५॥ Hatha Yoga Pradipika (3:5)

Therefore the goddess sleeping at the entrance of Brahma's door should be constantly aroused with all effort, by performing mudra thoroughly.

The science of Gestures is a gift of our ancient Rishis and Munis, and even Gods have the science of Gestures is a gift of our ancient Rishis and Munis, and even Gods have communicated each other by gestures. We can see the evidences in the walls of our ancient temples, Thus we can understand Mudra's are also an expression, a sign language, a bodily gesture, or even a communication we can say. Those mudra's are gestures developed by gods & Goddesses and later these skills were followed thoroughly by our ancient Rishis & Munis.

A hasta mudra is a gesture or positioning of the hands to channel and direct energy in the body. Mudras come from the over three thousand year old tradition of yoga originating in India. Hasta means "hand" in Sanskrit and "mudra" comes from the Sanskrit word "mud", meaning to delight. A mudra is a seal as in sealing your connection with the Divine or sealing energy in the body. There are many forms of mudras, such as with the eyes and the tongue.

The fingertips of every living being have many concentrated nerve root endings which are free energy discharge points. Science also confirms that around every tip there is a concentration of free electrons. By touching together of the tips of the fingers or the finger tips to other parts of the palms this free energy (Prana) is redirected back into the body along

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specified channels, back up to the brain. The redirected energy traveling through the nerves stimulates the various chakras. Thus, the tension applied to the nerve's end or the neural a psycho-neural circuits formed by the mudras which helps in balancing the five basic elements (i.e. fire, air, ether, earth and water). This balancing of the tension, and redirection of the internal energy effects the changes in veins, tendons, glands and sensory organs, to bring the body back to a healthy state. The body is made up of 5 elements – Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space. When these 5 elements are not in balance we get various physical and psychological ailments. The energy from the body radiates out mainly through the tip of the nose, lips, finger tips and toes. When the thumb gets in contact with the other fingers, energy is directed back to vitalise various parts of our body. This is called as circuit bypass. Mudras and Bandas go hand in hand. Banda help in locking in the energy and whereas mudras help in redirecting the energy. In our puranas, we see our Gods and Goddesses expressing in different Mudra. Mudras are the expression of our inner feeling. In the Tantra shastra Mudra is defined as the one which gives happiness. Mudras are part of Yoga and it is also called as Yoga Mudra. Mudras done using hands are called Hasta Mudra. The 5 fingers represent 5 elements (tatvas):

Fingers	Name of Elements	In traditional yoga fingers represents different energy point
Thumb	Fire	Parmatama or Supreme soul
Index Finger	Air	atma or individual soul
Middle finger	Space	satva (purity, peace)
Ring Finger	Earth	rajas (activity, action, passion)
Little/Small finger	Water	tamas (inertia)


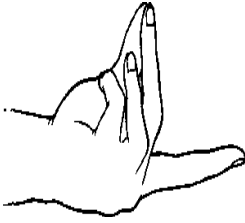
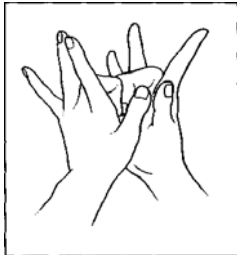

Fire element is the important one and when fire element goes weak, various ailments come to the body and death sets in when the fire element dies. Joining the fire element (thumb) with other elements (other fingers) vitalises the other elements also.


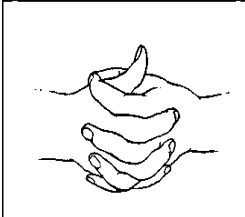
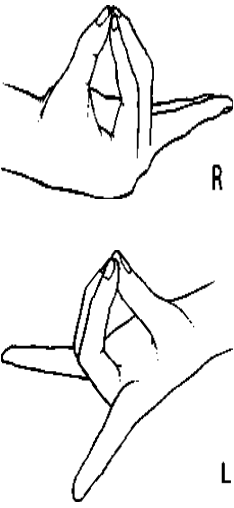
According to Ayurveda, diseases are caused due to an imbalance in the body, which in turn is caused by lack or excess of any of the five elements. Our fingers have the characteristics of these elements and each of these five elements serve a specific and important function within the body. The fingers are essentially electrical circuits. The use of mudras adjusts the flow of energy - affecting the balance of air, fire, water, earth, ether and accommodating healing.

Keeping specified nerves stretched for specified periods tones up of the nervous system. The fingers of each hand are held folded in certain specific postures and this provides the required tension on the nerves. The fingers of each and every individual in the world are different in their shapes and sizes. These are determined and provided by nature as a tool to bring the nerves into prime condition when affected adversely. Thus, they provide a different 'end tension' on the nerves when different individuals fold their fingers or the same individual folds the fingers by different methods in different Mudras. This is exactly the tension required by that individual for that particular application. Nature has already bestowed us with the tools to be used to keep us healthy.

Certain mudras in yoga control the involuntary physiological processes and the breathing. Mudras accomplish this by uniting various marma points in the fingers that in turn activate different areas of the brain as well as the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. One example is atmanjali mudra.

Below mention six Hasta Mudras gives amazing effects on Respiratory System.

Image	Technique & Benefits
<p style="text-align: center;">Atmanjali Mudra</p> 	<p>Before starting other mudra's we should perform it. To join your hands together palm-to-palm in Namaste. This mudra's brings marmas together and nerve circuits in the head and the upper part of the body in the vagus nerve system are united together. This produces a physiological response that induces calmness and a deeper breath.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Bronchial Mudra</p> 	<p>Technique: Perform it with both hands: Place the little finger at the base of the thumb, the ring finger on the upper thumb joint, and the middle finger on the pad of the thumb. Extend the index finger.</p> <p>Benefits: For an acute attack of asthma, first use this mudra from 4 to 6 minutes and then practice the Asthma Mudra until breathing has become normal again. For a long-term treatment, hold both mudras for 5 minutes, five times a day. People with respiratory problems often also suffer from inner loneliness, isolation, sexual problems, and sadness. To the outside world, these feelings are often successfully played down with humor.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Asthma Mudra</p> 	<p>Technique: Both hands: Press together the fingernails of the middle fingers and keep other fingers extended.</p> <p>Benefits: In case of an acute asthma attack, first do the Bronchial Mudra for 4 to 6 minutes. Then use this Asthma Mudra until the breathing calms down. For long-term treatment, use these two mudras five times every day for 5 minutes. During cold weather, never breathe through your mouth because the bronchial tubes will become inflamed and congested. Try not to be in a hurry because every incidence of stress activates the adrenal glands. Adrenaline promotes the congestion and constriction of the bronchial tubes. Eat a light diet with little meat; meat once a week is enough. No milk products, tomatoes, hot peppers, or kiwi. No smoking should be obvious. • Get enough fresh air by taking long walks. Do yoga or gymnastics every week and get enough rest. Most people who suffer from breathing difficulties are familiar with inner loneliness or cannot set boundaries.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Varuna Mudra (god of water)</p> 	<p>Technique: Bend the little finger of your right hand until the tip touches the ball of your right thumb; place the thumb of your right hand on it. Press the little finger and thumb slightly with your left thumb. At the same time, your left hand encircles the right hand lightly from below. Do as needed, or practice three times a day for 45 minutes.</p>

	<p>Benefits: It should always be done when too much mucus or secretion collects in the stomach or lungs. (Keshav Dev)</p>		<p>energy is directed upward. Every organ, the general mood, and thinking (concentration, memory, logic, enthusiasm, etc.) are positively influenced as a result.</p>
<p>Uttarabodhi Mudra (Mudra of the highest enlightenment)</p> 	<p>Technique: Place both hands folded in front of your solar plexus, at the level of your stomach. Lay the respective index fingers and thumbs on each other. Point your index fingers upward to the ceiling, and your thumbs downward to the floor or stomach. If you are lying down, the tips of your thumbs may lie at the lower end of your sternum. You can use this mudra when you feel physically and mentally listless, when you want to relax, or when you need a rousing idea—a flash of inspiration.</p> <p>Benefits: This Mudra strengthens the metal element which is associated with the energy of the lungs and large intestine. It strengthens inhalation; and since the heart and upper lung areas are particularly opened when this mudra is done, it has a refreshing effect. The metal element has a direct relationship with the nervous system and anything that conducts electrical or energetic impulses.</p>	<p>LINGA MUDRA (Upright Mudra)</p> 	<p>Technique: Place both palms together and clasp your fingers. One thumb should remain upright; encircle it with the thumb and index finger of your other hand. Do as needed or three times a day for 15 minutes. Basic position: Stand up; legs are slightly spread, knees bent somewhat, and hands are in front of the chest. Inhalation: Throw your arms behind you, turn your head to the right, and look over your shoulder. Exhalation: Return your hands to your chest and turn your head to the front. Repeat at least ten times.</p> <p>Benefits: This finger position increases the powers of resistance against coughs, colds, and chest infections. It also loosens mucus that has collected in the lungs. In addition, it is very useful for people who suffer from respiratory complaints when the weather changes. It also increases the body temperature.</p>
<p>Pushan Mudra (Dedicated to the sun god, Pushan, also the god of nourishment)</p> 	<p>Technique:-Version 1: Right hand: The tips of the thumb, index finger, and middle finger are on top of each other; the other fingers are extended.</p> <p>Left hand: The tips of the thumb, middle finger, and ring finger are on top of each other; the other fingers are extended.</p> <p>Version 2: Right hand: The tips of the thumb, ring finger, and little finger are on top of each other, the other fingers are extended.</p> <p>Left hand: Same as Version 1.</p> <p>These two mudras can be used as immediate help or practiced four times a day for 5 minutes in the case of chronic complaints.</p> <p>Benefits: It intensifies breathing and therefore the absorption of oxygen and the release of carbon dioxide in the lungs. It has a relaxing effect on the solar plexus (the area of the stomach, liver, spleen, and gallbladder), regulates energies in the autonomic nervous system, mobilizes energies of elimination, and detoxifies. It has an excellent effect on general or acute nausea, seasickness, flatulence, and that sensation of fullness one feels after meals.</p> <p>Right hand fingers position connecting the energies of the thumb, ring finger, and little finger activates the lower digestive process and the elimination process. This mudra can be called the general energy pump. It stimulates the functions of the brain, a fact that has also been proved scientifically. The finger position of the right hand activates energy in the pelvic floor, like a smoldering fire that has been stoked. With the finger position of the left hand, the kindled</p>	<p>These Steps helpful to obtain maximum benefits of these Hasta Mudra.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mudra should do in Sitting Posture i.e., Vajrasana, Padmasana and Sukhasana. 2. Take deep and smooth breathing without any jerk (give equal time to both inhalation and exhalation). 3. Try to concentrate on mental fluctuation. 4. Duration (05 to 15 Min./mudra in a single span) max. timing will be 45 min. 5. Best timing is Morning when body fresh. 6. Don't move arms and hand during performing mudra. 7. Don't put extra pressure on figure tips press it gently. 8. Avoid touching nails with tip of the fingers because nails have maximum dead cells. 9. The ancients believed there were 24 diagnostic elements, the Gayatri mantra has 24 words, the <u>Jains</u> have 24 Tirthankaras, and Sanatan Dharma has 24 avatars. The 24 words of the Gayatri Mantra have a special relationship with 24 mudras known as Gayatri mudras. They have different names and formations. 10. A constant practice of Mudras can stop or slow down the destructive changes in the human body. It can help develop a virtuous, socially amiable, non-violent, pious and courteous disposition. 11. Mudras effect changes in veins, tendons, glands and sense organs. 12. Mudras need no prior preparation. They can be done (mostly but with exceptions) at any time, anywhere and under virtually any circumstances. 13. Some of the Mudras can balance the elements of the body within 45 minutes; some react within a few seconds on the human body. 14. Mudra is a very exact and scientific yogic function by which one can develop or even change, one's internal and external dispositions viz. mental (anger, emotional 	

disturbance, intelligence etc.), spiritual (concentration, meditation) or physical (in various diseases, illnesses).

Conclusion

We can compare hasta mudra's with Acupressure where the nerves are influenced by the application of pressure on certain points of body or Acupuncture, where slight electrical impulses are conveyed through needles inserted in the body. The advantage in Mudras is that the pressure to be applied on the nerves is automatic and controlled by the shape and size of the fingers and not by external agencies/instruments. Because the Mudras work on the nerves, they are a Neural Science. Mudra Vigyan is also a science based on the principles of the Indian Medical Science (Ayurveda). Thus, the above mention mudras applied tension to the nerves or the neural which form the psycho-neural circuits and it helps in balancing the five basic elements (or building blocks) and reduce cough, cold, air pathways congestivity and bronchial infections. It also balancing of the tension, and redirection of the internal energy effects the changes in veins, tendons, glands and sensory organs, to bring the body back to a healthy state.

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