

Yoga

Student's Name

Institution of Learning

Yoga

The majority of people in the Western world are used to traditional medicine and current health care systems. Sometimes, when conventional medicine is not able to help a particular person or doctors cannot formulate the diagnosis, a person addresses alternative medicine for help. There are many alternative or conventional medical systems and yoga becomes more and more popular because it demonstrates serious enhancements of the human body and health. Actually, yoga is a very old system. Despite the fact that it is relatively new to Western societies, yoga used to be a therapeutic and medical treatment for years in India. Typically, yoga is considered to be a system or sequence of physical actions, which allow human body being healthier and stronger. Yoga practitioners are certain of the positive effects yoga has on their health, body and mind. Nevertheless, the majority of doctors are opposed to yoga, due to the fact that negligent attitude can lead to injuries or deterioration of health. Nevertheless, more and more researches and trials depict that yoga can cure a number of diseases and manage symptoms. The current paper will analyze yoga system as medicine, revealing the positive effects it has on various diseases, while demonstrating how it influenced the health care system as such.

Yoga as Medicine

Yoga is a form of non-aerobic exercises, which incorporated a particular plan of strict and accurate alignment, position, respiration exercises, and meditation. The word derives from ancient Sanskrit, and it stands for the “union.” Yoga is a systematical technique to enhance body defenses, cognate the mind, and release the spirit. People practicing yoga demonstrate a tendency to be more bendable, more muscular, more active, have no problems with weight, and are more vigorous than people who do not practice yoga (Woodyard, 2011).

Practiced in India for the first time more than 5,000 years ago, yoga is one of the most ancient mind-body existing health systems. In the U.S., yoga practiced for the first time by the Concord transcendentalists in the 1840s. However, the system transformed into a well-known practice and health system only in the 1880s when the English translation of Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* had been published. The above-mentioned ancient book provided an explicit illustration and explanation of yoga techniques and transcendental meditation Samadhi, which is focus of the yoga credence (Malshe, 2012). According to *Yoga Sutras*, yoga goes beyond the yoga mat itself and consists of eight limbs, incorporating yama (ethical standards of conduct), niyama (self-discipline), asanas (physical posture), pranayama (breathing control), pratyahara (sensory transcendence), dharana (concentration), dnyana (meditation), Samadhi (state of ecstasy) (Prakash, 2012, p. 36). Each of the eight limbs one may utilize in isolation. Nevertheless, the practice of asanas and breathing practices inside of the overall yoga philosophy mend the mind and body for meditation and spiritual evolvement.

Many distinctive yogic approaches have appeared on a basis of Patanjali's eight limbs. Each of these approaches developed particular and sometimes unique technique for impeding and curing various diseases. The Western world took merely the most general agents of yoga practiced, meaning the physical postures (standing for asanas) and breathing practices (standing for pranayamas) of ancient Hatha yoga and meditation. Hatha yoga is the most common branch of yoga itself and it improves the capability of the corporeal body with the help of asanas sequences utilization, combined with breathing techniques. The breathing techniques of Hatha yoga are unique and they concentrate on sentiment lengthening of inspiration, breath holding, and expiration (Malshe, 2012). With the help of corporeal movements, breathing and

concentration, unification of asanas takes place, clogs in the energy channels of the body clear up. As a result, the body energy system becomes more balanced.

Traditional medicine and yoga have distinctive approaches to making decisions on treatment. In case of conventional medicine, doctors attempt to establish a diagnosis first. When the diagnosis is formulated, relevant therapies are to be prescribed. In an ideal world, these therapies would not only manage the symptoms but tackle the principle basic reason of the disease (Malshe, 2012). Unfortunately, it is not always possible to establish the proper diagnosis or to find the relevant cause of the disease. In the case of yoga, yoga teacher and therapies attempt to observe the practitioner with proper attention to formulate a specific treatment, which is grounded on all possible observations (Malshe, 2012). In fact, two practitioners may even be diagnosed with the same disease, and typically these would be treated similarly in the conventional medicine principles. It is not a case for yoga therapy. The yoga therapy may differ for the same disease, because yoga considers the overall physical state, health status, possible medical implications, energy levels and other important factors in the treatment of the diseases. In addition, yoga therapists attempt to transform and alter their practitioners' regimens as well, relying on the ideas that can be inoculated or things that can be changed in the lives of their practitioners (Woodyard, 2011). In a case of proper yoga therapy, teachers and therapies are not interested in working with the diagnosis that much, instead they are medicating and curing the practitioner with health disorders. In situations when tests are inconclusive and conventional doctors are unable to give authoritative advice or explain practitioner's symptoms, there hitherto might be some yogic tools or even a number of them to use (Malshe, 2012).

Yoga can be a beneficial approach and assistance in relieving numerous symptoms of chronic ailments incorporating cancer, arthritis, and heart diseases since yoga practice results in

enhanced relaxation and improved physical state (Kang, Adler, Hecht, & Dhruva, 2014).

Existing scientific literature does not approve yoga as an efficient cancer or any other disease treatment; however, it depicts that yoga may enhance life quality. A number of cancer treatment centers even suggest to practice yoga as a supplement to conventional medical treatment. The practice of yoga allows consolidating and appeasing the nervous system. It allows increasing the blood circulation to inner organs and delivering more oxygen to the organism cells (Kang et al., 2014). Yoga allows clearing the psychological disorder, which is able to ruin a person's life, providing that person with the possibility to observe the world and the existing problems more explicitly. Yoga helps to cultivate the spiritual power, which help the person to become more felicitous, less agitated, more at peace (Malshe, 2012).

Yoga's health advantages can be partially accounted for the fact that different stretching, respiration, movement, balance, meditation, and consolidation practices, which are all together known as hatha-yoga, offer numerous advantages of other valuable performances including walking, weight lifting, or biofeedback trainings, suggesting to move beyond these practices, stepping aside the physical side of activities involved (Woodyard, 2011).

Various researches have confirmed that yoga can be utilized in order to manage and supervise corporal activities, incorporating blood pressure, heart rhythm, respiration, metastasis, physical temperature, electric impulses in the brain, and derma resistance. It means that yoga can improve physical state, decrease stress levels, reinforce sensations of refreshment and soundness (Li & Goldsmith, 2012).

There is a prolonged effect from practicing yoga. For instance, it can relax the body and the mind of person practicing yoga. It is worth noting that in comparatively limited situations, yoga practice can result in the facilitation of numerous illness symptoms as well (Woodyard,

2011). With continuous uninterrupted practice, especially of the stretching and aggravating postures (known as asana), and the respiration techniques (known as pranayama), the organism, body and breathing system of a person practicing yoga become robust. The posture and lung facility enhances together with intestinal functions, lymphatic drainage, and the immune system performance. Therefore, a person practicing yoga feels more balanced, better capable of enduring the changing nature of life.

In fact, yoga alternative medical system gives much attention to balance. Not only to the physical balance as such, meaning the capability to stand still in particular asana, by psychological and energetic balance as well. Many people believe that the physical practice of yoga stands for the ability of being flexible, but physical plasticity is not the original objective of asana practice. A number of people, who come to yoga classes, especially female, are very flexible; nevertheless, they lack strength and robustness. Other people, including male, are very strong when they appear on yoga trainings, but they have serious problems with flexibility. Many yoga students start practicing with reserve because of fear. Others face difficulties in staying stimulated for continuous practice. A number of people are unable to relax. Yoga actually challenges each particular person in the required sphere, while modifying shortcomings into vigor, making each individual a more balanced person. Asana practice is balanced itself due to the fact that it incorporates performing various asanas from each of the existing categories (Woodyard, 2011). Therefore, yoga may be perceived as a practice, which has numerous instruments to assist in overcoming one of the major agents disrupting the health state and robustness of different people existing in the current world. While stress is a major factor in a provoking numerous medical conditions, starting from heart attacks ending with infertility, yoga's function in stress diminution assists in defining why it is beneficial in so many conditions.

Nevertheless, stress reduction is beneficial for everybody, except the sick (Li & Goldsmith, 2012).

Yoga has received evidently distinct support from Western convenient medicine when the constituents creating health were analyzed. It may be the best explanation why yoga is so efficient. The destitution of symptoms is never analogous to robustness in yoga. In yoga terms, health as such, spreads far beyond the state of not having a headache or knee pain or even receiving cancer treatment (Kang et al., 2014). It stands for the optimization of each system function in the human organism, from digestion to muscles, blood circulation, and immunity. It stands for the emotional health, spiritual stability, and happiness (Malshe, 2012).

A 3,000 years old system of yoga is currently estimated in the Western world as a holistic access to health and is categorized by the National Institutes of Health as a form of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (Li & Goldsmith, 2012). Therapeutic yoga stands for the implementations of asanas in order to cure medical diseases. A number of various modern styles of Hatha yoga, including Iyengar, Sivananda, Yoga 23, have evolved into clear and expressive medical strategies. Iyengar yoga, which is grounded on Yoga master BKS Iyengar, who passed away this year, appoints a methodically arranged and advancing range of asanas adapted to suit a student's requirements and physical state. As a therapy, yoga is directed to the purification of human physiology. When the postures are implemented and practiced in a proper way, they are considered to positively influence each organ and gland of the organism. A proficient yoga teacher and therapist educated in the Iyengar yoga tradition is able to adjust the body to all asanas in order to assure that bones and joints are properly lined up to reach physiologic alterations. The body weight has to be allocated equally on the joints and muscles to hinder traumas. In order to achieve required outcomes and to diminish pressure, Iyengar yoga

practitioners utilize such supporting instruments as chairs, belts, blankets, and blocks to so that to ballast the asanas. In fact, each asana has a particular shape to which the body adjusts, instead of adjusting the asana to the body (Li & Goldsmith, 2012).

The Impact of Yoga on Diseases

By extending the appliance of yoga beyond stress-connected diseases to incorporate preclusive and therapeutical results, physicians nowadays have superiority in curing patients' diseases and discords. Particularly, yoga therapy supplements patients' conventional medical therapy of osteoarthritis together with other bone and joint issues. Yoga therapists are following anatomic lines of the body, which allow them to adjust asanas in order to assure that patient organism units, joints, and bones are aligned in a proper way to gain physiologic alterations. Current researches evaluating the influence of yoga therapy on rheumatic diseases, including osteoarthritis, and repeated strain traumas, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, demonstrated that yoga therapy resulted in physiologic alterations, alleviated ache, and enhanced movements (Woodyard, 2011). The Hatha Yoga Pradipika, which is known to be the classic handbook on hatha yoga, suggests that yoga is both a preclusive and therapeutical scheme for the body, mind, and spirit. By extending yoga's recognized applications, medical patients can face the benefits of a noninvasive technique to cure their diseases and problematic areas (Malshe, 2012).

Yoga is a relevant supplementary medical therapy for patients who suffer from such anatomical disorders as bone and joint disorders. For example, a particular range of postures is suitable for patients with frequent OA of the finger joints (Woodyard, 2011). It helps to rebuild the skeletal frame and relax rigid joints. Due to the fact that numerous musculoskeletal issues are mechanical, yoga system proposes a particular set of exercises to alter the existing alignment and relieve musculoskeletal issues. For example, the major objective of the Iyengar yoga system is to

reform bones, muscles, and joints (Woodyard, 2011). Such rearrangement diminishes stress and helps patients to reestablish anatomical connections.

In accordance with a report presented by the National Institutes of Health, there are a number of demonstrations and evidence, which presuppose that yoga is beneficial when utilized with conventional medical treatment in order to assist in relieving numerous symptoms connected to asthma, cancer, diabetes, drug dependency, elevated blood pressure, heart diseases, and migraine headaches (Garfinkel, 2006). Yoga also helps in reducing levels of cholesterol in a case, when yoga is practiced together with a specific diet. Unsystematic clinical tests have demonstrated that yoga can assist in relieving the arthritis pain and can aid with disturbance, inrush, and doldrums (Garfinkel, 2006).

A single minor clinical test demonstrated that people diagnosed with lymphoma announced decreased number of sleep disorders, dropped asleep faster, and took a rest for longer period of time after a practicing seven-week yoga program, if to compare with the patients who did not practice yoga. In addition, those patients demonstrated no enhancement in doldrums or weariness (Woodyard, 2011). A better well-planned investigation studies are required to approve all of the results. Current studies of cancer survivors, particularly women who suffered from breast cancer, demonstrate that yoga helps in improving numerous constituents of quality life (Garfinkel, 2006).

Dr. Krishna Raman, a well-known cardiologist operating in Madras, India, connects Western medicine with yoga in order to medicate widespread and complicated diseases. Raman refers peculiar metabolic illnesses (for example, podagra) and recommends practitioners not to execute any postures and activities during sharp attacks (Büssing, Ostermann, Ludtke, & Michalsen, 2012). On the other side, in the case of rheumatoid arthritis, preliminary therapy with

medication is appointed. When the joint agility enhances, the patient is able to supplement yoga therapy only if he/she is correctly and proficiently managed, controlled and performed (Büssing et al., 2012).

Another research demonstrates that in one study, which was evaluating the usage of yoga as a supplementary therapy for OA of the fingers, seventeen patients were arbitrarily appointed either a yoga-grounded ten-week workshop or no extra therapy beyond the medications obtained by both groups. The first group of patients was appointed to eight one-hour group classes concentrating on stretching and consolidating activities focusing on the upper body stretching and proper aligning. The yoga group demonstrated critically greater reductions in ache and sensitivity and enhanced movement range (Büssing et al., 2012).

Yet another study, which was an unsystematic, blind, supervised trial in 42 recruited or retired individuals suffering from carpal tunnel syndrome, contrasted with a twice-weekly controlled regimen utilizing eleven yoga asanas outlined for consolidation, stretching, and balancing joint powers within eight weeks. A control category was proposed with a typical conventional wrist splint. The study demonstrated statistically critical benefits for the ache relief and pressure firmness in the yoga control group (Büssing et al., 2012).

Except for the above-mentioned clinical researches, numerous studies demonstrate that mechanical practices can have a physiologic impact at the cellular level. Influences of mechanical and fluid pressure on structures (such as cartilage) also suggest that yoga asanas can change joint performance (Büssing et al., 2012). Decreased levels of periodic fluid pressure, which appear within joint divertissement, have been depicted in vitro to lower germinations of catabolic cytokines such as interleukin-1 and tumor necrosis factor-alpha. In experimental arrangement, joint movement maintains cartilage, which is bereaved by immobilization. In order

to elude joint misuse, properly controlled and supervised yoga may be one method to facilitate the movement and increase joints' strength, which are supposed to maintain wholeness (Büssing et al., 2012).

Yoga as a system obtains less consideration from the medical community than other various alternative practices, in spite of the strong argument in favor of yoga practice, such as symptomatic advantage in musculoskeletal disease. Physicians may detect particular constituents of yoga as beneficial in working with symptoms for mechanical and muscular disclosures of musculoskeletal disease. Still, many rheumatologists will not recommend yoga only due to the fact that they are not acquainted with its benefits (Garfinkel, 2006).

At the same time, yoga can assist not only in mechanic disease but also in a number of other problems, not connected to the human skeleton. Appropriate yoga practice amends doldrums and can result in critical elevations in serotonin levels conjoined with diminishing level in the monamine oxidase, together with the enzyme level, which actually ruins neurotransmitters and cortisol. A wide range of therapeutic practices is accessible for the conduct of doldrums diseases, nevertheless, many patients address supplementary practices because of the harmful and noxious influences of medication, shortage of antiperistasis or various supplementary approaches (Woodyard, 2011).

Many researches illustrate the possible advantageous influences of yoga system interferences on doldrums, stress, and fidgeting. Yoga enhances blood circulation and hemoglobin and red blood cells levels, which provides elevated amount of oxygen with a possibility to attain the body cells, improving their performance (Woodyard, 2011). Yoga disperses the blood, which allows to lower the hazard of acute myocardial infarction and anginal attack, due to the fact that they are frequently provoked by blood calculus. Twisting asanas

squeeze out venous blood from the inner organs and consent oxygenated blood to get in the organ after the twist is acquitted (Woodyard, 2011). Inverted asanas allow venous blood to circulate from the pelvis and legs back to the heart and, after being pumped via the lungs, the place where it becomes newly oxygenated. Some researches demonstrate yoga diminishes the relaxed heart rhythm, elevated persistence. Moreover, it is able to enhance the outmost absorption and usage of oxygen within the practice performance. Systematically emanating the heart rhythm into aerobic fitness diminishes the hazard of heart disease. Despite the fact that not all yoga approaches are aerobic, even yoga asanas, which do not augment heart rhythm into the aerobic fitness, can help to better cardiovascular performance (Woodyard, 2011).

Despite the fact that yoga is not considered to be a cancer treatment, or an ultimate method of impeding cancer, yoga enhances corporal, emotive and incorporeal health. Furthermore, it drives to a particular calmness, which is critically important to many cancer patients. Yoga combined with various breathing practices and meditation can lower the stress level, advance curing, and improve life quality for patients suffering from cancer (Kang et al., 2014). The medical reality demonstrates that tumor growth and other cancer indications are magnified by stress, therefore, it is critical for people suffering from cancer to lower and control stress level efficiently. Thus, there is a serious rational in implementing yoga practices in cancer therapy. The trials drive to a conclusion that yoga can elaborate an inspiring influence on mental and physical energy, which ameliorates physical state and lowers emaciation (Kang et al., 2014). Moreover, the practice of yoga places a significant emphasis on accepting individual's moment-to-moment feelings resulting in mindfulness and not compelling the body beyond its convenient boundaries. Such a robust sense of embranchment is particularly crucial for people living with life-menacing diseases as it lowers the stress a person undergoes from unsavory symptoms.

Primarily, cancer patients apparently benefit from those asanas, which are established to practice every muscle, nerve and gland within the whole body (Kang et al., 2014).

The University of Oslo experiment focused the attention on ten affiliates who took part in a week-long yoga workshop in Germany. During the first two days, affiliates dedicate two hours taking part in an in-depth and all-around yoga sequence, incorporating asanas, breathing practices and meditation. For the following two days, they dedicated the same time participating in an hour-long nature walk and afterwards listening to either jazz or classical music (“Newly published,” 2014). Directly before and after each of the four activities, the researchers took analysis of blood from each affiliate. Afterwards, they insulated and anatomized peripheral blood mononuclear cells, which perform a major function in the immune system. The researchers found out that the walking and music-listening relaxation altered the expression of 38 genes in these circulating immune cells. On the other hand, the yoga workshop resulted in alterations of 111 genes (“Newly published,” 2014). Fourteen genes were influenced by both activities, which demonstrate that the two factors affect analogous biological proceedings. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the influence of yoga was far more prevailing, which shows that the system reacts to other influences except the one demonstrated by exercises (“Newly published,” 2014). Mere yoga relaxation induces robust advantages via various alterations at the molecular level.

The Impact of Yoga on Health Care System

The researches and trials allowed yoga system influencing current health care system. In fact, doctors became more accepting of alternative and supplementary yoga medicine in comparison to previous years. The facts demonstrate that three percent of American utilizes yoga due to the referral from a doctor (“More docs,” 2013). The research demonstrates that more than 6.3 million Americans utilize yoga therapy as a result of provider referral. These figures can be

compared with 34.8 million who had been self-referred (“More docs,” 2013). The people who had been referred to yoga by their doctors had a tendency to be more disease, or disease with a much more serious condition or disorder and used the health care system more often than the people who decided to practice yoga on their own. It is obvious that more researches are required to provide adequate guidance for doctors in the yoga medicine to enable their informed decision in what would be the most suitable combination of treatments.

Many doctors are still afraid to refer patients to yoga, due to the fact the improper conduct and control of yoga teacher can lead patients to various injuries and problems and the doctor who recommended yoga would be the one to blame. Patients have to understand that advanced asanas, as for example, headstand should be practiced under close supervision of a yoga teacher and obviously not during the first classes. Physicians acknowledge that yoga and convenient medicine blend can be much more beneficial in particular cases, especially if it concerns spine problems, stress level regulations and dealing with depressions and anxiety (Li & Goldsmith, 2012).

Yoga is an ancient Indian health care system. It is highly important to understand that yoga has to be practiced within the context of yoga philosophy. In such a case, yoga practitioner understands that yoga is a useful tool for enhancing one’s health and body strength and not a new theme for posting photos in Facebook or Instagram. Superficial or limited attention during yoga practice can lead to injuries and other health problems, which is a major factor why doctors are afraid to refer patient to yoga classes. Therefore, yoga has to be perceived with all seriousness and readiness to enhance one’s mind and body state, which will allow to prevent serious diseases or facilitate the resolution of the existing problem. Numerous trials depicted the positive effect of yoga on patients, suffering from various diseases, starting from scoliosis and ending with

doldrums. Combinations of conventional practices with yoga therapy can be a powerful tool for assisting people in fighting their problems and illnesses. Currently, the researches show that a number of doctors prescribing yoga as an alternative supplementary and compulsory treatment is growing, which witnesses the fact that yoga has seriously impacted the current conventional health care system.

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