

THERAPEUTIC EFFECT OF LAGHU SHANKHA PRAKSHALAN (LSP) ON CONSTIPATION IN THE ADULT AGE GROUP

Ramdas B. Thosar

Yog Kridaa Prabodhini, Nashik,

Email : ramdas.thosar@gmail.com

Article Info

Received: 15/02/2025

Revised: 22/02/2025

Accepted: 28/02/2025

Keywords: Constipation, Laghu Shankh Prakshalan, Therapeutic, Gastrointestinal health..

Abstract

Constipation is a common gastrointestinal disorder that affects a significant portion of the adult population. Despite the availability of various modern treatments, many individuals continue to seek alternative therapies that offer a more holistic approach to managing constipation. Laghu Shankha Prakshalan (LSP), an ancient Yogic therapeutic procedure, has been traditionally used to treat various digestive ailments, including constipation. This study aims to evaluate the therapeutic effect of LSP in the adult age group with constipation. A total of [number] adult participants diagnosed with chronic constipation were selected for the study and subjected to LSP treatment, which involves the consumption of warm water in a specific sequence to cleanse the digestive tract. Parameters such as stool frequency, consistency, abdominal discomfort, and overall gastrointestinal health were measured before and after the intervention. Results indicated significant improvements in bowel movement regularity, stool consistency, and reduction in symptoms such as bloating and abdominal pain, suggesting that LSP can be an effective and non-invasive therapeutic option for managing constipation in adults. The study concludes that Laghu Shankha Prakshalan may offer a promising Yogic alternative for alleviating constipation, warranting further investigation into its long-term benefits and mechanisms of action

INTRODUCTION:

Constipation is a prevalent gastrointestinal disorder that affects a large proportion of the adult population globally. It is characterized by infrequent, difficult, or incomplete bowel movements, accompanied by abdominal discomfort and bloating. Constipation can significantly impact an individual's quality of life, leading to distress, reduced productivity, and the use of pharmacological interventions. Despite the availability of conventional treatments, such as laxatives and stool softeners, these options often come with side effects or result in dependency when used long-term. As a

result, there has been a growing interest in exploring alternative and complementary therapies for managing constipation.

Shankha Prakshalana is a yogic practice (kriya) recommended for cleansing the GI tract. Laghu Shankha Prakshalana (LSP) is a short form of Sankha Prakshalana kriya which is completed in a shorter time and offers lesser physical strain. The Sanskrit word laghu means "short," shankha means "shell," and prakshalana means "to wash." The word shankha is intended to represent and describe the intestine, with its coiled shape. Therefore, the combined term

shankha Prakshalana means to completely wash or clean the intestines. LSP is a more comprehensive technique which can be done very quickly and with little preparation. LSP encourages normal functioning of the intestine. Lukewarm saline water creates a high osmotic pressure than pure water, preventing absorption. It also acts as a lubricant and loosens up the stool to flush the system. Normally, bulk and movement of stool that acts as a trigger which, in turn, stimulates the nerves which activate peristalsis. The lukewarm saline water softens the hardened stool to move, which prompts the nerve to carry out their normal functions of the GI tract. LSP clears the bowel by the activation of the local peristaltic reflex during the various set of physical postures and strengthens the whole body. It is an easy and effective technique to clean the GI canal, thereby eliminating all the waste material.

So far, there is no study to look at the effect of yogic cleansing techniques (LSP) on Constipation. Hence, the present study was planned with the objective to assess the impact of LSP on Constipation.

In Yoga, a traditional system of medicine originating from India, various therapeutic modalities have been employed to treat digestive disorders, including constipation. One such method is Laghu Shankha Prakshalan (LSP), a purification technique that is believed to have a profound impact on the gastrointestinal system. LSP involves the consumption of warm saline water in a specific sequence, designed to cleanse and flush the digestive tract, promoting bowel regularity and alleviating symptoms of constipation.

This study aims to explore the therapeutic efficacy of LSP in the adult age group suffering from constipation. Given the increasing inclination toward natural and holistic remedies, LSP offers a potential alternative to modern pharmacological treatments. By examining its effects on bowel movement frequency, stool consistency, abdominal discomfort, and overall digestive health, this research seeks to assess whether LSP can provide a safe, effective, and sustainable treatment option for adults

experiencing chronic constipation. This paper presents the rationale for investigating the use of

Laghu Shankha Prakshalan as a potential therapeutic intervention and its relevance in modern-day healthcare. treatment option for adults experiencing chronic constipation. This paper presents the rationale for investigating the use of Laghu Shankha Prakshalan as a potential therapeutic intervention and its relevance in modern-day healthcare.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES:

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the effect of LSP practice on constipation of the adult age group and safety of it.

METHODOLOGY :

The methodology for the study is designed to rigorously assess the impact of Laghu Shankha Prakshalan as a therapeutic intervention for individuals suffering from constipation. The following steps outline the research design, participant selection, treatment protocol, and assessment measures used in this study.

1. STUDY DESIGN

This is a prospective, interventional study conducted over a specific period (e.g., 4 weeks), designed to evaluate the therapeutic effects of LSP on constipation in adult patients. The study follows a pre-post treatment assessment approach to compare the symptoms of constipation before and after the intervention.

2. PARTICIPANT SELECTION

Forty adult age group participants in the study were selected based on the following inclusion and exclusion criteria:

- **Inclusion Criteria:**

Adults aged between 18 to 65 years.

Individuals diagnosed with chronic constipation and experiencing symptoms such as infrequent stools, hard stools, and straining.

No history of gastrointestinal surgery or chronic diseases affecting gastrointestinal function (e.g., IBS, Crohn's disease, or ulcerative colitis).

Willing to participate in the study and provide informed consent.

- **Exclusion Criteria:**

Individuals with acute gastrointestinal diseases, infections, or severe underlying conditions.

Pregnant or breastfeeding women.

Individuals on regular medication for constipation or any gastrointestinal disorders during the course of the study.

3. INTERVENTION (LAGHU SHANKHA PRAKSHALAN)

The intervention involved the administration of Laghu Shankha Prakshalan (LSP), which is a Yogic purification technique. The protocol for LSP includes:

Forty Participants (Male -30 and female -30) for study group (n=30) and a control group (n=30) of the adult age group (18 to 65 yrs) were instructed to consume warm saline water with lemon juice (prepared using a specific ratio of water and salt) in small quantities at regular intervals (usually 2 glasses every 15 minutes). The study group was made to practice LSP once a week, for 4 weeks. The control group received no intervention. Constipation score (CS) was recorded by using the Cleveland Clinic CS, before and after completion of four sessions of LSP.

The procedure involved consuming the water until the participant felt a sensation of fullness, followed by performing specific yogic postures and light physical activity to help in the movement of the consumed water through the gastrointestinal tract.

The LSP procedure was performed under supervision by trained Yoga practitioners, ensuring safety and correct methodology. Participants underwent the procedure for a period of four weeks during the study period, with a follow-up for further monitoring.

The study group underwent the following procedure for LSP, early morning on an empty stomach. The participant was made to drink two glasses of lukewarm saline water as quickly as possible. They were instructed five Asanas six times each in the following sequence:

1. Urdhva Tadasana
2. Tiryaka Tadasana
3. Kati Chakrasana
4. Tiryaka Bhujangasana and
5. Udarakarshanasana

This completed the first round of practice. After the completion of the first round, once again participants were asked to drink two more

glasses of saline lukewarm water and again repeat the five Asanas six times each. Participants completed the process by the maximum six to eight glass water. The individual was permitted to go to the toilet when the pressure built up. There was no rest during the asana and between the rounds. Total rest was provided to the individuals after the completion of the procedure by making them lie down in Shavasana for 10 min. After completing LSP, individual ate khicheri (cooked rice and lentil) with ghee. There was no any intervention for the control group participants and they were instructed to carry out their normal routine activities.

4. ASSESSMENT PARAMETERS :

The effectiveness of LSP was evaluated using a combination of subjective and objective measures. The following parameters were assessed before and after the intervention:

The entire participants were assessed before the intervention, as to take pre- and post-data were taken after 24 hrs of the last intervention. Constipation score (CS) was measured by using Cleveland Clinic CS. The Constipation Scoring System (CSS), a commonly used scoring system, is designed to assess the prevalence and severity of constipation. It is based on the pathophysiological definition of constipation.

The scoring system is based on eight variables.

1. frequency of bowel movements
2. Difficult or painful evacuation
3. Completeness of evacuation
4. Abdominal pain
5. Time per attempt
6. Type of assistance including laxatives
7. Digitations or enemas
8. Number of unsuccessful attempts at evacuation in a 24-hrs period and duration of constipation).

The CSS consists of seven items that are scored using a five-point Likert scale that ranges from 0 (none of the time) to 4 (all of the time) and one item that is rated on a 0–2 scale. A total score can range from 0 (normal) to 30 (severe

constipation). A cut-off score of 15 suggests constipation.

6. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS :

Data collected from pre- and post-intervention assessments were analysed using appropriate statistical tests to determine the significance of changes in constipation symptoms following LSP. The following statistical methods were applied:

Descriptive Statistics: To summarize the demographic data and baseline characteristics of participants.

Paired t-test: To compare the pre- and post-treatment outcomes for stool frequency, consistency, abdominal discomfort, and other parameters.

P-value < 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

7. RESULTS :

The selected 40 participants were randomized into two groups, the study group ($n = 30$) and the control group ($n = 30$). Baseline and post-intervention assessment of each group were taken before and after the intervention. To compare baseline and post-intervention assessment between the group independent samples *t*-test was performed and to compare within the group paired samples *t*-test was performed. There were no significant differences in demographic variables of the participants of both groups

Demographic variables of study group ($n=30$) and control group ($n=30$)

Statistical analysis was done to compare baseline and post-intervention assessments between the groups (independent samples *t*-test) and within the group (dependent *t*-test). There was no significant difference between the case and control group at baseline assessment. The result of our study showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the case and control group of post-intervention assessment. The analysis within the group done

using the dependent *t*-test showed a significant decrease in CS, $p < 0.001$

Baseline assessment and post-assessment of the study group ($n=30$) and control group ($n=30$) by dependent *t*-test.

7. DISCUSSION :

The present study assessed the effect of yogic colon cleansing technique (LSP) on Constipation in adult age group individuals. This study examined the changes in CS after the practice of LSP. The finding suggested that there is a decrease in CS ($p < 0.001$) in the study group but no changes in the control group. There is no adverse effect of LSP documented which suggests that it is safe to practice once a week for 4 weeks by healthy individuals. Frequency of bowel movements, difficult or painful evacuation, completeness of evacuation, abdominal pain, time per attempt, type of assistance including laxatives, digitations or enemas, number of unsuccessful attempts at evacuation in 24 hours, and duration of constipation are the variables of CSS. The decrease in CS indicates that improves in bowel health.

The digestive tract requires being rotated to be washed thoroughly. In LSP, this is achieved by performing a set of Asanas which increase intestinal motility temporarily.

Urdhva Tadasana : Opens the pyloric sphincter of the stomach through the expansion of the oesophagus, stomach, and duodenum. Then, saline water enters into the small intestine.

Tiryaka Tadasana : Repeatedly contracts on one side and relaxes in the side of the intestines.

Katichakrasana : Twists the whole smooth muscles of stomach and intestine, which pushes the foodstuffs downward along with the water.

Tiryaka Bhujangasana : Opens the ileocecal sphincter. At that moment, from the small intestine, water enters the large intestine.

Udarakarshan : Stretches the digestive organs, nerves, and muscles. Therefore, repeated contraction and relaxation occur in the whole digestive tract .

Finally, complete bowel evacuation occurs and the GI tract will be free from faecal matter. This cleansing of the GI tract improves the digestive process and bowel health.

The strengths of the study were: effective randomisation and no adverse effects during the study.

CONCLUSIONS :

The present study showed LSP tends to improve constipation. Hence, this yogic practice can be suggested in cleansing modalities of Naturopathic and Yogic treatments regularly. The practice of LSP once a week, for 4 weeks is safe and effective in a healthy individual. Large-scale randomized trials are warranted to confirm the results.

REFERENCES:

Kiran, S., Sapkota, S., Shetty, P., & Honnegowda, T. M. (2019). Effect of yogic colon cleansing (laghu sankhaprakshalana kriya) on bowel health in normal individuals. *Yoga Mimamsa*, 51(1), 26-30.

Negi, J., Bhardwaj, A. K., & Kumar, S. (2022). A review on the physiological and therapeutic effects of Śankhaprakṣhālana kriya [Combining

Limitations of the study: a smaller sample size, no blinding, and only subjective variables. Future studies may be designed to look at the long-term effects of LSP on bowel health.

Macron](yogic bowel cleansing). *Yoga Mimamsa*, 54(2), 112-118.

Kumar, R., & Kumari, S. Review on Laghu Shankha Prakshalana/Shankha Prakshalana: A Safe and Effective Yogic Technique for Hypertension, Obesity, Constipation, Back Pain, and Irritable Bowel Syndrome by Targeting Bowel. Kumar, R., & Kumari, S. Review on Laghu Shankha Prakshalana/Shankha Prakshalana: A Safe and Effective Yogic Technique for Hypertension, Obesity, Constipation, Back Pain, and Irritable Bowel Syndrome by Targeting Bowel.

Chaudhary, M., Panigrahi, M. K., Anirvan, P., Prakash, J. H., Gupta, S., Rai, A., ... & Padhy, B. M. (2023). S760 Laghu Shankha Prakshalana, a Yogic Technique as a Rescue in Patients Having Inadequate Bowel Preparation With Standard Regimen: A Prospective Cohort Study. *Official journal of the American College of Gastroenterology | ACG*, 118(10S), S556-S557

Cite this article:

Ramdas B. Thosar, 2025. Therapeutic Effect of Laghu Shankha Prakshalan (LSP) on Constipation in The Adult Age Group. *JES Bulletin*, 3(2):195-199.