

**IYENGAR YOGA: A Complementary Method To Improve The
Quality Of Life In Peoples Suffering From Eating Disorders**

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Abstract :

Yoga is one of the spiritual practices derived from the caves and orthodox school of different yogis of Hindu Philosophy. The practices were codified by Patanjali under the title of Ashtanga Yoga. Although Yoga was traditionally seen as a practice meant for achieving self-realization, in recent years there has been significant attention given to the effects of yoga practices on physical and mental health. The aim of this study was to get insight into factors that have contributed to incidence of eating disorders, reasons for joining the program of Iyengar Yoga and contribution of Iyengar Yoga as a complimentary therapy method has proven to be effective as additional intervention in improving the quality of life in persons with eating disorders. In this article, Iyengar Yoga practices are discussed for increasing their control over their cravings and mindfulness skill development. Reduction of negative functioning and increase in mental health, physical health and behavior regulation.

The paper seeks to discuss in detail the following issues relating to Iyengar Yoga effects on people suffering from eating disorder:

1. Introduction
2. Origins of Yoga
3. Iyengar Yoga and Eating disorders
4. Results
5. Conclusions

Keywords: Spirituality, Yoga Therapy, psychology, stress coping, mindfulness, complementary, meditation, Eating Disorder, Meditation, Breathing exercises

Highlights :

- Iyengar Yoga is spiritual practice originally meant to help in achieving self - realization .
- Iyengar yoga props can help beginners to perform yoga poses comfortably and to hold body in one posture for longer time without any stress.
- Yogic practices have produced neurobiological changes in healthy person.
- Yoga- based practices have shown its positive effects in many mental and physical diseases
- Benefits of such spiritual practices like yoga for persons with eating disorders is astonishing.

1.Introduction : Historically there are eight elements of yoga, that together, comprise ethical principles and practices for living a meaningful ,purposeful ,moral and self-disciplined life .Iyengar Yoga includes traditional yoga practices ,including postures and meditation. For more than 50 Years ,Iyengar Yoga has been captivated clinicians for its potential application with mental and physical health. Iyengar Yoga focus attention on immediate experience and finding one-mindedness .Although a great body literature exists on yoga and its healing properties but yoga and eating behaviors both are unique ,both share inherent similarities that are confluent in serving the mental and physical client population .The article has three goals .The first goal is to define and characterize Iyengar Yoga ,by primarily drawing upon yogic texts and the developing scholarship on the topic .Many readers may find the concept of yoga unfamiliar or resist participation due to Western misconceptions surrounding the now popularized physical practice of yoga or use of Iyengar Yoga props during practice of yoga for maintaining stability in one posture for longer time .Second goal is to place therapeutic skills training for physical and mental health ,also to expose a process through which yoga is theorized as a healthy eating habit .The paper concludes with the third goal of proposing future directions in theoretical development and operational definition of yoga.(Dianne Neumark-Sztainer,phd,NOTED researcher and certified yoga teacher) ,has written :”Yoga and eating disorders : Is there a place for yoga in the prevention and treatment of eating disorders and disordered eating behaviors ?”(Neumark –Sztainer ,2014).She concludes that “Promising findings point to a need for randomized ,controlled trials that would allow for the determination of whether involvement in a regular yoga practice leads to a decrease in risk factors and an increase in protective factors for eating disorders .”She also determines that students in yoga classes are at equal or greater risk for having disordered eating behaviors than the general population . Yoga classes ,with well –trained instructors ,can be a nurturing environment to learn better tools for self-care ,how to pay more attention to their body needs ,and, potentially, less disordered eating symptoms .Neumark - Sztainer suggests that “high levels of yoga practice may be helpful in promoting body awareness, responsiveness ,and appreciation .

Background: Individuals with restrictive eating disorders present with co-morbid psychiatric disorders and many attempt to control symptoms using strenuous exercises that increase caloric expenditure. Iyengar Yoga offers a safe avenue for the engagement in physical activity while providing outlet for disease-associated symptoms. This study makes effort in use of yoga practice on patients suffering from anxiety, depression and body image disturbance in persons effected of eating disorder. Eating disorders are one of the most common psychological/psychosomatic disorders that cause many problems for physical health, mental functioning and quality of life. Eating disorder is identified by severe chaotic eating behaviours and includes anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. The use of complementary medicine, such as yoga, has always been of interest to researchers in clinical sciences and has been proposed as a new approach to the treatment of eating disorders. Yoga essentially means connectivity and continuity. Through mind- and body-based techniques, yoga can be effective in the achievement of therapy goals in feeding and eating patients. **Methods:** The data for the present review study was collected through a search in electronic resources and databases as well as manual search of library resources. The search for relevant articles and studies was performed on the internet in relevant websites and scientific/research journals using a number of keywords. This study will address yoga therapy and its relationship with and effects on eating disorders after a review of the definition, classification, epidemiology and pathophysiology of different types of eating disorders.

2.Origins of Yoga :A 3,000 year old tradition, yoga, is now regarded in the Western world as a holistic approach to health and is classified by the National Institutes of Health as a form of Complementary and Alternative Medicine. The word “yoga” comes from a Sanskrit root “yuj” which means union, or yoke, to join, and to direct and concentrate one's attention. Regular practice of yoga promotes strength, endurance, flexibility and facilitates characteristics of friendliness, compassion, and greater self-control, while cultivating a sense of calmness and well-being. Sustained practice also leads to important outcomes such as changes in life perspective, self-awareness and an improved sense of energy to live life fully and with genuine enjoyment. The practice of yoga produces a physiological state opposite to that of the flight-or-fight stress response and with that interruption in the stress response, a sense of balance and union between the mind and body can be achieved. The history of yoga is rather spotty because many early writings were lost. The beginnings of yoga in northern India can be traced back more than 5,000 years. The word yoga was first mentioned in the oldest sacred text, the Rig Veda, collections of songs, mantras, and rituals used by the Brahmans, the Vedic priests. Starting in late 1800s and early 1900s, yoga masters begin to travel to the West and attracted followers who attend lectures and demonstrations. Yoga is a word of Sanskrit language. Written and spoken limitedly in India, Sanskrit is found primarily in popular INDIAN liturgical contexts such as Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. The word yoga has varying interpretations but it is most commonly understood as meaning “union”. The act of joining or yoke two people or things together in a close relationship with physical, mental and

spiritual disciplines is also called yoga. Yoga has been a mind body model of restoring health and claiming the mind for centuries. Yogic literature often augments this definition, declaring that the practice of yoga aids practitioners in becoming joined with the divine or with awakening their awareness of self.

Krishnamacharya was guru of Iyengar who opened the first hath yoga school in Mysore, India, in 1924. He is widely considered the most influential yoga teacher of the 20th century and credited with the birth of hath yoga in the West. Krishnamacharya produced four students who would continue his legacy and increase the popularity of hath yoga: B.K.S. Iyengar (Iyengar-style), T.K.V. Desikachar, Pattabhi Jois (Raja or Ashtanga-style).

Hath yoga now has many different schools or styles and emphasizes a wide range of practice applications and study. Since the turn of century, popularity of yoga practice has risen dramatically to more than 36.7 million people in 2016 from 4 million in 2001, according to the Yoga in America Study, conducted by yoga journal and yoga Alliance. These numbers are on the rise as our patients, colleagues, friends, and family embrace these ancient rituals and routines. Spending on yoga classes, clothing equipment, and accessories has increased. In a world that triggers enormous anxiety and increased symptoms of distress, ancient yoga practices appeal to many seeking accessible self-shooting and self-care skills.

3.Iyengar Yoga and Eating disorder: In 2012, the words of B.K.S. Iyengar, "Yoga, an ancient but perfect science, which deals with the evolution of humanity. This evolution includes all aspects of humanity. This evolution includes all aspects of one's being, from bodily health to self-realisation." Yoga practices help in mind-body connection, increased self-awareness and making peace with their bodies, along with a return to health. The study of Iyengar Yoga teaches poses (asanas) accompanied with breathing exercises like pranayama and focused attention, or meditation named dhyana. In Iyengar yoga institutions the students learn physical movements performed in a consistent prescribed way, sometimes using props for beginners and sometimes independently without using props as comfort of student, combined with focused attention to breathing, which results in increased attention to internal feedback and tolerance for discomfort. Yoga classes typically end with savasana, a deep relaxation exercise for mind and body. The regular practice of yoga increases the capacity to understand and manage physical and potentially, emotional status like diet control.

Different researches in the past suggest regular yoga can improve depressed mood and immune function, as well as reduce stress symptoms and lower blood pressure related issues (van der Kolk et al., 2015). IYENGAR says yoga may help one to connect with his or her body in a more accepting, self-soothing way. Additional studies indicate that because of consistent hours of yoga practice over many years can enlarge certain areas of brain. Indeed, yoga's potential neuroprotective effects, across age, experience, and frequency, indicated increased age-related gray matter (Gm), mostly in the left hemisphere, toward a parasympathetic mode, with benefits to affective status. Yogis reveal larger brain volume in the somatosensory cortex, the

superior parietal cortex (in directing attention),and the visual cortex (visualisation).Yogis may also have enlarged hippocampi ,perhaps dampening stress ,and the posterior cingulate cortex ,which helps with the concept of the self .Results suggest regular yoga practice ,including postures ,breathing exercises ,and meditation, predicted GM volume differences benefiting body representation, attention,self-relevant processing ,visualization ,stress regulation (villemure ,ceko ,cotton ,& Bushnell,2015).My doctoral research noted improved state anxiety ,body image ,and self efficacy in first –time pregnant women participating in consistent prenatal yoga training (Samuels,1987).Additional research utilizing yoga as an adjective treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)indicates significant improvements that appear to be maintained and comparable to psychopharmacologic methodologies (van der kolk et al ., 2014).

The top reported reasons for starting and continuing yoga are “stress relief” ,”Flexibility and balance”, “improved health “mental health” and “physical fitness”.(Yoga in AMERICA STUDY,2016).

4.Results:The results showed that eating disorders are caused by emotional disorders and stress ,essentially by subjective factors .Many people achieve relaxation and body ,mind and soul balance with Iyengar Yoga .This practice of Iyengar Yoga makes it more possible to fight eating disorders .

5.CONCLUSIONS : Iyengar Yoga creates self- confidence and a positive feeling about one’s body and appearance .Yoga has a holistic attitude toward human –beings and provides different , continuous and simple techniques for humans health ,development , preparation and balance and is thus effective in improving nutrition and eating disorders .Yoga practice helps with eating disorders and body disturbances .Centuries of the practice and study of yoga have suggested numerous health benefits related to high blood pressure, chronic low-back pain ,sciatica ,glaucoma, arthritis, multiple sclerosis ,PTSD, and menopausal symptoms .Many of India to the west describe their own physical maladies as factors that contributed to the development of specific schools of yoga .The goal is to restore health.BY Providing purposeful distraction , increased stress coping ,social and medical support and also doing yoga with the help of Iyengar Prpos will raise your confidence level by including yoga in your daily routine is so simple and easy . The literature also suggests that yoga can lead to significant symptomatic improvements in eating disorders .Patients ,along with improvement of psychological understanding between healthy and unhealthy foods. It will also suggest yoga as complementary interventions to modern treatments or as sole treatment for mental and physical health related disorders. This paper also reviews the philosophical origins , current scientific evidence and clinical promise of Yoga and mindfulness skill development ,including the reduction of negative functioning and increase of mental health ,physical health and behavior regulation .These are complementary therapies in eating disorders.

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