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Benefits of Yoga in our Life

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Abstract

Promoting healthy lifestyle includes proper eating, physical activity, and better way of communicating and socializing in the community. All these have positive impacts, which we can easily get in practicing yoga. Yoga will reduce the risk of getting so many diseases, which resulted from our day-to-day lifestyles. This paper, therefore, deals with the significance of yoga in our life. This article is written based on practical lesson I get in practicing Yoga while attending Yoga class. And in this article I included what I observed in my own situation while training in our life. Health is a primary goal of any individual and hence without spending lots of money by practicing Yoga one can achieve proper health. This article therefore, deals with significance of Yoga in our life to encourage the reader to practice Yoga to sustain physical, social and spiritual health.

Keywords: Yoga, Physical, Spiritual health, flexibility, Muscle Strength

Introduction

Our life patterns affect our health in dissimilar aspects physically, psychologically, and socially. There is a need for increasing people awareness about the effect of daily life to control the effects of the patterns of life. The need for effective population body healthy promotion approaches is urgent as mental health concerns are escalating globally and current allopathic treatment regimens are insufficient to bring people towards the state of mental well-being (citation). Successfully alleviating stress has the potential to promote wellbeing and prevent illness. Worldwide, yoga is gaining popularity as an accessible, acceptable and cost-effective practice for mind and body. People are turning to yoga for mental health improvement because of preferences for: self-treatment as opposed to clinical intervention; perceived greater efficacy than medication; fewer side effects; lack of response to medication. Yoga has minimal side effects and is cost-effective in comparison with pharmacological treatments and psychotherapy. Yoga' added benefit is that it improves physical fitness and encourages self-reliance. In this brief article we discuss the evidence for yoga as a form of mental health promotion, illness prevention and treatment for depression.

History

Yoga is a 5000 year old tradition. In India monks went into seclusion for years with the goal of creating a dis-ease free strong body. The original intention was to be able to sit in meditation for hours but with a achy body that is impossible to do. The postures of yoga were each created for a specific health purpose. To Detoxify, realign musculature, strengthen muscle, and create flexibility.

Along with correcting the fallacies of the body, these yogis went about trying to find how to correct fallacies of the mind. An entire philosophy was created, based solely around leading a human being finding his or her bliss. The teachings were so dead –on that they are still practiced 5000 years later. Yoga has become more popular than ever, with celebrities, politicians, business people, and almost every walk of life currently practicing. The important thing to understand about this way of thinking is yoga is not a religion. You can be from any background and reap its benefits.

What is yoga?

The eight limbed path of yoga includes: Yama (moral codes), niyama (self-discipline), asana

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(postures), pranyama (breath practices promoting life force), pratyahara (sensory transcendence), dharana (concentration), dhyana (meditation), samadhi (state of bliss). The word roots of yoga mean “to join” in Sanskrit. Joining mind and body, and individual and collective selves is the essence of this ancient South Asian practice ^[1]. Yogic philosophy posits that every life form is interconnected and united ^[2]. “Yoga exists in the world because everything is linked” ^[3].

Different Types of Yoga

While the philosophy remains fairly consistent among different disciplines the physical aspect of yoga comes in a few forms.

Kriyas: This school of thought believes that nerve centers in the body can get clogged up or inactive and this leads to poor health. Kundalini’s repetitive posture flows (kriyas) unlock these blocks and leave you feeling wonderfully energized yet peaceful.

Hatha: A strengthening flow class, postures lead into postures -Hatha- postures are held for minutes, this is believed to really affect the body, as each posture is designed to gain health benefits. The longer you hold the pose, the more effective it is.

Vini: A gentle type of yoga, well suited for those just starting out, or for those who’d like to go at a slower pace

Aero Yoga: Also known as partner yoga, involving holds, mutual balancing, and a lot of fun

Iyengar Yoga: (prop yoga) created by a yoga master named Iyengar in India, this type of yoga is very therapeutic. You are placed into positions with various props (blocks, straps, chairs, blankets) and once you are comfortable are left in the pose for

Benefits of Yoga in Our Life

Builds muscle strength

Strong muscles do more than look good. They also protect us from conditions like arthritis and back pain, and help prevent falls in elderly people. Moreover, when you build strength through yoga, you balance it with flexibility. If you just went to the gym and lifted weights, you might build strength at the expense of flexibility. See also Why You Should Add Weights to Your Yoga Practice.

Prevents cartilage and joint breakdown

Each time you practice yoga, you take your joints through their full range of motion. This can help prevent degenerative arthritis or mitigate disability by “squeezing and soaking” areas of cartilage that normally aren’t used. Joint cartilage is like a sponge; it receives fresh nutrients only when its fluid is squeezed out and a new supply can be soaked up. Without proper sustenance, neglected areas of cartilage can eventually wear out, exposing the underlying bone like worn-out brake pads.

Improves your flexibility

The practice of yoga is about creating balance in the body by developing both strength and flexibility. This is accomplished by performing a series of postures or “poses” which are designed for specific benefits to each part of your body. Tight hips can strain the knee joint due to improper alignment of the thigh and shinbones. Tight hamstrings can lead to a flattening of the lumbar spine, which can cause back pain. And inflexibility in muscles and connective tissue, such as fascia and ligaments, can cause poor posture. Improved flexibility is one of the first and most obvious benefits of yoga. During

your first class, you probably won’t be able to touch your toes, never mind do a backbend. But if you stick with it, you’ll notice a gradual loosening, and eventually, seemingly impossible poses will become possible. You’ll also probably notice that aches and pains start to disappear. That’s no coincidence.

Increases your blood flow

Yoga gets your blood flowing. More specifically, the relaxation exercises you learn in yoga can help your circulation, especially in your hands and feet. Yoga also gets more oxygen to your cells, which function better as a result. Twisting poses are thought to wring out venous blood from internal organs and allow oxygenated blood to flow in once the twist is released. Inverted poses, such as Headstand, Handstand, and Shoulder stand, encourage venous blood from the legs and pelvis to flow back to the heart, where it can be pumped to the lungs to be freshly oxygenated. This can help if you have swelling in your legs from heart or kidney problems. Yoga also boosts levels of hemoglobin and red blood cells, which carry oxygen to the tissues. And it thins the blood by making platelets less sticky and by cutting the level of clot-promoting proteins in the blood. This can lead to a decrease in heart attacks and strokes since blood clots are often the cause of these killers.

Betters your bone health

It’s well documented that weight-bearing exercise strengthens bones and helps ward off osteoporosis. Many postures in yoga require that you lift your own weight. And some, like Downward- and Upward-Facing Dog, help strengthen the arm bones, which are particularly vulnerable to osteoporotic fractures.

Drops your blood pressure

If you’ve got high blood pressure, you might benefit from yoga. Two studies of people with hypertension, published in the British medical journal *The Lancet*, compared the effects of Savasana (Corpse Pose) with simply lying on a couch. After three months, Savasana was associated with a 26-point drop in systolic blood pressure (the top number) and a 15-point drop in diastolic blood pressure (the bottom number—and the higher the initial blood pressure, the bigger the drop).

Perfects your posture

Your head is like a bowling ball—big, round, and heavy. When it’s balanced directly over an erect spine, it takes much less work for your neck and back muscles to support it. Move it several inches forward, however, and you start to strain those muscles. Hold up that forward leaning bowling ball for eight or 12 hours a day and it’s no wonder you’re tired. And fatigue might not be your only problem. Poor posture can cause back, neck, and other muscle and joint problems. As you slump, your body may compensate by flattening the normal inward curves in your neck and lower back. This can cause pain and degenerative arthritis of the spine.

Ups your heart rate

When you regularly get your heart rate into the aerobic range, you lower your risk of heart attack and can relieve depression. While not all yoga is aerobic, if you do it vigorously or take flow or Ashtanga classes, it can boost your heart rate into the aerobic range. But even yoga exercises that don’t get your heart rate up that high can improve cardiovascular conditioning. Studies have found that yoga practice lowers the

resting heart rate, increases endurance, and can improve your maximum uptake of oxygen during exercise—all reflections of improved aerobic conditioning. One study found that subjects who were taught only pranayama could do more exercise with less oxygen.

Protects your spine

Spinal disks—the shock absorbers between the vertebrae that can herniate and compress nerves—crave movement. That's the only way they get their nutrients. If you've got a well-balanced asana practice with plenty of backbends, forward bends, and twists, you'll help keep your disks supple. See also *How to Build a Home Practice*

Found a healthy lifestyle

Yoga may also inspire you to become a more conscious eater. A regular practice gets you moving and burns calories, and the spiritual and emotional dimensions of your practice may encourage you to address any eating and weight problems on a deeper level.

Maintains your nervous system

Some advanced yogis can control their bodies in extraordinary ways, many of which are mediated by the nervous system. Scientists have monitored yogis who could induce unusual heart rhythms, generate specific brain-wave patterns, and, using a meditation technique, raise the temperature of their hands by 15 degrees Fahrenheit. If they can use yoga to do that, perhaps you could learn to improve blood flow to your pelvis if you're trying to get pregnant or induce relaxation when you're having trouble falling asleep.

Lowers blood sugar

Yoga lowers blood sugar and LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and boosts HDL (“good”) cholesterol. In people with diabetes, yoga has been found to lower blood sugar in several ways: by lowering cortisol and adrenaline levels, encouraging weight loss, and improving sensitivity to the effects of insulin. Get your blood sugar levels down, and you decrease your risk of diabetic complications such as heart attack, kidney failure, and blindness.

Helps you focus

An important component of yoga is focusing on the present. Studies have found that regular yoga practice improves coordination, reaction time, memory, and even IQ scores. People who practice Transcendental Meditation demonstrate the ability to solve problems and acquire and recall information better—probably because they're less distracted by their thoughts, which can play over and over like an endless tape loop.

Relaxes your system

Yoga encourages you to relax, slow your breath, and focus on the present, shifting the balance from the sympathetic nervous system (or the fight-or-flight response) to the parasympathetic nervous system. The latter is calming and restorative; it lowers breathing and heart rates, decreases blood pressure, and increases blood flow to the intestines and reproductive organs—comprising what Herbert Benson, M.D., calls the relaxation response.

Improves your balance

Regularly practicing yoga increases proprioception (the ability to feel what your body is doing and where it is in

space) and improves balance. People with bad posture or dysfunctional movement patterns usually have poor proprioception, which has been linked to knee problems and back pain. Better balance could mean fewer falls. For the elderly, this translates into more independence and delayed admission to a nursing home or never entering one at all. For the rest of us, postures like Tree Pose can make us feel less wobbly on and off the mat. See also *Poses for Back Pain*.

Gives you peace of mind

Yoga quells the fluctuations of the mind, according to Patanjali's Yoga Sutra. In other words, it slows down the mental loops of frustration, regret, anger, fear, and desire that can cause stress. And since stress is implicated in so many health problems—from migraines and insomnia to lupus, MS, eczema, high blood pressure, and heart attacks—if you learn to quiet your mind, you'll be likely to live longer and healthier.

Conclusion

The impact of yoga for improving health and treating medical conditions has increased dramatically in the past decade. It has also become quite specialized, with most reviews of yoga research focusing only a single disease or population. Our objective was to review the state of research more broadly, providing examples of and references for notable yoga research across many different research modalities, diseases, and populations. Worldwide, yoga is gaining popularity as an accessible, acceptable and cost-effective practice for mind and body. People are turning to yoga for mental health improvement because of preferences for: self-treatment as opposed to clinical intervention; perceived greater efficacy than medication; fewer side effects; lack of response to medication.

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