

• **36 - CURING ASTIGMATISM AS PER AYURVEDA**

• **What is Astigmatism?**

- Astigmatism comes from the Greek words **asti** (meaning “without”) and **stigma** (meaning “point”). Astigmatism is a vision problem that causes objects to appear distorted and blurry..It often affects both **distance and near vision**. It is the most common vision problem and it may occur parallel to **nearsightedness (myopia)** or **farsightedness (hyperopia)**.

• **Why Blurred Vision?**

- .Poor eyesight results from that fact that the cornea becomes **oval in shape**. Therefore, the light rays do not focus to a single point in the eye, causing blurred vision.

• **Symptoms:**

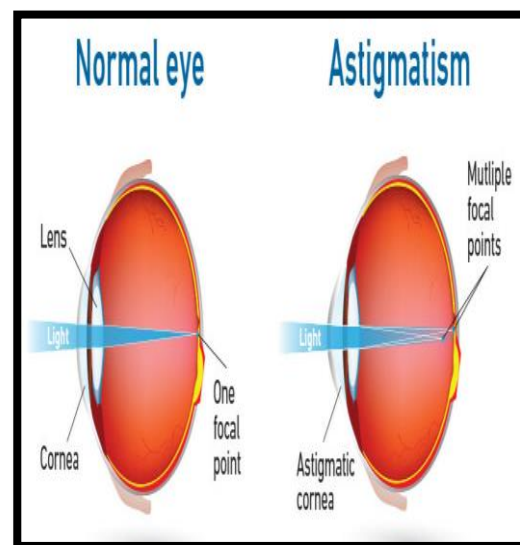
- Blurred vision
- Headache
- Sensitivity to light
- Squinting up the eyes
- Fatigue
- Eye strain

• **Causes for Astigmatism**

- **Distortion in the shape of the cornea**, which becomes oval and loses its natural roundness;
- **Cornea damage (scar)** due to infection or wound;
- Eye surgery Other **eye diseases** that could affect the cornea;
- **Sitting, standing or sleeping** in an improper posture over a long period.

• **Diagnosis**

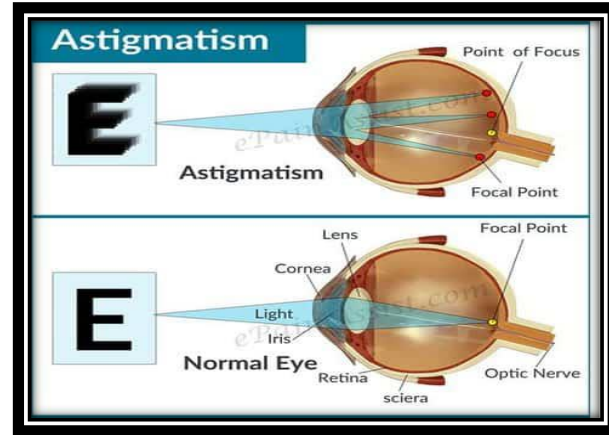
- **Manual keratometer** – an instrument used to measure the curvature of the cornea;
- **Corneal topographer** – an instrument that creates color-coded maps similar to topographical mountain maps (steeper areas are displayed in red while flatter ones are in blue).



- Ayurveda works in **two dimensions regarding astigmatism**. On the one hand, it targets the prevention of astigmatism, and on the other, if the condition is present, the focus lies with treatment. It is important to note that [Ayurveda](#) emphasizes disease prevention and health maintenance.

- **Astigmatism and Ayurveda**

- Eyes are one of the sensory organs (*jñānendriya*). The **optic center (Sookshma indriya)** is located in the occipital lobe of the cerebrum. Its main function is vision, and **Alochak Pitta** is responsible for it..



- Ayurveda specifically mentions that
- eyes are a **Tejas (fire)** predominant organ. Pitta has **Tikshna and Ushna (sharp, hot and irritating)** properties. Air pollution, dust, fumes, as well as looking at bright objects such as television, computer or mobile phone screens can aggravate Pitta and Vata, thus creating or worsening eye pathology, e.g. astigmatism.

- **Hydration Balances Disturbed Pitta and Vata**

- Proper **eye hydration or miniaturization** is a must for people with eye problems, especially astigmatism. Care should be taken of **dry eyes**.
- **Small lifestyle changes** such as avoiding continuous work in front of the computer, watching movies or reading for long periods of time especially in the dark, could also be helpful. This will **reduce tension on the eye muscles**, while drinking large amounts of pure water will help keep the body hydrated.
- The simple practice of **applying cotton pads dipped in rose water** on the eyes is a very good natural solution to the problem. It will keep eyes hydrated and reduce eye muscle tension.
- **Green juices, carrot juice or seasonal fruit juices** can also be very efficient in maintaining a proper hydration level along with providing antioxidants required for the body and the eyes. **Vitamin A** is essential to maintaining eye health.
- Ayurveda explains the same concepts in its own language. According to Ayurveda, eyes are **Majja Pradan (Ayurvedic Majja dhatu)**, and eye tissue is characterized as **Snigdha Pradhan (having unctuous properties)**.
- So, **ghee and butter** are the best substances to nurture the unctuous quality. Vitamin A is present in ghee and butter. Using ghee internally and externally will help to maintain eyes healthy.

• **Herbs Important for Astigmatism**

- **Carrots** ..Raw carrots or carrot juice are very good for your eyes. They provide the body with plenty of nutrients which help keep eyes healthy. Carrots are also essential in **curing eye problems caused by astigmatism.**

• **Amala**

- **Amala (Indian gooseberry)** is popularly used to treat vision-related diseases or disorders. It is rich in **vitamin C** and antioxidants and beneficial in repairing damaged eye tissue and cells.
- **Two tablespoons of Amala juice** can be taken in 100 ml of water early in the morning. This also helps treat constipation naturally, [restoring the digestive fire](#), which in turn boosts Alochak Pitta, the fire element important for normal vision.

• **Triphala**

- .Triphala is an ancient Ayurvedic product used to treat various diseases. It is made from three ingredients, namely **Hirada (Terminalia chebula)**, **Behada (Terminalia belerica)**, and **Amala (Indian gooseberry)**. It is extremely beneficial in treating astigmatism by improving tissue and retina health as well as strengthening the eye muscles. **Paste of Survari Hirda**, which is a specific Hirda tree species, can be mixed with one part of honey and two parts of ghee, and applied on the eyes at night – this is the best eye tonic.
- Add one spoon of Triphala powder in a glass of water and keep it overnight. Filter it thoroughly in the morning and use it as eye wash regularly. The same water can be taken internally for months. **Medicated Triphala Ghee drops** are also very helpful – put two drops in each eye.

• **Yashtimadhu**

- .Yashtimadhu (licorice) is another ancient [Ayurvedic herb](#) used to treat various diseases, that is unctuous, nourishing and healing. Its effect is better for dry conditions of the eyes. Yashtimadhu has the ability to strengthen the eyes as well as purify and nourish the blood vessels. It can be used the same way as Triphala or with Triphala every day. Yashtimadhu can also be taken internally or combined with ghee.

• **Cassia Seeds**

- **Cassia seeds** have been used in Ayurveda for ages to promote vision and treat skin- and blood-related problems. They are useful in treating blurry eyes reducing eye pain and discomfort.
- For internal use, one teaspoon of cassia seeds can be boiled in one cup of water until the mixture is reduced to half of the original quantity. The decoction should be taken two to three times a day.

- **Classical Ayurvedic products Used to Treat Eye Diseases**

- Aswagandharishtam /Gandhakarasyanam (101) / Loha Sinduram (101)
- Makaradwajam (100 mg capsules) / Triphaladi Churnam
Mahatraiphala Ghritam / Pathyakshadhatryadi Kashayam
- Mahatiktam Kashayam / Chyavanaprasam / Anu Thailam / Kshirabala (101)
- Valiya Bhringamalakadi Tailam / Elaneer Kuzhampu / Karpooradi Kuzhampu
- Nayanamritam Kuzhampu / Jeevantyadi Ghrita

- **Proper Diet**

- Diet is a very important factor that helps maintain the proper functioning of any organ or system in the body. Foods rich in antioxidants should be included in the diet.

- **Vegetables**

- *Spinach, carrots, bell peppers, celery, squash, tomatoes, parsley, and lettuce*

- **Fruit**

- *Berries, plums, mangoes, grapes, cherries, citrus fruits, and melon*

- **Fish**

- *Sardines, mackerel, cod, and tuna. These fish are rich in DHA which is a compound good for eye cells. Hence it is highly recommended to add these fish to your diet.*

- **What to Avoid**

- Dietary restrictions should comprise **fried foods, alcohol, and sugar.**

- **Lifestyle Changes**

- Excess television and mobile device and computer use, bright light, working in hot atmosphere, near furnaces or in chemical or glass factories are all harmful for the eyes

- **Yogic Eye Exercise (Tratak Kriya)**

- This exercise is very useful to **control eye movement** caused by visual malfunction. Identify an object that is far, stand up, and focus on that object. **Try not to blink** when you feel strain on your eyes but instead switch focus from the far to a near object and continue focusing without blinking. Once you **feel your eyes are strained, place your palms over them and relax.** Repeat the same procedure several times as your **stamina increases.**
- Rolling the eyes in full circles is another good way to **exercise the eye muscles** by stretching them so as to improve their flexibility; as a result, the corneas will slowly begin to regain their original shape thus remedying the problem of astigmatism.

- **Panchakarma**

- **Virechana** - The regular use of purgative medication is a key treatment for astigmatism. People more prone to astigmatism should take purgatives such as triphala once a week with suitable oil or ghee. Virechana is a systematically planned purgative therapy done to balance the Pitta energy.

- **Nasya**

- Anu Thailam is a key product for eye health. The regular use of two drops of Anu Thailam prevents astigmatism.

- **Netra anjana**

- The regular use of eye drops such as **Elaneer Kuzhampu, Karpooradi Kuzhampu or Nayanamritam Kuzhampu** is recommended. Obtaining expert advice is required before you start using the **Ayurvedic eye drops**. Ayurveda suggests not putting any kind of eye drops when the sun is not in the sky, i.e. after sunset or when the weather is cloudy.

- **Netra dhara**

- The **regular eyewash with triphala** decoction helps alleviate the symptoms.

- **Netra basti**

- Netra basti is a supportive treatment for astigmatism. It is also called **Netra Tarpana**, which is done by means of **meditated ghee for both eyes to correct vision**. The treatment normally results in tangible relief and improvement in **eye health**.

- **Padabhyanga (Foot Massage)**

- According to Ayurveda, the sensory organ of eyes and the body part of feet are both **Teja mahabhut pradhan (dominated by the element of Fire)**, hence foot massage by medicated ghee e.g. **ShatadhautaGhruta** is beneficial to the feet as well as the eyes. The above **Ayurveda guidelines** can help stop the progression and deterioration of the eyesight affected by astigmatism.

