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YOGA IS ESSENTIAL IN TODAY'S WORLD

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ABSTRACT
The comforts and luxuries of modern life come in the form of technology that not only make people's lives easier but also encourage inactivity. Due to hectic schedules and the competitive nature of metropolitan living, tensions are present in addition to comfort. Technology-related changes in lifestyle, work environment, eating and sleeping patterns result in an unhealthy and stressful living, which in turn causes a variety of physiological and psychosomatic ailments, including diabetes, asthma, cardiovascular disease, metabolic disorders, and various cancers. Thus, yoga has a part in teaching us how to live a healthy and serene existence. This essay attempts to educate readers on the advantages of yoga so they can adopt it as a lifestyle.
KEYWORDS: *Yoga, Postures*

INTRODUCTION

In modern life excessive use of cell phones, laptops, dishwashers, etc causes a serious threat to our health. They make us physically inactive and put us at an increased risk of diseases like cancer, diabetes, obesity and cardiac troubles. Also, many gadgets, including like hair dryers, electric shavers and digital clocks, give out waves of electromagnetic radiation that pass through our bodies and disturb our biological processes. Social networking websites have replaced face to face contact, making people secluded. Therefore, Yoga is being considered as an inexpensive and safe mode to deal with all such problems. Yoga is a holistic approach that provides physical, psychological and spiritual benefits. Based on the holistic principles of harmony and unification within body and nature, yoga's simple postures leave a powerful impact against busy lifestyle demands. It has also emerged as an alternative form of therapy not only to stay fit and healthy but it also acts as a link between individual and his true inner self.

Yoga

Yoga is originated in India around 6000 years ago. The word Yoga is derived from Sanskrit word 'Yuj' which means 'to join' or 'to unite'. It is the union of individual consciousness with universal consciousness. Maharishi Patanjali, for the first time summarized the Yoga Techniques in form of 195 sutras so as to bring a practical form of yoga to people. The main stream of yoga practice is found in eight limbs of yoga prescribed by Maharishi Patanjali which is also known as 'Astanga Yoga'-Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayam, Pratyahar, Dharna, dhyan and Samadhi. Today yoga is often defined as a lifestyle which aims to have a healthy mind within a healthy body. It imparts strength and flexibility to the body while helping to balance the mind and its' thinking. Through the practice of yoga, one not only achieves physical health, but also mental and spiritual well-being.

Benefits of Doing Yoga on daily Basis Physical benefits

Improves Flexibility

Lack of flexibility in muscle and connective tissue causes poor posture. Often people suffer from knee joint pain because tight hips strain the knee joint due to improper alignment of the thigh and shin bones. Inflexibility of muscle in back causes back pain. The lumbar spine gets flatten due to tight hamstrings and causes back pain. Yoga poses increases the range of motion at joints and stretches the muscles. Regular practice of yoga improves flexibility as it loosens up the body and removes tightness from it. The aches and pains will start disappearing as one continues to practice yoga on daily basis as yoga poses are meant to reinforce the muscles around the spine.

Improves blood flow in the body

There couldn't be any better way to improve blood flow in body than Yoga. Asanas are meant to be maintained for as long as possible. This slows down the blood flow in a specific part of the body and suddenly releases it with a splash. Thus, it clears away the impurities and clogs of the blood vessels. This phenomenon slows the formation of plaque, basis of atherosclerosis and heart problems. Folding different parts of the body and followed by relaxation excites the local nerves and blood vessels which tends to increases the blood flow also. Yoga maintains the flexibility of the blood vessels which usually decreases with increase in age.

Improves Bone Health

Yoga asanas that bear weight improves strength of bones and helps keep osteoporosis at bay. Yoga has many postures which require you to lift your own weight. Asanas like Downward- and Upward-Facing Dog (Adho Mukh Swan asana) help strengthen the arm bones, considered quiet vulnerable to osteoporotic fractures.

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Builds Muscular Strength
Yoga helps build muscular strength. When you build strength through yoga, you do so while balancing it with flexibility. It also protects from bone-related ailments such as arthritis and back pain.

Drains Lymph's and Boosts Immunity
While doing yoga, the drainage of lymph (a viscous fluid rich in immune cells) increases when muscles contract and stretch, organs are moved around, and body come in and out of yoga postures and hence boost immunity. This helps the lymphatic system to fight infection, destroy diseased cells, and dispose the harmful waste products that come out of cellular functioning.

Improves Balance
Regular practice of yoga increases improves the body balance and stability and effectively reduces the chances of major falls. Better balance means fewer falls and fewer injuries.

Regulates adrenal glands
Yoga lowers cortisol levels. Actually, cortisol is secreted by adrenal glands in response to an acute crisis, which temporarily boosts immune function. If cortisol levels stay high even after the crisis, they can compromise the immune system. Temporary boosts of cortisol help with long-term memory, but chronically high levels undermine memory and may lead to permanent changes in the brain. Additionally, excessive cortisol may lead to major depression, osteoporosis (it extracts calcium and other minerals from bones and interferes with the laying down of new bone), high blood pressure, and insulin resistance.

Prevents digestive problems
Stress causes ulcers, irritable bowel syndrome and constipation. So less stress means less suffering. Yoga asanas can ease constipation and moving the body facilitates more rapid transport of food and waste products through the bowels and therefore decreases the chances of colon cancer. Twisting poses are beneficial in getting waste to move through the system.

Mental Benefits
Improves Focus and Concentration
An important element of yoga is- to focus. It has been found that regular practice of yoga helps improve memory, reduces reaction time, and improves concentration. People, who do yoga with great focus, do not get distracted easily by people or by other things. Yoga relaxes and calms the body. This means that less stressed person can quickly focus on his work. That's why children and teenagers are also encouraged to do Yoga because it helps them focus on their study better.

Makes you Sleep Better
With inner peace and relaxed body, one can easily sleep without waking up in mid night and changing the body posture. A good sleep is required for a better day. Restorative asana, yoga nidra (a form of guided relaxation), Savasana, pranayama, and meditation encourage pratyahara, a turning inward of the senses, which provides downtime for the nervous system. Another by-product of a regular yoga practice, studies suggest, is better sleep-which means you'll be less tired and stressed and less likely to have accidents.

Fosters Mental Calmness
Concentrating so intently on what body is doing has the effect of bringing calmness to mind. Yoga also introduces meditation techniques like how to focus on breath and get away from thoughts. These skills can prove to be very valuable for the people suffering from insomnia.

Reduces Stress
Physical activity is good for relieving stress, and this is particularly true of yoga. Because of the concentration required, daily troubles, both large and small, seem to melt away during the practice of yoga. The emphasis yoga places on being in the present moment can also help as you learn not to dwell on past events or anticipate the future.

CONCLUSION
Man is a triune being—physical, mental, and spiritual. Yoga supports the balanced growth of each of the three. Other physical activities, like aerobics, merely guarantee bodily health. Yoga comprises a variety of poses, and performing them correctly helps to maintain good physical and mental health by enhancing muscle strength, stamina, immune stability, constant sharpness, intelligence, memory, and emotional stability.

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