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**Dr. Hanumanthayya Pujari**

Assistant Professor, Department of Physical Education & Sports Sciences, Women's University, Vijayapura, Karnataka, India

## Health benefits of yoga for women

### Dr. Hanumanthayya Pujari

#### Abstract

This paper will highlight the Health benefits of Yoga for Women through the practice of Yoga and explore how Yoga can significantly enhance their health.

Yoga is a spiritual science of self-realization. It comes from India and goes back over five thousand of years. The Indian sage Patanjali, in his yoga sutra defines yoga as the control of the activities of the mind; yoga methods encompass the entire field of our existence, from the physical, emotional and mental to the spiritual. Its methods include ethical disciplines, physical postures, breath control, as well as meditation.

Yoga is an ancient system developed over the centuries by the Sages of India. Yoga is a system of training of mind, body and spirit for purification of soul and attaining oneness with the supreme consciousness. The goal of yoga is to calm the mind, ensure better co-ordination of mind and body so that we live a healthy life and experience spiritual growth.

Today's woman is much more than her traditional role of a housewife, a mother or a daughter. Her extended roles that foray beyond her four walls, she plays an equal role in the decisions of socio-economic and political life she leads. She is a multi-faceted, dynamic and uniquely influential part of our society and is forever striving for perfection in every aspect of life.

A woman's golden years of life has their unique challenge. With age, the practice of complex *asanas* reduces. *Asanas* aimed at improving blood circulation and a healthy nervous system will help the body to extend and eventually fully relax. The aim of yoga at this stage, as always, is to maintain both physical and mental health, therefore bringing about balance and harmony. With continuity, the practice of yoga matures and women learn how to accommodate the physical limitations brought about by increasing age.

Regular practice of certain specific asana (postures) provides the body with necessary strength to face the contractions to help ease labor, speed recovery and restore energy levels. Post-Natal practice of pranayama, or yogic breathing, and practice of gentle and easy Asana helps to restore firmness in the muscle fibers and encourage a continued supply of milk.

**Keywords:** health benefits, yoga, women

#### Introduction

Practicing yoga regularly can prove very beneficial for women. Yoga can provide innumerable benefits to women like improving reproductive system, helping in natural child birth, giving complete workout to the body.

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Women's body is fragile and soft. This is a general view and fact. Exceptions can be everywhere and in every field. Women are designed by nature to nurture and take care and so all women are sensitive and soft at heart. On the other hand, she has to be strong from within because she has to undergo the strenuous activity of bearing a child and going through the childbirth. So, every woman has to be strong not only outwardly, she should have a strong system inside also.

Yoga *asanas* prove to be very beneficial for women provided they do the right *asanas* in the right way. The yogic *asanas*, in fact, work in such a way that supports the basic systems of the body and boosts the immune system as well.

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### **Benefits of yogic asanas for women**

#### **Gives Complete Workout to Body**

Yogic *asanas* give a complete workout to the entire body and this is not possible from any other workout system. It enhances the internal organs by providing sufficient oxygen to different cells of the body.

#### **Enhances endocrinal system**

Endocrinal system of the body is very important as all hormonal secretions are controlled and secreted with the help of this system. Yoga *asanas* enhance and promote the endocrine system.

#### **Helps to adjust reproductive organs**

There are yoga *asanas* like camel pose that adjusts the reproductive organs and helps the woman remain fit and healthy.

#### **Improves Metabolism**

'Shoulder stand' stimulates thyroid and parathyroid glands and encourages metabolism. All the yogic *asanas* are good for weight loss. It is never too late or too early to start yoga. Just pay attention that when you start yoga and you have not done it before, start with slow and stretching *asanas*.

#### **Helps to cure various health diseases**

Yogic *asanas* are not only helpful in weight loss or help cure different diseases; it keeps the person happy and tension free. It has great and positive effects on mind and fills in positive energy that results in eradicating depression, lethargies and other problems that are related to sedentary and monotonous lifestyle. Proper yoga *asanas* can even help relieve severe back and neck pains. Regular practice will help you stay away from all these problems.

The yoga *asanas* that are for stretching your muscles and body parts will help you have flexibility and keep your joints free. Yoga *asanas* and meditation helps in keeping diabetes and high blood pressure under control.

#### **Yoga helps to get rid of stress**

Yoga is beneficial in relieving stress and discomfort during menopause and even helps get rid of osteoporosis also. These benefits are seen gradually and so no dramatic change must be expected. Yoga has helped many real victims of trauma get

recovered and lead a better life. Yoga gives better and sound sleep and relieves stiffness, fatigue and weakness in your body.

#### **Beneficial for natural child birth**

Women, who attend yoga classes before, during and after pregnancy, have almost no problem during and after childbirth. Practicing yoga regularly during pregnancy can help to give birth to a child naturally and without any complications.

If you are able to practice yoga on regular basis, you will find manifold and noticeable benefits in your body. You will also feel changes in your thinking and attitude towards life and other factors. When you are performing yoga *asanas*, make sure the room is free from any disturbances and is comfortable and warm. Early morning is the best time for yoga. However, maintaining a good and nutritious diet along with yoga *asanas* help men and women remain healthy for a long time.

#### **Fitness and Weight Management**

Practicing yoga can improve your fitness and help you achieve or maintain a healthy weight. Properly executing yoga poses strengthens your bones and muscles, enhances your balance, and promotes flexibility and greater range of motion, all of which can help protect your body against everyday injuries. Women who practice yoga tend to have lower body mass indexes and better control over their weight than those who do not practice yoga.

#### **Stress reduction and disease management**

Stress reduction is a major health benefit of practicing yoga. Yoga's emphasis on breathing and meditation can help calm your mind and mediate your body's typical response to stress, lowering your blood pressure and decreasing production of stress hormones. Simply decreasing your overall stress can have a huge impact on your quality of life. Practicing yoga can also be helpful for disease management as certain diseases are aggravated by stress. For instance, yoga can be beneficial in managing or preventing heart disease, insomnia and irritable bowel syndrome, all of which are stress-related. Reducing stress also enables the immune system to perform more effectively. Yoga has also been shown to improve people's moods, and to reduce anxiety and depression.

#### **Pain Management**

Yoga is also helpful in managing pain due to arthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome, back pain and other types of chronic pain. Each pose places emphasis on a particular set of muscles. Many yoga poses can target specific muscles that may need to be stretched in order to reduce pain. Regular practice can increase flexibility and which may reduce pain overall and prevent further injury.

#### **Pregnancy**

Yoga can be especially beneficial during pregnancy because it's an excellent way to achieve the type of regular, gentle exercise recommended for pregnant women. Improved fitness will help your body cope with pregnancy-induced body changes and prepare your body for undergoing labor. Yoga can also be helpful in coping with stress during pregnancy. If you decide to practice yoga during pregnancy, attend a prenatal class taught by an instructor experienced in working with pregnant women. Many regular yoga poses may be

unsuitable for pregnant women.

### **Conclusion**

Adolescence shapes the entire lifetime of young girls as they tend to undergo major changes in body and mind. This period of sudden change is an ideal time to begin the practice of Yogasanas, especially with a combination of Pranayama and Meditation. It will not only help develop a healthy and regular menstrual cycle, but will also help to deal with the psychological changes, curiosity and fear that they may experience due to physical imbalance. Regular practice of yoga aides in developing muscular strength, avoids obesity, assist the development of the reproductive organs, and balance hormones.

Middle-age for women comes with its own set of complexities. The benefits of yoga during this time are substantial. It plays the role of a “healer” for a new set of physical changes in a woman. Regular practice will help to maintain physical, mental, and emotional health. Specifically, practicing Yoga, Pranayam and Meditation, during the menopausal phase helps to balance hormones, keep weight under control, avoid medical complications like thyroid, and maintain a healthy digestive system.

A daily Yoga Routine can be modified and adapted to suit a woman’s changing needs in each phase of life, helping her to achieve peace of mind and bodily poise. Yoga course teaches a variety of yoga routines, which can be practiced in the comfort of your home or even at your workplace

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