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## YOGA PRACTICES FOR BETTER IMMUNITY AND HEALTH - A SHORT REVIEW

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### **Abstract:**

*There is an amazing bond between the body and the mind. "A sound mind in a sound body," according to Greek Philosophy. Distractions, both physical and mental, are removed via asana practice. It is a condition of total harmony between the mind, body, and spirit. Every cell in the human body is affected by the eastern mind-body discipline of yoga. It could be one of the most effective and well-tested ways to increase our resistance so that we can lead better lives. Science has flourished in the present digital era. In the quickly transforming post-pandemic world, individuals look for solutions to a wide range of problems, including the unpleasant worries of sorrow, restlessness, emotional imbalance, hyperactivity, tension, and stress. Even if it's tougher to stay motivated and they're under more stress than before, people may be able to adjust to and get through all of these problems. In today's world, immunity and health care issues that everyone is worried about. Everyone should need to boost their immunity in order to live a healthy life. We need to maintain our physical health and adopt a healthy lifestyle in order to retain a high quality of life in the digital era. In this circumstance, yoga is crucial for one's health. We have several established and proven methods for enhancing our quality of life, but yoga is one of the best. On multiple fronts, our immune system protects the body from bacteria, viruses, and other potentially hazardous creatures. Living a healthy lifestyle provides the best chance for one's immune system to successfully fight off illnesses. Yoga is a holistic activity that improves our mental and physical health. In turn, this strengthens the body's defence in that situation. If we have an inclination to practice yoga and meditation regularly, choose nutritious foods, and adopt a healthy modus vivendi, we may easily attain a healthy lifestyle. The three methods of a healthy lifestyle that are most effective are Ayurveda, yoga, and meditation. This brief overview research aims to explore the advantages of different yoga and pranayama approaches for a stronger immune system and general wellbeing in the current digital era. It has been concluded Both yoga and meditation have a substantial positive impact on the growth of the inner self. Age, religion, caste, or gender are not barriers to breathing and meditation activities. We must maintain our physical and mental well-being in order to maintain a high quality of life in the digital era.*

**Keywords:** Yoga, Health, Immunity, Yoga practices

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The body and the mind are inextricably linked. "A sound mind in a sound body," the Greeks thought. In order to live in harmony, the body and mind should be harmonized through pranayama

and asana. Yoga was utilized by ancient sages to investigate both the outside and within of themselves, and perhaps, in the end, to gain enlightenment and insight. Asana practice liberates one from physical limitations as well as mental distractions. It is a condition of perfect body, mind, and spirit balance (31). Yoga asanas are basic actions that help to maintain the health of the interior and exterior portions of the body. No activity can be performed properly if the internal and exterior portions of the body are not in excellent condition (26). Yoga is a debatable topic. It is both knowledge and a way of life. Yoga evolved during the Vedic and Upanishad periods. It is India's oldest scientific and spiritual discipline. Yoga practices can assist an individual in seeking overall growth and development. Fashion is now used to maintain optimal health (1). Yoga is a comprehensive discipline with origins in 'age-old ancient Holy Writ' from India. The Bhagavad Gita (the heart and soul of the Mahabharata epic), one of the most well-known ancient yogic books, is said to have been composed around 3000 years ago (2). Another academic exposition on yoga, the Patanjali yoga sutras, is allowed to have been penned about 200 years ago (3). Hathayoga Pradipika of Yogi Swatmarama, Goraksha Samhita of Yogi Gorakhnath, Gheranda Samhit of Sage Gherandan, and Hatharatnavali of Srinivasa Bhatta Mahayogindra are all regarded authentic ancient jottings that describe yoga as both an art and a wisdom (4).

Yoga is a contemporary and healthy way of living in the twenty-first century. Yoga has surpassed all other forms of exercise in terms of global appeal. As we all know, the 21st of June has been designated as Yoga Day, which is observed across the globe. Yoga can help you improve your posture, boost your oxygen intake and enhance the functioning of your respiratory, digestive, endocrine, reproductive, and excretory systems (5). Yoga may be one of the most powerful and tried resistance boosters that we may use to live a healthier life. Yoga is a comprehensive practice that enhances our bodies both physically and psychologically. As a result, the body's protection improves in such a situation. A healthy life is simple to obtain if we learn to adopt a healthy way of life, make appropriate dietary choices, and practise yoga and meditation on a regular basis. Ayurveda, yoga, and meditation are the ideal variables for measuring a healthy existence (7). When the Covid 19 epidemic abruptly spread over the world, the public suffered from anxiety, concern, and a certain predicament for himself / herself as well as their families, particularly adults and children. Yogic practises are recommended by several doctors, medical experts, virologists, and even WHO specialists throughout the world to increase immunity. Yoga therapy is the most ancient practise of Indian traditional medicine. Yoga therapy may be divided into four techniques. That is Vedic yoga (This form of yoga has described in the tremendous Vedas like, Yajur, Sama, Atharva and Rig and Vedic yoga is additionally diagnosed as Archaic Yoga) Pre-classical yoga (which consists of spectacular gestures and affectations and is closely tied to Vedic yoga), Classical yoga, Postclassical yoga, and Digital yoga are the four types of yoga (6). The purpose of this short review study is to

investigate the significance of various types of yoga practices for better immunity and health in the modern digital era.

### **YOGA PRACTICES:**

In daily life, we frequently focus on only one area of our existence and are unaware of the others. Through pranayama and asana, the body and mind should be cultivated in a balanced way to live in harmony. Ancient sages used yoga to examine the external and interior worlds, and maybe, in the end, to obtain insight and understanding. These great instructors, or gurus, did not link yoga with religion, but rather as an art of living to the fullest extent possible in conjunction with the larger life-reality (9). Historically, yoga practices included all parts of the human experience that promote health and well-being. If asanas become the main or major focus of yoga practice, other key factors that sustain and vitalize the practice may be overlooked, leading practitioners to miss the most important feature of yoga: the union of mind, body, and spirit (33). Yoga is a type of mind-body exercise that combines muscular movement with an internally directed focused concentration on self, breath, and energy awareness. Regular yoga practice develops strength, endurance, and flexibility, as well as kindness, compassion, and increased self-control, while creating a sense of peace and well-being. Patanjali offers an eightfold road to consciousness and enlightenment called ashtanga, which literally means "eight limbs" in the Yoga Sutras. The eight limbs are ethical standards for leading a meaningful and purposeful life. They focus on one's health while honoring the spiritual parts of one's personality. Each has its unique method of illness prevention and treatment (8)(33). A person who does yoga can have a lot of control over his or her mind, body, and spirit. It combines mental and physical disciplines to produce a quiet mind and body, and it aids in stress management and relaxation. Yoga practice is known as sarvanga sadhana, or comprehensive practice. The majority of yoga styles stress deepening and extending your breath. Pranayama, or breath awareness, is a popular yoga technique that increases parasympathetic activity, allowing the body to calm down and bring the mind and body back into balance. Transferring this breathing ability is critical for dealing with stressful situations since it offers motivation, cultivates an internal center of control, and allows for deeper and more restful sleep (5).

### **YOGA PRACTICES FOR IMMUNITY AND HEALTH:**

Yoga is an eastern mind-body practice that has an impact on every cell in the human body. It will improve organ-system performance, improve neuro-effector communication, raise strength, and increase resistance to diseases and stress. It will also bring about calmness, balance, a positive outlook, and serenity. In comparison to the average population, yoga practitioners have been found to be more physically, mentally, and coping skill-wise fit (34). Man must have good physical and mental health in order to appreciate the present moment. One must preserve balance between the body and the spiritual power, the spiritual power and the consciousness, the self and humanity, and

the mind and manner in order to fulfill this purpose of birth. Yoga is the practice of suitable physical and mental asanas and a moral way of life to preserve the harmony mentioned above (1). According to research, yoga improves physical strength, flexibility, and the cardiovascular and respiratory systems etc. Better levels of enjoyment and a greater standard of living were also possibilities. There has been evidence connecting an increase in physical activity to mental illnesses including anxiety, depression, and other illnesses (22). Every human being has the right to good health, although it is dependent on individual, societal, and environmental variables. Yoga refers to a functional balance between the body and the mind. Inexplicable delight, excellent health, long life, calm, and happiness are all results of the harmony attained through yoga practise. Yoga is incredibly effective in improving both physical and mental wellness. Even the most feared illnesses can be cured by it. However, much of its potential as a science of healing still has to be realised (1). Our immune system is weakened by mental stress (34). To a considerable extent, we may create a healthier immune system (7) (18) and a better image of ourselves in order to avoid being negatively affected by other diseases. Yoga practises benefit the health of different age groups, especially children. Yoga is the practise of appropriate physical and mental asanas in conjunction with a moral lifestyle in order to maintain harmony between the body and the life force, the intellect and the person, the individual and society, and the will and nature. To appreciate the material world, man must be intellectually and physically well (1). The immune system is a vital organ that protects the body from dangerous bacteria and viruses. The immune system requires a constant supply of energy and nutrition to function at its best. A poor diet, excessive exercise, and stress can all have a negative impact on the immune system. When the immune systems are not functioning effectively, the body becomes exposed to health concerns (12) (21). The immune system defends the body on several levels against bacteria, viruses, and other potentially harmful organisms. A healthy lifestyle helps one's immune system fight infections in the best possible way (11). The immunological function of the human body has recently received more attention than ever before due to the emergence of corona virus diseases 2019 (COVID-19), a communicable infectious illness caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2. (SARS-CoV-2) (10). Various varieties of Pranayama, such as Anuloma-viloma, Kapalvhati, Bhramari, Kapalbhathi, and Udgeeth, all enhance lung capacity and open up all tissues and cells of the body, increasing breathing duration and, in turn, increasing immunity and extending life. It also activates neurohormonal systems that improve health, as indicated by the reduction of sympathetic activity. (13). The physical and breathing movements of yoga can help strengthen your immune system keeping you healthy and disease free. Gravity is affected by some yoga positions, such as inversions. This boosts the movement of lymph into your respiratory organs, where viruses and diseases commonly enter the body. When you return upright, gravity drains the lymph and cleanses your system. This improves your immunity and strengthens your ability to fight off disease

(20).

### **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

Movement-based mind-body practices like yoga, Tibetan yoga, and tai chi/qigong are usually a combination of physical postures or motions, breathing techniques, and meditation with the aim of improving health and wellness. One of the most popular Eastern practices in Western cultures, Indian-based yoga (the word "yoga" comes from the Sanskrit word "to yoke" or "join"), emphasizes the synchronization of the body, breath, and mind. For ages, India has employed this traditional method to cure health problems (28). Mind-body strategies are methods for influencing biological, physiological, or psychological processes and enhancing QOL. The Mind and Body Therapies category of the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) encompasses both therapies. These include practices like yoga, pranayama, and meditation (27). Yoga offers a wide range of benefits to give humanity. As a result, the goals and objectives for practicing yoga might differ from person to person, based on their primary disciplines, crafts and vocations, demands and requirements, and challenges they experience in their daily lives (15). Here is the pervious literature about various types of yogic practices for immunity and health. According to research, yoga can strengthen our immune system by boosting levels of natural killer cells and immunoglobulin A (18).

Daruna (2004) suggested that stress management is critical to achieving a general sense of well-being due to the importance of the body's ability to use its natural killer (nK) cells in antigen synthesis and disease prevention. Natural killer cells increase after exercise, giving the body with a boost in immunological function to fend off invaders and speed up the search and destroy mission of these essential white blood cells. Chronic stress alters not only the number of nK cells but also their cytotoxicity. Daruna observed that those who experienced stress but did not view it as severe had no alteration in the ability of their nK cells to operate normally. Instead, their nK cells are stimulated (19). According to Tellhed et al. (2019), 71 middle-aged people who self-rated as moderately stressed underwent an experimental study to see if yogic breathing as a stress coping technique and improved mindfulness mediates the psychological health effects of a yoga intervention. The Yoga and Mindfulness Intervention (YOMI) program is a 5-week yoga intervention. The YOMI includes a daily 5-minute breathing exercise in addition to 60 minutes of yin yoga practice and 30 minutes of psycho education. Anxiety, despair, and sleep issues were significantly reduced in the YOMI group (33). After 12 weeks of yoga, there is a continuous and gradual improvement in pulmonary functions. Improvements in forced expiratory volume in the first second (FEV1) are statistically significant (24). Numerous research show that various yoga practices have good impacts on anxiety and sadness (25). A collection of yoga breathing techniques are referred to as pranayama. According to recent data, the practice has a favourable impact on clinical stress and anxiety markers. According

to Novaes et al. (2020), pranayama practice altered the activity of brain areas involved in emotional processing, including the amygdala, anterior cingulate, anterior insula, and prefrontal cortex. These changes were linked to altered connectivity and activity in the brain regions responsible for processing emotions, paying attention, and being aware of one's surroundings (23).

A Lisa Diamond article titled "The benefits of yoga in enhancing health" was published in 2011. This article's goal is to present data in favour of recommending yoga to patients in primary care as a stress-reduction strategy. He came to the conclusion that yoga is an additional kind of self-care that enables patients to actively participate in their own health and wellbeing as opposed to passively receiving treatments like exams, medications, or other therapies. Yoga may be practised by anybody, virtually anywhere, and it is inexpensive and has few negative side effects. The physiological consequences of stress on the immune system, endocrine system, and ANS as well as how stress is perceived can all be improved by yoga. All of which have the potential to result in sickness, disease, and even death over time. To help their patients, health practitioners must develop stress-reduction strategies (17). Shashi Kant Yadav and Akshay Pathak explored the relevance of pranayama and how regular practice may aid to enhance immunity for a healthy life in a paper titled "Pranayama helps to strengthen immunity to fight against Covid-19" published in 2020, suggests that pranayama, a type of continuous physical activity and inwardly focused attention practice, produces a brief mental state of self-contemplation. With the use of pranayama, our immune system may be boosted. While boosting autonomic and higher neural center activity, it decreases anxiety and stress. Pranayama helps to build a stronger immune system with regular practice for a healthy life (13).

In his work "Yoga and Its Importance in Our Daily Life," Shyam Sundar Sarkar investigated the importance of yoga in sustaining healthy physical and mental health in August 2018 and finally he stated that a person who does yoga may have a great deal of mastery over their mind, body, and soul. It helps with body tone, breathing, energy, and vitality. It also aids in the development of muscular strength, flexibility, and strength. Both meditation and yoga contribute considerably to the development of the inner self. The benefits of yoga become more apparent as you go through your practice. While yoga offers numerous benefits for the body and mind, it is not a substitute for medical treatment. It is essential to study and practice yoga poses under supervision (1). Another comparable essay with the title "Importance of yoga at COVID-19" was written by Biswajit Hembram and published in the International Journal of Physical Education, Sports and Health on 2021. This review's objective is to assess the results of studies on the therapeutic value of yoga as a depressive disorder intervention. In specifically, the studies examined asana-focused yoga styles. According to follow-up study, it seems beneficial to develop a yoga policy for society in order to coordinate the healthcare goal and achieve the safety of life in the country. Yoga is now generally recognized as being essential for resolving a variety of problems as a method, way of thinking, and

study of consciousness. It has been a fundamental component of Indian culture ever since the time of the Vedas, and now, even modern science recognizes it. In order to provide social assistance to overcome mental health challenges, the government, community organizations, families, and individuals must actually contribute (6).

Another study by Ravi Kumar, titled "Significance of Yoga in the Modern Age," was released in March 2017. He looks at the relevance of yoga in the contemporary world. Finally, he came to the conclusion that yoga is a godsend for a contemporary, healthy way of life. The globe has seen a surge in popularity for yoga. Yoga can cure a wide range of health ailments, including arthritis, chronic fatigue, diabetes, AIDS, asthma, high blood pressure, back pain, weight loss, obesity, the common cold, constipation, epilepsy, skin problems, and breathing problems. Consistent yoga practice also helps to reduce stress, uphold mental calm, increase bodily awareness, and improve focus. These are but a handful of yoga's psychological benefits (5). In July 2021, Young-Ran Yeun and Sang-Dol Kim announced their findings, purpose of their study was to confirm recently contributed evidence concerning the influence of yoga on immune function using a systematic review of randomized controlled trials. According to extant studies, yoga has the potential to augment the treatment and prevention of inflammatory illnesses since it can up regulate anti-inflammatory markers while reducing pro-inflammatory indications (14).

Chitra B. Hangargekar, Rubiya S. Quazi, and Amol A. Joshi conducted another review research in 2020. The goal of this article is to offer individuals with a full explanation of how to build strong immunity to combat COVID-19 by applying certain preventative measures, so they can better understand and avoid it. They aimed to emphasize Ayurvedic and Yoga knowledge and practices that might be used as adjuvant treatment for COVID-19. It's "Corona time," but it's the virus we're talking about. In conclusion, they claimed that Covid - 19 has been classed as a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. In order to adequately tackle COVID-19, modern medical aid and health systems are being pushed to the greatest test. Ayurveda, Yoga, and meditation may be useful in connecting with the community to build a healthier atmosphere. According to study, persons with a strong immune system are better prepared to combat the virus (11). According to Tran et al. (2001), 8 weeks of hatha yoga practice can considerably increase numerous health-related characteristics of physical fitness in young, healthy, primarily female volunteers. Yoga exercise, in particular, can improve muscular strength, endurance, flexibility, and cardio respiratory endurance (29).

## **DISCUSSION:**

Yoga and other movement-based mind-body therapies are examples of practices that combine physical postures or motions with breathing exercises and meditation to enhance health and well-being. One of the most well-known Eastern practices in Western culture is yoga, which is based in

India. It emphasizes the coordination of the body, breath, and mind. This old-fashioned treatment for health issues has been used in India for decades (1) (27). Yoga practices has a number of benefits for immunity (11) (30) and overall health (1) (5) (33). A person who does yoga can have a lot of control over their mind, body, and spirit. It combines mental and physical practices to help you reach inner calm, manage stress and anxiety, and maintain relaxation. Additionally, it enhances breathing, energy, and vitality while boosting muscle strength, flexibility, and body tone. Yoga may do much more for your body than merely stretch, despite the fact that you may think it just affects how you move and feel. This statistic alone says a lot about how common place yoga is in today's society. The globe has come together because of this incident. Along with yoga, meditation is crucial for cultivating our inner selves on a regular basis. It can be quite beneficial in getting rid of a number of physical and psychological issues (1).

According to Lisa Diamond (2011), yoga provides a number of health benefits, particularly when it comes to stress management. Stress perception and its physiological impacts on the immune system, endocrine system, and autonomic nerve system (ANS) may all be improved with yoga. All of which have the potential to result in sickness, disease, and even death over time. To help their patients, health practitioners must develop stress-reduction strategies (17). A review study by Shashi Kant Yadav and Akshay Pathak published in 2020 concluded that Pranayama is a form of continuous physical exercise and attention-focused practice. It lessens tension and anxiety while increasing activity in higher cerebral centers and the autonomic nervous system. Regular practice of pranayama strengthens the immune system for a healthy existence (13). Another study found that yoga is therapeutically useful as an intervention for depression therapy; specifically, the studies in this review looked at yoga styles in which asana practice is central, and finally concluded that yoga is now widely recognized as being essential for resolving a variety of problems as a method, way of thinking, and study of consciousness. To give social assistance in overcoming mental health difficulties, the government, community organizations, families, and the general public must all work together (6).

## **CONCLUSION:**

Yoga has grown in popularity in recent years; it is the fastest growing health trend, while having been practiced for thousands of years. Yoga and meditation both contribute significantly to the development of the inner self. As we continue to practice, the benefits of yoga become clearer. It boosts energy, vitality, and respiration. It also aids in the development of muscle strength, flexibility, and power (1). Breathing and meditation practices are not limited by age, religion, caste, or gender. There are many different styles of yoga, and it can be difficult for novices to decide which type of yoga to practice (16). The practice of pranayama serves as a preventative measure rather than an alternative treatment for COVID-19.



Therefore, during a pandemic, we may easily overcome corona virus problems and boost immunity by regularly practicing pranayama. This is because our heritage has given us a variety of lifestyles based on general principles of keeping our body and mind in good health (16). It has been concluded that in order to maintain a good quality of life in the digital era, we must maintain our physical health and adopt a healthy lifestyle by engaging in different yoga practices. Regular practices of yoga has been shown to have positive effects on physical, mental, and emotional health. It is among the most complete systems for fostering psychological, physical, social, and spiritual growth. For yoga practitioners, the advantages frequently speak for themselves; a growing corpus of research-based support for yoga's benefits also supports this. Numerous elements make up yoga, which emphasizes the integration of the body, breath, and mind. In 21st-century culture, its use is more widespread.

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