

# A Literature Review on Panchabootha Mudras and its Effect on Health

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**Abstract:** Mudra is a part of yoga. The human body and the world is made up of five elements namely boomi, neer, Agni, vayu, aagayam. The disturbances in these five elements are the causes of diseases and the imbalance of the mind. In order to bring equilibrium in the state of our body and mind we resort to yoga and its part mudra. We can perform hundreds of mudras and it depends on how the formation is performed with different fingers, mudra plays a very significant role in improving and maintaining our health irrespective of age and gender, anyone can get the benefits from mudra. These five mudras are very helpful in maintaining equilibrium in body. Thus, there is a need to work on this topic for the benefits of people. The information are collected from Siddha classical books of library, Government Siddha Medical College, Palayamkottai.

**Keywords:** mudras, prithivi mudra, varuna mudra, agni mudra, vayu mudra, aagaya mudra.

## 1. Introduction

MUDRA is a part of yoga. It literally means gesture. Mudra expresses and channelize cosmic energy within the mind and body. The human body is made up of five principles or elements Bhoomi, Neer, Agni, vayu, Aagayam. When these 5 elements are not in equilibrium we suffer from various physical and physiological ailments. In order to bring equilibrium in the state of body and mind we move towards mudras.

The tip of the nose, lip, fingers tip and toes are mainly responsible for the radiation of energy from our body. When thumb gets in contact with the other fingers, energy is directed back to vitalize various part of our body, this is called circuit bypass.

Mudras are the presentation of inner feeling. The activities and principle of the body are governed by the forces of five elements, which are systematically presents in our fingers which can keep the equilibrium and these can be activating by practice of mudras.

With the help of yoga mudras, A human being lived for century free from diseases. The secret of their long life, health and achievements are results of their yoga and mudras. The term mudra has special meaning in general sense it means controlling, making stronger, a symbol used to keep something safe and secret bodily symbol. One of the meaning is also safeguard and strengthen; mudra also mean happiness, also stand for bliss.

**Synonyms:**

*Mudras, Prithivi mudra, varuna mudra, Agni mudra, vayu mudra, Aagayam mudra.*

## 2. Review of Literature

*Important things regarding MUDRAS:*

- Once the tip of the thumb joins the tip of the opposite finger, several *tatva* gets balanced within the body.
- Once the tip of the thumb joins the bottom of the opposite fingers, several *tatva* get raised within the body.
- Once the tip of the fingers dropped at the bottom of the thumb, several *tatva* gets reduced with in the body.
- Hasta gesture will be done by anyone.
- Doing the gesture with each the hands is a lot of helpful, once gesture is finished with right hand, it affects the left part of the body and contrariwise.
- Mudras not solely improve the physical health however additionally improve the mental state by reducing the anger, increasing the peace and cathartic one from the addiction.
- Mudras can be performed for few seconds, 10 minutes, half an hour or fifty minutes. Fascinating results can be seen if it will perform for 50 minutes.

*Mudra therapy's Functional factors:*

*Belief:*

It's a complimentary therapy and can be used along with other therapy.

*Mind:*

Before starting take a deep breath, till the breathing is rhythmic and the mind is relaxed.

*Dhyana:*

Increase the effectiveness of *Mudra*.

*Body:*

Keep the body relaxed and in comfortable pose.

*Posture:*

Mudra should be practiced with both hands. Do not use pressure between the touching fingers if it is not mentioned. Keep unused finger in straight position but not rigid and try not

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to move the fingers or arms while practicing *mudras*. *Mudras* can be done while sitting or lying down or walking according to instructions.

#### *Time:*

Usually, morning time is best for this therapy with few exceptions like for digestive disorders, *mudras* should not be practiced for about half to one hour after meals or should be follow as per instruction.

### A. Panchabootha Mudras

#### 1) Prithivi Mudra



Fig. 1. Prithivi Mudra

#### *Speciality:*

- Among all five elements which constitute our physical body, the earth element is the most dominant when it's about the proportion of different elements.
- Earth element in our body is a representation of confident attitude, strength (physical and mental both), firmness and stability in life. It lies in our skin, tissues, hair, nose and bones. It reduces all physical weakness.

#### *Method:*

- To perform the Prithivi mudra, before make the finger arrangement and body posture,
- Firstly, sit in a yoga Asana, such as padmasana, siddhasana or vajrasana. Get comfortable with the Asana, because without comfort it is very hard to concentrate and meditate.
- Then, close the eyes and take some deep breaths. This will make a flow of prana throughout the body.
- Focus on the movement of breath through the nostrils, this will help to relax.
- After this body posture, the arrange the fingers,
  - ❖ Firstly, curl the ring finger of your hand towards the thumb.
  - ❖ Now, touch the tip of your finger with the tip of your thumb.
  - ❖ Lastly, extend rest three finger, as much as possible. Do this with both hands simultaneously.
  - ❖ Place both the hand on the upper thigh, this will help in removing all the thoughts, and focus the mind.

#### *Time duration:*

- The morning time is the best time to perform any mudra or yoga exercise. At this time of the day, mind is in freshest state and as much as to get concentrate easily. The time to perform this mudra is between 4 am to 6 am. This mudra can also perform in the evening also.
- Prithivi mudra should perform at least 15 to 20 minutes a day.

#### *Benefits:*

- Prithivi mudra considerably increase the earth element in the body this mudra promotes hair growth and reduce hair fall and premature graying of hair.
- It helps to gain weight.
- It helps to heal ulcer in mouth and stomach, burning sensation in (eyes, face, hands, stomach, urine, anus and feet), acidity, inflammation, digestive disorders and fever.
- Regular practice of this mudra keeps us energetic and prevent fatigue, weakness and laziness. It also strengthens the body and increase stamina and endurance.
- It is best mudra to heal body tissue and skin and boost the growth of tissues.
- It helps to heal cuts and wounds, dry and cracked skin, fracture in bones, the density of bones and brittle nails. It makes the skin glow.
- It helps to prevents nasal disorders. It treats cold and cough.

#### *Precautions:*

- Don't force fingers to be extended, just stretch then gently.
- Don't press the tip of thumb and ring finger too hard.
- Wear comfortable clothes.
- Practice it in a quiet place.
- It is not recommended for women in pregnancy because slight excess of this element could cause a problem.

#### 2) Varuna Mudra



Fig. 2. Varuna Mudra

#### *Speciality:*

- Varuna mudra is ability to increase the water content

in the body. It is also known as jala mudra.

- There are three doshas (vatham, pitham, kabam) and all are made up of combining five elements (earth, water, fire, air, ether) and their properties.
- Vatham = Ether + Air
- Pitham = Fire + Water
- Kabam = Earth + water
- Water is common element in pitham and kabam doshas. Water sufficiently present in pitham and kabam nature persons.

#### Methods:

- Sit in the yoga Asana such as padmasana or siddhasana or vajrasana. Get comfortable with your sitting position as the first priority of yoga Asana is being in a balance of steady and comfortable.
- After sitting comfortably and concentrating quietly, fold the little finger of both hands and bring your thumb closure to folded little fingers.
- Now gently press the tip of your thumb with the tip of the little finger. Leave the rest three fingers ideally.
- Place two hands over the kneecap, palm confronting upward. Keep this finger course of action unmoving for the whole practice.

#### Time Duration:

- Varuna mudra should practice during morning or after pranayama and meditation session. It moistens up pranana and thus make it more energetic.
- The practice duration of Varuna mudra should be at least 20 to 30 minutes a day. Or divide it into 2 to 3 sessions of 10 to 15 minutes throughout the whole day.

#### Benefits:

- Inadequate consumption of water leads to a deficiency of water in the cells, which cause dehydration in the body. Varuna mudra rehydrates the tissues and cells in the cellular level and provides relief from a range of disorder like constipation and dehydration.
- The outer layer of skin does not contain much amount of water. Therefore, it become rough. Varuna mudra helps in maintaining the proper flow of water throughout the body. Thus, it removes roughness and makes skin moisturizer.
- It helps in reducing cholesterol and stomach ulcer.
- It prevents the inadequate distribution of body water and maintains a good flow of water in blood vessels. It helps in cleaning the blood.
- It activates fluid circulation throughout the body. It is useful in disorders such as Anemia, and skin diseases such as skin rashes. It brings glow to the face.
- It reduces pimple and wrinkles and skin problems like acne, itching and impurities present in our blood.

#### Precautions:

- Touch the tips gently not forcefully.
- Wear comfortable dresses.
- Do not practice this mudra if suffering from swelling, bloating or puffiness.
- Avoid this mudra when suffering from cough and cold.

- Mudras should be performed in limited manners.
- 3) *Agni Mudra*

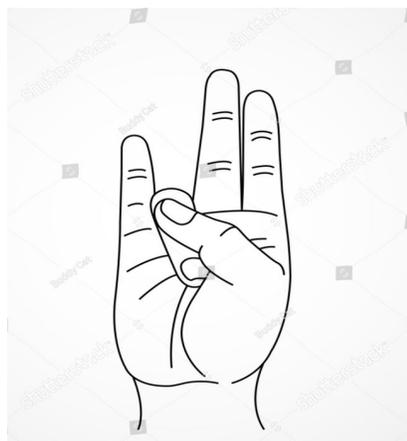


Fig. 3. Agni Mudra

#### Speciality:

- The Agni mudra also known as surya mudra. It represents the fire element. Performing this mudra activities, the fire energy in the body, and allows to restore the fire balance. It facilitates the flow of energy in the body.
- Ring finger is related to sun and Agni. It is representative of heat, health and energy.

#### Methods:

- Sit in the yoga Asana such as padmasana, siddhasana, vajrasana in comfortable posture.
- Place your hands on your thigh or knee, let the palm faces upward towards the roof.
- Close the eyes and take deep breath
- Fold the ring finger and press it with the thumb finger, keep the other three fingers extended.
- Apply moderate pressure on the ring finger using the thumb.
- Simultaneously repeat the same procedure in the other hand too.

#### Time duration:

- It is better to do this posture at the time of sunrise, the energy of sun can be absorbed into the body and utilized.
- Surya mudra ideally be practiced between 4 to 6 am.
- Start with small time duration, and gradually increase the time once doing it.
- Alternatively, it can do it for 10 to 15 minutes a day.

#### Benefits:

- It enables heat balance in the body. It increases the fire element in the body and regularizes the metabolism. It improves appetite and digestion.
- It helps to regulate body temperature
- It helps to increase pitham. And at the same time, it decreases kapam dosham.
- It helps to improve the vision
- It removes block in the liver and enables maintaining

liver health.

- It lowers cholesterol level in the body.
- It helps to reduce weight.
- It helps to regulate thyroid related disorders.
- It has positive effect in the body, mind, and soul. It keeps body healthy and happy. It also promote longevity of life.
- It controls blood urea and complications in diabetes
- It removes excess fluid and swelling in the body.
- It acts as energy booster.

*Precautions:*

- One should not do this mudra during weakness in the body.
- In summer it should not be done for long time.
- Pitham constitution people should be careful doing this posture.
- This might increase body temperature. Avoid this mudra when suffering from fever.
- Avoid this gesture during underweight because this mudra is highly effective in reducing weight.

4) *Vayu Mudra*



Fig. 4. Vayu Mudra

*Speciality:*

It prevents all the disease that occur due to imbalance of the air. By practicing vayu mudra we can balance the ups and downs of the air element in the body.

Index finger represents the air element.

*Methods:*

- Choose padmasana, vajrasana, siddhasana to sit in a comfortable sitting posture.
- Before performing vayu mudra, make sure to keep your mind relaxed and stay calm
- Keeps eyes closed and take deep breaths focusing on breathing.
- Breathing helps stimulate the prana flow across the body, and closing eyes increases concentration.
- Place the hands over thigh while palms are facing the sky.
- Gently fold the index finger to touch the thumbs base.

- Press the index finger with the thumb by applying slight pressure.
- Keep all other fingers as straight a's possible.

*Time duration:*

- The best time to perform this mudra is early in the morning on an empty stomach.
- Start practicing vayu mudra for about ten minutes per day initially.
- Then extend the time up to 45 minutes per day gradually.

*Benefits:*

- Vayu mudra helps to regulate or balance the air element in the body, thereby helping tackle excess gas, flatulence, bloating, or other gastric issues.
- It helps in better digestion by eliminating gas from the intestines and stomach.
- It eliminates toxins, waste and harmful chemicals from the body effectively, acidity is also reduced significantly.
- It reduces pain in the neck, shoulders, arms, and back by practicing vayu mudra in combination with suryanamaskar yoga poses.
- It gives effective solution for weight loss by reducing stress level.
- It reduces pain and inflammation and preventing disease like osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis.
- It helps to reduce anxiety and stress and improves sleep pattern.
- It promotes hair growth by strengthening the roots of hair.
- It calms nervous system
- It controls excitement
- Overcome hormone imbalance of endocrine gland.
- Gives relaxation.

*Precautions:*

- Avoid wearing tight clothes while doing vayu mudra.
- Preference of open and airy place should be advisable
- Do not over bend the index finger and application of great pressure by thumb finger is not advisable
- Keeping back straight adds some extra stars to practice and it eases the prana flow.

5) *Aagaya Mudra*

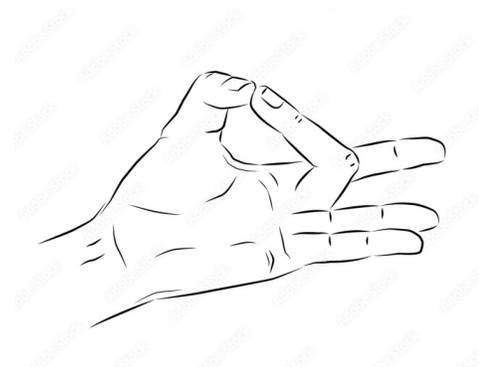


Fig. 5. Aagaya Mudra

**Speciality:**

- Aagaya mudra is a mudra of space.
- It represents the space or ether element, which surrounds all of us. An increase in the space element in the body makes the person broad minded and promotes openness.
- It helps in transforming the negative thoughts, anger, selfishness into positive thoughts.

**Methods:**

- Sit in comfortable posture like padmasana, vajrasana and siddhasana. This will provide the firmness to the body for the attentive meditation practice.
- By straightening of the head neck and back in a straight line, proceed for deep breathing.
- Place back of the palm on both knees.
- Gradually fold the middle finger and touch it firmly against the thumb.
- By maintaining the contact of middle and thumb finger, extend the rest of fingers as much as possible.

**Time duration:**

This mudra can be practiced in the morning, evening and at night.

Can practice 30 to 45 minutes on a daily basis.

**Benefits:**

- Lack of space element in the body results in the condition of migraine.
- It relieves the migraine problem.
- It provides immense release from the sinus pain
- Ear problem will be cured.
- Raise self confidence
- Increase efficiency of heart.
- It removes negative emotions like anger sorrow or fear.
- It reduces problems like jaw pain, shoulder pain, malfunctioned thyroid, neck pain and hearing problem.
- It increases calcium in the body. It makes teeth strong and cure disease related to bones or skeleton.
- Provide satisfaction of completeness.

**Precautions:**

- People suffering from the vatham imbalance should practice it with patience.
- Do not put pressure while placing fingers on each other.

- This will give discomfort in maintaining the posture.
- Avoid tight cloths and dark room.

**3. Discussion**

In siddha system of medicine Siddhar yoga maruthuvam forms an important part. It has various schools of yoga. In these various schools of yoga includes the importance of mudras. Mudras are one of the vital technique that treat various kinds of disease. It helps to attain the state of siddhi and enhance the power of chakras. In this present study the literature contains important of panchaboothamudras. It will helpful to know about mudras and it's uses and also helpful for further research studies.

**4. Conclusion**

The main aim of the minor project is to document the panchaboodha mudras. I have collected technique from GSMC, Palayamkottai library and siddha classical textbooks which are available. I have concluded the Siddhar Yoga Maruthuvam deals various schools of yoga, Mudras place a Major role to treat the various disease. It helps to attain the Siddhi and also enhance the power of chakras. This study helps to the younger generation for improving skills and their knowledge in mudra technique.

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