



A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF YOGA ON HEALTH AND ITS BENEFITS

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INTRODUCTION

In an age where the younger generation is increasingly turning obese and facing health issues at an abnormal rate, fitness plays a very vital role. One can achieve complete control of mind over body by being both physically and mentally fit. Yoga and meditation have been practiced in India since ancient times and provides a healthy mind and a sound body, something which the stress filled youngsters of our generation need. Yoga is considered a comprehensive practice that integrates mental, physical, and spiritual elements of the human body. The purpose of this study was to examine the benefits of yoga and meditation on the physical and mental health. This study provides support for Deep relaxation and meditation practices cultivate awareness and ultimately more profound states of consciousness. Beneficial effects might involve a reduction of distress, blood pressure, and improvements in resilience, mood, and metabolic regulation.

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OBJECTIVE

To study and understand the influence of the practice of Yoga on health and the benefits of the same.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bhole (1977), in his paper "Psycho Physiological Importance of Some Yoga Practices," explained different aspects of Yoga. Yoga as a "way of life" encompasses the philosophy of the following 4 forms of Yoga which are:

- ❖ Karma Yoga (path of detached action),
- ❖ Jnana Yoga (knowledge of self)
- ❖ Bhakti Yoga (trust in the supreme order)
- ❖ Raja Yoga (asana, pranayama, meditation, etc.)

The paper "Psychology of Meditation and Health: Present Status and Future Directions" written by Dilwar Hussain and Braj Bhushan reviews the effects of meditation on mental health and human physiology such as heart beat, blood pressure, cortical activity, metabolism, respiration, and skin resistance are also discussed.

In the paper "Randomized, controlled, six-month trial of yoga : effects on cognition and quality of life" by Barry S. Oken , Daniel Zajdel , Kristin Flegal, Shirley Kishiyama, Mitchell Haas, Dale F. Kraemer, Julie Lawrence, Cathleen Dehen .And Joanne Leyva focuses on the impact of yoga on cognitive functions, mood, fatigue, and overall quality of life and their cognitive measures focused on attention and alertness were studied for a six month period.

YOGA – A way of life



Yoga is a 5000-year-old Indian body of knowledge. Derived from the Sanskrit word "yuj", 'Yoga' means union of the individual consciousness or soul with the Universal Consciousness or Spirit. The earliest mention of the existing practice of Yoga tradition is found in the oldest surviving literature Rig Veda.

Types of Yoga:

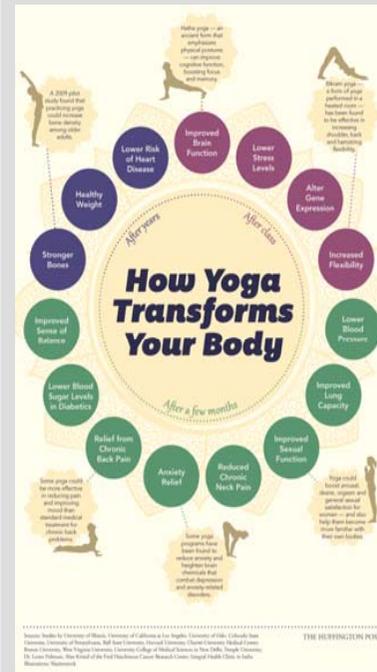
The term "yoga" has been applied to a variety of practices and methods that includes:

- Gyan Yoga' or philosophy
- Bhakti Yoga' or path of devotional bliss
- Karma Yoga' or path of blissful action

IMPACT OF YOGA

The benefits of Yoga are mostly only perceived to be at the body level and fail to realize the immense benefits yoga offers in uniting the body, mind and breath. When the body and mind are in harmony, the journey through life is calmer, happier and more fulfilling.

Cross-training with yoga can help one gain strength, flexibility, and stamina to improve the performance in sports. The yoga for athletes comprises of sequences, poses, and warm-ups to balance both the body and mind.



Physiological Impacts:

Through Yoga , the body triggers a line of beneficial chemical processes within the body, slows the heart rate, reduces the level of blood lactate, lessens the muscular tension, leads to more efficient gas exchange in the lungs, lower levels of cortisol and adrenal levels. This not only boosts the immune system, but also results in higher energy levels, and increased strength.

Normalizing Blood pressure:

Blood circulation can be improved in the body through Yoga and Pranayama and has proved to treat both High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) and Low Blood Pressure (Hypotension).

Practicing Yoga stretches keeps the arteries ductile and reduces the stiffness of the arteries which again lowers the blood pressure.

It results in the creation of positive energy leading to a better and improved lifestyle. Certain Asanas have the power to slow the heart rate by soothing the nerves and minimizes the chances of a heart attack.

Mental Benefits:

It has been found through studies that the benefits of Yoga include increased focus, concentration levels and mental clarity. It also helps to bring down the stress levels, reduce depression and anxiety. Since the stress is reduced, the sleep cycle is improved. Yoga as a way of life boosts feelings of self image and well being.

Immune System Boost:

When regularly practiced and being in the relaxed state on a regular basis , the brain produces more of the positive neurotransmitter 'serotonin' and stimulates less of the negative 'cortisol' which impairs cognitive skills, trigger high Blood pressure and blood sugar imbalances, affecting the immune system badly.

DISCUSSION

The study has given insights into the benefits of Yoga practice in daily life and how it is used to maintain a sense of well being and alleviate a range of health problems and ailments.

Therefore it can be used also for the purpose of medical therapy for numerous health issues apart from those mentioned previously , like stress, anxiety, depression, and other mood disorders and help maintain an overall wellness of the health of both the body and mind.

CONCLUSION

The benefits of increased feelings of relaxation, improved self-confidence and body image, improved efficiency, better interpersonal relationships, increase in attentiveness through Yoga and meditation as a way of life encourages an optimistic outlook on life.

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