

YOGA AS AN ALTERNATIVE DISEASE THERAPY

**Dr. Rajesh Kumar Verma, (Hon. Director General Asia) IBC Cambridge U.K.
Head & Associate Professor Tilak P.G. College, Auraiya, U.P, India**

The world has shown a tremendous progress with lot of scientific innovations. As a result of it we have achieved many of our socio-economic goals. The income, living standard, housing, infrastructural facilities and basic amenities of the world has risen at a significant pace but on the other hand environmental deterioration also took place which lead to increasing disease burden in the society. Today our life styles have changed all around the globe. Our physical wants have increased dramatically so people are more and more busy in their works to fulfill the increasing physical wants. Our modes of production have also changed. Form production of necessities we have moved to comfortable goods and now we are moving to luxurious goods. Today many of us are living luxurious life too but our happiness is not increasing. The social tensions, stress and the disease burden in the society have snatched our happiness. So one must think of proper development which produces more healthy and happy society.

There is a growing realization that he health of the people of a national significantly contributes to its economic growth. Assuring a minimum level of physical and mental well being is a critical constituent of the development process. Health and nutrition plays a vital role in the development process as it increases the productive capacity of the labour force, ensures better standard of living and enables sustainable development. Provision of essential health services of acceptable quality at affordable cost to the community is the backbone of the policy for national

development of health system. It also takes into account various provisions of health care. At the present time cost of hospitals, drugs, pathology and medical care services are very high. So alternative therapies of healing as well as securing sound health and reducing disease burden in the society are also considered. Yoga is a traditional system of healing in India. A separate ministry in Indian Government 'Ayush' is taking care of it. They promote it as an alternative therapy for healing along with naturopathy. Yoga is now adopted by western world too. They regard it as a holistic approach to health and is now classified by the National Institute of Health of USA as form of complementary and Alternative medicine (CAM)

Yoga as a way for Monitoring Equilibrium between Mind, Body and Spirit-

Yoga has been an integral part of ancient Indian religion. It is believed to be about 3000 years old tradition. Its literature is available in various religions, i.e. Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. It has been practiced all over India as a way of maintaining sound health and relaxing the mind, body and spirit. It is one of the oldest therapy of the world. Its inception starts from vedic period. It is involved in many Indian customs and traditions. Its training in ancient time was provided in the Gurukuls and temples in the forests, near rivers and lakes in clean and green environment. In recent years yoga has also become popular in USA and Western countries. Many of our Yoga gurus are providing training of various yogic exercises in the traditional setting in abroad too. **Yoga** is an invaluable gift of ancient Indian tradition. It is a spiritual discipline which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. The importance of yoga has been acknowledged by the global community. **June 21** was declared as the International Day of Yoga by the United Nations General Assembly on December 11, 2014. This was declared following an appeal made by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi in the United

Nations General Assembly (UNGA) wherein a resolution was adopted to observe 21st June as the International Day of Yoga (IDY). The prime minister stressed the importance of yoga and its role in disease prevention, health promotion and management of many lifestyle-related disorders..He inaugurated the Yoga Portal of UNESCO in Paris.

First time yoga guru Pantanjali in the classic text yoga sutras described yoga philosophy and practice. In Yoga sutras Patanjali highlights an eight fold path known as ‘Astanga Yoga’ to awareness and enlightenment which means eight limbs. Yoga is a form of mind body fitness exercises that involves a combination of muscular activity and internally directed mindful focus on awareness of the self, the breath and energy . Yoga is the term used for the traditional system of physical exercises and are used for therapeutic purposes too. Yoga is recognized as a form of mind-body medicine that integrates individuals’ physical, mental and spiritual components to improve aspects of health, particularly stress related illness. The overall system of yogic exercises is to put in equilibrium mind, body and spirit. It can broadly be divided into three main components:

- a- Physical exercises or simple yogic exercises or yogasans.
- b- Breathing exercises or Pranayam and
- c- Meditation i.e. state of releasing stress and increasing mind concentration

These three components of yogic exercises are inter-related and support each other. Yoga is a way for health and wisdom. It is a single solution to many health hazards .Sustained practice of yoga also loads to important outcomes such as changes in life perspective, self-awareness and an improved sense of energy to live life fully and with genuine enjoyment. The practice of yoga produces a physiological state opposite to that of the flight-or-flight stress response and with that interruption in the

stress response, a sense of balance and union between the mind and body can be achieved.

Healing Principles of Yoga-

The problem of ill health is a serious matter of concern today. Health is considered as the absence of disease. In Indian culture health and harmony is defined as being at peace within ourselves and in the community too. The term disease is disturbance in the body equilibrium that is also called 'humors'. Modern medical science concentrates on specific diseases and their remedies but they neglect the principles of sound health and mental peace. The maintaining of sound health for a longer period is also very significant. It is where the therapeutic utility of yoga is more than the modern science. The Yoga frames the rules for maintaining sound health for individuals shows ways for creating a harmonious society with full of mental peace.

Yoga is a form of mind-body fitness exercises that involves a combination of muscular activity and an internally directed mindful focus on awareness of the self, the breath and energy. Both the meditative and exercise components of yoga show promise for variety of health benefits.

In all these three process of Yoga our concentration is on prana or healing life energy. This body energy is also known as cosmic energy. We try to go for higher energy levels by regular yogic exercises. The system of Yoga believes that prana or healing life energy is also absorbed in the body through the breath which is useful in treating wide varieties of illness and complaints. Regular Yoga practice will bring many health benefits on both physical and emotional level. Yoga teaches us to inquire into the ways to use our body properly and to use awareness. Its emphasis is

on long term strengthening of our body and sustaining our health by improving our immune system. Yogic exercises not only focuses on various types of physical and breathing exercises but it also concentrates on mental peace and spiritualism. Yoga has been studied as an intervention of many conditions including back pain, stress and depression and depression. Yogic exercises can helps us with weight loss, strength building and even detoxing our body thereby reducing the disease burden. It also assures for longevity.

Healing power of yoga is based on following basic principles:

- 1- Regular Practice of yoga enables a proper balance in the body by slowly removing all kinds of defects, imbalances or dosa of the body (according to ayurveda kaph, vatta and pitta). Yogic exercises are time consuming process and good results depends upon how effectively we do physical exercises. On moderate basis for a normal body one hour of yogic exercises in the morning and at least 15 minutes to ½ hours relaxation exercises are sufficient. Yogic exercises starts with warm up exercises in it we twist and stretch our body in different forms of yogasans. It must be accompanied with proper breathing for example when our head go downward we must take breath out and when our head go upward we must take breath in. For a particular yogasan time should be approximately 30 seconds which can be increased to one to two minutes. Thus by doing yogic exercises we order our Skelton system to do hard work and after it we give rest to it. Usually a set of yogasanas are recommended for curing a patient by instructors. The number of these yogasanas are approximately two hundred. Out of which we have to choose only 10-40 yogasans for our daily regular exercises depending upon our body structure, its problems, health status, age and stamina.

- 2- Human body is just like a machine made up of several important parts/organs which is controlled by our mind. Our different organs are the various parts of the body. As for the proper functioning of machine energy and oils are required. Similarly proper functioning of the body depends upon energy generated by food intake and the juices supplied by its glands. It is where yogic exercises control our body. By doing hard work in yogic exercises we improve our digestion system which results in more generation of blood and more fluid juices to body which results in generation of more energy to perform our daily activities. Slowly body shifts from lower level of energy to higher level of energy which is reflected in more strength, stamina, flexibility, agility and concentration power. Our whole body alignment works properly without any discomforts.
- 3- Pranayam consists in developing awareness of one's breathing power follow by willfull regulation of respiration as the functional or vital basis of one's existence. In the initial stages this is done by developing awareness of the flow of in-breath and out-breath through nostrils and mouth by simple breathing exercises. Later this phenomenon is modified through regulated controlled and monitored inhalation. Pranayam are the higher yogic practices in the form of the breathing exercise to have more control over respiration. They are oftenly classified into ten to fifteen types. In it we concentrate on our inhalation power. We deliberately disturb are normal breathing by following processes.
- a- First of all flow of in-breath is regulated, contolled and monitored. We inhale more and more breath in to our lungs. It is called (Purak) or inhalation.

- b- Secondly flow of out-breath is regulated, controlled and monitored. We exhale more and more breath out from our lungs. It is called (Rachak) or exhalation. We try to empty our lungs by releasing more and more breath.
- c- Stoppage to few seconds at lungs filled with air is called internal Kumbhak. It releases plenty of energy from our body.
- d- Stoppage to few seconds at empty lungs is called external Kumbhak.
The whole process of pranayam is to train our lungs and heart to do work hard. It results in proper functioning of our lungs and in the end we find lot of purified blood in the body.
- e- Meditation is the process of developing our mind power and there by to have more control on our body. The quality and state of an individual mind is crucial to healing. When the individual is in a positive mind state healing happens more quickly whereas if the mind state is negative healing may be prolonged. The logic behind this is that whole commands to different organs are delivered by our brain knowingly and unknowingly. It is the whole nervous system that controls our whole body and its different organs like heart beating, production of digestive juices, working of glands, working of respiratory system, kidney and purification of blood.
- f- If our mind is in stress and our nervous system is not working properly then the varieties of diseases will grow up. It is where yoga works very silently. It builds our inner strength and more control on different parts of body. Yoga is an art of living without discomforts and displeasure by doing scientifically physical, breathing and mental exercises. Yoga enhances the intrinsic power of the body by awakening the mind power which results in improving our immune system. Ultimately we have more control on all the organs of the body to work effectively.

Human body is a holistic entity comprised of various interrelated dimensions inseparable from one another and the health or illness of any dimension affects the other dimension.

It is our immune system that which protects us against variety of diseases when our immune system is weak we will fall ill at regular intervals. Yoga is a process of self empowering. We are our own healers. We are engaged in the healing process from beginning of first yogasan upto the last yogasan and relaxation process we do in that particular day. When one starts practicing yogic exercises our journey towards good health starts. He slowly develops his own healing power. He slowly recognizes the importance and functions of body organs and the ways (Yogasans) to improve the functioning of different organs of the body. He slowly recognizes the ways to improve the function of different parts of body by allotting a set of specific exercises for specific organs. If one is doing proper and regular exercises then he will fell few body changes too. By improving the strength & stamina of mind power and by relaxing of mind and body organs healing power automatically generates within the body.

Yoga centers As an Instrument of health care:-

Health care is an expression of health concerns and health services to human beings. Health care is defined as a multitude of services rendered to individuals, families or communities by the agents of the health services or professionals for the purpose of promoting, maintaining or restoring health. Such services are provided by a team of doctors and paramedical workers. In the yoga centres all these services are provided by a team of yoga instructors and ayurvedic doctors who diagnose the diseases and suggest way for recovering from diseases.

According to yogic science to live a healthy life is in our hands for it we require neither any hospital nor any medicine. If we live in a healthy environment and do regular yogic exercises for at least half an hour then we will be able to secure a sound health for longer period but in the present day environment and due to our busy schedule we are unable to protect ourselves from diseases. Today our lives are very busy with lot of stress and tensions. The problem of mental peace is a subject matter of concern today . On account of environmental hazards the disease burden in the society is increasing day by day. Human body is becoming more and more physically weak and mentally unhealthy. Yogic exercises in any yoga centre are able to produce wonderful results as it reduces disease burden in the society and keeps our body, mind and soul completely relaxed and creates a lots of positive energy too.

Yoga pranayam and meditation show the path of sound health with assurance of mental peace. It also aims at creating a harmonious society. If the disease is disturbance in bodily equilibrium then yoga is a way to re-establish bodily equilibrium in the body.

Yoga and Ayurveda are the oldest medical system of the world. They both are inter-related. Yoga alone is a multi-dimensional and very big science. It covers physical exercises, breathing exercises, meditation, philosophy and religion. It work till today as an effective instrument of health care. It provides a protective care to the body just like a helmet.

The main of yoga centre is to develop our inner as well as our outer strength so that a person can protect himself from several diseases and achieves sound health.

Primary Yoga education is provided by various yoga centers on its various aspects with the help of a team of instructors. One can adopt yoga practice in his life in a proper way in these centers. They are not only in India but abroad too. The yoga system aims at maintaining a proper balance between body, soul and mind by doing

various types of yogic exercises. Yogic exercises resemble physiotherapy science in many respects. The disease therapy in a yoga centre covers a wide spectrum of personal and community services for treatment of various kinds of diseases prevention of illness and promotion of health as well .Yoga centers are the service provides to its students/patients. They work just like a hospital with the difference that health services of a yoga centre are broad based and for a longer period at a very cheap rate. These yoga centers provide necessary information regarding how to protect our body from various kinds of diseases. Here the diseases problems of students are also discussed and a set of yogic exercises are prescribed with a mix of Ayurvedic medicines. These yogic exercises works like a vaccine. They try to improve the immune system. Of the body which influence the incidence/prevalence of diseases. These courses also recommend fasting process, food intake chart etc. Rules for a better life styles based an physiology/philosophy/and religion are also a counterpart of these yogic exercises.

Though various physical exercises and breathing exercises and the meditation process are interpreted differently by different yoga gurus but all recommend a set of physical and mental exercises for healing. Yoga enables to maintain a proper balance in the body by removing all the defects/disequilibrium of the body. Yoga slowly removes all three types of disturbance in the body kapha, vatta and pitta, but this does not mean that after yogic exercises we will be free from diseases or we have not to take medicines. Yogic exercises many a times are unable to check diseases however since the immune system of the body is improved by yogic exercises it may be able to reduce the intensity of the disease or the disease burden in the society. Regular yogic exercises are of preventive threaptic use. It is a creative therapy is a debatable question.Some yoga guru like Ramdev of Patanjali yog peeth recommend it as a curative therapy too. He recommends a set of exercises to cure

the ailments. Many of the chronic diseases in his centre were tried to be recovered from yoga therapy.

Diseases can be classified into two broad groups a- communicable diseases and b- non-communicable diseases. Communicable diseases are mainly due to influence of many kinds of bacteria and viruses. So these communicable diseases like cholera, plague, various kinds of malaria fevers, viral fever, T.B., leprosy, HIV/Aids and even cough and cold are not cured at any level by exercises. On the other hand in acute diseases situation its practice should be stopped because it may increase the intensity of diseases. After controlling the diseases one can go for slow yogic exercises. Many of communicable diseases can be cured by Ayurvedic treatment but it takes a lot of time to recover by it. However in the case of non-communicable diseases like lungs related diseases, cardiovascular diseases problem in digestion system, depression or mental disorder, diabetics etc. It has great utility. Yogic exercises slowly recovers body from above mentioned diseases. If the diseases are in the early stage then yogic exercises are very effective in providing fruitful results but if the diseases are chronic then yogic exercises may or many not benefit in recovering from diseases. Then a mix of ayurvedic medicines are recommended to the patients.

Some of the scientific reasons are discussed here regarding utility of yoga as a disease therapy. i.e. how it protects are body from several diseases. Here above mentioned few non-communicable diseases are described as to what extent and how the yogic exercises control these diseases. Yogic exercises prepares our body to fight against these diseases and by twisting and stretching exercises, breathing exercises and meditation process tries to recover our body too from the clutches of there diseases.

- a- **Lung diseases-** Yogic exercises have direct impact on our respiratory system. As each and every step of yogasan is associated with our breathing process. We deliberately twist the inhalation process. Each yogasan and pranayam is done with breathing rhythm. . Yogasan & Pranayam are meant to work as a healthy exercises for our lungs thereby protects lungs from many diseases on account of heavy intake of oxygen gas in our lungs and heavy release of Carbon di oxide gas. In it the breathing levels are increased so these exercises prove to be good tonic for our lungs and protect it from many diseases. Yogic exercises especially pranayam have superiority over other exercises as it has a deep and direct impact on our lungs with more intake of fresh air and thrown away of unwanted gases.
- b- **Cardio diseases-** Our heart has to do lot of hard work. Heart organ pumps blood regularly without any rest at a moderate pace within specified limits. When the heart pumping is high or low then cardio diseases creep in. It helps lungs in the process of purification of blood. It is where the yogic exercises work and prevent body from heart diseases with excessive breathing in these yogic exercises the more fresh air enters into our body as a result o₂ intake in the body increases and co₂ out take is also fast. The high level of fresh air accompanied with o₂ improves the process of purification of blood and protects body against cardio diseases. But in case of acute chronic heart problems or replacement yogic exercises are totally prohibited.
- c- **Digestion System-** One of the major cause of disease today is that we are unable to digest food properly. Our digestive system has weakened due to untimely food intake, reliability on fast food, wrong diet chart, more use of carbohydrates etc. It has weakened our digestive power as a result of it many of food particles remains left undigested in the body which cause slowly

illness problems related with are stomach like constipation, liver and kidney disorders, diarrhea, stomach pain and swelling, vomiting etc.

Under normal circumstances yogic exercise are performed with empty stomach daily in the morning hours. When we do hard work in the form of these exercises our digestive system works properly and even may improve. As a result of yogic exercises all types of heterogeneous elements of our body are derived out by way of either more sweat or toilets and urine. When our digestive system is working properly many of our existing diseases will be cured itself.

In such a situation our digestive system will generate sufficient juices as a result our glands are supplied with proper fluids to maintain proper balance in the body. Proper digested food produces power in the body which makes our organs more healthy fit and fine.

d- **Blood Pressure-** Blood Pressure is very common disease. Blood Pressure is characterized by abnormal pressure level in the arteries. It is of two types high Blood Pressure and low Blood Pressure. The Blood Pressure of a normal person is between 120 to 80 mm hg. When the Blood Pressure increases beyond this limit it may cause damage to the heart and some times it may prove fatal. The main cause of high Blood Pressure is hypertension which is due to excess stress, strain and emotional disturbances. Blood Pressure may also due to problems in artery, disturbed kidney function and malfunctioning of endocrine gland. Blood Pressure affects the internal organs like heart, lungs, liver and kidney. When the Blood Pressure is lower than the normal it interferes with the well being of a person. The main cause of low Blood Pressure is anemia. Sedentary life styles are the main reasons for high Blood

Pressure. Yoga helps in regulating the Blood Pressure by stabilizing the sympathetic and para sympathetic nervous system. Yogasan helps us in bringing a balance in autonomous nervous system. However sometimes few yogic exercises may cause hypertension/ Blood Pressure yoga is not a sufficient cure for Blood Pressure medical advice is necessary to control Blood Pressure.

e- Diabetes- In the diabetes the sugar level in the blood, urine and other organs of body increases due to non dissolvity of sugar or glucose as a result healing power of the body is out and our wounds are not cured. It makes slowly the whole body weak. In it our blood cell do not respond to insulins produce in the body. Stress is of the main reasons for diabetes. It increases the secretion of glucagon Harmon responsible for increasing blood glucose/sugar level in the body. When we do yogic exercises under fasting more insulins are generated and sugar becomes more and more dissolved. In this diseases one should try to take such medicines which keeps him within the affordable limits of diabetes. Yogic exercise reduces the amount of glucagon hormone thereby improve the action of insulin. So yoga can be an effective measure to control our blood sugar levels.

The underlying cause of diabetes is defective production and action of insulin. A hormone that controls glucose, fat and aminoaid metabolism. The problem of diabetes may be due to a wide variety of mechanigm such as

- a- Pancreas disorders
- b- Defects in the formation of insulin.
- c- Destruction of beta cells.
- d- Decreased insulin sensitivity and
- e- Loss of auto-immunity.

Malnutrition may result in partial failure of beta cell function. Damage of beta cell increases the problem of diabetes. Lack of exercises or hard work may alter the interaction between insulin and its receptors which may lead to a problem of diabetes. When diabetes is detected it must be treated adequately. The main recommended treatments are-

- a- To maintain blood glucose level as close within the normal limits by taking oral anti diabetic drugs.
 - b- To maintain ideal body weight.
 - c- To take proper diet
 - d- To do few physical exercises.
- f- **Ortho disease-** Yogic exercises have direct impact on our bones and cartilages. Yogic exercises are bending exercises and circulatory exercises. In various poses (asanas) we twist, stretch and relax our body according to the need of our body. In yoga we provide highest priority to backbone or spinal cord. It is given many types of exercises. It starts from neck to the last point of back. It also carries the nervous system. We try to awaken this spinal cord. With regular yoga asanas our bones and cartilages begin to work properly so many of our orthopedic problems are solved automatically. Each and every yogic asana tries to improve the flexibility of bones in their own way. Specific exercises are recommended for specific bone problems. Our bones have generally following three major problems a- Neck Problem b- Knee Problem and 3- Back bone problem. All these problems can be solved by specific yogic exercises. It also increases the flexibility of our bones.

However in early stage muscle pull problem can be a general problem but it can be solved with regular exercises and proper training.

Mental stress & Tension- Yogic exercises and dhyan concentrates in releasing mental stress and tensions automatically. Here mind is ordered to think few ideas, think about god and think about zero or no idea. It is a process of enhancing empowerment of mind. After it mind relaxation process is adopted by savasan. The savasan is process of laying quietly with thinking that various organs from lower to mind are not working and have no sense or life in ascending order. After it we assume that our whole body has so sense or life. It is a simple process of sleeping quietly with no idea and giving rest to every part of body for about fifteen minutes to half an hour. It will relax all the mental stress and tensions. But it is unable to control mental disorders.

For disease therapy yoga centre focus on –

- 1- Regular training of Yogic exercises-
- 2- Nutrition chart
- 3- Massaging Programmes
- 4- Recommendation of yogic exercises for various diseases.
- 5- Relaxation process.

Other has works in yoga centres may be on religion, philosophy and chanting of religious poetry (Mantras).