

Yoga

<https://oaji.net/articles/2016/1170-1461153468.pdf>

Nowadays yoga has become more popular among all age groups.

It employs a broad holistic approach that focuses on teaching people a new lifestyle, way of thinking, and way of being in the world. In the process, however, it is also found to bring a myriad of healing effects. By attending to practices for improving, regaining or retaining general good health, a person is likely to find that some of his more specific difficulties tend to disappear. Many of the healing effects of yoga are clinically verified. The most important benefits of yoga are its application in relieving stress, fatigue, invigoration and vitality, its anti-aging properties, and its application for relaxation therapy.

Yoga has become more popular than ever, with celebrities, politicians, business people, and almost every walk of life currently practicing. The word **yoga** is Sanskrit for *Yoke*, or *union*. In the practice of yoga, we seek to create union between the mind and body. Yoga is dynamite to make you feel younger and healthy with heightened mental prowess. Longer life often results from following yogic ways of health maintenance. When both external dangers and internal diseases and habits leading to degeneration have been removed, one naturally lives healthy and longer.

The term **Yoga** comes from the root *yuj*, "to yoke or join." Here it is used to mean the union of the individual spirit with the Universal Spirit. The art of Yoga is defined as a system of culture for perfecting human efficiency. It claims to destroy the defects and diseases of the body and mind, to establish health and bestow happiness, to develop intelligence, and reveal true knowledge of self, and to extract the nectar of all things.

The term yoga, as interpreted by many, means "union" and can be broken down further into five specific elements all contributing to the union of mind, body and soul. **Jnana**, **Bhakti**, **Karma**, **Raja**, and **Hatha yoga** are the different elements of yoga.

- *Karma yoga* is the yoga of action
- *Bhakti yoga* is the yoga of devotion
- *Jnana* is the yoga of knowledge
- *Raja* is the yoga of the mind
- *Hatha* is the yoga of the body

All elements of yoga are equally important when creating a necessary balance for those individuals who practice it.

Yoga is considered by society as part of a wellness practice for adults and is widely accepted in many workplaces as having clear benefits to employee work production and personal well-being, as seen by the recent increase in wellness programs being implemented in major corporations. For example, Microsoft implemented a Weight Management program in 2005 to increase the physical fitness of employees and therefore reduce employee absenteeism (McPherson, 2005). Yoga helps us to take away the stress and frustration, improve physical and mental health, and increase personal satisfaction and well-being.

Yoga is specifically mentioned as an example of a fitness activity in the new curriculum under the larger category of **Movement Competence** (Health and Physical Education, 2010, pg. 140).

A study published in the *Journal of Asthma* looked at six young asthmatics with a history of childhood asthma that went through yoga training for two years. The study concluded that practicing yoga is beneficial for asthmatics because it “increased pulmonary function and exercise capacity” (Jain, 1991, pg. 440).

Researchers have discovered that the regular practice of yoga may produce many health benefits, including increased fitness and normalization of blood pressure. Yoga is a renowned antidote to stress. Over time, yoga practitioners report lower levels of stress and increased feelings of happiness and well-being. This is because concentrating on the postures and the breath acts as a powerful form of meditation.

Yoga is non-competitive and suitable for anyone, regardless of their age or fitness level. Your yoga teacher should carefully guide and observe you and modify postures when necessary. An **asana** should never cause pain. If it hurts, ease back on the stretch or don't do it at all. It is important to keep within your physical limits. If you are over 40, haven't exercised for a long time or have a pre-existing medical condition, you should check with your doctor before starting any regular exercise routine.

Yoga Benefits for Health

The physical building blocks of yoga are the **posture (asana)** and the **breath**. A series of poses held in time with breathing, exercises every part of the body. Benefits include:

- **Increased strength, endurance, flexibility, and balance** – which also translates into increased ability to perform activities, more energy, and restful sleep.
- **Mental calmness** – most diseases originate from over-eating, sexual excess, anger, and hatred. Yoga teaches mental composure, thus improving overall health.

- **Reduced energy depletion** – Anger and hatred deplete energy. Yoga purifies the body and mind, preventing ailments caused by emotional turbulence.
-

Some Important Benefits of Yoga for Health Are as Follows

- **Builds muscle strength:** Strong muscles protect from arthritis, back pain, and help prevent falls in the elderly. Yoga balances strength with flexibility.
 - **Improves posture:** Enhances core strength and body awareness, helping prevent neck, back, and joint problems caused by poor posture.
 - **Prevents cartilage and joint breakdown:** Full range of motion through postures protects joints and nourishes cartilage.
 - **Increases blood flow:** Improves circulation and oxygen delivery, enhancing cell function. Twisting poses support organ health.
 - **Drains lymphs and boosts immunity:** Enhances the lymphatic system's ability to fight infection and dispose of toxins.
 - **Lowers blood sugar:** Helps reduce “bad” LDL cholesterol, increase “good” HDL cholesterol, and improve insulin sensitivity—critical for diabetics.
 - **Maintains nervous system:** Advanced practices show control over bodily functions such as heart rate and body temperature.
 - **Gives peace of mind:** Yoga helps quiet mental loops of stress, regret, and fear—contributing to longer, healthier lives.
 - **Eases pain:** Yoga and meditation have been shown to reduce pain in chronic conditions like arthritis, fibromyalgia, and back pain.
-

Yoga is the perfect example of **holistic health** because it integrates mind and body. It is a multidisciplinary tool useful for purifying the mind, gaining emotional control, achieving mental peace, and physical well-being. It benefits both worldly individuals and spiritual seekers.

Yoga helps you become:

- A better person
- A better human being
- A better devotee

PURPOSE OF YOGA FOR HEALTH

The original context of yoga was spiritual development practices to train the body and mind to self-observe and become aware of their own nature. The purposes of yoga were to cultivate discernment, awareness, self-regulation, and higher consciousness in the individual. As the split occurring between those seeking physical developments versus those seeking spiritual development has widened, the lack of awareness and attention to inner experience has disconnected the practitioner from his body.

In the modern world, we have become quite successful in our external achievements -- we have created powerful technologies and a variety of products, we are obsessed with accumulating power, wealth, property and objects -- and yet we have not been able to create either individual or social peace, wisdom, or happiness. We have only to look around and see the destructiveness of our weapons, the emptiness of our pleasures and entertainments, the misuse of our material and personal resources, the disparities between rich and poor, and above all, the loneliness and violence of our modern world. We see that amid all our success in the external world, we have accomplished little of lasting value.

These problems will not be solved through new technological developments. Instead, the resolution to these human problems will come only when we discover within ourselves that for which all of mankind is searching — inner peace, tranquility, and wisdom. This attainment is the goal of yoga, for yoga is the practical science intended to help human beings become aware of their ultimate nature.

For those who want to follow the path of yoga towards peace and evolution, there are a few prerequisites. We need good health, a calm mind, sincerity, and a burning desire to rise above our human imperfections. Our health is maintained by a simple and well-regulated diet, adequate sleep, some physical exercise, and relaxation. Imbalance or excesses in food, exercise, sleep, or our personal relationships produce physical and emotional disruptions that disturb the practice of yoga and meditation.

If the aspects of our daily lives are well balanced, then certainly we can make progress in yoga in the modern world. Regardless of where we live or what we do, we can create a life conducive to yoga.

SCOPE OF YOGA

Yoga is certainly more than mastering its postures and asanas and increasing the strength and flexibility of the body. It indicates healing of mind and body and attaining the state of self-enlightenment.

It is said that in early periods when yoga was just introduced, the main purpose was to heal community members and the practitioners acted as religious mediators. The exact origin of yoga is uncertain, but collecting the small pieces together takes us to a valid conclusion. It is said that yoga originated in the west and the first sign appeared in ancient Shamanism that dates back to some 3000 B.C. Evidence of yoga can also be found in the *Rig Veda*.

The word **Yoga** provides a sense of peace which certainly derived from the etymology of the word. The word has been taken from the Sanskrit word 'Yuj' which means unite or join. This word unite has been taken in the sense of uniting the individual with cosmic consciousness.

Needless to say, practicing of yoga includes the traditional aspects too such as practicing different poses, chanting of mantra, observing breathing habits, and controlling thoughts coming to mind with the help of meditation.

Today, it is practiced for fitness, healthy body and mind, strength, flexibility, emotional well-being and much more. The main purpose of practicing yoga is to take control over the body, mind, and emotional aspects. The cessation of bad thoughts creates a positive vibe around the person and makes him healthy overall.

The researchers found that prisoners after a ten-week yoga course reported improved mood, reduced stress and were better at a task related to behaviour control than those who continued in their normal prison routine.

CONCLUSION

Yoga practice is safe and can bring many health benefits to practitioners, whether they are young, old, healthy, recovering from illness or looking for a therapeutic option to help them to manage a chronic condition.

The beauty of yoga is that it can be practiced by anyone. It doesn't matter how old you are or what shape you are in. If you desire a more limber body, yoga is one of the quickest ways to attain it. Yoga also increases an individual's physical coordination and promotes better posture. And it does all this without potentially hazardous negative effects that are often incurred in high-impact forms of exercise.

When performed properly, in conjunction with proper related breathing techniques, yoga helps stimulate the circulatory system, the digestive process as well as the nervous and endocrine system.

Yoga is dynamite to make you feel younger with heightened mental prowess. Longer life often results from following yogic ways of health maintenance. When both external dangers and internal diseases and habits leading to degeneration have been removed, one naturally lives longer.