

Ayurlog: National Journal of Research in Ayurved Science*A Web based quarterly online published Open Access peer reviewed National E-journal of Ayurved***Yoga – a remedy for menopause*****Upasana¹, Amrita Singh², Kalpana Sharma³**

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Yoga, its interpretation in sanskrit could be well understood as UNION. This is further defined as a union of mind, soul and body. Menopause the word originated from Latin word Meno means menses and pauein means ceases. The retrospective definition is no period for 12 months. Menopause has symptoms which pathetically affects quality of life of women. Yoga is effectively beneficial in the symptom of menopause .Yoga was developed and perfected over

centuries in India. In fact; it has been practiced for over 5000 years and it is one of the oldest forms of healing therapy, older than many forms of modern medicine. Aging gracefully isn't always easy, especially when the uncomfortable symptoms of menopause set in between night hot flashes, heightened anxiety and moodiness, and painful menstruation and intercourse. Menopause can be a nearly universal source of stress for post-menopausal ladies. Yoga is the safest natural

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remedy to fight with this nightmare. Menopause brings with it fluctuating hormones that mess with sleep, pack on pounds of belly fat, and make the lady irritable and less interested in sex. But yoga can help. Yoga practice cut hot flashes by 31% in one study, and other research has found that regularly doing yoga improved libido, mood, and craving control. With yoga the body is transformed into a longer and more spacious creation, rather than a stiff and hard body, as exemplified by most western exercise. Yoga is also important as a way to improve balance.

Continual evidence supports the notion that yoga can help to relieve irritability and depression brought on by menopause. Women report that yoga relaxation and stretching techniques help in stabilizing their moods and also improving their overall well being.

Keywords: Menopause, Yoga.

INTRODUCTION

Menopause is a part of every woman's life. It is the stage when her menstrual period

permanently stops. This stage usually occurs between the age of 40 and 60 associated with hormonal, physical and psychological changes.

According to Ayurveda, *Rajonivritti* (menopause) is a normal physiology which occurs due to ageing. *Rajonivritti* is made up of *Rajah* and *Nivritti*, where *Rajah* is *artava* (menstrual blood), *stri-pushpa* (ovum) and *Nivritti* is end or cessation, therefore “*Rajo stri pushpasya nivrittyasya*” ie cessation of menstruation and ovulation is called *Rajonivritti*. During the period of *Rajonivritti*, there is decline in the nourishment and function of all the *dhatus* (tissues) of the body.

These changes can occur gradually or abruptly. It can also occur when the ovaries are removed or stopped functioning. Menopause is not an illness but a natural biological process, though the risk for Heart Disease and Osteoporosis rises after Menopause.

Symptoms include irregular menstruation, changes in sexual desire, hot flashes, vaginal dryness and urinary problems, changes in

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appearance, mood changes, sleep disturbances, palpitations and backaches. Not all women experience these symptoms, some are not even aware of any other changes in their body. Estrogen and progesterone level plays the biggest part in Menopause. In this stage, the ovaries make less estrogen and progesterone. Estrogen is the female hormone that plays a major role in shaping your body and in preparing it for Pregnancy. When the body produces less of these hormones, the parts of the body that depends on estrogen to keep them healthy will react and this often causes the discomfort in some Women. Menopause is divided into two stages: the premenopause and postmenopause. Premenopause is the time when lady begin to experience the signs and symptoms though she is still ovulating. Women experience uneven rising and falling of their hormone level that often cause her to feel hot flashes and variations in her periods. Postmenopausal stage is when she was about 12 months past her last period and the ovaries no longer produce estrogen and progesterone nor releases eggs.

Menopause does not really require medical treatment since it is a natural biological process. The Menopause treatments actually focus on relieving the symptoms of Menopause and in preventing any chronic condition that may occur during the postmenopausal years such as heart disease and osteoporosis Menopause more bearable and can also facilitate in preventing any chronic ailments that can occur in the postmenopausal years. Yoga emphasizing the performance of postures (asanas) that stretch and strengthen the body.

Following are the basic yoga sessions for Menopause:

Yoga Asanas	Summary
Kapalabhati	Kapalabhati is a Breathing technique specifically for cleansing. Helps in reducing mucus in the air passages or realeses tension and blockages in the chest it is often helpful to breathe quickly.
Hands to Feet	The Hands to Feet Pose or

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(Pada Hastasana)	Pada Hastasana gives many of the same benefits as the Forward Bend - trimming the waist, restoring elasticity to the spine, and stretching the ligaments of the legs, especially the hamstrings.		simple Yoga Posture with a wonderful stretch in which one line of energy reaches upward from belly and outward through the arm, and one line travels downward through the legs
Warrior Pose	The Warrior Pose stretches and strengthens the arms and legs, increases stamina, improves balance and concentration, and can also relieve backache	Tree Pose (Tadasana)	The Tree Pose helps strengthen the thighs, calves, ankles and back. It can also increase the flexibility of hips and groin. Balance and concentration can also be improved with constant practice. This Yoga Pose is recommended for people who have sciatica and flat feet
Stand Spread Leg Forward Fold	Practicing the Standing Spread Leg Forward Fold can strengthen and stretch the inner and back legs along with spine		
Triangle Pose (Trikonasana)	In Hindu art, the triangle is a potent symbol for the divine principle, and it is frequently found in the yantras and mandalas used for meditation	Lotus Yoga Pose (Padmasana)	The Lotus Yoga Pose is usually done in Meditation. It is a classic seated posture which strengthens the ankles and knees, enhances concentration, and improves flexibility of the legs
Standing Side Stretch Pose	The Standing Side Stretch is another Yoga Pose with two lines of energy radiating outward from center. This is a	Single Leg Raise	This Yoga Pose is performed in order to prepare the body for other exercises. It benefits the

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		legs, lower back muscles, and abdominal area. In practicing the Single Leg Raise, one leg is raised while the other one stays on the floor.		performing the Headstand and to serve as counterpose after Backbends.
Double Leg Raises	Leg	A Double Leg Raise is similar to a Single Leg Raise, only this time, one will raise both legs. In doing this Yoga Pose, we have to make sure that the full length of the lower back is resting on the floor and shoulders along with neck should be relaxed.	Leg Reclining Lunge (Single and Double)	The Leg Reclining Lunge is part of the series of Yoga exercises which target the leg muscles. When done properly, this Yoga pose can strengthen and tone all muscles of legs.
			Seated Forward Bend (Paschimothanasa)	Relaxes whole body and mind, Stretching hamstrings, shoulders, and spine, relieve stress, and improves the posture and concentration by practicing the Seated Forward Bend.
Cobra Pose (Bhujangasana)		This Yoga Pose improves spinal flexibility and strengthens the muscles in the arms and back. In addition, it is effective in relieving menstrual irregularities and constipation.	Sage Twist Yoga Pose (Marichyasana)	Also called Marichi's Yoga pose. The Sage Twist Pose benefits the abdominal organs and spine. Doing this pose is avoided with complain of chronic spine or back injury.
Child Pose		The Child Pose is a gentle way of stretching your shoulders, hips, thighs, ankles, and back muscles. It is a relaxation posture which is done to normalize the circulation after	Wind Relieving Pose (Pavanamuktasana)	The term Pavanamuktasana comes from the Sanskrit word 'pavana' which means air or wind and 'mukta' which means

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	freedom or release. The Wind Relieving Pose works mainly on the digestive system. Specifically, it helps in eliminating excess gas from stomach.		the body and mind, and makes to feel refreshed after doing the asanas and the pranayamas. This is why it is an essential part of Yoga practice.
Anuloma Viloma	Anuloma Viloma is also called the Alternate Nostril Breathing Technique. In this breathing technique, one inhales through one nostril, retain the breath, and exhale through the other nostril.	Sun Salutation (Surya Namaskar)	The Sun Salutation or Surya Namaskar is a Yoga Pose which limbers up the whole body in preparation for the Yoga Asanas. It is a graceful sequence of twelve yoga positions performed as one continuous exercise.
Simple Meditation Technique	This Meditation process is good to induce relaxation response and promotes a peace. Meditation has also been scientifically proven to have health benefits such as lowering blood pressure and aiding the asthmatics in their breathing.	Boat Posture	Perform the Boat Pose to strengthen your abdominal area and hip flexor, tone muscles in the midsection, improve digestion, and relieve stress.
Relaxation Pose	There are three parts to proper relaxation - physical, mental and spiritual relaxation. Relaxation Yoga Pose relaxes	Fish Pose (Matsyasana)	Doing the Fish Pose relieves stiffness of the neck and shoulder muscles and improves flexibility of the spine. It is the counter-pose of the Shoulderstand.
		Locust Pose (Salabhasana)	The Cobra Pose works mainly on the upper back; the Locust

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	Pose targets the lower part. This posture also strengthens the abdominal area, arms, and legs. Another thing that makes it different from many poses is that it entails rapid movement.	Matsyendrasana)	strengthens the spine. It is also beneficial for liver, kidneys, as well as adrenal glands.
Shoulder Stand (Sarvangasana)	In the Shoulder Stand the body is resting on the shoulders. This Yoga Pose improves circulation, strengthens the abdominal area, and stimulates the thyroid gland.	DISCUSSION Yoga could help women to limit symptoms of the menopause, according to researchers yoga significantly cut hot flushes and improved concentration, sleep and pain levels. The researchers found that relaxation therapies of yoga showed the most promising effect on menopause. Although properly controlled studies are still required to confirm these benefiting particular, yoga showed significant treatment effects for hot flushes and cognitive symptoms. In certain cases yoga also showed benefits for sleep, mood, and pain symptoms. As many women did not want to use hormone replacement therapy but were poorly advised about the science behind non-drug alternatives. The efficacy of yoga in the rehabilitation of postmenopausal osteoporosis has been showed as a positive response. The maintaining of emotional stability, improvement in posture, balance, and coordination and increasing in body	
The Bow	The Bow maintains elasticity of spine, improves posture, increase vitality, reduces abdominal fats, and keeps the digestive and reproductive system healthy.		
Cat Pose (Bidalasana)	The Cat Yoga Pose teaches to initiate movement from the center and to coordinate the movement with breath. These are two of the most important themes in Yoga practice.		
Half Spinal Twist (Ardha)	If done properly, the Half Spinal Twist lengthens and		

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flexibility are major effects of yoga in menopause. Yoga helps to improve balance so the chances of falling are minimized. Most people never practice balancing in their lives; yoga begins to change that. Yoga has many other positive health benefits. Balance to the organs and glands are often seen with a dedicated yoga practice. Many people who fall and break bones do so because they are heavily medicated by drugs to treat symptoms of other diseases. These drugs often create a “foggy” or unfocused state in people. Yoga often begins to allow people to remove themselves from these mind-altering drugs, not only allowing them to become balanced and focused, but beginning to help heal these other disorders. At a deeper level, yoga practice has been shown to have various effects on the nervous and hormonal systems. Yoga has been shown to induce the relaxation response, the reversal of stress.

CONCLUSION

Regularly practicing Yoga may have positive effects on the menopausal women as it remarkably improves the bone health of

the lady. . There may, however, be benefits that can occur for balance, specifically when related to ankle and foot strength. Based on the evidence from various researches practicing yoga as the primary source of exercise may provide enough support for increasing BMD, or improving balance and strength. Expected benefits may include increased fitness levels in the widely recognized components of flexibility, muscular strength and endurance and cardiovascular health. Health related and psychological benefits include relief from stress, relaxation, an overall feeling of well-being, and sense of “flow” – a sense of immersion and absorption in one’s experience. Benefits of particular concern to women include relief from premenstrual syndrome, lower back pain, depression, respiratory disorders, or menopausal symptoms.

Thus the possibility of yoga can be used therapeutically as a type of complementary and alternative medicine.

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