



## Yoga in modern life

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### Abstract

In this modern world our environment is fighting for survival and we humans suffer from more and more physical and psychological stress, we cannot always control them but can learn how to face them and to this end Yoga is as good an invention it has ever been. The aim of yoga is attainment of physical, mental and spiritual health. The main credit of systematizing yoga goes to Patanjai who wrote the "yoga sutra" two thousand years ago. He has recommended 8 stages of yoga discipline. Yoga has gained tremendous popularity in the last few years, it is the most rapidly growing health movement despite it was developed thousands of year's ago.

**Keywords:** yoga, environment, physical, psychology

### Introduction

Yoga is a spiritual science for the integrated and holistic development of our physical, mental as well as moral-spiritual aspects. Yoga is based on philosophy that is practical and for our day-to-day living. Yoga produces desirable physiological changes and has sound scientific basis. True wealth of a nation consists of superior and noble persons it harbors. Popularisation of yoga will spawn a good number of such persons who will be an asset to the society and fit to be called as world men/women, the ideal of Rig Ved. Materialistic outlook and consumerism, pollution of mind and environment, dependence on junk food and drugs, deficiency of noble virtues and deeds and the stress of daily life are the bane of modern society. Being holistic, yoga is an ideal solution for all these problems. Good health, knowledge and creativity are more important than material wealth and power. We should realize the primacy of man over machine and humanity over materialism. Unfortunately, in the name of materialism, some people are slavishly aping decadent aspects of western, materialistic culture. Their life is cluttered with too much of worthless things and three dimensional culture of drink, dance and drugs. Junk food, junk entertainment, superfluous needs and wasteful consumerism are being promoted by callously commercial self-seekers. Materialistic and sensory pleasures do give us happiness. However, real and lasting joy comes by strengthening and purifying our body-mind-soul complex and performing noble deeds and selfless actions. That is why, yoga and ayurved have always given due importance to our physical body, subtle body as well as soul. During the last few decades, three important things have happened. i) We have moved away from mother nature and our lifestyle is becoming more and more unnatural and stressful due to 'modern' lifestyle ii) modern medicine has conquered infectious diseases and decimated epidemics iii) there has been a significant prolongation of our life span. The result of all these is a phenomenal increase in lifestyle and psychosomatic disorders like headaches, sleep disturbances, depression,

mental stress, eating disorders, obesity, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, angina, bronchial asthma, peptic ulcer, irritable bowel syndrome, arthritis, impotency, menstrual disorders and carcinomas. Medical diagnosis and treatment of these diseases are becoming more and more expensive and beyond our available resources. It needs to be emphasized that yogic lifestyle and yogic techniques are very effective in prevention as well as treatment of these diseases. The efficacy of yoga in the management of hypertension has been well documented. Yogic treatment can be administered along with medical treatment as a complementary therapy. As yogic treatment is effective and inexpensive, we will be able to save billions of rupees annually and there will be a tremendous reduction of pressure on our hospitals which are over-crowded, understaffed and fund starved. It should be noted that while drugs have many undesirable side effects on our physical and mental health, yoga has beneficial 'side effects' in terms of improved psychosomatic health. It is clear that yoga is a boon for the 'modern' society which has become a victim of everyday stress. Modern research has established the scientific basis of yogic techniques and yoga has now gained international acceptance and acclaim. It is desirable that yoga be made an integral part of our educational as well as health care systems

### Prevention of Disease

Studies indicate that yoga can help prevent the diseases. Yoga reduces stress, lowers blood pressure, keeps off weight, and improves cardiovascular health, all of which lead to reducing your risk of heart disease. It is well documented that weight-bearing exercise strengthens bones and helps prevent osteoporosis. Additionally, yoga's ability to lower levels of cortisol may help keep calcium in the bones. A new study indicates that yoga can help elevate brain gamma-aminobutyric (GABA) levels. Low GABA levels are associated with the onset of Alzheimer's. Meditation like that practiced in yoga has also been shown to slow the progression of Alzheimer's. In addition to the glucose reducing

capabilities of yoga, it is also an excellent source of physical exercise and stress reduction that, along with the potential for yoga to encourage insulin production in the pancreas, can serve as an excellent preventative for type II diabetes

### Rehabilitation

Yoga as a physical therapy has a lot to offer patients of physical and mental handicaps. Many of the practices of physiotherapy and other physical therapies have a lot in common with Yoga practices. Mentally challenged individuals can benefit by an improvement in their IQ as well as in learning to relate to themselves and others better. As their physiological functions improve with Yoga, the combination of Yoga and physical therapies can benefit such patients as well as those with learning disabilities. Musculoskeletal problems can be treated by the combination to improve function as well as range of movement, strength and endurance abilities. Balance and dexterity can also be improved by the combination therapy. The use of Yoga can help those recovering from accidents and physical traumas to get back on their feet faster and with better functional ability.

### Relaxation

Most medical doctors understand that it is important to relax in order to get better. The problem is that, though the doctor tells the patient to relax, they don't tell them how to do so and maybe in fact they don't know the answer themselves in the first place. Hatha Yoga and Jnana Yoga Relaxation practices help relax the body, emotions and mind. Relaxation is a key element of any Yoga therapy regimen and must not be forgotten at any cost. Shavasana has been reported to help a lot in hypertensive patients and practices such as Savitri Pranayama, Chandra Pranayama, Kaya Kriya, Yoga Nidra, Anuloma Viloma Prakriyas and Marmanasthanam Kriya are also available to the person requiring this state of complete relaxation. It is important to remember that relaxation on its own is less effective than relaxation following activity.

### Yoga helps in achieving healthy lifestyle

*"Yoga is more than just a workout – It is about working on yourself."* Yoga – an art of living well – is composed of 75% practice and 25% theory. The benefits of yoga can only be experienced or seen when we live and practice it regularly. Yoga teaches you to live with nature, with total harmony between the head, heart and hand i.e. the intellectual, emotional and physical aspects of the personality. Health problems faced by city dwellers – pollution, global warming, pressures of work, travel, communication, etc. - lead to accumulation of tension in the mind and toxins in the body. This is where yoga comes to the fore to help us achieve a balanced state of mind and body which can help us cope with our daily grind. We need to shift our mindset from the curative aspect to the preventive aspect of yoga for a healthy, fruitful life. Regular practice of yoga has helped Aseema staff members in numerous ways such as – improvement in stamina and flexibility, development of strength, relief of muscular tension and pain and improved sleep. These benefits can be enjoyed by all who choose to devote a little time every day to maintaining and enhancing their quality of life.

### Conclusion

Yoga is not a religion; it is a way of living whose aim is 'a healthy mind in a healthy body'.

Man is a physical, mental and spiritual being; yoga helps promote a balanced development of all the three. Other forms of physical exercises, like aerobics, assure only physical well-being. They have little to do with the development of the spiritual or astral body.

Yogic exercises recharge the body with cosmic energy this facilitates

- Attainment of perfect equilibrium and harmony
- Promotes self- healing.
- Removes negative blocks from the mind and toxins from the body
- Enhances Personal power
- Increases self-awareness
- Helps in attention focus and concentration, especially important for children
- Reduces stress and tension in the physical body by activating the parasympathetic nervous system.

Thus yoga is very important in modern life.

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