

Importance of Yoga in Physical Education and Sports

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ABSTRACT

In sports, yoga is essential for improving athletes' performance. It also contributes to the preservation of the sportsmanship and wholesome atmosphere. It contributes to the development of a culture among athletes that values making the right judgments when necessary and keeping by the rules of the game. It also fosters harmony in the body, stance, and mind while assisting in maintaining the beat. It improves the athlete's flexibility as well as their level of fitness. Yoga is both our traditional culture and philosophy. Its primary goal is salvation (mukti), and its secondary goal is the treatment and curing of illnesses, both mental and physical. In addition, yoga helps you to relax not just tight muscles, but also anxious and overstressed minds.

Keywords: Athlete, Yoga, physical education, Muscles, Performance.

Introduction:

The word 'yoga' means "to join or Yoke together". It brings the body and mind together to become a harmonious experience. Man is a physical, mental and spiritual being; yoga helps promote a balanced development of all the three. Yoga is a method of learning that aims at balancing "Mind, Body and Spirit".

Yoga produces mobility without putting strain or stress on the body, which sets it apart from other forms of exercise. For this reason, the practice is a great addition to any sport and a perfect complement to other types of training. The physical positions known as "postures" are held to strengthen and stretch various body regions while coordinating breath with movement. All the major muscular groups, such as the back, neck, and shoulders, the deep abdominals, the hip and buttock muscles, and even the ankles, feet, wrists, and hands, are methodically worked. Although most poses are non-aerobic in nature, they do in fact send oxygen to the cells in the body by way of conscious deep breathing and sustained stretching & contraction of different muscle groups. Yoga originated thousands of years ago in India as a technique to help people achieve spiritual enlightenment.

For any physical activity for children and teens to be successful in cultivating healthier outcomes, it must actually get students to actually be physically active. Yoga does this, and quite well. As a weight-bearing activity, yoga stimulates bone growth and development and can lead to greater muscle strength, endurance, and flexibility. In fact, researchers at the Los Angeles Charter College of Education found that students who participated in Yoga Ed. classes experienced significant gains in upper body strength over one year when compared to school district means (Slovacek,

Tucker, & Pantoja, 2003). And although not all yoga is necessarily aerobic exercise, classes that do get students' hearts pumping can help improve cardiovascular fitness. Research suggests that yoga can reduce blood pressure, lower cholesterol levels, and mediate blood sugar (McCall, 2007),

Competitive yoga is another name for yoga practiced as a sport. It is the way asanas are performed during athletic contests. Since many years ago, India has hosted competitive yoga, or yoga tournaments. Yoga produces motion without straining or unbalancing the body, which sets it apart from other forms of exercise. Other physical activities, such as aerobics, merely guarantee bodily health. Their relationship to the growth of the astral or spiritual body is minimal. Participating in yoga practices promotes spiritual energies and revitalizes the body. Yoga poses provide benefits for physical education by recharging the body with cosmic energy. Yoga is then commonly taken as a system of physical education with a spiritual component, although the truth is the reverse: Yoga is a spiritual system with a physical component. The "postures" are the physical positions that coordinate breath with movement and we hold these positions to stretch and strengthen different parts of the body. They systematically work all the major muscle groups, including the back, neck, and shoulders, deep abdominals, hip and buttock muscles and even ankles, feet, wrists and hands. Yoga can help to check any imbalance in muscular development and will enable the body to function more efficiently. If the body is flexible and supple, it will be less prone to sports injuries as the joints will be kept lubricated. Yoga also helps strengthen connective tissue, break down adhesions from old injuries and over-training that have tightened as we age, thus helping create mobility of the joints and an anti-aging posture.

Asanas help to adjust the vertebrae, increase flexibility, strengthen muscles and tendons, and thus contribute to proper posture (Khalsa, 2007). By practicing asanas and pranayama, internal organs are being regenerated, the epidermal, digestive, and cardiovascular systems are being cleansed of toxins and wastes, the nervous and endocrine systems are being balanced, and brain cells nourished (Khalsa, 2007)

Yoga also helps strengthen connective tissue, break down adhesions (tiny scar tissue) from old injuries and over-training that have tightened as we age, thus helping create mobility of the joints and an anti-aging posture. The deep rhythmic breathing performed in yoga also creates and builds up one's life force energies or Prana, also called Qi or Chi in Chinese healing and martial arts. So, one actually creates more energy than is expended during a yoga session. The type of energy that is not from the caloric intake of our diet, but a cosmic energy.

Yoga as a way of life is more true to its ancient tenets. It constitutes asana, regulated breathing (pranayama), and awareness of yoga sutms (principles) that govern the mind. Regular practice of yoga enhances awareness of mind and body, which is needed in the self- management of diet and exercise plan in diabetes. According to Patanjali, yoga consists of eight steps or limbs, which are all equally important and are related as parts of a whole. The pmpose of these eight limbs is discriminative enlightenment or self-realization. But here the emphasis will be on health benefits. The eight steps or limbs of yoga are as follows:

1. **Yama:** Codes of restraint, abstinences, selfregulations;
2. **Niyama:** Observances, practices, self-training;
3. **Asana:** Meditation posture (Figure 1);
4. **Pranayama:** Expansion of breath and prana, regulation, control;
5. **Pratyahara:** Withdrawal of the senses, bringing inward;
6. **Dharana:** Concentration;
7. **Dhyana:** Meditation and
8. **Samadhi:** Deep absorption, meditation in its higher state, the state of perfected concentration.

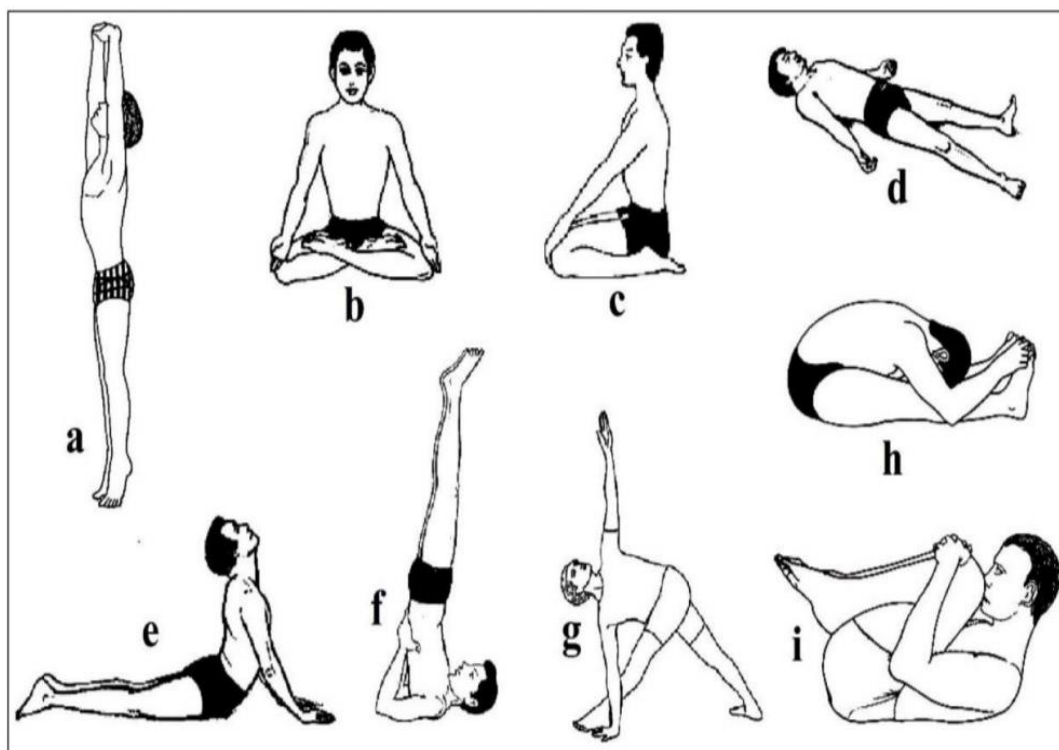


Fig.1: Various Popular Asanas (Postures) Useful for Physical and Mental Health. (a) Tadasana; (b) Padmasana; (c) Vajrasana; (d) Shavasana; (e) Bhujangasana; (f) Sarvangasana; (g) Trikonasana; (h) Paschimottasana; (i) Pawanmuktasana.

Objectives of yoga in games:

Health, physical fitness and emotional stability are the objectives which bring yoga and physical education on a common platform for the benefit of the human individual. Health is a more general and comprehensive term conveying the 'feeling of well-being', while physical fitness is a more specific term. Physical fitness is the capacity of an individual to perform a given task at a particular time. Health and physical fitness are not static. They are always changing they follow the law can be maintained only by carefully selected physical activities which are called 'exercise'. The utility of the particular exercise program can be evaluated only in the forms of the effects that one obtained in promoting a particular factor of physical fitness. Trough constant practice of yoga, one can overcome all difficulties and eradicate all weakness pain can be transmitted in to 24bliss, sorrow in to joys, and failure into success and sickness in to perfect health. Determination, patience and persistence lead one to goal.

Importance of Yoga in sports:

While yoga makes a guy humble, obedient, and balanced, sports make a person outgoing, self-confident, and aggressive. Yoga poses and practices assist athletes enhance their strength and performance, prevent injuries, and decompress from numerous problems—despite the fact that yoga and sports are two distinct disciplines. For athletes, it's a great complementary workout. In addition, players require improved energy levels, self-discipline, attention, and confidence regardless of the game they are playing. With different yoga poses, one can accomplish all of these. Put differently, there is a way to improve athletic performance with yoga approaches. All though yoga is beneficial for physical fitness but every sport involves vigorous movement whereas yoga techniques involve smooth and safe movement of muscles. In sports, muscles are commonly injured by pulls and strains but asanas help to avoid various kinds of injuries. So, Yoga as a therapy helps healing of Physical and mental suffering. Importance of yoga in sports can never be ignored. But as every game is played in different mode and through different means, it is necessary to understand what kind of yoga asanas are needed for the better performance. Every game needs specialized skills as per its requirements. But whatever is the form of skills, players need to train the body in such a way that skills are refined and polished to perform in better way. It takes time, energy and commitment to master the skills. Along with this it is very important that a player remains focused, concentrated and confident despite various kinds of distractions liking cheering or chanting slogans. So yoga not only helps to relieve stress and mental sufferings but also contributes in physical fitness.

The primary goal of yoga, as a practice of physical education, is to lead to the harmonious growth of children and adolescents. Throughout this respect, it is fitting to remember Pierre de Coubertin's brilliant thinking from his speech at the 1994 Paris Congress: "... there are no two sections to an individual, body and soul; there are three, body, mind and heart. Character is not created by the subconscious but by the body in the first place"(Coubertin, 1985)

Benefits of yoga in Sports:

Benefits of yoga in sports cannot be ignored. Its mind and body connection bring more focus, attention, flexibility, mobility, energy, and strength which is very much needed to stay ahead of the competition. In yoga, the different postures coordinate the breath with the movements and by holding the postures, the various muscles of the body are stretched and strengthened. These postures are an ideal complement to other forms of exercise, such as jogging, running, and cycling as they systematically work for all the major muscle groups at the neck, back, shoulders, hips, hands, feet and even ankles. The majority of sporting activities increase muscular strength and endurance, frequently in particular body parts. Yoga can address this imbalance in muscular development since it improves the body's and mind's ability to communicate and cooperate. Athletes or anyone involved in sports will be less likely to sustain injuries because to yoga's increased muscle and joint flexibility. Any sport an athlete decides to pursue will benefit from and be enhanced by yoga.

Coordination:

Yoga helps in getting better alignment of all body parts. This helps in improving coordination of all body parts. For instance, in table tennis the hand eye coordination plays a key role and a player who does yoga on a daily basis will have better coordination of hand and eye which can be quite useful in improving his performance.

Flexibility:

Yoga poses work by stretching your muscles. They can help you move better and feel less stiff or tired. At any level of Yoga, You will probably start to notice benefits soon.

Improves Strength:

Mostly all the games require strength. Gymming makes the players body stiff which affects their performance. To remove that stiffness and continue the gym work, sportspersons engage themselves in Yoga.

Balance:

As a swimmer, I have always been rather flexible. But my balance is historically horrible. But through a consistent yoga practice, my coordination and balance have improved immensely. Why is this important? Better balance and coordination means enhanced control over how I move my body, which in turn leads to better technique and form -- the brass ring every athlete spends a career refining, whether your focus is a swim stroke, golf swing, running stride, and jump shot or wrestling move.

Conclusions:

Based on the previous investigation, our paper concludes that yoga is necessary and important in physical education and sports since it benefits us on many levels and in various ways throughout life. Systematic yoga practices maintain a perfect, pure, and peaceful mind in addition to curing and controlling a number of diseases. Yoga indicates that practicing yoga leads to mental and physical excellence. Physical education, such as yoga, helps in developing discipline via sports and activities. Physical education improves all the fundamental qualities needed for personality development and heightens mental awareness. Yoga gives both children and adults the chance to succeed in physical activity, which can help lay the foundations for a healthy foundation in life.

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