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HEALTH & HARMONY



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YOGIC CLEANSING PRACTICES -1

Yoga, the science of discipline focuses on the balance of body, mind & soul; thus maintaining harmony between physical, mental, social and spiritual well being of a person. While attempting such a balance, after moral ethics, purification of body is emphasised. Cleansing of body is achieved by certain processes known as Shatkarmas Shatkriyas or Shodhan kriya. The word "Shat" means Six, "Shodhana" means purification or cleansing and Kriya / Karma means processes or techniques. Thus there are six purificatory processes which help to clean our body & mind to maintain a good health and prepare us for the path of Yoga.

According to Hathayoga, Shatkarma help to remove accumulated toxins, impurities from the body. When the channels of subtle energies (Nadi) are full of impurities, Prana Vayu (subtle energy) does not enter them, therefore, first of all, Nadi should be purified before beginning the practice of Pranayama.

IMPORTANT SHATKARMA FOR COMMON MAN

Shatkarmas are six in number and each one consists of a variety of practices. The basic techniques, benefits and precautions of some of the important practices are useful for the common man. These common practices are:

- (1) Neti
- (2) Dhauti
- (3) Basti
- (4) Nauli
- (5) Trataka
- (6) Kapalabhati

Guidance for cleansing the body

1. **Neti:** nasal cleaning
2. **Dhauti:** cleansing of the digestive tract
3. **Nauli:** abdominal massage
4. **Basti:** colon cleaning
5. **Kapalabhati:** forceful exhalation thus purification of the frontal lobe
6. **Trataka:** Continues eye gazing

Each of these groups contains more than one practice, such as *Jala Neti* (Nasal cleansing with water), *Vaman dhauti* (or *kunjal kriya*, Vomiting out the water) etc.

They are all excellent practices designed to purify the whole body and bring about clarity & harmony between body and mind.

An easy, short cleansing program:



Precautions to be taken for cleansing processes:

- These are very effective practices that can never be learned from books or taught by inexperienced people, it should be learned and practised under the supervision of a qualified Yoga Teacher.
- All the practices require patience and dedication.
- These practices activate almost all of the vital systems in the body, especially the digestive, respiratory, circulatory and nervous systems.
- These purificatory processes are both preventive and curative.
- One's capacity to work, think, digest, taste, feel, experience, etc., increases and greater awareness develops.

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