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Yoga: A Remedy to Covid 19

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ABSTRACT: : It is rightly said that if we want to maintain a balance between oneself and environment then yoga is necessary for every human. We can't deny the fact that since ancient times in India yoga is being practiced. The 'yoga' word is derived from the Sanskrit which means 'to join or to unite'. Exercises of yoga have a physical effect and also bring a balance between body, soul and mind. Several years ago, sages analysed nature and cosmos through meditation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Why is it necessary to have yoga in our daily life?

- Practicing yoga develops physical health.
- It develops mental health.
- It develops social health.
- It develops spiritual health.
- It helps in our self-realisation, etc.

Yoga at the physical level comprises several postures or asanas to keep the body healthy. The mental techniques in Yoga include breathing exercises or pranayama and meditation to discipline the mind. According to the Bhagavad Gita "A person is said to have achieved yoga, the union with the Self, when the perfectly disciplined mind gets freedom from all desires, and becomes absorbed in the Self alone."

Yoga helps in developing the body and mind but yes it is not a substitute for medicine. Also, with any sort of exercise or yoga, it is also necessary to maintain a proper diet or we can say that the food we eat is also responsible for good health. The food that we eat poses an impact on both our body as well as our psyche that is our habits and qualities. A well-balanced diet is necessary to take.

In such a busy life full of responsibilities, long working and busy schedules, we mostly forget to be happy. Sometimes to maintain a balance between work life and personal life also becomes difficult and indirectly affects health and life. It is necessary to spare some time for exercise, yoga, etc. So, it is important to include yoga in daily life as it helps in controlling a person's body, mind and soul. And together it brings the physical and mental discipline which is better for the body and mind.

At the end Yoga makes us understand about the life, meaning of existence, it is relative in method but absolute in the objective. Yoga poses a positive impact on life and also has numerous physical and mental benefits.

II. COVID 19 AND YOGA

The coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19) pandemic is unique and unprecedented in several aspects and has challenged health care systems. At present, the global momentum is unabated, and a second wave is anticipated. The experience and lessons learnt from the earlier severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) epidemics appear inadequate and call for better approaches and strategies in public health and medical care. Conventional mainstream medicine is at the forefront when it comes to curbing this menace, especially at the critical care stage. The current prophylactic measures are insufficient, and suggested options such as hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) are still under investigation. The prophylactic and therapeutic potential of traditional and complementary medicine systems such as Ayurveda and Yoga is not really being considered during this crisis and global hunt for effective preventive and treatment measures. In this commentary, we have attempted to highlight the knowledge and practices from Ayurveda and Yoga that might be effectively utilized in the prophylaxis and adjuvant therapy of COVID-19. Several of our recommendations in this paper are driven by the emerging dynamics of the causative organism SARS coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and the unravelling of the pathophysiology of COVID-19.⁴ While we focus here on prophylaxis and the protection of



vulnerable target organs, Ayurveda and Yoga as an add-on therapy may support patients of COVID-19 by improving the quality of standard care.

Research and therapeutic strategies for COVID-19 have focused on agents to attack the virus or immunize against it. This leaves aside the consideration of the host—one of the most important factors in disease dynamics. Ayurveda pays particular attention to the host and recommends measures for a healthy lifestyle rather than the mere prescription of medicine. Charaka Samhita,⁵ the classic of Ayurveda, describes epidemic management and defines immunity as the ability to prevent disease and arrest its progress to maintain homeostasis. The concept of building strength of mind and body to cope with various stressors, including infection, is a cornerstone of Ayurveda practice. Similar to innate and acquired immunity, the Ayurveda concept of immunity (Bala or strength) is classified as natural (Sahaja), chronobiologic (Kalaja), and acquired (Yuktikrut). The holistic approach of Ayurveda toward promoting health (Swasthavritta) includes personalized interventions based on host and environmental factors. The interventions include therapeutic cleansing procedures (known as Panchakarma and certain immunomodulators⁷ (known as Rasayana). Local and systemic⁹ interventions to boost the immune system have been advocated to manage respiratory illnesses. The choice of specific Ayurveda therapeutic agents and practices is based on certain individual genetic characteristics known as Dosha Prakriti types (Vata, Pitta, and Kapha). In our opinion, several general measures described below may be useful to reduce the risk of SARS-COV-2 infection and complement therapeutic management as add-on treatment.

III. YOGA FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Poor mental health conditions, including stress and depression, are known to increase the risk of acute respiratory infections. Rising numbers of COVID-19 cases and deaths possibly raise stress and anxiety, while loneliness and depressive feelings are likely due to mandatory social distancing measures. Consideration of the mind is another distinction of Ayurveda and Yoga. Several measures for mental health are described, including pranayama and meditation. Pranayama is known to improve lung function. Meditation is found to reduce inflammation markers and influence markers of virus-specific immune response. Yoga including meditation could be a simple and useful home-based practice for the prevention and post-recovery management of COVID-19.

IV. CONCLUSION

Modern medical care and health systems are being tested to the hilt for effective management of COVID-19. However, there are several gaps. We must remember the basic principle in medicine that “prevention is better than cure.” The simple and feasible measures based on Ayurveda and Yoga could be quickly advertised in public-health campaigns through electronic and print media and information brochures for public distribution and display at prominent locations. The Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India, has already issued a very useful advisory in this context. People are overstressed by the compulsions of social distancing and physical barrier methods. They are likely to find comfort and support in some of the deeply rooted traditional practices that may protect them from the infection and its associated debilitating conditions. Noticeably, these interventions have the advantages of simplicity, affordability, and acceptability and appear promising as feasible measures for large-scale implementation. Ayurveda, Yoga, and meditation have a potential role to engage the community in creating a more positive health environment. Admittedly, there is need for more research. It was welcome news to learn that the United States National Institutes of Health, National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health has engaged a stress-related initiative and is reportedly considering others. Another timely initiative is the launch of the traditional, complementary, and integrative health and medicine COVID-19 support registry to document practices and products. The evidence presented here should draw the attention of stakeholders, including the World Health Organization, to the unexplored potential of traditional medicine systems and adopting integrative approaches in the search for solutions for the COVID 19 crisis. It is high time to embrace integration with an open mind.

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