

THE ROLE OF YOGA DURING COVID – 19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract – This study focuses on the role of Yoga during COVID-19. This pandemic has become a most important cause of stress and anxiety. Everything have been affected by COVID – 19. It has created stress among people. It has led to an extensive loss of human lives and has created extraordinary challenges for the public health system. This public health crisis has brought to the importance of strengthening our immune systems. For this, we need to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The review of the study has taken from internet on Yoga-based studies. Good food and an appropriate diet are essential for our health, physical exercises like yoga also have significant health benefits on both body and mind.

Keywords – Yoga, COVID, Pandemic.

Introduction – Yoga is a path to total harmony of body, mind, and spirit. The word Yoga comes from the Sanskrit word yuj, which means union. Union of the individual realization with the universal awareness. Yoga is not merely a form of exercise for the body. It is an ancient wisdom - for a healthier, happier, and more peaceful way of living - which ultimately leads to union with the Self. Yoga is a light resistance workout – helps build flexibility, muscle strength, bone strength. Yoga helps with improving flexibility of spine, curing back pain, sciatica and neck pain. Controls blood pressure, regulate blood sugars – indirectly improving heart health. Yoga improves our ability to concentrate and focus, increases self-esteem value. Helps build immune system, which reduces the incidence of common ailments. Certain yogic exercises help improve thyroid gland functionality thus improving metabolism. Pancreas – Certain Yogic asanas improves blood supply to the pancreas, enabling it to function efficiently and produce insulin in the right quantity that helps in managing and controlling diabetes. Reduces belly fat which improves insulin sensitivity.

The importance of yoga – among the Covid-19 pandemic, which has upended the lives and livelihoods of millions of people around the world – has increased substantially. The COVID – 19 pandemics has led to an extensive loss of human lives and has created

extraordinary challenges for the public health system, not just in India, but across the world. The fear of this virus has kept many of us indoors. This forced confinement has increased the stress on our bodies and minds.

This public health crisis has brought to the fore the importance of strengthening our immune systems. For this, we need to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Studies suggest that yoga contributes to improving the immune system since it is a combination of physical exercise, controlled breathing and mental concentration – all of which are known to have health benefits. Among the many yoga asanas, shavasana and sasakasana reduce stress which, many practitioners believe, increases the efficiency of the immune system. Breathing techniques like pranayam improve the functioning of the respiratory system. Trikonasana improves blood circulation which benefits all our organs. yoga has come to be standard as an effective tool in improving health, which, in turn, helps maintain an all-important work-life balance.

Method – Literature searches were carried out to find out the role of yoga during COVID – 19 Pandemic. Data has collected from various website by using google search engine.

Importance of Yoga - Decreases stress and anxiety: It is well known that yoga has the ability to ease stress and promote relaxation. It also lowers the levels of stress, anxiety, fatigue and depression

Reduces inflammation: Practicing yoga may reduce inflammation as well. It is a normal immune response, however, chronic inflammation can lead to the development of pro-inflammatory diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Thus practicing Yoga may prevent you from such diseases.

Improve heart health: The health of our heart plays an important role in well-being of overall health. Studies have shown that incorporating yoga into a healthy lifestyle slow the progression of heart disease and thus it reduces several risk factors for heart disease. It also decreases the cholesterol level in our body.

Improves quality of life: Yoga has become an adjunct therapy to improve the quality of life for many individuals. Practicing yoga significantly improved quality of life, as well as mood and fatigue.

The Role of Yoga on Impact of COVID-19 – Doing Yoga every day for prevention, rehabilitation and to increase immunity. ShodhanaKriya (Yogic cleansing practices) Jalaneti, Sutra Neti –it helps in cleansing sinuses, beneficial in allergic conditions and reduces upper airway reactivity. Yogic SûkmaVyâyâmas / shithilikara navyaya mas/ Pawanamuktasana series (Joint movements): Neck movements Shoulder rotation Trunk movement Knee movement Ankle rotation - Joint movements help to increase blood circulation and reduce stiffness which enhance joint flexibility. Helps to facilitate asana practices.

Yogasana: Standing, Sitting, Prone&Supine lying - Ushtrasana, UtthanaMandukasana, Tadasana, Trikonasana, Vakrasana, Bhujangasana, Sarala Matsyasanaetc. Practices improves chest expansion and cardiopulmonary functions.

Kapalabhati - Improves pulmonary functions and reduces secretions. Very useful preparatory practice for pranayama practice. Helps to cleanse frontal sinuses.

Yoga Nidra - Reduction in sympathetic arousal and reduced emotional distress and improves quality of sleep. Rejuvenate the body and helps to keep the mind calm.Meditative practices Breath awareness- Meditation helps to reduces anxiety and stress.

Immunity-Boosting Yoga Asanas – Some immunity-boosting yoga asanas that can prove beneficial in promoting resistance against COVID-19.

Assanas Process Benefit : Bhujangasana (Cobra pose) Lie down on your stomach with your toes flat on the floor, soles facing upwards; rest your forehead on the ground.Keep your legs close together, with your feet and heels lightly touching each other.Place both hands in such a way that palms are touching ground under your shoulders, elbows should be parallel and close to your torso. Taking a deep breath in, slowly lift your head, chest and abdomen. Keep your navel on the floor.Pull your torso back and off the floor with the support of your hands. Make sure that you are putting equal pressure on both the palms.Keep breathing with awareness, as you curve your spine, vertebra by vertebra. If possible, straighten your arms by arching your back as much as possible; tilt your head back and look up Now, breathe out, and gently bring your abdomen, chest,

and head back to the floor and relax. Opens up the shoulders and neck to relieve pain.Tones the abdomen.Strengthens the entire back and shoulders.Improves flexibility of the upper and middle back.Expands the chest.Improves blood circulation. Reduces fatigue and stress..Useful for people with respiratory disorders such as asthma.

Matsyasana (Fish Pose) : Lie on your back. Put feet together and relax your hands alongside the bodyPlace the hands underneath the hips, palms facing down. Bring the elbows closer toward each otherBreathing in, lift the head and chest upKeeping the chest elevated, lower the head backward and touch the top of the head to the floorWith the head lightly touching the floor, press the elbows firmly into the ground, placing the weight on the elbow and not on the headLift your chest up from in-between the shoulder blades. Press the thighs and legs to the floorRelax in the posture with every exhalationNow lift the head up, lowering the chest and head to the floor. Bring the hands back along the sides of the bodyThe asana stimulates the pituitary gland and increases the blood supply into the head.It helps in dealing with respiratory problems and is helpful with asthma and bronchitis.It improves the rhythmic breathing pattern.The asana also improves the reproductive system and regulates the flow of menstruation in women.It aids the immune system and improves blood circulation in the body.

Balasana (Child pose) : Sit on your heels. Keeping your hips on the heels, bend forward, and lower your forehead to the floorKeep the arms alongside your body with hands on the floor, palms facing upGently press your chest on the thighs and holdSlowly come up to sit on the heels Helps to release tension in the back, shoulders, and chestStretches the hips, thighs, and anklesStretches the muscles, tendons, and ligaments in the kneesAllowing the forehead (your third eye chakra) to rest on the ground has a calming and soothing effect on the brain. As such it not only calms the mind, but also helps to alleviate stress and anxietyHelps normalize breath and blood flow in the bodyLengthens and stretches the spineHelps to alleviate low back and neck pain when done with props in a supported mannerFlexes and massages many of the internal organsWhen done with knees together and the torso resting on the thighs, it helps your digestionIt is a recommended pose for those with dizziness and/or fatigue

Setu Bandhasana (Bridge pose) : Lie on your backFold your knees and keep your feet hip-distance apart on the

floor, with knees and ankles in a straight line. Keep your arms beside your body, palms facing down. Inhaling, slowly lift your lower back, middle back, and upper back off the floor; gently roll in the shoulders; touch the chest to the chin without bringing the chin down, supporting your weight with your shoulders, arms, and feet. Hold the posture for a minute or two and exhale as you gently release the pose. Bridge Pose gives strength to your back muscles. It relieves the tired back instantly. Stretches chest, neck, and spine. Gives calmness to brain, reduce the level of anxiety, stress, and depression. Setu Bandhasana opens up your lungs and reduces thyroid problems. Improves digestion. Good for women in menopause and menstrual pain. Helpful in asthma, osteoporosis, and sinusitis. High blood pressure.

Dhanurasana (Bow pose) : Lie on your stomach with your feet hip-width apart and your arms by the side of your body. Fold your knees and hold your ankles. Breathing in, lift your chest off the ground, and pull your legs up. Keep the pose stable while paying attention to your breath. Continue to take long deep breaths as you relax in this pose. After 15 -20 seconds, as you exhale, gently release the pose.

As stated by Bharat Thakur on his website, during Dhanurasana, "the spinal column is stretched, improving blood circulation to the spinal nerves." It also stretches your neck, shoulder, arms and leg muscles, thus strengthening those areas. It is considered to be a good exercise for those with chest or breathing ailments like asthma, as it expands the chest and increases the breathing capacity of the lungs.

Conclusion – To live through this lockdown & pandemic period, yoga is the best thing to adopt as a lifestyle habit. It helps us build a strong physical, mental and spiritual health system. When combined with breathing and

meditation, it acts as the best element to take care of our mind, body and soul. There are different forms of yoga that can help us to stay physically strong and mentally balanced. Good food and an appropriate diet are essential for our health, physical exercises like yoga also have significant health benefits on both body and mind. It improves the immunity system and helps us to stay fit.

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