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MUDRAA AND AUTISM

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What is Autism?

The term Autism is also now referred to as **Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)**.

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a broad term used to describe a group of neurodevelopmental disorders.

These disorders are characterized by problems with communication and social interaction. People with ASD often demonstrate restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped interests or patterns of behavior.

ASD is found in individuals around the world, regardless of race, culture, or economic background. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), autism does occur more often in boys than in girls, with a 4 to 1 male-to-female ratio. The CDC estimated in 2014 that nearly 1 in 59 children have been identified with ASD.

There are indications that instances of ASD are on the rise. Some attribute this increase to environmental factors. However, experts debate whether there's an actual increase in cases

or just more frequent diagnoses.

What are the different types of autism?

The DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) is published by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and is used by clinicians to diagnose a variety of psychiatric disorders.

The fifth and the most recent edition of the DSM was released in 2013. The DSM-5 currently recognizes five different ASD subtypes, or specifiers. They are:

- with or without accompanying intellectual impairment
- with or without accompanying language impairment
- associated with a known medical or genetic condition or environmental factor
- associated with another neurodevelopmental, mental, or behavioral disorder
- with catatonia

Someone can be diagnosed with one or more specifiers.

Prior to the DSM-5, people on the autism spectrum may have been diagnosed with one of the following disorders:

- autistic disorder
- Asperger's Syndrome
- pervasive development disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS)
- childhood disintegrative disorder

It's important to note that a person who received one of these earlier diagnoses hasn't

lost their diagnosis and won't need to be re-evaluated. According to the DSM-5, the broader diagnosis of ASD encompasses disorders such as Asperger's syndrome

What are the symptoms of autism?

Autism symptoms typically become clearly evident during early childhood, between 12 and 24 months of age. However, symptoms may also appear earlier or later.

Early symptoms may include a marked delay in language or social development.

The DSM-5 divides symptoms of autism into two categories: problems with communication and social interaction, and restricted or repetitive patterns of behavior or activities.

Problems with communication and social interaction include:

- issues with communication, including difficulties sharing emotions, sharing interests, or maintaining a back-and-forth conversation
- issues with nonverbal communication, such as trouble maintaining eye contact or reading body language
- difficulties developing and maintaining relationships

Restricted or repetitive patterns of behavior or activities include:

- repetitive movements, motions, or speech patterns
- rigid adherence to specific routines or behaviors
- an increase or decrease in sensitivity to specific sensory information from their surroundings, such as a negative reaction to a specific sound

- fixated interests or preoccupations

Individuals are evaluated within each category and the severity of their symptoms is noted.

In order to receive an ASD diagnosis, a person must display all three symptoms in the first category and at least two symptoms in the second category.

What causes autism?

The exact cause of ASD is unknown. The most current research demonstrates that there's no single cause. Some of the suspected risk factors for autism include:

- having an immediate family member with autism
- genetic mutations
- fragile X syndrome and other genetic disorders
- being born to older parents
- low birthweight
- metabolic imbalances
- exposure to heavy metals and environmental toxins
- a history of viral infections
- fetal exposure to the medications - valproic acid (Depakene) or thalidomide (Thalomid)

According to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), both genetics and environment may determine whether a person develops autism.¹

Introduction to Mudras:

In the Vedas it is said, “*Naasti mudraa samamkin chitsiddhiyam shiti mandte*” meaning in this world there is no method other than Mudra to gain success. It is said in our Vedas that our palms are very powerful and they have healing powers. We can see it from the following *Atharvaveda shlokas*

Ayam me hastobhagavan, nayam me bhagavattarah I

Ayam me visvabheshajah, yam shivabhimarshanah I I

-Atharvaveda 4.13.6

Fortunate is my left hand, yet more fortunate is the right. Left hand contains all healing balms and removes blocks in the free flow of joy, and the right makes whole with gentle touch. for it contains all the medicinal capacities of the universe, It's all-healing touch bringing peace, harmony, joy and liberation from all toxic conditions of matter, birth, death, old age and disease.

Hastabhayaam dashashaakhaabhyaam jivah vachah purogavree I

Anaamayeet nubhyaam hastabhayaam taabhyaam tavabhim rishaamashi II

- Atharvaveda 4. 13. 7

The tongue that leads the voice proceeds. Then with our tenfold branching hands, which powerfully affirm healing. With these two healers of disease, we stroke you with a soft caress our palm not only help us to do our daily work, but it has lot of healing power because of this it is in the said in the Hindu text several Gods reside on the palm

Karaagre vasate Laxmih,

Karamoole Saraswati

Karamadhyetu Govindah.

Prabhaatekara darshanam

It means:

Goddess Laxmi resides on the tip of the fingers. Goddess Saraswati resides on the wrist. In the center of the palm resides Lord Govinda Himself. In the morning, one should look at one's palms.

Hands were revered by the Hindus for centuries. One of the Shivaic tantrik rituals of India gives the following liturgical adoration to the fingers of the hands:

"Om Sham I bow to the thumbs Namah.

Om Shim I bow the index fingers Svaha.

Om Shum I bow to the middle fingers Vashat.

Om Shaim I bow to the ring fingers Hum.

Om Shaum I bow to the little fingers Vaushat.

Om Shah I bow to the front and back of hands Phat."

This chant is accompanied by specific Mudras that purifies the subtle channels of the upper limbs. Not only is this ritual practiced in India but variations of it may be found in Bali islands as well. You must have seen the statues of Buddha, Jesus, Mahavir, and Shiva et al. among many others, wherein the hands and fingers are shown curled in a specific posture. For example, Lord Shiva's image normally shows the hand positioned in *Vardamudra*, i.e., giving blessing . Likewise, one of the popular images of Lord Buddha shows the fingers of the Left hand holding a pot of nectar, while the palm of the right hand is resting on the lap, with fingers folded and pointing straight down. Another image shows the fingers of the right hand near the chest region and folded in a specific pose. Such finger postures not only have a therapeutic effect on the mind-body system but also accentuate mental keenness and acuity. This science of hand and finger postures is '*Mudra Vigyan*'. In fact, there are innumerable mudras and each has a specific effect.

This science can help you to cure bodily ailments in a wonderful manner. It actually helps in balancing the five elements (*panch-tattvas*) in the human system to their optimal levels. The elements can even be increased or decreased to cure appropriate ailments. When the elements are completely balanced, the yoga (unison) of mind, body and soul with the Supreme Soul can be achieved! But one will find that it gives equally astonishing results in achieving mental concentration. And the funny thing is, unlike yoga, you can practice Mudras anywhere, anytime! Mudra is a hand gesture or seal which is a symbol of energy. It is the most beautiful form of expression by the use of the thumb and fingers. It can also be done without the use of hands like *Khecheri Mudra* done with tongue and *Viparita Karani Mudra* which is one of the body poses. It is used as the non

verbal form of communication in various Indian classical dances like *Kathak* and *Bharat Natyam*.

It also works as a therapy for the body and mind by balancing the ratio of five elements - *panchtattvas*).

Mudras are supposed to be a part of *Tattva Yoga* –the science of elements. Along with *Asanas* *Mudras* are employed along with *Yogic Meditation* to energize the *Chakras* and calm the mind.

Our palms have more than 5000 nerve endings. Whenever *Mudras* are performed, these nerve endings get activated and thus activate the corresponding brain part. *Mudras* are a type of yoga that can be understood and done easily. Even children can do *Mudras* without any effort. Before doing any *Mudra*, take a few deep breaths, sit down in a comfortable position, relax and do it.

For best results it has to be done for a minimum of 30-45 minutes per day. There are several *Mudras* for keeping oneself healthy. Based on my 30 years experience I have formulated **Riitesh's Law of Riitesh Mudraa**.

REGULAR PRACTICE OF RIITESH MUDRAA IS VERY USEFUL FOR PEOPLE WITH AUTISM, CEREBRAL PALSY, PARKINSON'S DISEASE AND ALL BRAIN RELATED PROBLEMS.

Riitesh Mudraa is formed in two steps First form

Vaayu Mudraa

Vaayu Mudra



Fold The Index Finger (forefinger) on the pad of thumb.Press The Forefinger

gently on the pad. Press index finger with thumb. Keep the other fingers aloof. (try with both hands).

Position of P9 point on middle finger



Secondly join tip of thumb at P9 point on middle finger



I have developed a method of holding pen or pencil that can be beneficial for people with autism and named it “**Riitesh Method of holding pencil**”



Persons having brain related problems should hold pen or pencil in such a way that index finger and thumb are in *Vaayu Mudra* position

About Dr. Riitesh Sinha:

Dr. Riitesh Sinha has done B. Sc., PGDCA, CIC, MIT, ND. He is working in the area of alternative therapies for improving the lives of distinctly abled (disabled) people.