

ROLE OF YOGA IN PROMOTION OF HEALTH – A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Man is in a constant pursuit for health, happiness and peace, since ages. Even then attainment of ultimate bliss is very difficult task, which is the key to health, success and salvation. *Yoga* is the secret behind the long healthy life of our ancient seers. Health is a complete state of physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely absence of disease or infirmity. To achieve complete state of health *yoga* means a lot. *Yoga* is a systematic conscious process for accelerating the growth of a human being from animal level and ultimately to divinity. As our body is covered by *Pancha Koshas* (five layers/ sheath) each layers helps to maintain health. *Annamaya kosha* is the first layer purified by following moderate balanced diet, *Shadkriyas* and *Asanas* promotes physical health. Whereas *Pranamaya* and *Manomaya kosha* helps keep the mind in a balanced condition through *Pranayama*, *Mudras*, *Bandhas* *Dharana*, *Dhyana*. *Vignanamaya Kosha* balance state is achieved through the practice of *Dharana*, *Dhyana*. Anandamaya is last layer state of bliss can obtain through *Yoga*. Hence overall state of health is attained through the practice of *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *mudras*, *Bandhas*, *Pratyahaara*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana*.

KEYWORDS: *Koshas*, *Yoga*, *Annamaya*, *Pranamaya*, *Manomaya*, *Vignamaya*, *Anandamaya*.**INTRODUCTION**

Yoga has become popular in all parts of the world. For restless mind it gives solace, for the sick it is a boon. For a common man it is the fashion of the day to keep him fit and healthy. Some use it for developing memory, intelligence and creativity. With its multifold advantages it is becoming a part of life.^[1]

According to WHO, Health is defined as a complete state of physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely absence of disease or infirmity.^[2] Ancient yogic science also given importance for health and explained *Pancha Koshas* (five layers or sheath). Each layer highlights the importance of physical, mental, social, intellectual and a spiritual health(state of ultimate bliss). These can be achieved through the practice of *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *Pratyahaara*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi* i.e *Astanga Yoga*.

The *Panchakoshas* are *Annamaya kosha*(gross physical layer), *Pranamaya Kosha* (vital force layer), *Manomaya Kosha* (Emotional / mental layer), *Vignanamaya Kosha* (intellectual layer)and *Anandamaya Kosha* (ultimate state of bliss layer).^[3]

Annamaya Kosha can be purified through intake of *Mithaahra*, *Kriya* and *Asana*. A healthy *Yogic* diet like

consuming *Mithaahara*, *Ksheera*, *Shalianna*, *Yava*, *Godhooma*, *Mudga*, *Masha*, *Chanaka*, *Moolaka*, *Varthaki* etc,^[4] *Kriyas* (yogic purificatory methods) like *Dhouti*, *Basti*, *Neti*, *Nouli*, *Trataka*, *Kapalabhati*^[5] purifies the body and *Yogasana* (postures) provides strength. Thus *Annamaya kosha*'s related physical symptoms are removed.

Prana is the basic life force. Through the practice of *Kriyas* mainly *Kapalabhati* and *Pranayama* can maintain proper breathing can alleviate *Pranamaya Kosha* related ailments.

Manomaya Kosha can be handled through *Mudras*, *Bandhas*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana*. culturing of mind is accomplished by focusing of the mind (*Dharana*) initially, followed by relaxed dwelling of the mind in a single thought (*Dhyana*) thus it helps to prevent psychosomatic illness.

In *Vignanamaya Kosha* both *Prana* and *Manomaya Kosha* merges results in attainment of real knowledge that burns the strong attachments, obsessions likes and dislikes.

Anandamaya Kosha (blissful state) is the key for happy and healthy life which brings about inner healing power through good actions.^[6]

DISCUSSION

Yoga means that which unites. Uniting *Sharira* and *Manas* is possible by yogic practice.

To have good physical health one must follow moderate balanced diet, *Yogasana* and *Kriyas*. one must consume moderate diet to get progress in yoga and to prevent diseases. Foods like *Shali*, *Godhooma*, *Yava*, *Mudga*, *Masha*, *Chanaka*, *Panasa Vartaka*, *Patola*. the stomach must fill half with pleasing, pure, sweet, cooling foods until satisfied and half of stomach should be left empty, thus it produces comfort to the body for maintaining health.^[7]

Kriyas are of 6 types they are *Dhouti*, *Basti*, *Neti*, *Nouli*, *Trataka* and *Kapala bhati* (purificatory yogic techniques) removes excess of *Meda* (fat), *Sleshma* (mucus) in the body. *Dhouti* is divided into *Antar Dhouti*, *Danta Douti*, *Hrid Dhouti*, and *Moola Shodhana*. *Antar Dhouti* purifies entire gastro intestinal tract, *Danta Dhouti* purifies teeth, gum and tongue. *Hrid Dhouti* cleanses stomach, *Moola Shodhana* purifies rectum. *Basti* purifies large intestine. *Neti* cleanses nasal passage. *Nouli* causes contraction and relaxation of abdominal muscles and intestine. *Trataka* improves eye sight. *Kapala bhati* gives gentle massage to the internal organs.^[8]

Practice of *Asanas* brings stability and steadiness. *Asanas* relieves physical and mental distress by creating temporary tension which stimulates the elimination of toxins from the body, it makes joints flexible improves health of the muscle, brings coordination in the function of nervous system and increases of the internal organs due to its light massaging effect. Thus with gradual practice of *Asanas* the body gradually becomes healthier.^[9]

Pranamaya Kosha: **Prana** is a life force increases vital power in the body. This *Kosha* can be purified by the practice of *Kapala bhati* and *Pranayama*. *Pranayama* is divided into 8 types they are *Surya Bhedana*, *Ujjayi*, *Shitali* and *Sitkari*, *Bramari*, *Bastrika*, *Murcha* and *Plavani Pranayama*.^[10] These *Pranayama* induces soothing effect, slows down heart rate, produces vasodilatation, improves circulation. Thus vital energy increases intern health improves.

Manomaya Kosha: *Manas* is supreme where all thoughts are originated from hence in order to control mind should practice *Mudras*, *Bandhas*, *Dharana* and *Dhyana*. *Bandhas* and *Mudras* are specific body position which channels the energy produced by *Asanas* and *Pranayama* into various centers and arouses particular state of mind, regulates blood flow and *Prana* to the heart, stimulates the abdominal organs, delays ageing, improves health.^[11] Where as *Dharana* brings concentration of mind over

definite object and *Dhyana* is a uninterrupted flow of thought towards the object of meditation. Thus any psychosomatic diseases can be avoided.

Vignanamaya Kosha (intellectual layer)

When *Annamaya*, *Pranamaya* and *Manomaya* is in purifies condition eventually the individual attains knowledge which makes free from attachment etc. thus an individual remains in a state of bliss is nothing but *Anandamaya kosha*.

CONCLUSION

Thus *Yoga* is a systematic methodology for all round personality development – physical, mental, intellectual, emotional and spiritual component of man helps to promote health.

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