

# YOGA AND ITS IMPACT ON THE VAGINAL HEALTH – A REVIEW

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## ABSTRACT

Vaginal health is an important part of women's overall health. Vaginal problems can affect fertility, desire for sex, and ability to reach orgasm. A healthy vagina is full of bacteria. Some kinds of bacteria are considered “good” while others are “bad.” Good bacteria help keep the vagina a little bit acidic. This keeps bad bacteria from growing too fast. Sometimes, though, the bad bacteria can take over and cause problems. **Objectives:** The Purpose of the present study is to motivate other researchers to conduct a study on yoga and its impact on vaginal health and spread knowledge about yoga and its benefits on these disorders like Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), Endometriosis, vaginitis, Pelvic floor muscle dysfunction, Irregular Menstrual cycle, Excessive Vaginal discharge, Sexual discomfort. **Method:** This article was compiled through previous studies which are available on the internet, in theses and books. Search through an Electronic database to identify all related articles on Yoga and its impact or effect on vagina Health. **Results:** Through this research or investigation, we have found that yoga has lots of benefits like reduced menstrual pain and its associated symptoms, lower stress levels, increased quality of life, improved sexual health and better psycho-emotional well-being. **Conclusion:** From this study, it was concluded that yoga is very beneficial in the management of vaginal disorders and its recommended for females suffering from vaginal disorders. Specific yogic exercises at least twice a week.

**Keywords-** Yoga, Meditation, PCOS, Menstrual disorder, endometriosis, hormones, sexual discomfort.

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## Introduction

The vagina is an elastic, muscular canal with a lubricating and sensory lining that is soft and flexible. The vagina is an elastic, muscular canal with a lubricating and sensory lining that is soft and flexible. The uterus releases menstruation fluid through the vagina. (Sachdev, 2023)

The female reproductive organ known as the vagina changes over the course of a woman's lifetime. The female reproductive organ known as the vagina changes over the course of a woman's lifetime. (Gold and Shrimanker, 2022)

The vulva and uterine cervix are joined by the vagina, a reproductive organ, which ultimately leads to the uterine cavity. A healthy vagina serves a variety of purposes including Menstruation serves as a conduit for the tissue and menstrual fluid to exit the uterus.

Immune defence: protection against dangerous diseases using local flora, an

acidic pH, and chemical signalling. Functions of reproduction include serving as a sperm container and a tube for parturition. Female arousal response and sexual pleasure are two sexual functions. The Purpose of the present study is to motivate other researchers to conduct various studies on yoga and its impact on Vaginal health and spread knowledge about yoga and its benefits on reproductive system disorders like Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), Endometriosis, vaginitis, Pelvic floor muscle dysfunction, Irregular Menstrual cycle, Excessive Vaginal discharge, Sexual discomfort.

## Method

Electronic databases including PubMed, google scholar, research gate, and Shodhganga were searched to identify all related articles on Yoga and its impact on Reproductive system Disorders. Stratified analysis was performed using the nature of yoga, meditation and/or Vaginal and sexual health and the methods of

measuring vaginal disorder. Heterogeneity was also determined.

### Importance of Yoga

Yoga is frequently thought of as being limited to asanas, or positions, and its benefits are exclusively thought to be physical. We frequently miss out on the enormous benefits yoga offers in bringing

### Benefits of Yoga

#### 1. Hormonal imbalance is significantly reduced by yoga therapy

Yoga treatment, which focuses on more than just the physical body, offers a comprehensive approach to treating hormonal issues. Yoga is a combination of stillness, flexing motions, and coordinated breathing techniques to enhance general well-being. This will result in hormone balance and improved prediction of vaginal health. One study indicate changes in hormonal levels related to PCOS condition in those patients who participated in the Hatha yoga practice in comparison with the students in the CG. (Ch & N, 2023, p. 209) This study design is within these parameters: Subjects were taken from a gynaecological clinic. After the laboratory evaluations, 25 women participants who satisfied the Criteria of PCOS were recruited. The *Yoga* session in this study consisted of 60 minutes for 12

the body, mind, and breath together. Harmony makes life's path calmer, happier, and more meaningful. Yoga will help you succeed if you want to transform, build a strong and flexible body, or pass away. Yoga is a promising therapeutic method that can be used to cure a variety of non-communicable disorders.

weeks. These *yoga* sessions were practised for 5 days per week, The Studies have reported benefits in high school students who practised yoga for 10–18 weeks one to five times per week. It serves as evidence of the benefits of complementary therapy (intervention). Among PCOS-affected women, changing one's lifestyle may be a successful technique for reducing the risk of PCOS-related physiological and psychological disorders.

Another study shows that Yoga and the usage of specific asanas and pranayama are very effective in hormonal imbalance and proved to be an alternative strategy to treat PCOS effectively. Practising yoga may help decrease testosterone levels and alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression in women with PCOS. More specifically, women doing regular one-hour yoga classes three times a week for three months can see a significant and positive change in overall PCOS

symptoms in their bodies (Badola &

## 2. Yoga helps to improve sexual function

It has been recognized that sexual dysfunctions in females are common and that treatment, frequently, is not sought. Sexual dysfunction among women has the potential to affect the quality of life and interpersonal relationships. Yoga appears to be a nonpharmacological method of improving sexual functions in women. This study shows that yoga can produce improvement in all six domains tested by FSFI (i.e., desire, arousal, lubrication, orgasm, satisfaction, and pain). Considering the widespread acceptability of yoga, its nonpharmacological nature, and its apparent beneficial effects in the present study, this modality deserves further study. recruited 40 females (Age range 22–55 years, average age 34.7 ± 8.49 years) who were enrolled in a yoga camp and were given a standardized questionnaire (FSFI) before and after the 12 weeks session of yoga. There was a statistically significant improvement in all domains of sexual functions studied, i.e., desire, arousal, lubrication, orgasm, satisfaction, and pain. The overall weighted FSFI score was 946.2 before the

Laxmi, 2021, p. 190).

start of the study (baseline score) and 1,215.3 after the completion of the study. There was an overall improvement of 18.69% ( $P < 0.0001$ ) in female sexual function scores after yoga. Twenty-nine (72.5%) subjects expressed improvement in satisfaction with their sexual life following yoga, while 11 (27.5%) patients did not note any appreciable improvement (Dhikav et al., 2010, p. 967)

Reduced vaginal mucus to dyspareunia (pain during intercourse) is often experienced by perimenopausal women. This decreases sexual drive and awakening in women who influence sexual quality with their partners. This study aims to find out the effectiveness of loving yoga on the sexual function of perimenopausal women. This type of research is a quantitative experiment with a one-group pretest-posttest design approach. Research by giving loving yoga intervention for four weeks (with intensity twice a week). Loving yoga movement focuses on kegel gymnastics and pelvic muscle movements, such as plank movement, upward dog, happy baby, downward-facing dog, cat-cow, pigeon, cobbler, leg-up-the-wall, reclining-big-toe, and bridge. Researchers measured the sexual function in 30 women

by purposive sampling with inclusion criteria aged 40-50 and still sexually active before and after loving yoga using the Female Sexual Function Index (FSFI) questionnaire. Analyze data using paired sample T-test Results: This study result is seen from the mean value of 14.33, which means the FSFI score  $\leq 26.5$ . While after complementary therapy loving yoga, the mean value of respondents is 30.13 or an FSFI score  $\geq 26.5$ , which means no sexual dysfunction (setyani & Indrawati, 2021)

### **3. Yogasanas and Pranayams help to relieve premenstrual and menstrual symptoms**

A prospective interventional study was carried out in Pravara Kanya Vidya Mandir School, Loni. The study group comprised 200 adolescent girls with premenstrual and menstrual complaints. After 6 months of yoga training the menstrual cycle changes were noted in a predesigned questionnaire. Data were analyzed by applying the Z test. Results: 69.5% of dysmenorrhoea was reduced to 6.5% (Z value 12.1). Menstrual cycle length (58.5%) was normalized to 95.5% (Z value 6.98), Menstrual bleeding phase (82.5%) was normalized to 97% (Z value 3.5). Heavy blood loss (40%) was reduced

to 5.5% of girls (Z value 6.38), and normal menstruation (17.5%) was increased to 86.5% (Z value 36.87) of girls. Scanty blood loss was noted in 42.5%, which later reduced to 8% girls, (Z value 6.16). There was a significant reduction in backache, lack of concentration, and other complaints after 6 months of yoga training. Interpretation & conclusion: There was a significant relief from menstrual cycle disorder complaints among adolescent girls following yoga practice and pranayama. (Effect of yoga on premenstrual and menstrual cycle disorders in adolescent girls)

One more study is related to menstrual disorder, Menopause is an opportunity for the fullest blossoming of a woman's power, wisdom and creativity. This study tested the effect of yoga on the quality of life of menopausal women. Methods: The study was conducted in selected areas in Chennai, Tamil Nādu. A simple random sampling technique was used for the study. Of 260 menopausal women, 130 of them were allotted to the study group and 130 of them to the control group. The study group underwent yoga training and practised yoga daily for 35-40 minutes/day for 12 weeks. Standardized WHO QOL BREF Scale was used to assess the menopausal women's quality of life. Result: There was

an extremely high significant difference found in all domains of quality of life at  $p=0.001$  level between the study group and the control group at 12 weeks. The study concluded that yoga is an effective intervention in improving the quality of life of menopausal women (JAYABHARATHI & Judie, 2012, p. 207)

#### **4. Positive impact of Yoga Exercise on Pelvic Floor Rehabilitation**

Pelvic floor rehabilitation positively impacts the prevention and treatment of postpartum vaginal prolapse and relaxation, urine incontinence, and other pelvic floor problems. It can hasten the recovery of the postpartum vagina and pelvic floor muscle tension and flexibility. This article uses electrical stimulation and the treatment of pelvic floor muscles combined with the posture recognition algorithm, the yoga rehabilitation training program that has the best effect on the parturient is obtained, and the yoga myoelectric stimulation combined method and the traditional myoelectric stimulation method are designed for comparison experiments. The experimental results show that the parturient who has undergone the combined method of yoga myoelectric stimulation, in the resting state, contraction state, and Valsalva state,

the position of the bladder meridian, the position of the uterus, and the position of the rectal ampulla of the parturient have a significant recovery compared those who have undergone the traditional electromyography treatment. In addition, the average area of hiatus in the pelvic floor ultrasound examination in the control group 42 days postpartum was 12.2605 cm<sup>2</sup>, while the average area of the hiatus in the pelvic floor ultrasound examination in the experimental group 42 days postpartum was 10.788 cm<sup>2</sup>; the average area of hiatus in the pelvic floor ultrasound examination in the control group at 3 months postpartum was 11.4805 cm<sup>2</sup>, and the average area of hiatus in the pelvic floor ultrasound examination in the experimental group at 3 months postpartum was 8.9475 cm<sup>2</sup>. To sum up, yoga had a very significant improvement in the physical indicators and mental health of postpartum women. (Li, 2022, p. 1)

#### **5. Yoga is beneficial for Pain Associated with Endometriosis**

Yoga may be an effective method for easing both menstruation and endometriosis-related pain. Yoga can manage the release of the body's endogenous opioids and the pain gate control system, which is located in the

spinal cord. By re-establishing the balance of the autonomic nervous system and the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis, relaxation practises like yoga can combat the detrimental effects of stress. This study aimed to compare chronic pelvic pain, menstrual patterns, and quality of life (QoL) in two groups of women with endometriosis: those who did and those who did not participate in a specific 8-week yoga intervention. Method: This was a randomized controlled trial. It was conducted at the University of Campinas Medical School, Campinas, SP, Brazil. Forty women were randomly divided into two groups: an intervention group of women who practiced yoga ( $n = 28$ ), and a control group of women who did not practice yoga ( $n = 12$ ). Participants attended 90-min scheduled yoga sessions twice a week for 8 weeks. Additionally, an Endometriosis Health Profile (EHP)-30

The questionnaire was applied to evaluate women's QoL at admission and 2 months later upon completion of the yoga

## Discussion

The current review aimed to synthesise previous literature that examined Yoga and establish its potential effect on vaginal health and its associated

program. Menstrual and daily pain patterns were evaluated through a daily calendar (visual analogue scale). Results: The degree of daily pain was significantly lower among the women who practised yoga compared with the non-yoga group ( $p = 0.0007$ ). There was an improvement in QoL in both groups between the baseline and the end of the study evaluation. About EHP-30 domains, pain ( $p = 0.0046$ ), impotence ( $p = 0.0006$ ), wellbeing ( $p = 0.0009$ ), and image ( $p = 0.0087$ ) from the central questionnaire, and work ( $p = 0.0027$ ) and treatment ( $p = 0.0245$ ) from the modular questionnaire were significantly different between the study groups over time. There was no significant difference between the two groups regarding the diary of menstrual patterns ( $p = 0.96$ ). Conclusions: Yoga practice was associated with reduced levels of chronic pelvic pain and improved QoL in women with endometriosis. (GONCALVES et. al. 2017, p. 6)

symptoms reducing hormonal imbalance, improving sexual function, helping to relieve premenstrual and menstrual symptoms, Positive impact on Pelvic floor rehabilitation, beneficial for Pain Associated with Endometriosis. In addition, this review aimed to identify an

optimal Yoga protocol for session structure, intensity, frequency, repetition and duration. With this aim, some studies were evaluated providing evidence suggesting that yoga can improve certain health parameters in females. These

### **Conclusion**

Yoga has many benefits reduced menstrual pain and its associated symptoms, lower stress levels, increased quality of life, improved sexual health and better psycho-emotional well-being. From this study, it was concluded that yoga is very beneficial in the management of

studies have revealed that yoga can significantly improve quality of life, release postpartum stress and positive impact on vaginal disorders. Yoga is a feasible and time-efficient approach for maintaining vaginal health Vaginal Disorders and it is recommended for females suffering from vaginal disorders to perform specific yogic exercises at least twice a week.

### **Conflicts of interest**

The authors have no conflict of interest to disclose.

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