



General Understanding and Awareness about Yoga, Health and Hygiene in Schools

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Abstract:

Yoga refers to union not as an idea, a philosophy or as a concept that you imbibe. Generally, health is seen as the normal and sound state of the body of the human being. Health also refers to a state of sound mind and physically fit body free from any disorder, sickness or ailment. In simple words, health refers to the physical, emotional and psychological well-being of a person. Hygiene refers to all those human activities that are done for improving and preserving, maintaining sound health. So hygiene is requirement for keeping good health. In schools in India we need practices of Yoga and keeping good health by way of awareness of improving our regular health related hygienic practices.

Keywords: *Yoga, Health, Hygiene*

1. Introduction

The word “yoga” essentially means, “that which brings you to reality”. Literally, it means “union.” Union means it brings you to the ultimate reality, where individual manifestations of life are surface bubbles in the process of creation. Right now, a coconut tree and a mango tree have popped up from the same earth. ‘What is yoga, exactly? Is it just an exercise form? Is it a religion, a philosophy, an ideology? Or is it something else entirely? The word “yoga” literally means “union”. In this article, Sadhguru offers the following yoga definition; essentially, “that which brings you to reality.”Yoga means to move towards an experiential reality where one knows the ultimate nature of the existence, the way it is made. Yoga refers to union not as an idea, a philosophy or as a concept that you imbibe. As an intellectual idea, if you vouch by the commonness of the universe, it may make you popular in a tea party, it may give you a certain social status, but it does not serve any other purpose. You will see, when things come down to even money – it does not even have to boil down to life and death – even for money, “This is me, that is you.” The boundary is clear; there is no question of you and me being one.

In broadly saying, health is seen as the normal and sound state of the body of the human being. Our Health also refers to a state of sound mind and physically fit sound body free from any disorder, sickness or ailment. In simple words, health refers to the physical, emotional and psychological well-being of a human being. Hygiene indicates to good practices which prevents diseases and allow us to live in good health, especially in the matter like, cleanliness, proper disposal of sewage and use of safe drinking water. It refers to all those human activities that are done for improving and preserving, maintaining sound health. So hygiene is requirement for keeping good health. In schools in India we need practices of Yoga and keeping good health by way of awareness of improving our regular health related hygienic practices.

2. What is Yoga?

The word “yoga” essentially means, “that which brings you to reality”. Literally, it means “union.” Union means it brings you to the ultimate reality, where individual manifestations of life are surface bubbles in the process of creation. Right now, a coconut tree and a mango tree have popped up from the same earth. ‘What is yoga, exactly? Is it just an exercise form? Is it a religion, a philosophy, an ideology? Or is it something else entirely? The word “yoga” literally means “union”. In this article, Sad guru offers the following yoga definition; essentially, “that which brings you to reality.” Yoga means to move towards an experiential reality where one knows the ultimate nature of the existence, the way it is made. Yoga refers to union not as an idea, a philosophy or as a concept that you imbibe. As an intellectual idea, if you vouch by the commonness of the universe, it may make you popular in a tea party, it may give you a certain social status, but it does not serve any other purpose. You will see, when things come down to even money – it does not even have to boil down to life and death – even for money, “This is me, that is you.” The boundary is clear; there is no question of you and me being one. Yoga and spirituality are inseparable. It is an ancient teaching that helps the persistent practitioner to achieve the spiritual enlightenment. By no means has it consisted of a set of exercise routine only. Yoga is comprehensive system, a way of thinking, a way of living one’s everyday life. In essence, spirituality deals with one’s relationship with that which is beyond individuality. From the yogic perspective, one experiences the spirituality by cultivating his awareness and taking this awareness deep into the subtle dimensions of his being. Awareness allows one to experience the subtler aspects of life and marks a step on his inner journey toward self-realization. Once one has forged a conscious relationship with that which is beyond the “little” him, then one can bring that connection and understanding into his everyday life. Only then can one truly permeate his life and teachings with depth and meaning. In this modern era yoga help to achieve the highest goal of spirituality regardless of one’s spiritual aim. Yoga has always been an important part of Indian civilization. Though its form have changed or seen with a different outlook in different centuries. Yoga was practiced and looked upon greatly in fifth and sixth century but during eighteenth century as Indian history was going through a turmoil in British rule where the encounter of two different culture occur whose consequences we are still facing, yoga was viewed differently but people kept experiencing it and it was passed on from generation to generation.

3. Benefits of Yoga

Yoga, the Sanskrit word for ‘union’, is a practice that uses posture and breathing techniques to induce relaxation and improve strength, and its health benefits may surpass those of any other activity. Whether one practice yoga to relax, stretch, breathe, meditate, or simply because it’s in fashion, he may not realize the numerous health benefits of yoga. And while there are many different kinds of yoga, ranging from the gentler Hatha yoga to the more strenuous, like Bikram yoga (which is performed in a 105°F room) or power yoga, every form of yoga improves health from head to toe. Here are some of yoga’s many health benefits. Benefits of Yoga to our Bones, Muscles, and Joints

1. The physical benefits of yoga are myriad. Yoga keeps our body strong, as it involves all the muscles in our body to hold and balance yoga Asanas (poses). The various yoga postures strengthen our feet, legs, hands, abdominals, lower back, legs, and shoulders.
2. Yoga’s stretching and breathing exercises improve our flexibility, helping joints, tendons, and muscles stay limber. People suffering from osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis will see a noticeable improvement in their stiffness, pain, and other arthritic symptoms by practicing yoga poses and postures.
3. Yoga improves our endurance, especially the more athletic forms of yoga such as ashtanga yoga, Power yoga, vinyasa yoga, and Bikram yoga. These rigorous yoga practices follow a specific sequence of poses (Asanas) that become more challenging as one progress. Unlike the gentler Hatha yoga, the forms of Ashtanga yoga, Power yoga, Vinyasa yoga, and Bikram yoga require one to keep his body in constant motion Sri Aurobindo 3 between poses, resulting in a strenuous cardiovascular workout and improved core strength.
4. Hatha yoga can relieve chronic back and neck pain, since the poses and postures gently stretch and strengthen our back and neck muscles.

5. Yoga is often prescribed to help heal various injuries, including repetitive strain injuries, knee and back injuries, pulled hamstrings, even minor skin burns.
6. Yoga is an excellent weight-bearing exercise that can improve our bone density. This is particularly beneficial for women approaching menopause, since yoga can help ward off osteoporosis, or thinning of the bone.

4. Benefits of Health through Yoga

4.1 Stress Management

Regular yoga practice helps to reduce stress responses in your body, according to a study in the 2010 issue of "Psychosomatic Medicine." Reducing the inflammatory response to stressors on your body will help reduce your chance of stress-related conditions such as high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease. Meditation is also an effective stress reducer that is used to help reduce anxiety, panic disorders and agoraphobia, an anxiety disorder.

4.2 Increased Flexibility

Western society is plagued by sedentary jobs where workers sit most of the day. This leads to reduced muscle mass, fitness and flexibility. In addition, office work increases neck and shoulder strain from hunching over in front of a computer all day. Yoga poses focus on stretching and lengthening the muscles. Increased flexibility will help you with daily movements such as lifting and bending, while improving sports performance. Many athletes incorporate yoga into their workout schedules to improve or maintain flexibility.

4.3 Emotional Boost

Both yoga and meditation improve mental focus and provide a general feeling of well-being. Many yoga disciplines are based around an upbeat theme. For example, Anusara yoga's philosophy looks for the good in all things and is created for an uplifting experience focused on the celebration of the heart. A 2012 control study published in "Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine" found yoga participants happy, peaceful and upbeat in contrast to the control group who had a decrease in general well-being. Meditation provides an emotional boost through deep relaxation, and it can be done anywhere. You can give yourself an emotional boost by taking a 10-minute meditation break right at your desk. Just simply shut your eyes, focus on relaxing your muscles and practice deep breathing.

4.4 Better Diet

Studies suggest that practicing yoga improves fitness and body awareness, leading to better eating habits. This in turn leads to increased self-esteem and the desire to take care of your body. Practicing meditation or yoga is a behavior modification technique that can help you improve your overall fitness.

4.5 Improved Health

Reducing your stress level, eating healthier and getting more exercise can only lead to better health. Modern life is full of stressful situations, fatigue from long hours and little sleep, allergies, anxiety disorders and a long list of stress-related diseases. Adding yoga or meditation to your life will improve the quality and possibly the quantity of your life. Improved health means you can participate in more physical activities and just feel better in the things you do daily. The proverb says that health is wealth. It is truly said that of all things in the world health is the most valuable that one can possess. Money is no doubt a pleasant thing. However, it can give no pleasure to a man of ruined health. As body and mind are closely connected, the mind cannot be sound and cheerful without sound health.

4.6 Value and benefits of Good Health

Life is a great struggle, and health is the best weapon to be successful in the battle of life. A healthy man can enjoy life in every way. An unhealthy man lives a most miserable life. He may have intelligence, merit and wealth, but he cannot put them to use and reap their benefits.

4.7 Hygiene Habits for Good Health

Pure water: Pure water is another source of good health. A great deal of sickness is caused by using impure water. People in villages often bathe, and wash clothes and cattle in tanks. If this water is used for drinking purposes, it may bring disastrous diseases. To make water pure it should be boiled, so that it may not do any harm.

4.8 Balanced and Nutritious food

Wholesome food keeps our health good. A part of the food we take serves as fire to keep the body warm; another part forms flesh to give us strength. Pure milk is the most nutritious food. Vegetables and many other things that we generally take are nutritious food. A mixed diet is the best food for us. Stale and rotten food is dangerous for health. Meals should be taken at fixed times. Over-eating causes many diseases. Special care is necessary about food when any epidemic prevails.

4.9 Cleanliness

Cleanliness is necessary for good health. It is the most important hygiene habit. Dirt spreads diseases, because germs thrive in it. They move about with the dust in the air, so a dirty man is easily attacked with diseases. The man, who has a clean body and puts on clean clothes, is free from dirt and dust, and no disease can attack him easily. Daily bathing is a good habit. It keeps our body clean. We should keep our clothes, beddings, food, utensils, and all other things neat and clean. No dirt should be allowed to gather near our houses. We should also keep our teeth and nails clean. We should remember that cleanliness is next to godliness.

4.10 Eye care

We should take great care of our eyes. Both inadequate light and excess of light are harmful to our eyes. Eyes become fatigued by study and require some rest. Bathing the eyes with cold water at night is a good hygiene habit.

4.11 Other Measures for Good Health

Other Measures for Good Health are as under:

Regular exercise: Regular physical exercise is necessary to keep good health. Walking in the open air every morning and evening strengthens the muscles of the limbs and quickens the circulation of blood. A game every day before sunset is very advantageous. A man, taking regular exercise, will be much better fitted for the duties of life than a languid bookworm will.

Pure air: The first requisite is pure air. To secure good health we must have a sufficient supply of fresh air. For this we should keep the environment clean.

Proper sleep: Many people sleep too much. This renders them indolent. On the other hand, a zealous student goes to the opposite extreme. Both of these practices injure health. 'Early to bed and early to rise' is the best course.

5. Conclusion

Yoga is a metaphysical doctrine or a philosophy. It provides amazing improvement towards health, personal appearance and youthfulness, which appears to be miraculous. In the 21st Century era health and psychological problems are treated by yoga. It can be said that physical, mental and psychological problems could be treated through yoga. It bears solutions of all physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social and family problems of our present hectic life style. So we should adopt Yoga on first priority in our day to day life matters. Yoga through meditation works remarkably to achieve this harmony and helps the mind work in Synchronize with the body. In fact yoga = meditation, because both work together in achieving the common goal of unity of mind, body and spirit – a state of eternal bliss. We must learn proper hygiene practices to preserve our health. Too much work or exercise, eating or drinking are injurious to health. A regulated life is very helpful to a sound health. Above all, the mind too, must be kept clean and pure.

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