

## YOGA AND LIFESTYLE DISORDERS

### HOLISTIC HEALING & YOGA THERAPY

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Holistic Medicine is similar to Integrative Medicine in its approach. It focuses on the 'Preventive and therapeutic approach which sees the person as a whole being, including mind, body, & spirit, and not as a patient with an isolated malfunction of a particular system or organ.' Integrative medicine (IM) is healing-oriented medicine that takes account of the whole person, including all aspects of lifestyle.

Holistic Healing is very much a part of family medicine. "To heal is to achieve or acquire wholeness as a person; the wholeness involves physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual aspects of human experience" says Dr TR Egnaw, a Chief of Family Medicine in Washington DC.

There are three types of Healing: Spontaneous natural healing, Technological healing (based on active medications or procedures) and Inter-personal healing (induced by Provider-Client relationship). Wickenburg consensus statement of 1988 has looked at various Factors in Healing and it estimated that Rational (Pharmacological or technological) factors only accounted for 20% of healing and the remainder resulted from Placebo effect (35%), Hawthorne effect (30) and Spiritual factor (15%)

Complementary & Alternative Medicine use among 1,055 patients of Mayo Heart Clinic in USA revealed that 82% reported use of CAM therapies, which included 24% mind-body therapies like Yoga& meditation, stress management, and other relaxation techniques. However, only 1 in 7 discussed it with their physicians for fear of refutation or ridicule. A similar study in Australia among 19209 women found that 1-in-3 used yoga and meditation as adjunct therapies.

Therefore Yoga-therapy is currently a very active area of research and include the following conditions:

- Psychological symptoms and disorders
- Mindfulness and job stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Sleep
- Pain syndromes
- Low back pain
- Headaches
- Osteoarthritis
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Cardiovascular conditions
  - o Coronary artery disease
  - o Hypertension
- **Yoga In Recent Research**
- Autoimmune conditions
- Asthma
- Ashtanga yoga & Smoking
- Diabetes
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Lymphoma

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- Breast Cancer
- Physical effects
  - o Weight loss
  - o Leg strength
- Pregnancy conditions
  - o Hypertension and preterm labor
  - o Stress and vagal activity
  - o Labor pain
- Physiological effects
  - o Heart rate and blood pressure
  - o Pulmonary measures
- Ashtanga yoga & Smoking

### **SOME OF THE RECENT EVIDENCES OF YOGA THERAPY:**

Ashtanga yoga for weight loss and well being in the Young: Ashtanga yoga is often referred to as “power yoga” as it is more aerobic in nature. Participants lost 2 kg on average after a 12-week program.

**YOGA DURING PREGNANCY** - Effects on maternal comfort, labour pain & outcomes: 74-primigravid Thai women were equally divided into experimental and control groups. yoga program involved six, 1-hr sessions at prescribed weeks of gestation. The Yoga-group had i) higher levels of maternal comfort during labour and 2 hour post-labour and ii) had experienced less labour pain

**YOGA ON BALANCE & GAIT :** A study of 27 women with musculoskeletal problems (osteoarthritis and low-back pain) who underwent 8 sessions (twice weekly x 4 weeks) of yoga therapy of asanas, stretching exercises and breathing techniques revealed that yoga had a positive effect on balance and gait of women with musculoskeletal problems.

**ADVERSE EFFECTS OF INCORRECT YOGA PRACTICE** included meditation-induced mania or psychosis, arterial occlusion, and “lotus neuropathy” which highlight the importance of using properly trained yoga therapists.

**MINDLESS REJECTION OF EFFECTIVE** Rational Rx is at times of great concern to evidence-based practitioners. In a study of 2562 breast cancer survivors, the research question was, “does the use of alternative medicine affect breast cancer prognosis in those who reject systemic therapy?” The results showed that those who refused proven systemic treatment had double the risk of adverse outcomes and that alternative therapies did not alter the outcome of breast cancer. Therefore yoga therapy is only an adjunct in cancer management and not a replacement for standard therapy.

### **LOOKING IN TO THE FUTURE:**

- Advances in neuro-imaging, genomics & metabolomics will help unravel the secrets of natural healing processes
- We could offer evidence based therapy incorporating these “endogenous healthcare forces” thus unifying the art and science of healing.
- Let all the healing forces work together to help the suffering humanity.