

**Concept and principles of Shatkarmas : meaning, Definition, Types and their Significance in Yoga Sadhana :**  
**Purpose & Utility of Kriyas in Hatha Yoga :**

**Dhautirbastistatha netitratakam naulikam tatha I  
 Kapalabhatishchaitani shat karmani prachkshate II 2 : 22 II HYP**

Dhauti, Bhasti, neti, trataka, nauli and kapalabhati; these are known as Shatkarma or the six cleansing processes.

Shat Kriyas are the yogic techniques to cleanse the internal organs. According to Hatha Yoga Pradipika there are six cleansing techniques called Shat Kriyas. The scripture says if any practitioner of Hatha Yoga is obese or has excess of fat or phlegm the body should be performed first these Kriyas. But others, not suffering from the excess of these, should not perform them.

Both Hatha yoga and Ayurveda believe that diseases are caused when there is an imbalance of the Doshas. Shat Kriyas help to maintain balance of the three Doshas or humours in the body ; Kapha or mucous, Pitta or bile and Vata or wind. Shat Kriyas are practised before the beginning of Pranayama to ensure that body is pure and free from toxins.

	Kriya name	Method of Kriya/How to perform Kriya	Type	Benefits
1	Dhauti	A string of the cloth approx 3 inches wide and 15 cubics long moistened in warm water and coaxed down the gullet into stomach and gently taken out. Or Prepare warm salted water and drink 4/5 glasses or more as per your capacity and then lean forward and put your middle and ring finger in mouth and touch the root of the tongue keeping tongue out and vomit the whole water out.	<b>According to Gheranda Samhita there are 4 parts of Dhauti</b> 1. Antar (internal) 2. Danta (teeth) 3. Hrid (cardiac) 4. Moola Shodhana (rectal cleaning)	Cures cough, asthma, enlargement of sleep, leprosy and disorders of phlegm and bile.

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vatsara Dhauti - expelling air through anus.</li> <li>2. Varisara Dhauti - Evacuating a large quantity of water through the bowels.</li> <li>3. Vahnisara Dhauti - Rapid expansion and contraction of abdomen.</li> <li>4. Bahishkrita Dhauti - Washing the rectum with hands.</li> </ol>	<b>Antar Dhauti 4 practices</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vatsara dhauti</li> <li>2. Varisara Dhauti</li> <li>3. Vahnisara Dhauti</li> <li>4. Bahishkrita Dhauti</li> </ol>	
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Danda Dhauti - Inserting a soft banana stem into the stomach.</li> <li>2. Vastra Dhauti - Swallowing a long thin strip of cloth.</li> <li>3. Vaman Dhauti - Regurgitating the contents of the stomach.</li> </ol>	<b>Hrid Dauti 3 practices</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Danda Dhauti</li> <li>2. Vastra Dhauti</li> <li>3. Vaman Dhauti</li> </ol>	
		Moola Shodhana - Can be done in 2 ways It is done either by inserting a turmeric root or the middle finger into the anus.		
2	Bhasti	Sit in utkatasana in nevel deep water take a pipe that is 6 inches long half inch in diameter open at both ends and insert inside the anus contract and withdraw the anus muscles so the water enters in and cleanses it.	It corresponds to modern enema 2 parts of Basti <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Jala (water)</li> <li>2. Sthala (Dry)</li> </ol>	cures disorders like colic, enlarged spleen, strengthens the abdominal muscles, cures urinary and digestive disorders , chronic constipation.
3	Neti	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Jala Neti - Passing warm saline water through the nose.</li> <li>2. Sutra Neti - Passing a soft thread through the nose.</li> <li>3. Ghrita Neti - Passing clarified butter through the nose.</li> <li>4. Dugdha Neti - Passing Milk through the nose.</li> </ol>	<b>Neti 4 Practices</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Jala (Water)</li> <li>2. Sutra (Thread)</li> <li>3. Grita (Ghee)</li> <li>4. Dugdha (Milk)</li> </ol>	Cleans the brain illuminate the Devine sight. Can see upto long distance cures Asthma, cold, sinuses, cervical problems. Cleans ears, eyes.

4	Trataka	Take candle and place it in the eye level Sit and gaze it for 1 min or until water starts coming and close eyes. Now start gazing the image of the flame in front of your close i.e. chidakasha keep focusing in between eyebrows. When image is disappear than open eyes and start gazing again	<b>Trataka 2 Practices</b> 1. Antar (Internal) 2. Bahir (external)	Removes eye deceases. Removes sloth. Improves concentration and meditation.
5	Nauli	While standing practice uddiyana abdominal contraction first while in this position allow the centre of the abdomen to be free by contracting the left and right sides of the abdomen. This position will bring the abdominal muscles in a vertical line. this is madhyama Nauli. same way we can do right and left moment of abdomen and it is called Dhakshina Nauli. If do fast left and right the abdomen get circulated.	<b>Nauli 3 Practices</b> 1. Dakshina Nauli 2. Vama Nauli 3. Madhyama Nauli	Tones the stomach, intestines and liver, relives menstrual problems, and increases the flow of Prana.
6	Kapalabhati	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vatkrama Kapalabhati - Whivgis similar to bhastrika pranayama.</li> <li>2. Vyutkrama Kapalabhati - Sucking water in through the nose and expelling it through the mouth.</li> <li>3. Sheetkrama Kapalabhati - Sucking water in through the nose.</li> </ol>	<b>Kapalbhati 3 Practices</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vatkrama Kapalbhati</li> <li>2. Vyutkrama Kapalbhati</li> <li>3. Sheetkrama Kapalbhati</li> </ol>	Cures all disorders from Abdomen cleanses lunges, respiratory track and brain Frontal lobe

#### **General benefits of Shatkarmas :**

Shatkarmas are very good to overcome a lot of diseases completely such as Asthma, food allergies, reduces obesity, migraine, regulates entire digestive system.

Shatkarma creates harmony in body and mind.

Energy can flow through the body freely.

Increases one's capacity to work, think, digest, taste, feel, experience ext.

**Note : Unlike all other schools of hatha Yoga which provide the place of first anga to the Shatkriyas, Swatmarama in Hatha Pradipika says that kriyas need to be practiced only by those who from excessive fats, phlegm and mucous in the case of healthy people, pranayama practices are sufficient to bring about cleansing purification.**