

## ELEMENTS SIMILARITIES OF YOGA AND AYURVEDA: A BRIEF REVIEW

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## ABSTRACT

Originating in India, *Yoga* and *Ayurveda* are two ancient, interrelated systems. There are fundamental similarities between them despite their different goals and methods, especially in their holistic and philosophical approaches to wellbeing. *Ayurveda* deals with complete psycho-spiritual somatic entity and stands for ensuring *Arogya*, which in turn help to achieve *Dharma-artha-kama-moksha*, whereas *Yoga* cares specifically for the psycho-spiritual aspects of life, and thus facilitates *Moksha*. *Yoga* and *Ayurveda* both describe *Ausadhi*, *Mantra*, *Japa*, *Samadhi*, and other similar techniques to achieve their goals. Even *Ayurveda* specifically describes the state of higher achievements of *Yoga* practice including *Saty Buddha*. Similarly, the *Achara Rasayana* and *Sadvritta* mentioned in *Ayurveda* is the same as *Yama* and *Niyama* mentioned in *Yogic* science. *Yoga* is not limited to physical postures and fitness in same way *Ayurveda* is not limited to herbal remedies for physical disorders. Both systems have deeper layers and *Ayurveda* conceives the purest form of *Yoga*. The critical study of the ayurvedic classics indicates that most of the basic concepts of *Yoga* are already described in ayurvedic texts thus, *Yoga* is an integral part of *Ayurveda*. These two science combinedly brings out the full healing of the body.

**KEYWORDS:** *Yoga, Ayurveda, Arogya, Moksha, Satya Buddha.*

## INTRODUCTION

*Yoga* and *Ayurveda* both are the unique science of antiquity. *Ayurveda* is one of the world's oldest holistic healing system. At the core of ayurvedic medical philosophy lies in its fundamental principles, which signifies the preservation of healthy well-being and amelioration of disease in the afflicted.<sup>[1]</sup> *Yoga* was an integral aspect of *Ayurveda*. It is a fundamental spiritual practice based on subtle science that focuses on establishing harmony between mind and body. The goal of *Yoga* is self-realization (*Ayam Tu Paramo Dharmo Yadyogenatma Darshanam*), freedom from all kind of sufferings and leading to the state of *Moksha* or *Kaivalya*. Thus, they both are complementary practices that spring from the same *Vedic* tradition that dates back thousands of years. Born from the same *Vedic* scriptures, they share the same basic ideas and beliefs that contribute to an individual's overall well-being. *Yoga* addresses the harmonisation of mind, body, and spirit, *Ayurveda* addresses both physical and mental well-beings.

**Yoga-** *Yoga* is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Yuj' as well as the root 'Yujir' which means 'to combine' or 'to integrate.' Although the word may be employed in a variety of contexts, the primary meaning according to

*Yagyavalkya Smriti* "Samyogo Yoga Ityaktō Jeevatma – Pramaatmano" refers to the union of *Jeeva-atman* with the *Pra-matman* i.e., the union of the individual consciousness with the cosmic or divine consciousness.<sup>[2]</sup> This can be understood as the integration of physical, mental, intellectual, and spiritual parts of human nature, as well as the integration or adjustment of an individual with his surroundings and society. This process entails a step-by-step preparation aimed at balancing the body through various physical postures, controlling the mind and senses through *Pranayama* and finally realising the truth that the soul is the true conscious energy.

**Ayurveda-** *Ayurveda* (Ayu = Life + Veda = Knowledge or Science), a comprehensive science of life, was developed to ensure *Arogya*, i.e. healthy life in all its dimensions, which was considered essential for achieving the four instincts of life-*Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha*. It has consistently underscored the paramount importance of proactively preserving health and averting maladies by adhering to meticulous dietary and lifestyle regimes.

**Elements of yoga in ayurveda**

*Yoga* and *Ayurveda* are both founded on a similar philosophy of human being. The fundamental processes

in both the science involve purifying the mind and body, regulating the mind, and ultimately connecting the soul or consciousness with God. Life is made up of *Sarira* (body) + *Indriyas* (senses) + *Sattva* (mind) + *Atma* (soul).<sup>[3]</sup> Ayurveda deals with the total psycho-spiritual somatic entity and stands for the relief of all three categories of miseries, namely *Adhyatmika*, *Adhidaivika*, and *Adhibhautika*. Thus, it ensures *Arogya*, which provides *Dharma-Artha-Kama-Moksha*, whereas *Yoga* cares specifically for the psycho-spiritual aspects of life, and thus facilitates *Moksha*.

*Yoga* and *Ayurveda* are complementary practices. They recognize the importance of the five elements (*Panchamahabhutas*- *Akash*, *Prathavi*, *Jal*, *Vayu*, and *Agni*)- in maintaining the balance between body and mind. Both systems have supported *Ausadhi*, *Mantra*, *Japa*, *Samadhi*, and other techniques to achieve their goals. *Yoga*, in addition to spiritual approaches, teaches the use of medications for *Chitta-suddhi*. Similarly, in addition to *Ausadhi*, *Anna*, and *Vihara* (drugs, diets, and so on), *Ayurveda* teaches the methodology of these two human sciences.

*Charak Samhita* one of the foremost *Ayurvedic* classics mentions the importance of *Yoga* in *Sharir Sthaan*: "*Mokshe Nivriti-nirshesha Yoga Moksha Pravartakam*."<sup>[4]</sup> that means all pain is relieved by *Yoga*. Just as *Yoga* is not limited to physical postures and fitness, *Ayurveda*, too, is not limited to herbal remedies for physical disorders. Both systems have deeper layers and, when correctly applied, can lead to a state of full equilibrium on the physical, mental, and spiritual levels.

*Himsa-asteya*, misbehaviour with women, conspiracy, harsh sound, falsehood, irrelevant talk, to harm someone, jealous, to take wealth of others, non-believe in God, these ten points should not be come in body, mind, and speech.<sup>[5]</sup> The *Achara Rasayana* and *Sadvritta* mentioned in *Ayurveda* is the same as the *Yoga Yama* and *Niyama*. Both systems consider the body to be made up of subtle and gross parts and help each other in healing. *Ayurveda* treats the *Dosha-Dhatu-Mala* (body humours-tissues-metabolic wastes), but *Yoga* teaches how to maintain the mind balanced in various situations. *Sattva-vajaya*, which means "healing the mind by increasing purity of mind," is one of the three basic types of therapies addressed in *Ayurveda*, and the use of *Yoga* methods and meditation to maintain a healthy state of mind is discussed.

*Ayurveda* specifically describes the state of higher achievements of *Yoga* practice including *Satya Buddhi*. The *Satya Buddhi* is the state of realization of the ultimate reality. It eliminates all miseries and leads to *Moksha*. *Moksha* (Freedom from material bonds) is the ultimate objective of both *Yoga* and *Ayurveda*. *Acharya Charaka* says, "*Pravettih Dukham Nivrittih Sukham Iti*"<sup>[6]</sup> which states *Pravettih* is the cause of all miseries and *Nivrittih* is the source of real happiness. The

*Pravettih* is initiated by *Karma* (action). The *Satya Buddhi* transcends all *Karmas* and affords *Nivrittih*. Thus, *Acharya Charaka* describes the highest quality of a *Yogic* achievement, *Satya-Buddhi*, and he also teaches the humanity a path for such an achievement.

The above description reveals that *Ayurveda* conceives the purest form of *Yoga* and considers it primarily as the means of *Tattva Jnana*, liberation, and mental peace. However, certain statements would also reflect the implication of the knowledge of the science of *Yoga* to the biological sciences including the problems of health and disease. Some such statements are reproduced below. *Ayurvedic* classics presents a consolidated account of the elements of *Yoga* as seen in *Charaka Samhita* in various treatment modalities which is being mentioned here. The *Karmaja* diseases (deeds done by a man in the present or any prior existence) are not curable through medicine. These can be cured by *Prayascitta*, *Japa*, *Homa* and *Upahara* etc. by reducing the *Karmas* of part of life. Moreover, Hiccup should be treated through the practice of *Pranayama* (*Pranayam-odvejana Trasanani*).<sup>[7]</sup> In the treatment of *Murcha*, the method of *Pranayama* (by pressing nose and mouth and withholding of breath) is mentioned.<sup>[8]</sup> Austere penances and vows, self-control, truthfulness, charities and religious practices as well as the eight *Siddhis* i.e. *Aisvaryas* are either wholly or partially present in the *Grahas* (affecting pediatric age group) according to the degree of their respective power.<sup>[9]</sup> These *Grahas* may be cured by only *Sauca*, *Snana* (bath), *Brahmacarya* etc. and chanting *Mantra*.<sup>[10]</sup> Protective rites should be performed for the safety of the wounded patient from the influences of malignant star and spirits with the major and the minor duties i.e. *Yamas* and *Niyamas* enjoined to be practised on his behalf.<sup>[11]</sup> Everyone's food and drink, especially of kings should be protected from poison because *Yoga* and *Ksema* are under the king's control and *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama*, *Moksha*; are connected to *Yoga* and *Ksema*.<sup>[12]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

*Yoga* is an integral part of *Ayurveda*. These two sciences have elemental similarity between them, particularly in their philosophical and holistic approach towards well-being, so they combinedly brings out the full healing of the body. *Ayurveda* provides the appropriate lifestyle recommendations for *Yoga* practice, as well as the background to unfold the full healing potential of all aspects of *Yoga*. *Yoga* provides the spiritual and psychological basis for *Ayurveda* and its higher applications. Thus, they can be used in conjunction to enhance overall health and address specific health issues.

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