

Need of Yoga for Boosting Sports Performance and Health

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Abstract: Although most poses are not aerobic in nature, they do in fact send oxygen to the cells in the body by way of conscious deep breathing and sustained stretching and contraction of different muscle groups. Whatever sport you choose to practice, yoga can enhance and complement your ability. Most sports build muscular strength and stamina, often in specific areas of the body. Yoga can benefit professional sports persons, it is necessary to explore what is required to play a sport and play it well. It is well acknowledged that to play any sport, whether it be tennis, volleyball, surfing, swimming or running, we must develop the basic skills and continually train the body so that we can apply the skill in a refined and polished way. This of course requires considerable time, energy and commitment to practice the skill at hand. Having a body that is flexible, strong and controlled is also another important consideration, if one is not able to move the body with the grace, velocity and speed required, then performance will be lackluster. So, we can say that yoga is very beneficial to everyone specially for a sportsmen.

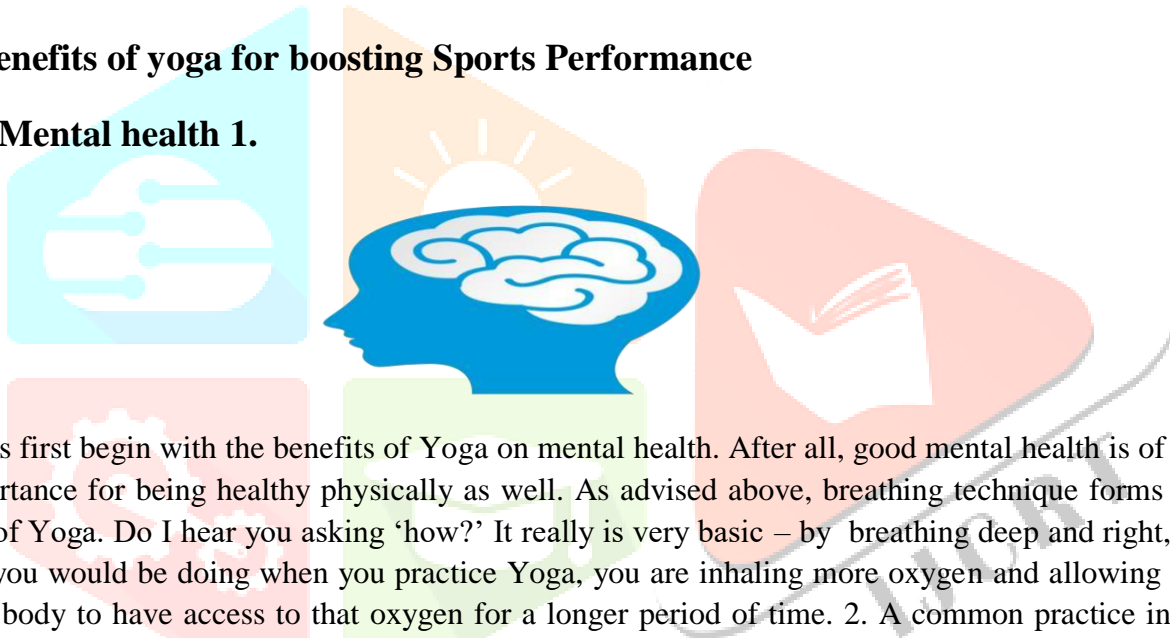
Keywords: Yoga, Injury, Fitness, Performance.

1. Introduction: Yoga originated thousands of years ago in India as a technique to help people achieve spiritual enlightenment. Based on the idea that the mind and body are one, students believe that Yoga improves health by improving how you see the world, which calms the spirit and decreases stress. Today, people practice Yoga to improve their physical, mental and/or spiritual well being. There are many disciplines of yoga that emphasize different aspects of the mind, body and spirit. However, in the West, mainstream Yoga focuses largely on the physical practice, primarily Hatha Yoga. Hatha is a widespread style that incorporates a series of poses (called Asanas) that emphasize stretching, breathing (called Pranayams), relaxation and meditation techniques to help build strength, increase flexibility and balance, and improve coordination. Yoga has a lot of definitions floating around in today's world; however, if we go back to the roots of the word, we find that the term 'Yoga' has its origins in Sanskrit. It means to unite – Yoga helps the body to unite with the other vital metaphysical aspects of the mind and spirit. It is also often defined as a lifestyle which aims to have a healthy mind within a healthy body. Most simply defined, yoga is a set of poses or 'asanas', coupled with breathing techniques, which help impart strength and flexibility to the body

while helping to balance the mind and its' thinking. Unlike other physical forms of exercises, like the aerobics, by practicing yoga, one can not only achieve physical health, but also mental and spiritual well being. There is a great need of yoga and yogic practices to be taught and also to practice yoga, to overcome physical, mental and physiological problems. My paper largely deals with the mental aspects, as it is the current need. I urge upon the August body to see that yoga to be made simple rather than complex through research for the following reasons Development of science and technology in the recent years has made man's life fast, busy and full of tensions. The pressure on the muscles has been largely taken away by the machines, but the pressure on the nerves has greatly increased. This has resulted in what are called stress disorders or the psychosomatic disorders. Our mind and body is capable of bearing the load of tension to a certain limit. If tension continues beyond that limit, then the balance of the psycho-physiological processes is disturbed, and that results into various symptoms of maladjustment the mind expresses the tension in the form of impulses that flow from the brain to various muscles of the body. If these muscles continue to make an impact on the glands and organs, this will give rise to the malfunctioning of the organ or glands concerned. Unless and until the mind be relieved of the tension prevailing in it, the disorder of the organs concerned can't be rectified.

2. Benefits of yoga for boosting Sports Performance

2.1 Mental health 1.



Let us first begin with the benefits of Yoga on mental health. After all, good mental health is of paramount importance for being healthy physically as well. As advised above, breathing technique forms an integral part of Yoga. Do I hear you asking 'how?' It really is very basic – by breathing deep and right, something that you would be doing when you practice Yoga, you are inhaling more oxygen and allowing the cells of your body to have access to that oxygen for a longer period of time. 2. A common practice in yoga is to breathe only from one nostril at a time, while holding the other one closed with the tip of your finger. Medical research has shown that this boosts increased activity of the opposite side of the brain, leading to better cognitive performance and tasks associated with the other side of the brain. Regular yoga practice helps children with attention deficit disorder and people suffering from anxiety, depression and mood swings. It also helps keep the mind calm and reduce stress and thereby increase the general well being of the person.

2.2 Strength



Ever wondered, why so many of us, after a hard day's work, come and plunk ourselves, on our home sofas, with very little energy to even fetch a glass of water for ourselves. This is caused by lack of inner strength. Certain asanas of the yoga help generate inner strength. Inner strength is essential in doing day to day

activities and in preventing you from injuries. This is especially useful, as we grow old and need more energy and strength to do the same activity.

2.3 Flexibility



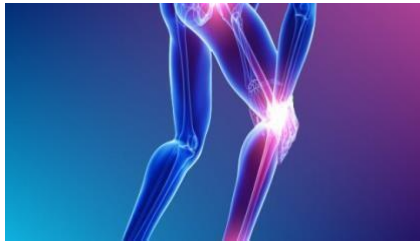
The popular notion that you need to be flexible in order to do yoga is incorrect; it is really the other way round – you should do yoga so that you can be more flexible. If you have a flexible body, you find it easy to do tasks. A lot of poses in Yoga concentrate on stretching and improving your flexibility. With yoga, not only the muscles of the body, but also the softer tissues of your body are worked out, resulting in less build up of the lactic acid, which is responsible for stiffness in various parts of the body. Yoga increases a range of motions of the less used inner muscles and helps in lubrication of joints. The result is a more flexible body, able to perform tasks easily!

2.4 Cardiovascular



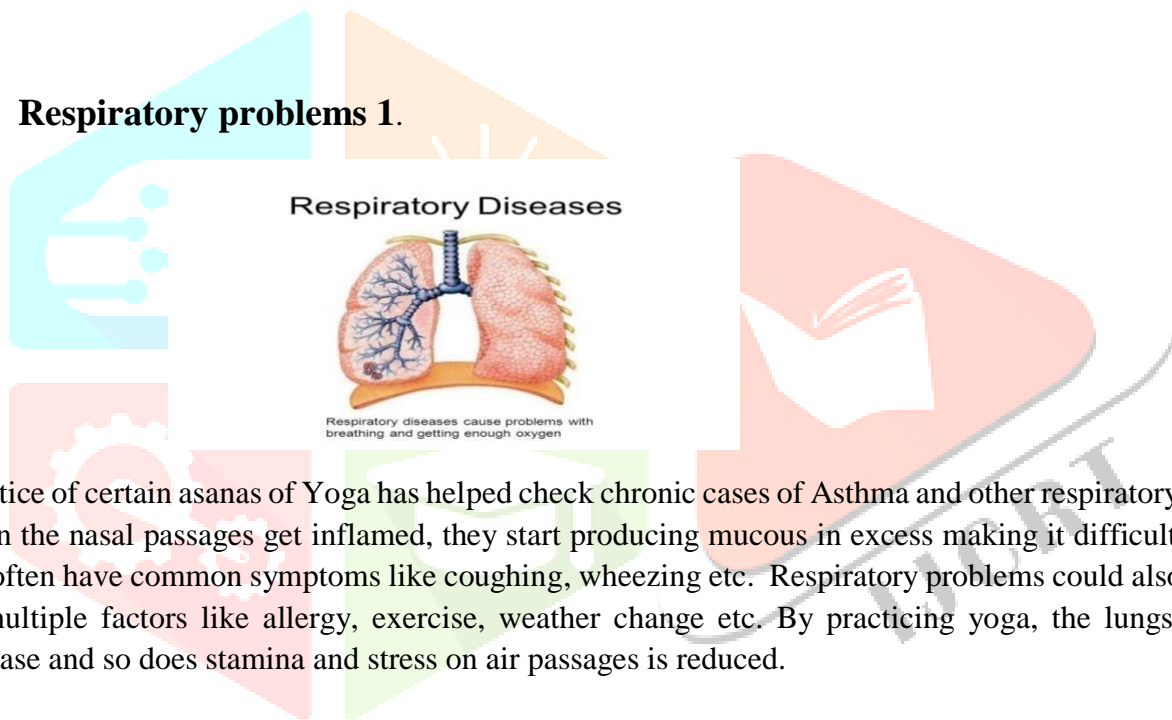
Yoga has a lot of positive effects on the cardiovascular system of our body. A healthy cardiovascular system is responsible for preventing heart attacks, strokes and hypertension. Heart disease is a problem which has roots in an improper lifestyle, faulty diet and negative thinking. Our thoughts, emotions and feelings affect our body and negative emotions/thoughts send a series of complex and unhealthy chemical processes throughout the body, giving alarms that something is amiss. Yoga tends to control these by bringing in fresh life-giving oxygen. The antioxidant properties of Yoga help in preventing the negative emotions and promote a general well being in the body.

2.5 Joint pain and arthritis



The general tendency of people suffering from joint pain, inflammation and stiffness is to avoid exercise. Yoga helps prevent advancement of this malady by toning the muscles and loosening the joints. When a person suffering from joint pain practices yoga, the gentle stretching and strengthening movements of the various Yogic poses, improves the blood flow to the muscles and tissues supporting the joints, thereby making it more comfortable to move.

2.6 Respiratory problems 1.



Practice of certain asanas of Yoga has helped check chronic cases of Asthma and other respiratory problems. When the nasal passages get inflamed, they start producing mucous in excess making it difficult to breathe and often have common symptoms like coughing, wheezing etc. Respiratory problems could also be caused by multiple factors like allergy, exercise, weather change etc. By practicing yoga, the lungs capacities increase and so does stamina and stress on air passages is reduced.

2.7 Back pain 1.



Yoga has helped innumerable cases of back ache. Back ache is caused due to stress and tension in the muscles supporting the spinal cord. Back ache may be caused due to improper postures mild injuries, which have been left untreated etc. Yoga has seemed to help cases of back pain by enhancing flexibility and strengthening the muscle groups supporting the spine, helping the body to maintain an upright posture. It eases the back pain by increase in blood circulation and getting healing nutrients to the injured muscles. Apart from healing injured muscles, it also prevents further injuries by strengthening the muscles.

2.8 Memory improvement 1.



Yoga helps in retaining information better and for a longer period of time due to its focus on concentration and meditation. By breathing right, concentrating and meditating, more blood flows to the brain, making it supple and ready to accept more information and reproduce that information when required.

2.9 Obesity



Obesity is when a person weighs more than his normal/ stipulated weight. This may be caused due to faulty eating habits, stress related eating, imbalances in the digestive and endocrine system or even something as basic as less physical exercise. Yoga helps obesity by inhaling more oxygen, which helps in breaking down fat cells and increasing your metabolism. Also, it helps remove sluggishness from the digestive and endocrine.

2.10 Asthma:



Studies conducted at yoga institutions in India have reported impressive success in improving asthma. It has also been proved that asthma attacks can usually be prevented by yoga methods without resorting to drugs.

2.11 Respiration Problems : Patients who practice yoga have a better chance of gaining the ability to control their breathing problems. With the help of yogic breathing exercises, it is possible to control an attack of severe shortness of breath without having to seek medical help. Various studies have confirmed the beneficial effects of yoga for patients with respiratory problems.

2.12 High Blood Pressure: The relaxation and exercise components of yoga have a major role to play in the treatment and prevention of high blood pressure (hypertension). A combination of biofeedback and yogic breathing and relaxation techniques has been found to lower blood pressure and reduce the need for high blood pressure medication in people suffering from it.

2.13 Pain Management: Yoga is believed to reduce pain by helping the brain's pain center regulate the gate controlling mechanism located in the spinal cord and the secretion of natural painkillers in the body. Breathing exercises used in yoga can also reduce pain. Because muscles tend to relax when you exhale, lengthening the time of exhalation can help produce relaxation and reduce tension. Awareness of breathing helps to achieve calmer, slower respiration and aid in relaxation and pain management.

HOW YOGA IMPROVES OUR HEALTH AND WELL BEING :

1. Yoga can help your heart

Yoga improves the quality of life in people with atrial fibrillation, according to [research](#). Heart rate and blood pressure also decreased in subjects who did yoga. Following a systematic review of 37 randomised controlled trials, researchers from the Europe and USA have discovered that yoga may reduce the risk factors for heart disease.

2. Yoga can have a positive effect on your mood.

According to a recently published [study](#), People who suffer from depression should participate in yoga, and deep breathing classes at least twice weekly plus practice at home to receive a significant reduction in their symptoms.

In 2010 [study](#), researchers observed that yoga might be better than other kinds of exercise in its positive impact on mood and anxiety. The findings are the first to show an association between yoga, increased GABA levels and reduced anxiety.

3. Yoga can benefit your lungs.

A 2016 review [paper](#) suggests that yoga may have a positive effect on symptoms and quality of life in people with asthma.

Patients with COPD who practice yoga can promote their lung function, according to a [study](#). Researchers observed that lung capacity, shortness of breath, and inflammation all exhibited notable improvement after patients finished 12 weeks of training.

4. Yoga can ease physical pain.

According to a 2017 systemic review [paper](#), yoga may lead to a reduction in pain in people with chronic lower back pain. According to a 2015 study yoga can be safe and efficient for people with arthritis. After eight weeks of yoga classes improved the physical and mental well-being of individuals with knee osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

5. Yoga can help you lose weight

Regular yoga practice is linked with mindful eating, and people who eat mindfully are less inclined to be obese, according to a [study](#) led by researchers at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. A [study](#) by

researchers at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center observed that daily yoga practice might help check middle-age spread in normal-weight people and may encourage weight loss in those who are overweight.

6. Yoga can complement medication

Researchers at the Perelman School of Medicine observed that men with prostate cancer who are undergoing radiation therapy could benefit from yoga.

7. Yoga can boost your energy

Practising yoga for as little as three months can diminish fatigue and reduce inflammation in breast cancer survivors, according to a research study. The more the women in the study practised yoga, the better their results.

8. Yoga counters stress

Twenty minutes of meditation and yoga combined can reduce feelings of stress by more than 10 percent and improve sleep quality in office employees, a study suggests.

For women with breast cancer doing radiation therapy, yoga extends unique advantages exceeding fighting fatigue, according to research. Researchers observed that while simple stretching exercises prevented fatigue, patients who engaged in yoga that combined controlled breathing, meditation and relaxation techniques into their treatment plan felt improved ability to engage in their daily activities, better general health and better regulation of cortisol (the stress hormone). Women in the yoga group were also better equipped to find meaning in the illness experience, which diminished over time for the women in the other two groups.

9. Yoga can help reduce inflammation

Frequently practising yoga may decrease the number of inflammatory compounds in the blood and diminish the level of inflammation that usually rises because of both normal ageing and stress, a new study has shown. The study showed that women who routinely practised yoga had lower amounts of the cytokine interleukin-6 (IL-6) in their blood.

10. Yoga Takes A Bite Out Of Eating Disorders

A study published in the latest issue of Psychology of Women Quarterly reports that mind-body exercise, such as yoga, is associated with greater body satisfaction and fewer symptoms of eating disorders than traditional aerobic exercise like jogging or using cardio machines.

Yoga in Modern Life is a holistic system, which means it takes into consideration not only the physical, but also the mental and spiritual aspects. Positive Thinking, perseverance, discipline, orientation towards the Supreme, prayer as well as kindness and understanding form the way to Self-Knowledge and Self-Realization.

These goals are attained by:

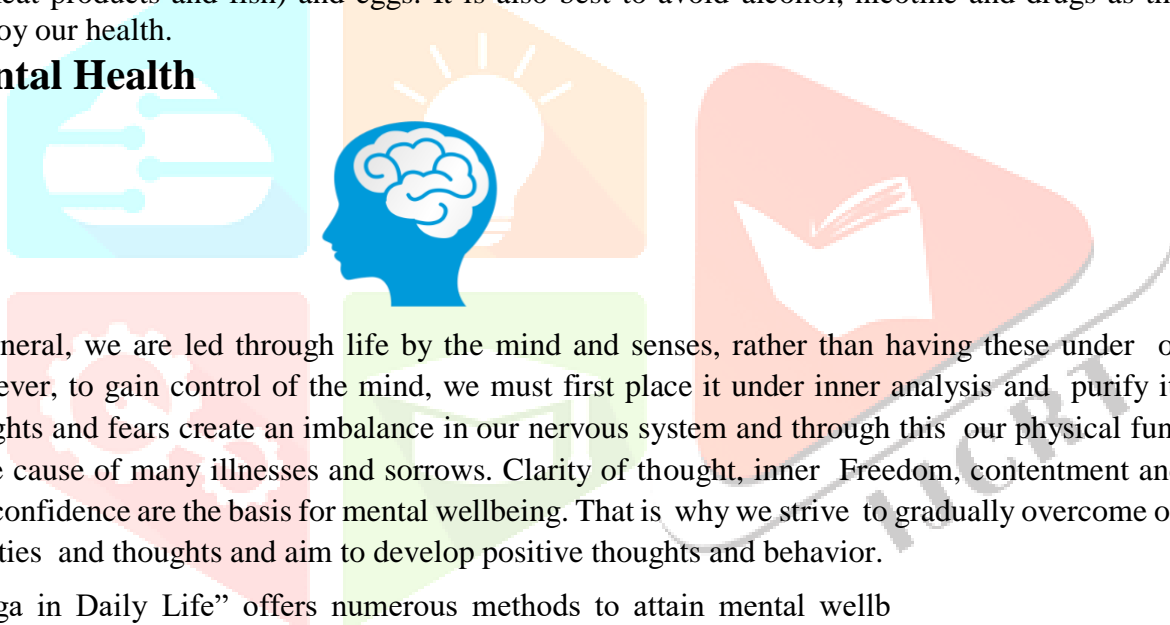
Physical Health



The health of the body is of fundamental importance in life.

An even greater factor in the maintenance of good health is the food we eat. What we eat influences both our body and psyche - our habits and qualities. In short, the food we eat has an effect upon our whole being. Food is the source of our physical energy and vitality. Balanced and healthy foods include: grains, vegetables, pulses, fruit, nuts, milk and milk products, as well as honey, sprouts, salads, seeds, herbs and spices - either raw or freshly cooked. Foods to be avoided are old, reheated or denatured foods, meat (including all meat products and fish) and eggs. It is also best to avoid alcohol, nicotine and drugs as these rapidly destroy our health.

Mental Health



In general, we are led through life by the mind and senses, rather than having these under our control. However, to gain control of the mind, we must first place it under inner analysis and purify it. Negative thoughts and fears create an imbalance in our nervous system and through this our physical function. This is the cause of many illnesses and sorrows. Clarity of thought, inner Freedom, contentment and a healthy self-confidence are the basis for mental wellbeing. That is why we strive to gradually overcome our negative qualities and thoughts and aim to develop positive thoughts and behavior.

“Yoga in Daily Life” offers numerous methods to attain mental wellbeing, Yogatexts to purify and free the mind. An important tool in self-observance of ethical principles, the in Daily Life” offers numerous methods to keeping of good attain mental wellbeing: Mantra company and the study of inspiring -investigation and self-practice

Self-Analysis. In this meditation practice we come into contact with our subconscious, the source of our desires, complexes, behavioral patterns and prejudices. The practice guides us to become acquainted with our own nature - as we are and why we are so - and then beyond self-acceptance to Self-Realization. This technique enables us to overcome negative qualities and habits and helps us to manage better life problems.

Social Health



Social health is the ability to be happy within oneself and to be able to make others happy. It means to nurture genuine contact and communication with other people, to assume responsibility within society and to work for the community. Social health is also the ability to relax and experience life in all its beauty.

One of the growing problems of our times is drug addiction. It is a clear sign of social illness. The system of “Yoga in Daily Life” can assist in overcoming this illness and grant people a new, positive aim and purpose in life. The importance of keeping good, positive company has a great influence upon our psyche, as such companionship moulds and forms our personality and character. Positive company is of great importance in spiritual development. Living “Yoga in constructive work for our neighbours and the community, to preserve nature and the environment and work for peace in the world. To practice Yoga means to be active in the most positive sense and to work for the welfare of all of mankind.

Spiritual Health



The main principle of spiritual life and the highest precept of mankind are:

AHIMSA – PARAMO- DHARMA

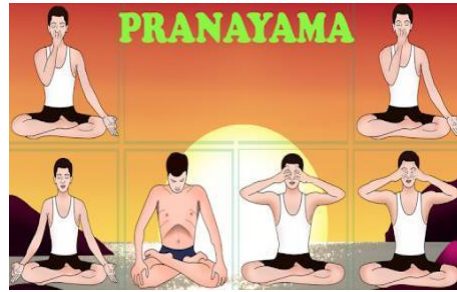
This precept embraces the principle of non-violence, in thought, word, feeling and action. Prayer, meditation, Mantra, positive thinking and tolerance, lead to spiritual health. Humans should be protectors, not destroyers. Those qualities that really make us human are the ability to give, understand and forgive. To protect life and respect the individuality and independence of all forms of life is a primary practice of the Yoga teachings. By following this precept greater tolerance, understanding, mutual love, help and compassion develops - not only between individuals, but between all humans, nations, races, and religious faiths.

Self-Realization or realization of the Divine within us Healthy Life) (

Cultivate indomitable will. Practice self-control and self-mastery. Have self-confidence. Develop independent judgment. Do not argue. Strive ceaselessly for Self-realization. Kill this little ego. Develop pure love. Rise above all distinctions of caste, creed and colour. Give up the sensual objects.

Moksha is the summum bonum of life. It is freedom from births and deaths. It is not will have to know the Truth through direct intuitive experience. You will have to cut asunder the veil of ignorance by meditation on the Self. Then you will shine in your pristine purity and divine glory.

The Techniques of Pranayama



Yogic techniques are known to improve one's overall performance. Pranayama is an important, yet little known part of Yoga. Until recently, this art and science of yogic breathing was almost completely unknown to the common man like many other ancient Indian arts. Those who knew it used to be very reluctant to share their knowledge and experience with anyone, unless a student proved by tests that he was ready to receive it.

This having been (accomplished) "Pranayama" which is control of inspiration and expiration the inspiration of prana-vayushwasa and expiration is prashwasa and the cessation of both is characteristic of Pranayama. Patanjali in his Yoga Sutra describes – Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi as eight angas (parts) of Yoga. Amongst them, in the present materialistic world, the third and fourth part, Pranayama and Asana (Postures) are considered as very important part and prescribed by modern medicine too.

The beneficial effects of different Pranayama are well reported and has sound scientific basis. 2-3 There is reported evidences of Pranayama that it increases chest wall expansion and lung volumes.

The ancient sages also discovered that among the thousands of nadis there are three which are the most powerful energy channels and, when purified enough, these can promote the development of the human being in all three planes: physical, mental and spiritual, allowing us to reach higher levels of consciousness. These channels are called IDA, PINGALA and SHUSHUMNA nadis. Pranayama techniques act to purify the nadis including these three main energy channels. Yogis discovered a long time ago that breathing through the left nostril we can stimulate the main energy channel called SHUSHUMNA and harmonize the activity of the nervous system as a whole.

Conclusion:

Overall, the studies comparing the effects of yoga and exercise seem to indicate that, in both healthy and diseased populations, yoga may be as effective or better than exercise at improving a variety of health-related outcome measures including HRV, to improve subjective measures of fatigue pain, and sleep in healthy and ill populations. However, future clinical trials are needed to further examine the distinctions between exercise and yoga, particularly how the two modalities may differ. In their effects on sports performance, researcher find out that yoga in sports as important as other think it helps us in different ways and different levels in a sports men life

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