DHAUTI: INTERNAL CLEANSING

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ABSTRACT
Ayurveda, the science of hygiene advocates purification of body for promotion, prevention and maintenance of health. The ancient purification exercises called the shat (six) karmas (activities) or sometimes more simply called the kriyas (preliminary purification activities) which open the pathways of the body, the nadis, the energy body and the mind. These purification practices are mentioned in many ancient yogic texts such as the "Hatha Yoga Pradipika", the "Gherand Samhita", the "Siva Samhita", the "Satkarma Sangraha of Raghavira", and many others. In traditional yoga, yogins are given the shat karmas in the very beginning. This helps to unplug the repression of cultural conditioning, open up the energy channels, activate the energy centers, and also unburden the physical body of accumulated obstructions and toxins. Shat karma are dhauti, nauli, neti, basti, kapalbhati and trataka. This article is summarized description of dhauti karma along with modern science validation.

KEYWORDS: shatkarma, dhauti, internal cleansing.

INTRODUCTION
Saucha refers to “purity of body” and encourages “purity of mind”. Purification is a central theme in yoga, along with empowerment, activation, and integration. As such it is abides at the first stage of yoga, but also at the last, simultaneously. The ancient Yogis developed the six cleansing techniques (Kriyas) for “purification” of the physical body. Shatkriyas are explained in classics of yogic science thousands of years ago in Hatha yoga Pradipika and Gheranda Samhita. In the intermediate and advanced practice of hatha yoga great stress is laid upon not only the external, but also the internal cleanliness and the physical body. The kriyas, or purificatory exercises, help eliminate excess mucus, toxins, and impurities from the...
body. The word kriya means “action or act,” and in this context refers to cleansing activity. The shat (six) kriyas commonly known to yogis are: 1) dhauti 2) basti 3) neti 4) nauli 5) trataka 6) kapalabhati These exercises are means of cleaning the throat and esophagus from kapha, keeping the stomach free of excess acid, the bowels of feces and the lungs, pores, and sweat glands free from waste and impurities. Chapter II, Verse 21 of the Hatha yoga pradipika explains who should practice the kriyas: "One who is flabby and phlegmatic should first (before the practice of Pranayama) practice the six acts. Others (who do not have these defects) should not practice them, the (three) humours (wind, bile, and phlegm) being equally balanced in them." The result of this practice is explained in Verse 23: "These six cherished processes, which purify the body and yield wonderful results, are held in esteem by the foremost of yogis.” Of the shat kriyas, neti, trataka, and kapalabhati can be practiced by intermediate students of hatha yoga. Nauli can be practiced by advanced students, whereas dhauti and basti should be practiced only under the supervision of an experienced, qualified instructor.

Dhauti is an important part of the Shatkarma. It is intended mainly to the cleaning of the digestive tract in its full length but it affects also the respiratory tract, external ears and eyes. According to Gheranda Samhita,[1] it is divided into four parts: Antar (internal) dhauti, Danta (teeth) dhauti, Hrid (cardiac or chest region) dhauti and Moola shodhana (rectal cleansing). Dhauti is the name given to a number of methods for cleaning various internal organ.
ANTAR DHOUTI

Vatasara dhauti, as advocated in gherand samhita “Shape your lips like a crow’s beak (kaki mudra) and drink air. Let the air swirl in the stomach for some time and then allow it to dispel itself. Vatasara dhauti is a most secret technique to purify the body. It destroys all diseases and increases gastric fire.” Gherand Samhita 1: 15 – 16. There exists different forms of vatasara dhauti. Kaki mudra is relaxing and cooling to the body/mind, stimulates the gastric fire, and purifies the blood.

Varisara dhouti involves drinking of water upto throat and expelled by rectum.varisara dhouti also called as shankha prachalana. Sankh means conch analogous to intestine and prachalan means to wash. Shankha prakshalana kriya (cleansing the conch of the intestines or complete bowel wash.

This washes the entire gastrointestinal tract very quickly by drinking salt water and performing special synergistic cleansing asanas together in sequence. Benefits: Cleanses and tones the entire gastrointestinal tract. Excellent for excess tamas and rajas, very cooling in summer, lightens the mind and attitude, good for depression, removes toxic conditions of the blood and tissues that are caused by intestinal waste product fermentation, putrefaction, and decomposition thus increasing the function of the intestines, It thus relieves flatulence, constipation, acidity, indigestion, menstrual cramps, asthma, acne and boils etc. It also prevents urinary infections and the kidney stone formation through lightening the load on the adjacent lymph glands and nerves. Light eating or fasting (preferable) greatly enhances its efficacy. It counteracts bad habits of sluggish bowel due to a previous diet of refined foods or a sedentary lifestyle.

Caution; Not recommended for heart patients, the very debilitated, and those suffering from high blood pressure, edema, ascites, and serious diseases of the intestines without supervision of a yoga therapist.

Agnisara kriya is process to stimulate agni and cure disease of abdomen or digestive problems , process is done by contracting naval region towards spine repeatedly. This is the fire wash kriya practice which is none other than many repetitions of uddiyana bandha performed continuously one after the other without breathing in-between. Agni sara dhauti is perhaps more often called agni sara kriya or vahnisara kriya. Agni of course means fire. Sara means to wash. Dhauti here refers to the digestive tract. Agni sara kriya washes the abdomen by
generating heat or fire (augmenting the fire chakra or manipura chakra), thus it is most often called simply, the fire wash. This kriya is said to wash, clean, and energize the fire chakra, stimulate the immune system, powers of digestion, and detoxify the body by increasing the inner fire.

_Bahiskrtaa dhouti_ is difficult to practice by normal individuals in this saktinadi i.e. lower intestine is expelled out, wash and draw inside. Generally Vatasara and Bahishkritaare not practiced, as they are difficult methods.

**DANTA DHAUTI**

This involves cleansing of face and mouth. Danthmula dhouti is rubbing teeth with khadir etc. Today most people use tooth brushes, picks, or special appliances but the point here is to stimulate the gums as well as the nerve roots of the teeth while taking advantage of the special herbs available by the plant, rather than to only mechanically clean, disinfect, or manage the PH of the mouth, tongue, and teeth.

_Jhiva shodhan_ is washing of tongue through fingers or metal instrument. Putting the index, middle and ring fingers in to the throat, one should rub out the impurities and clean the root of the tongue slowly. Thus one can be free from diseases arising from phlegm. Today tongue scraping in India is part of daily oral hygiene often utilizing a tongue scraper made out of silver, copper, or stainless steel which is inserted on the back most part of the tongue with a light but firm pressure and then brought forward skimming off any surface scum, mucous, dead cells, toxins, food debris, microbes, and other impurities until the entire upward facing surface of the accessible tongue is cleaned. Stimulates the back brain, throat chakra, throat, cleans the breath, increases digestion, reflexes positively to swadhistana chakra, prevents tooth decay, prepares for khecha Karnarandhra, By constant practice an auditory sensation is experienced.

_Karna Dhauti_ or ear cleansing is performed simply by inserting a well manicured finger (usually index finger) in one ear and vibrating it rapidly. This effect can be augmented by placing the palms over the ears and gently massaging in clockwise and counterclockwise circles. Similarly special herbal lavage are syringed into the ears as well as ayurvedic herbal oils. An ancient Indian cleansing technique utilizes special metal utensils administrated by skilled practitioners who mechanically remove the build up of wax and other waste materials that may have become deposited in the conch of the outer ear.
Kapal randhra dhouti is pressing forehead near nasal bridge. This increases the focus and eliminates stress. Kapal randra dhauti practiced daily leads to extraordinary vision by subsiding kapha dosha.

HRDDHAUTI
This involves Danda, Vaman And Vastra Dhouti. The word, hrid, refers to the heart. In the old days yogis stuck a specially prepared flexible and smooth stick made of turmeric, sugar cane, or stalk of banana down the throat, pharynx, and into the esophagus. Then it was pulled out before it entered into the stomach proper. Today modern yogis often use a stomach catheter which is safer usually less than three feet long and about one centimeter in diameter.

Benefits: Hrid dhauti is actually more stimulating to the lungs, bronchioles, esophagus, heart, shoulder, and thoracic region of the back, than the stomach which it also stimulates. It is specific for all problems of the thoracic and throat region except those listed in the cautions. In Ayurveda and yoga therapy it is especially recommended for asthma, cardiac restrictions, and other pulmonary problems.

Vamana dhauti is a method of cleaning the stomach by voluntary vomiting. Vaman dhouti can be done in three ways kunjal kriya, vyaghra kriya and gaja karma kriya. The term kunjal kriya contains two words i.e., kunjal + kriya. Here kunjal means 'elephant' and 'kriya' means procedure. It means the elephant before drinking the water through the trunk cleans the trunk first by filling it with water and spit it out forcibly. In yoga therapy vamana is excellent for disorders of udana, prana, samana, vyana, and apana. It cleanses and stimulates the stomach, esophagus, lungs, chest, heart, throat, nose, eyes, ears, and sinus. It balances the vayu (winds) in the body especially the upward moving prana-vayu (the prana that moves upwards). It alleviates depression, sloth, and heaviness. It is a remedy for many kapha and tamasic imbalances, Vamana dhauti is one of the specific remedies in Ayurvedic medicine for stomach, throat, asthma, and lung affliction (along with hrid dhauti). It is counter-indicated in cases of hiatus hernia and ulcers.

Another similar kriya is variously called Gaja karani, Bhaghi kriya, or Vyagra Kriya (tiger kriya) which varies mainly in that it is done immediately or within two hours after a specially prepared meal. Vyaghrha Kriya is done in und digested or partially digested state, as compared to empty stomach in kunjal kriya. It is especially helpful in removing excess mucous of the lungs and throat as well as normalizing pitta (bile secretions)
Vastra dhouti is cleaning of stomach with help of cloth. Similar to stick dhauti except that one swallows a four finger width (about 3 cm wide) tightly stitched and double hemmed linen cloth that has been dipped in lukewarm salted water which is about three to five meters long (approximately 20 feet). In an abbreviated practice a shorter cloth may be used, limiting the stimulation to the throat, esophagus, chest, and shoulder reflexes.

Benefits: Although obviously a stomach and esophagus cleanser and tonifier vastra dhauti has a powerful cleansing effect upon the sternum, chest, heart, throat, shoulders, upper back, and especially the lungs. It also removes excess mucous from the stomach and tonifies its cells and glandular abilities. It is specifically used in yoga therapy for asthma and lung afflictions while tonifying the voice. In Ayurveda it is said to bring both pitta and kapha doshas back into balance.

Mula shodhana is cleaning of rectum anal region by turmeric stalk or middle finger. This Mulashodhana cures constipation and indigestion, gives radian complexion and nourishment to body and stimulates the digestive organs. The ancient scriptures praise this kriya for curing hemorrhoids, prostate, skin diseases, constipation, seminal control, tonification of the genital region, and indigestion. Blood supply as well as waste removal is enhanced. In the classical hatha yoga tradition, the stem of the turmeric plant was used. Although tumeric is known to be antiseptic and healing to the mucosa, today it is usually done with a well lubricated finger cot on the index or middle finger with ghee, coconut, or castor oil commonly acting as the lubricant. This is variously known as Ganesh Kriya, Citrakriya, or Mulasodhana.

Benefits: Mulasodhana cleanses not only physically helps the area to cleanse, releases toxins and tensions in the muladhara chakra, but also releases emotional tensions in the mysterious chakra providing light and clarity. It is the area that is often fraught with fear, left over anxiety from poor infant toilet training, poor sitting habits, sedentary habits, lack of dietary habits, but also because of the generalized tension in the area it is often stressed because of sexual tension and fear of arousal. Opening up the perineum will also open up more energy to the urogenital diaphragm (swadhishana chakra). For those who have not learned to connect the earth (muladhara) and water (swadhishana) chakras together to connect with the fire (manipura) will experience resistance to activating these two lowest but vital centers. As such many will resist these kriyas (or all kriyas), deem them "low", gross, vulgar, or evil, even though these are precisely the areas which are most needed to open. In yoga the goal is arriving into the stage when the non-dual manifestation of spirit and nature, crown and earth,
consciousness and being are realized and experienced. This synchronization can not be achieved without the muladhara chakra being activated. Mulasodhana will help eliminate hemorrhoids, fissures, and adhesions when performed gently. It will stimulate the nerves and nadis at the pelvic diaphragm and muladhara chakra. It will aid in the elimination of constipation and relieve tension in the pelvis.

CAUTIONS: The pressure should not be too hard to cause any pain and there is no need for force. Hemorrhoids and fissures in the rectum are favorably improved, but require delicate and gentle maneuvering at first. v Contraindication of dhoti are hernia, high blood pressure, heart diseases, stroke, acute peptic ulcers.

DISCUSSION
Dhauti cleanses the esophagus and stomach by removing excess mucus and food. According to Ayurveda (the ancient health system from India) it reduce Ama. Dhouti karma in digestive system decreased peristalsis and increased release of glucose into the blood from the liver. Dilation of the alveoli in lungs stops acute asthma. Heart beats faster and blood vessels dilate supplying more oxygen to the heart muscle. The lungs get exercised by the action of the diaphragm on the abdomen which thus helps in better breathing function. In addition to flushing out the stomach and esophagus contents, Kunjal is also an excellent cleaning technique for the lungs and hence it is very beneficial for asthmatics. The strong contraction of pyloric sphincter produces a shock wave along the vagus nerve which then releases the spasm within the bronchial tree. Kunjal is in fact recommended as instant relief for any one feeling the onset of an asthma attack. If an asthmatic performs kunjal every morning over several months their attacks will get less and less frequent. The contractions of kunjal help the breathing mechanism and improve blood supply to the whole of abdominal and thoracic area. It is good technique for those with decreased digestion. It help to relieve indigestion, gas and acidity complaints. It tones up the abdominal muscles and other internal organs.

CONCLUSION
It is clear that the shat karmas are not simply physical cleansing exercises, rather they utilize specific bodily dynamics, evolutionary life functions, energetic and psychics mechanics in order to remove emotional, mental, and energetic blockages and hindrances. They affect the physical body, the energy body, the mental/emotional body, the creative thought processes and the pathways of embodiment and relationship in a positive way. Dhouti karma allivates the Kapha disorders, hyperacidity, indigestion, obesity, bronchitis, asthma, cough, cold, bad
breathe and others digestive problems. Enhance agni, lusture, nourishes body prevent and promote healthy state of body. Therefore shatkarma are beneficial for promotion of health as well as prevention of diseases.

REFERENCES