

Chapter 10. Face Massage (Mukhabhyanga) - Video demo & theory

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Welcome to Day 36 of your Ayurveda Cosmetology course! In this lesson, we dive into **Mukhabhyanga**, a specialized Ayurvedic facial massage known for its ability to **nurture the skin**, relax facial muscles, and stimulate subtle **energy points** (marma) that support a radiant, balanced complexion.

1. Introduction to Mukhabhyanga

Mukhabhyanga combines gentle strokes, mild pressure, and marma awareness to **improve circulation**, ease tension, and impart a **healthy glow** to the face. Originating in traditional Ayurvedic daily routines, it has evolved into a popular spa service for both **beauty** enhancement and **therapeutic** relaxation.

Key Components

- **Mild Pressure:** The facial skin and underlying muscles respond well to moderate, rhythmic strokes that promote blood flow without dragging the skin.
- **Marma Point Focus:** Stimulating vital energy centers on the face can help release stress, support local tissue health, and further amplify relaxation.

2. Benefits & Indications

1. Skin Health & Appearance

- Improves **blood circulation** to facial tissues, aiding nutrient delivery and waste removal.
- Helps **lymphatic drainage**, reducing minor puffiness.

2. Stress Relief

- Releasing tension in the jaw, temples, and brow may lower stress-related headaches or eye strain.
- The rhythmic strokes calm the mind, aligning with Ayurveda's holistic approach.

3. Dosha Balancing

- **Vata**-related dryness can be alleviated by warm, nourishing oils in the facial routine.
- **Pitta**-type irritation can be soothed by cooling strokes and mild pressure.
- **Kapha** stagnation may benefit from a slightly more invigorating or friction-based approach.

Common Indications

- Tense facial muscles, mild TMJ issues, or tension headaches.
- Dull, fatigued skin needing a glow boost.
- Clients seeking mild **facial rejuvenation** without chemicals.



3. Preparations & Materials

1. **Facial Oil** or Light Cream
 - **Kumkumadi Taila**: A popular saffron-based facial oil for complexion enhancement.
 - **Almond Oil, Light Sesame Oil**, or a gentle dosha-tailored cream if client's skin is highly sensitive.
2. **Marma Knowledge**
 - Basic familiarity with points like **Shankha** (temple), **Apanga** (outer eye corner), **Phana** (around nostrils), **Vidhur** (behind ear lobe), etc.
 - Subtle pressing or circular strokes on these points can deepen relaxation.
3. **Client Comfort**
 - Recline the client on a chair or massage table, with head slightly elevated.
 - Headband or hair clips to keep hair away from the face.
 - Tissues or towels on hand for any excess oil.

4. Step-by-Step Mukhabhyanga Procedure

Below is a **general** approach. Adapt strokes or timing to each client's constitution and preferences.

1. Cleansing & Warm-Up

- Lightly cleanse the face to remove makeup or dirt.
- Optionally apply a **warm compress** for a few seconds to soften the skin.

2. Oil Application

- Dispense a small amount of **dosha-suitable** oil or cream onto your palm.
- Rub palms to warm it, then gently distribute across the client's forehead, cheeks, chin, and neck.

3. Forehead & Brow

- **Long, horizontal** strokes from the center of the forehead outward, using fingertips.
- **Circular** motions on the temples (Shankha marma), applying gentle pressure.
- If addressing tension lines, do small, repeated strokes where lines are prominent.

4. Eye Region

- Use ring fingers for **soft** circular motions around the orbital bones—never pulling the delicate skin.
- Pay attention to Apanga (outer eye corner) or the area around the brow's end, applying mild pressure in micro-circles.

5. Cheeks & Nose

- Glide from the nose bridge across the cheekbones to the ears, or do upward strokes if the client has mild sagging concerns.
- Around the nostrils, gently circle at **Phana** points to relieve sinus tension.

6. Mouth & Jaw

- Light strokes from the corners of the mouth outward, or small circles along the jawline to release tension.
- At the **Jaw Joint (TMJ)**, press gently in small circular motions if the client experiences clenching.

7. Chin & Neck

- Upward strokes along the chin and jaw contour, or small circles for Kapha stagnation under the chin.
- Neck: Move from **collarbone** up to the jaw or ear region, mindful of any lumps or sensitivity.



8. Marma Stimulation

- Pause for a moment at **key points**: temples, between brows, behind ears, corners of nostrils, etc.
- Use subtle pressing or short circular motion, hold for a few breaths.

9. Completion & Wipe-Down

- After covering all facial regions, gently wipe off excess oil with a **lukewarm** towel if needed.
- Let the client rest a minute before sitting up—encourage them to notice the lighter, relaxed sensation in their face.

5. Post-Massage Care & Frequency

1. Optional Face Mask

- Some sessions add a short **herbal mask** or lepa afterwards to lock in nourishment.
- If the client has an immediate schedule or event, a quick finish with rose water toner plus a light moisturizer suffices.

2. Frequency

- A **monthly** or **bi-weekly** face massage can sustain glow and reduce tension.
- Individuals with chronic stress might appreciate **weekly** sessions.

3. Client Tips

- Advise them to keep hydrated and possibly do a daily mini self-massage with gentle strokes.
- Reassure them mild flush or warmth in the skin post-massage is normal.

6. Indications & Contraindications

Indications

- Mild tension headaches, jaw tightness, or furrowed brows.
- Dry or dull skin needing gentle circulation boost.
- Overall stress or anxious states—Mukhabhyanga offers soothing benefits.

Contraindications

- Active **acne** with inflammation—too much friction may aggravate.
- Recent facial surgeries or stitches—avoid until cleared.
- **Severe** rosacea or extremely sensitive skin—adjust strokes lightly, avoid strong friction or warming oils.

Conclusion

Mukhabhyanga offers a **soothing, dosha-specific** facial massage that can bring about an almost meditative relaxation while brightening the complexion. By learning the **marma points**, refining your strokes, and choosing the **right oils**, you provide a deeply rejuvenating therapy that stands out for its holistic, mindful essence.

End of Day 36: You've now delved into **Face Massage (Mukhabhyanga)**, exploring techniques, marma awareness, and relevant do's & don'ts. Next (Day 37), we'll address **Head Massage (Shiro Abhyanga)**—another essential Ayurvedic therapy for scalp and hair well-being. Enjoy continually expanding your holistic cosmetology skillset!

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