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## ROLE OF YOGA IN HEALTH

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### ABSTRACT

*Yoga fitness is the result of constant practice of Yoga in all its forms. These are physical and mental and include Yoga poses, breathing exercises and meditation. Yoga is the oldest form of physical and mental development that includes the body, mind, and spirit. The source of Yoga reverts to some 5000 years. This precious art is the brainchild of ancient Indian sages. It was adapted and customized down the ages and tailored to the needs of individual civilizations and generations. Further, it took numerous years to mushroom over the planet. Today, the value of Yoga is being more and more recognized for great health, and its deterrent and therapeutic benefits. Yoga consists of physical that keep you steady and comfortable, both physically and mentally, for long time devoid of strain. They even help your muscles relax. This happens by enhanced that subsequently alleviate pent-up stress and tension. Breathing exercises (pranayama), has to do with controlling and directing vital energy (prana) through balanced breathing. Balanced breathing boosts up levels of prana in your body. This automatically results in good health. Even though Yoga has many different types and classifications Hatha Yoga is a unique mixture of Yoga poses, breathing exercises and Meditation. It endows the practitioner with a balanced and wholesome body and mind, besides serenity and happiness. Yoga is a strong and potent art form with extraordinary therapeutic powers. The practitioner can exploit them for self-improvement. However it is imperative to do Yoga practice whole-heartedly with full concentration and focus. The best time is in the mornings or evenings.*

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**Key Words:** Yoga, patanjali yoga, meditation, breathing, health.

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### Introduction

The growing popularity of yoga really comes down to the extraordinary list of benefits it has to offer to your health and fitness. Yoga is devised of a set of postures (asanas) that are designed to stretch and strengthen your muscles and tendons. Movement between asanas and the focusing of the breath and body throughout a class not only strengthens your mind, but trains your mind to a state of peacefulness that stays with you. Other core benefits include: increased flexibility, detoxification of the body, better posture and increased confidence.

### What is Yoga?

Yoga is the science of life and the art of living. It is the common sense

answer to overall physical and mental fitness. Basically yoga is a system of physical and mental self improvement and final liberation that people have been using for thousands of years. Yoga arose in the age of the Vedas and Upanishads. It is India's oldest scientific, perfect spiritual discipline. Yoga is a method of training the mind and developing its power of subtle perceptions so that man may discover for himself the spiritual truths on which religion, beliefs and moral values finally rest. It is realization of our hidden powers. Swami Shivananda said, "He who radiates good, divine thoughts does immense good unto himself and to the world also". Yoga is science of life, it offers us simple, easy remedies and techniques and methods of health and hygiene to assure physical and mental

fitness with a minimum of time, effort and expense. Yoga in other term Preksha Dhyana invented by prominent Jainacharya Mahaprajna is such an uncomplicated, easy to learn technique of meditation.

### **Eight stages of Patanjali yoga are**

- (i) **Yama:** The universal moral laws.
- (ii) **Niyama:** Personal moral roots of conduct.
- (iii) **Asana:** Yogic postures.
- (iv) **Pranayama:** Acquiring and controlling prana or energy, by means of the breath.
- (v) **Pratyahara:** The withdrawal of the senses from the outer environment.
- (vi) **Dharana:** Concentration.
- (vii) **Dhyana:** Meditation.
- (viii) **Samadhi:** Enlightenment.

Yoga is also a technique for achieving purest form of self-awareness, devoid of all thoughts and sensations.

### **What is Health?**

Health is precisely, that condition in which human being has full sensitivity and in which all his faculties are operating fully. To actively work towards this condition is to cure illness and to develop maximum health. Yoga is both a philosophy and a living religion, believes that the body is so important and trains it so strictly. Without health we can neither practice meditation nor attain enlightenment. For total health one should seek the truth by skepticism. The body mind system possesses the innate power of recovering health and the yogic method of curing human ills aims at stimulating it. Prominent health specialist Ben Jonson

said, "O, health! Health! The blessing of rich! The riches of the poor! Who can buy thee at too dear a rate, since there is no enjoying the world without thee! Preksha (means to see inside with full concentration) may appear to mean different things to different people because it contributes to increase physical, nervous as well as spiritual energies. As per prominent Jainacharya Acharya Mahaprajna inventor of Preksha Dhyana Yoga total health consists of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health.

- On physical level, it helps each bodily cell to revitalize itself; it facilitates digestion, it makes inspiration more efficient and improves circulation and quality of blood.
- On mental level it proves to be an applied method to train the mind to concentrate; it offers way to treat serious psychosomatic illness without drugs; it is an efficient tool for ending addictions and other bad habits; it reveals to one the mysteries of his mind by the Realization and real experience of the inner consciousness which includes the subconscious and the unconscious.
- On the emotional level, the strengthening of conscious reasoning controls reactions to environmental conditions, situations and behavior of others; harmonization of the functioning of nervous and endocrine system results in control and ultimate eradication of psychological distortions.
- On spiritual level, regulation and transformation of blood chemistry through proper synthesization of neuroendocrinal secretions, dispassionate internal vibrations leads one to attain the power to control the mind and to become

free from the effect of external forces compelling one to lose to equanimity.

### **Role of Yoga in health**

Yoga blends the two states of tension and relaxation. Life always seeks to restore balance and the ideal state is that in which static force and dynamic power are in harmony. In this state, the deepest relaxation is found within the highest tension and this forms the basic for the new life of service and cooperation. The basic characteristic of yoga is its use of meditation, for by utilizing this discipline, the mind and body are purified and adjusted and personality is heightened. Yoga enables everyone to move towards that state of developed consciousness which is oneness with the sacred. The first step is to harmonize purity and strengthen both body and mind. In yoga we find people practicing fasting, celibacy, the renunciation of wealth and possessions as well as living home, loved ones and society. The aim is always same to control desires and since desire is mental and emotional, there are many ways of doing it. Fasting is the most natural and fundamental training for the control of desire, being practiced instinctively by animals and primitive men who live close to nature. There are seven centres for meditation in the body. Each centre is connected with its relevant endocrine gland as below. Meditation on any Chakra should be learnt and practiced under the guidance of a master in Kundalini Yoga. Self effort in this yoga should be strictly avoided as it could lead to complications.

### **Conclusion**

Yoga is the science of life and the art of living. It is India's oldest scientific, perfect spiritual discipline. Yoga is a method of training the mind and body for discovering spiritual truths. Yoga is science of life; it offers us simple, easy remedies, techniques and methods of health and hygiene to assure physical and mental fitness with a minimum of time, effort and expense. Yoga is neither a sect nor an ideology but a practical training of mind and body. Yoga is also a technique for achieving purest form of self-awareness, devoid of all thoughts. Health is precisely, that condition in which human being has full sensitivity and in which all his faculties are operating fully. According to prominent Jainacharya Mahaprajna inventor of Preksha Dhyana Yoga- health consists of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health. Sound health and peaceful mind are a must for man to enjoy the material world and develop the consciousness to its perfection. By realizing consciousness man can live with satisfaction, harmony and peace. Realization of consciousness is the only one perfect and higher knowledge by which one can know everything in the universe. The man is nothing but the extended and perceptual activity of consciousness keeping the physical body in a healthy condition and the mind in highly culturally enlightened level and thereby leading a creative life so as to be a useful member of the society throughout the span of one's life is the chief aim and thrust of karma yoga.

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