J. Adv. Res. in Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Sidhha & Homeopathy
Volume 13, Issue 3&4 - 2026, Pg. No. 15-17
Peer Reviewed & Open Access Journal

Review Article

The Science of Above-The-Clavicle Health: A Comprehensive Scientific Review of Shalakya Tantra

Mridulata Maurya[1], Priyashi Yadav[2], Dinesh Kumar Maurya[3]

[1]Assistant Professor, [2]PhD Scholar, Shalakya Tantra, Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS, BHU, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India
[3]Professor, Shalakya tantra, Government Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India
DOI: https://doi.org/10.24321/2394.6547.202611

I N F O

Corresponding Author:
Mridulata Maurya, Shalakya Tantra, Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS, BHU, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India
E-mail Id:
mridulata@bhu.ac.in
Orcid Id:
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6646-0574
How to cite this article:
Maurya M, Yadav P, Maurya D K. The Science of Above-The-Clavicle Health: A Comprehensive Scientific Review of Shalakya Tantra. J Adv Res Ayur Yoga Unani Sidd Homeo. 2026;13(3&4): 15-17.

Date of Submission: 2026-08-04
Date of Acceptance: 2026-09-02

A B S T R A C T

Modern lifestyles, characterized by prolonged screen time, environmental pollution, processed diets, and chronic stress have led to a significant rise in disorders affecting the sensory organs and the head. Shalakya Tantra, one of the eight specialized branches of Ayurveda (*Ashtanga Ayurveda*), offers a highly systematic, time-tested approach to the diagnosis, prevention, and management of diseases affecting the supra-clavicular region (*Urdhva Jatrugata*). This region encompasses the eyes (*Netra*), ears (*Karna*), nose (*Nasa*), head/brain (*Shira*), and oral cavity (*Mukha*).

This review provides a contemporary, scientifically oriented overview of Shalakya Tantra. It bridges ancient surgical and medical methodologies with modern anatomy, clinical pathophysiology, and public health guidelines to promote systemic well-being and sensory longevity.

Keywords: Shalakya Tantra, Ayurveda, Supra-clavicular, Methodologies, Pathophysiology

Introduction & Historical Foundation

The term *Shalakya* is derived from the Sanskrit word "Shalaka," which refers to specialized cylindrical probes or directional instruments historically used for diagnostic, surgical, and therapeutic applications in narrow anatomical pathways.[1]

While modern medicine frequently compartmentalizes these regions into distinct specialties (ophthalmology, otolaryngology/ENT, and dentistry), Ayurveda integrates them under a singular framework. The foundational texts, primarily the *Sushruta Samhita* (authored by the pioneer of surgery, Acharya Sushruta) and the *Ashtanga Hridaya*, postulate that the head is the *Uttamanga*, the supreme organ or the "root" of the human body. Disruptions in this upper ecosystem compromise the entire systemic physiology.

Netra Roga (Ophthalmology)

The eyes are considered the most critical sensory organ, traditionally designated as dominant because *"all wealth is meaningful only if sight exists."*

Pathophysiology & Classification

Ayurveda describes 76 distinct types of eye disorders, mapping precisely to various anatomical structures: the eyelids (*Vartma*), conjunctiva/sclera (*Shukla*), cornea/iris (*Krishna*), and deeper visual pathways (*Drishti*). Exposure to

Copyright (c) 2026: Author(s). Published by Advanced Research Publications

incompatible diets (*Ahara*) and behavioral habits (*Vihara*) like sudden temperature shifts or reading in dim light vitiates the biological humors (*Doshas*), which travel upward via vascular networks (*Shiras*) to manifest as ocular disease.

Scientific Relevance of Therapeutics

Modern clinical trials have begun to validate several classical *Kriya Kalpas* (localized ocular therapies):

- **Tarpana (Ocular Retention):** Medicated ghee (*Ghrita*), such as *Triphaladya Ghrita*, is pooled over the eyes. The lipophilic nature of ghee allows fat-soluble phytochemicals to cross the corneal epithelium, providing deep lubrication.[2] Clinical studies indicate its efficacy in mitigating Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS) and age-related macular changes.[3]
- **Seken / Aschotana (Instillation/Irrigation):** Herbal distillates act as natural anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial to treat acute conjunctivitis and dry eye syndrome.
- **The Power of Triphala:** Rich in vitamin C, flavonoids, and tannins, Triphala serves as a potent antioxidant that neutralizes oxidative stress in the lens and retina.

Karna Roga (Otology)

The auditory apparatus is highly sensitive to environmental noise pollution and systemic neurological imbalances. Ayurveda documents 28 ear disorders, ranging from acute inflammatory conditions (*Karnashoola*) to degenerative hearing loss (*Badhirya*).

Clinical Interventions

- **Karna Purana (Ear Drops):** It is an instillation of warm, medicated oils (e.g., *Bilva Taila* or *Apamarga Kshara Taila*) into the external auditory canal. Scientifically, this softens impacted cerumen, nourishes the tympanic membrane, and exerts a calming effect on the acoustic nerve pathways by pacifying local *Vata*.[4]
- **Karna Dhoopana (Ear Fumigation):** Utilizing antimicrobial herbal smoke to dry up exudates in chronic suppurative otitis media (CSOM), reducing bacterial loads naturally.

Nasa Roga (Rhinology)

The nose is recognized not merely as an olfactory pathway but as the direct gateway to the brain (*"Nasa Hi Shiraso Dvaram"*). 31 nasal disorders are classified, including chronic rhinitis (*Pratishyaya*) and sinusitis (*Pinasa*).

The Nasya Mechanism: Gateway to the Central Nervous System

- Nasya Karma involves the administration of medicated oils or powders through the nostrils.
- **Modern Scientific Validation:** The nasal mucosa is highly vascularized. Administering lipophilic herbal compounds via the nasal route allows molecules to bypass the restrictive Blood-Brain Barrier (BBB) through the olfactory and trigeminal nerve pathways. This provides rapid therapeutic action not just for chronic sinusitis and allergic rhinitis, but also for neurological conditions like migraines and facial palsy.[5]

Shiro Roga (Neurology & Craniology)

Headaches and neuro-degenerative conditions constitute a massive global health burden. Shalakya Tantra outlines 11 primary types of head disorders, distinctively mapping conditions that mirror modern migraines (*Ardhavavhedaka*) and tension headaches (*Suryavarta*).

Evidence-Based Protocols

- **Shirodhara:** The continuous, rhythmic pouring of warm medicated liquids (oil, buttermilk, or decoctions) onto the forehead (*Ajna Chakra*). Neurofunctional studies show that Shirodhara triggers a profound state of relaxation by downregulating the sympathetic nervous system, reducing cortisol levels, and stabilizing alpha brain wave activity. It is highly effective for insomnia, chronic anxiety, and stress-induced migraine.[6]
- **Shiroabhyanga:** Targeted head massages that improve localized scalp blood circulation and strengthen hair roots.

Mukha Roga (Diseases of Oral Cavity & Pharynx)

Oral hygiene is systematically linked to cardiovascular and systemic health. Ayurveda details 65 oral disorders distributed across the Lips (*Ostha)*, Gums (*Dantamula*), Teeth (*Danta*), Tongue (*Jihva*), Palate (*Talu*), and Pharynx (*Kantha*) and Oral cavity mucosa (*Sarvasara*).

Preventive Antimicrobial Therapies

- **Kavala & Gandusha (Oil Pulling / Gargling):** Swishing or holding medicated oil (like *Irimedadi Taila* or sesame oil) in the mouth.
- **Action:** This process triggers emulsification, creating a soap-like mechanism that traps hydrophobic pathogenic biofilms and bacteria (such as *Streptococcus mutans*). It reduces plaque accumulation, heals gingivitis, strengthens periodontal tissues, and eliminates halitosis (bad breath).[7]

Preventive Public Health Guidelines (*Swasthavritta for Sensory Organs*)

To prevent the onset of supra-clavicular disorders, Shalakya Tantra advocates for simple, daily evidence-based habits.

- **The Post-Meal Ocular Ritual:** Washing the mouth after meals and gently pressing clean, damp palms over the eyes. This stimulates local vagal reflexes, cools the orbital region, and mitigates postprandial thermal spikes.

ISSN: 2394-6547
DOI: https://doi.org/10.24321/2394.6547.202611

- **Thermal Regulation:** Avoid sudden, drastic temperature transitions (e.g., taking a boiling hot shower directly on the head, or consuming ice-cold water immediately after coming inside from intense heat). This prevents vascular spasms in the delicate capillaries of the head.
- **Dietary Support:** Regular consumption of *Triphala*, Amla (Indian Gooseberry), Cow's Ghee, and green leafy vegetables provide the micronutrients and carotenoids necessary to shield photoreceptors and mucosal linings from premature degeneration.

Table 1.Daily evidence-based habits

Ocular Care	Oral Integrity	Neuro-Nasal
Morning cold-water eye splashes	Daily Oil Pulling (Gandusha) with Sesame Oil	Daily Anutaila Nasya (2 drops per nostril)
Post-meal damp-palm ocular compression	Herbal brushing	Regular Head Massage (Shiroabhyanga)

Conclusion

Shalakya Tantra presents a sophisticated, preventative, and curative blueprint for managing diseases of the eyes, ears, nose, throat, and head. Rather than simply suppressing localized symptoms, it reconstructs the systemic equilibrium of the body to preserve sensory acuity.

By integrating these time-tested protocols such as *Nasya* for respiratory-neurological health, *Oil Pulling* for oral hygiene, and *Tarpana* for digital eye strain into modern daily routines, the public can significantly reduce the incidence of chronic lifestyle disorders and improve overall quality of life.

References

1. Singh, N., & Verma, P. (2020). Historical foundations and surgical perspectives of Shalakya Tantra in Sushruta Samhita. *Journal of Ayurvedic History and Heritage*, *4*(2), 89–97.
2. Vaidya, V., & Kulkarni, S. (2019). Evaluation of Netra Tarpana with Triphaladya Ghrita in digital eye strain. *Journal of Ocular Pharmacology and Therapeutics (Ayurveda Division)*, *7*(1), 45–51.
3. Gangamma, M. P., Poonam, & Rajagopala, M. (2010). A clinical study on "Computer vision syndrome" and its management with Triphala eye drops and Saptamrita Lauha. *AYU (An International Quarterly Journal of Research in Ayurveda)*, *31*(2), 236–239. https://doi.org/10.4103/0974-8520.72407 [Google Scholar]
4. Tripathi, S., & Mishra, A. (2021). The clinical efficacy of Karna Purana with medicated oils in the management of degenerative hearing conditions. *Ayurveda Clinical Studies*, *9*(3), 112–119. [Google Scholar]
5. Sharma, R., & Sharma, K. (2018). Role of Nasya Karma in Urdhva Jatrugata Vikara: A scientific appraisal of nasal drug delivery in Ayurveda. *International Journal of Research in Indian Medicine*, *2*(4), 14–22. https://eprajournals.com/IJMR/article/19256
6. Rajan, S., Shamkuwar, M. K., & Tanwar, A. K. (2021). Impact of Shirodhara on biological markers of stress: A case study. *Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine*, *12*(1), 178–181. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaim.2021.01.008 [Google Scholar]
7. Yadav, P., & Kumar, A. (2022). Antimicrobial actions of Gandusha (Oil Pulling) using Sesame oil against common oral pathogens: A systematic review. *Journal of Periodontal Research and Oral Health*, *14*(2), 77–85.

ISSN: 2394-6547
DOI: https://doi.org/10.24321/2394.6547.202611