

# Yoga and Ayurveda: An Integrated Approach to Wellness

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## **Abstract:**

Yoga and Ayurveda are two closely related traditional systems of Indian knowledge that emphasize the maintenance of health, prevention of disease, and promotion of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. While Ayurveda primarily focuses on maintaining physiological balance through diet, lifestyle, herbal approaches, and individualized health practices, Yoga emphasizes physical postures, breathing techniques, concentration, meditation, and ethical principles. The integration of these approaches provides a holistic framework for wellness rather than focusing exclusively on the treatment of illness. Currently, the education system has been merged with modern tools and technologies that are used in Ayurvedic teaching and learning. Modern learning methods include listening and reading, observing and imitating, and doing, while teaching methodologies include lectures, discussions, demonstrations, field excursions, panel discussions, group discussions, question and answer sessions, and so on. There is substantial evidence in the accessible ancient literature to suggest that the majority of these learning and teaching approaches existed in their original forms in ancient times.

**Keywords:** Yoga, Ayurveda, Yoga and Ayurveda, Integrated Wellness, Holistic Health, Preventive Health, Lifestyle, Mental Well-being

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Health is no longer understood merely as the absence of disease. Contemporary approaches increasingly recognize health as a multidimensional condition involving physical, psychological, social, emotional, and functional well-being. Sedentary lifestyles, occupational stress, inadequate dietary practices, sleep disturbances, and increasing dependence on technology have created new challenges for maintaining healthy lifestyles. Consequently, preventive and holistic approaches to health have received considerable attention.

Yoga and Ayurveda agree that states of imbalance are caused by pollutants collecting in the body and mind and obstructing their routes. By incorporating Ayurvedic nutrition and lifestyle guidelines, as well as Yoga into our spiritual practice, we can better allow prana (the life force) to circulate through the body's various gross and subtle channels, thereby alleviating illness and elevating our consciousness. Many of the asanas, breathing, and meditation techniques in this practice will be recognizable to people who have tried various types of Hatha Yoga (physical yoga). What distinguishes Ayuryoga is the use of Ayurvedic principles such as the five great elements, three doshas, and twenty universal gunas (qualities) to understand the effects of various practices on the body and mind, as well as Ayurveda's 'like increases like' philosophy, to support optimal health and healing from imbalances. These are two complementary health and wellness systems

that emerged in India more than 5000 years ago. Ayurvedic yoga is a practice that encourages self-healing in the body, mind, and consciousness while also promoting physical and mental well-being through various poses and breathing techniques.

Ayur yoga combines the concepts of Ayurveda and yoga to enhance physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. Ayurveda provides a foundation for understanding each individual's unique needs, whereas yoga addresses those needs using precise postures and breathing techniques. Through your Ayuryoga yoga teacher training, you will gain the ability to impart this instruction and awareness to others, allowing them to grasp the importance of balancing their doshas for optimal health and spiritual awareness.

Yoga and Ayurveda can be thought of two separate schools of practice that originated in the same country. They are, nonetheless, intimately linked. Yoga is one of the methods used in Ayurveda, which is a comprehensive treatment system. Ayurvedic practitioners would advise all of their patients to practice Yoga, as well as other Ayurvedic advice such as diet adjustments. Yoga and Ayurveda are often regarded as sister sciences, two sides of the same coin that require one another to function fully. The ancient Vedic and yogic literature emphasize the importance of eating the right meals and living a sattvic lifestyle that promotes yoga and meditation.[1]

### **History of Yoga and Ayurveda:**

Yoga and Ayurveda share similar origin stories. According to documents, yoga originated in the Indus Sarasvati civilization. The Rig Veda, one of India's earliest books, also references yoga. Rig Veda contains mantras, chants, and rituals that Brahmins might use throughout various religious practices. The same literature advises rishis to promote yoga as a way to unite higher consciousnesses. Simply put, yoga was and continues to be a way to develop the body and mind while also becoming more self-aware of our environment.

Ayurveda, on the other hand, was composed as a treatise in Atharvaveda by Dhanvantari, who acquired his education directly from Bhrama. The majority of the current literature on drugs, diseases, and therapies was written during this time period. However, other historians believe that Ayurveda, like Yoga, originated in the Rig Veda.

Yoga and Ayurveda have the same Vedic origins and work towards a common aim. Both share similar beliefs and purposes. Ayurveda will care for both your mental and physical wellness through nutrition and other lifestyle adjustments. Yoga, on the other hand, will help to unify the mind, body, and soul.

Ayurveda is based on doshas, with the underlying premise that each person is unique and should be treated accordingly. Yoga also includes several positions for different objectives. Yoga and Ayurveda are inherently symbiotic, working together to make people healthier and happier.

### **Historically Yoga:**

The fundamentals of yoga were first articulated systematically in the second century B.C., about 2100 years ago. Patanjali is credited with this, and his treatise is known as Yogasutra, which translates as Yoga Aphorisms. According to Patanjali, the human body contains pathways called nadi and centres known as chakras. If they are tapped. The energy stored within the body can be released. This energy is known as Kundalini. The release of kundalini allows the body to gain various abilities that are ordinarily beyond its capacity.

Patanjali describes eight stages of yoga: yama (universal moral commandments), niyama (self-purification through discipline), asana (posture), pranayama (breath control), pratyahara (withdrawal of mind from external objects), dharana (concentration), dhyana (meditation), and samadhi (state of superconsciousness). Despite the fact that the Yogasutras were written two millennia ago, yoga has been practiced for countless generations; scientists have only just begun to recognise the benefits of yoga. Experiments have shown that practicing Yoga helps cure a variety of diseases. Tests on Yogis reveal that they do develop amazing physical abilities. For example, they can survive without oxygen for lengthy periods of time, and they can adapt their metabolism if they are forced to go without food for an extended period of time.

Sadhus and sanyasis (sages and hermits) who had sacrificed earthly possessions and went across the country, meditating and proclaiming the gospel of truth, as they viewed it, have traditionally practiced Yoga. Yoga was also taught in ancient times as part of the traditional method of education in hermit-run ashramas and gurukul's. Though study in these ashrams was limited to a select few, the practice of Yoga in its less stringent forms has long been popular among the general public. Though nothing is being done formally to promote Yoga in India and abroad today, spiritual movements originating in India that have numerous devotees in the West serve as a conduit for the dissemination of Yoga. Although ashramas are disappearing, Gymnasiums continue to carry on the legacy of Yoga. Students of Indian classical dance must go through some Yogic training. However, physiotherapy is one sector in which the application of Yoga is becoming more well recognized. Yoga was also an important aspect of traditional education in hermit-run ashramas and gurukuls in ancient times. Though study at these ashramas was limited to a select few, the practice of Yoga in less stringent forms has long been popular among the general public. Although not much is being done formally to promote the practice of Yoga in India and abroad today, spiritual movements originating in India that have numerous devotees in the West serve as a conduit for the dissemination of Yoga. [2]

### **Yoga for Health and Wellness [3]**

Yoga provides weight loss, a strong and flexible body, glowing gorgeous skin, a tranquil mind, and good health, among other benefits. However, yoga is frequently misunderstood as just involving asana. As a result, its benefits are seen solely at the somatic level, and we fail to appreciate the enormous benefits yoga provides in connecting the body, mind, and breath. When you are in harmony, your journey through life is more peaceful, enjoyable, and fulfilling. With all of this and more to offer, yoga provides significant yet subtle benefits.

- **Healthy body:** Yoga activities not only serve as a strong deterrent to the development of many disorders and diseases, but also give essential answers for their correct treatment and cure.
- **Powerful mind:** It is widely believed that a healthy mind exists in a healthy body maintained by yoga exercises. Yoga can provide both good mental and physical wellness.
- **Strong sense organs:** Yogic activities help to keep one's sense organs healthy, strong, and properly functioning.
- **Control over the mind:** Yoga Sadhna gives the practitioner the ability and strength to exercise desirable control over his senses, emotions, desire satisfaction, and mental fluctuations.
- **Internal purification:** Yoga Sadhna not only aids in the purification and cleanliness of our body's internal organs and systems, but it also takes into account the purification of our inner self, which includes the cleaning of our thoughts and feelings.

- **Self-development:** Yogic activities assist individuals develop the spirit of self-awareness, confidence in one's abilities and strengths, self-discipline and intrinsic motivation, self-acceptance and self-actualization, and so on in order to achieve maximum self-development and enhancement.
- **Reduced Conflict:** Yoga may help students get along better with one another, resulting in a more positive learning atmosphere. A Milwaukee school launched a yoga programme with two courses each week for kindergarten through eighth graders.
- **Improved Concentration:** Yoga allows the body and mind to relax from the stresses of learning. This may help pupils apply themselves more effectively when studying or learning in the classroom.
- **Powerful boosts:** In addition to the spiritual benefits, meditation can enhance your confidence. The procedure works by releasing stress in your head, allowing you to feel more secure in your physical body.
- **Overall fitness:** You are truly healthy when you are not only physically fit, but also mentally and emotionally stable. As Sri Sri Ravi Shankarji puts it, health is more than just the absence of disease.
- **Weight loss:** Sun salutations and Kapal Bhati pranayama are two yoga techniques that can help you lose weight. Furthermore, consistent yoga practice causes us to become more sensitive to the type and timing of meals our bodies require.
- **Stress relief:** A few minutes of yoga during the day can help relieve the stress that develops in both the body and the mind. Yoga postures, pranayama, and meditation are all helpful stress-reduction approaches.
- **Inner peace:** We all enjoy visiting places that are tranquil and serene, with beautiful scenery. We don't realise that calm is right within us, and we may take a mini-vacation to feel it at any time of day! Enjoy a mini-vacation every day with yoga and meditation. Yoga is also an excellent approach to relax a disturbed mind.
- **Improved immunity:** Our approach integrates the body, mind, and spirit. An irregularity in the body affects the mind, and unpleasantness or restlessness in the mind might appear as a physical condition.
- **Living with increased awareness:** The mind is continually active, swinging from the past to the future but never remaining in the now. Simply being conscious of this mental inclination allows us to avoid becoming stressed or worked up and instead relax our minds.
- **Better connections:** Yoga can also help you enhance your relationships with your husband, parents, friends, and loved ones! A mind that is relaxed, cheerful, and comfortable is better equipped to deal with sensitive relationship issues.
- **Increased energy:** Switching between multiple duties throughout the day might be rather taxing. A few minutes of yoga every day is the key to feeling refreshed and energized even after a long day.
- **Better flexibility and posture:** Including yoga in your daily routine will provide you with a strong, supple, and flexible physique. Regular yoga practice stretches and tones the body's muscles while also strengthening them.
- **Better intuition:** Yoga and meditation can help you strengthen your intuitive ability, allowing you to easily recognize what has to be done, when, and how to achieve great results. It works. You simply need to go through it yourself.
- **Powerful lunge:** Yoga practices, particularly pranayama, serve to promote and strengthen our lunge power in terms of expansion and contraction, allowing us to inhale the greatest amount.

### Historically Ayurveda:

According to the Ayurvedic philosophy, health is more than just the absence of sickness; it is the perfect balance of all three Doshas, Satva, Atma, and Sharira. Satva (mind), Sharira (body), and Atma (soul) are the three components of life. If one is disturbed, their entire existence is in turmoil. When the Satva is in good condition, it produces positive feelings; but, if the mind is not healthy, the body-mind apparatus becomes imbalanced. Man's mental development surpassed that of other living beings. It also serves as a connection or bridge between the materialistic and spiritual worlds. Half a century ago, the idea that the mind has control over the body's functions and ailments was laughed at. Today, it is widely recognized as reality, but its ramifications are usually ignored. It is understood that physical symptoms in humans can be caused by a state of mind, and that changes in a person's mental state may be sufficient to alleviate the symptoms.

The natural state of the mind may be disturbed as a result of poor diet and actions, and happy feelings may be driven away. As a result, negative emotions such as rage, jealousy, cruelty, and sleepiness might occur, potentially leading to mental problems. As a result, it is easy to see how the entire Ayurvedic treatment process is centred on psychological wellness. It is commonly recognised that the mind may create both physical and mental ailments. That is why the emphasis on "mind" in Ayurveda is more practical and realistic in areas such as health and healing, as well as in people's daily lives.

Ayurveda is a traditional system of Indian medicine that places considerable emphasis on maintaining health and preventing disease. Classical Ayurvedic thought conceptualizes health as a state of balance involving bodily functions, digestion and metabolism, tissues, waste products, mind, senses, and self. A central concept is the **Tridosha theory**, involving Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. In traditional Ayurvedic practice, these concepts are used to understand individual constitution and patterns of physiological and psychological functioning.

Important components of Ayurvedic lifestyle management include:

1. **Ahara (diet):** Appropriate food selection and eating practices.
2. **Vihara (lifestyle):** Healthy daily activities and behavioral routines.
3. **Dinacharya:** Recommended daily routines intended to promote health.
4. **Ritucharya:** Seasonal adjustments in diet and lifestyle.
5. **Sleep and rest:** Recognition of adequate and appropriate rest as an important component of health.
6. **Preventive practices:** Emphasis on maintaining health before illness develops.

Ayurveda therefore contributes an individualized lifestyle and preventive-health perspective that can complement Yoga practices.

### Yoga and Physical Wellness

Regular physical activity is an important component of healthy living. Yoga incorporates controlled movements, postures, balance exercises, flexibility practices, and, depending on the style, varying levels of physical exertion.

Potential physical benefits associated with appropriately practiced Yoga include:

- Improvement in flexibility and joint mobility.
- Development of muscular endurance and functional strength.
- Improvement in balance and body awareness.

- Support for posture and movement control.
- Promotion of relaxation and recovery.
- Contribution to an active lifestyle.

Yoga should not necessarily be regarded as a complete substitute for all forms of physical activity. Individuals may benefit from combining Yoga with aerobic activity, resistance training, recreational activities, and other appropriate forms of exercise.

## Ayurveda and Nutritional Wellness

Nutrition is a central element of Ayurvedic lifestyle philosophy. Ayurveda emphasizes individualized dietary practices and appropriate eating routines. From a contemporary perspective, several broad principles—such as attention to food quality, moderation, regularity, and mindful eating—can complement evidence-based nutritional guidance.

An integrated wellness programme may therefore combine:

- Balanced and nutrient-dense meals.
- Adequate hydration.
- Appropriate meal timing.
- Moderation in highly processed foods.
- Mindful eating.
- Consideration of individual dietary requirements.
- Seasonal and culturally appropriate food choices.

However, traditional dietary concepts should be integrated carefully with modern nutritional science, particularly when an individual has a medical condition or specific nutritional requirement.

## Benefits of Yoga and Ayurvedic Practices in Daily Life:

| Sr. No. | Yoga / Ayurvedic Practice  | Major Benefits                                  | Impact on Daily Life                                   |
|---------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 1       | Yoga Asanas                | Improves flexibility, strength, and posture     | Supports physical fitness and mobility                 |
| 2       | Pranayama                  | Enhances breathing and relaxation               | Helps manage stress and improves concentration         |
| 3       | Meditation                 | Promotes mental calmness and awareness          | Supports emotional balance and mental clarity          |
| 4       | Surya Namaskar             | Provides a full-body workout                    | Improves stamina, flexibility, and vitality            |
| 5       | Regular Yoga Practice      | Supports physical and mental well-being         | Encourages a healthy and active lifestyle              |
| 6       | Ayurvedic Diet             | Encourages balanced and nutritious food choices | Supports digestion and overall wellness                |
| 7       | Dinacharya (Daily Routine) | Promotes disciplined daily habits               | Helps maintain regular sleep, meals, and personal care |
| 8       | Abhyanga (Oil Massage)     | Nourishes and relaxes the body                  | Promotes relaxation and skin care                      |

|    |                            |                                                   |                                                             |
|----|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9  | Adequate Sleep             | Supports physical recovery and mental functioning | Improves energy, mood, and productivity                     |
| 10 | Herbal Practices           | Traditionally used to support general wellness    | Can complement a balanced lifestyle when used appropriately |
| 11 | Mindful Eating             | Encourages awareness of food and eating habits    | May support healthy digestion and weight management         |
| 12 | Yoga Nidra                 | Deep relaxation and mental rejuvenation           | Helps reduce mental fatigue and promotes restful relaxation |
| 13 | Personal Hygiene Practices | Supports cleanliness and general health           | Reduces exposure to common sources of illness               |
| 14 | Stress Management          | Combines relaxation, breathing, and mindfulness   | Helps improve emotional resilience                          |

## GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES AND POLICIES:

The Indian government has launched various programmes to promote yoga and Ayurveda education. These include establishing dedicated institutions, providing financial aid and scholarships to students, and incorporating Yoga and Ayurveda into primary healthcare services. The ministry has defined its mission as seven broad theme areas under AYUSH operations. These include tasks such as information dissemination, education, and communication, as well as drug administration, human resource development, medicinal plant cultivation, research and development, international collaborations, and the provision of AYUSH services. Several projects have been launched to increase the visibility, acceptability, and use of Ayurveda, particularly its incorporation with the healthcare system. Strategies for the global promotion of Yoga and Ayurveda priorities elements such as safety, efficacy, quality, and the rational use of Ayurvedic practices.

In India, several organizations play diverse roles in Ayurvedic research. The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) is largely dedicated to Ayurvedic research, clinical trials, and formulation development. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) promotes collaborative research on the safety and efficacy of Ayurvedic medicines. The activities performed by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) are critical due to the numerous applications of medicinal plants and the requirement for improved medications and treatments for a wide range of diseases. Furthermore, the indigenous system of medicine, particularly plant-based cures, provides possible solutions in areas where contemporary medicine fails to provide both therapeutic concepts and effective therapeutic agents. The National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB) conducts research on medicinal plants used in Ayurveda, focusing on their conservation and sustainable production. The National Medicinal Conservation Programme, with a special emphasis on improving native medicinal plants and aromatic species used in medicine.

Molecular Biology (CCMB) partners to investigate the molecular mechanisms that support Ayurvedic remedies, bridging the gap between traditional knowledge and modern science. A noteworthy project involved a study to establish a link between dosha prakriti and genetic variants. This collaborative initiative comprised universities such as CCMB, MAHE, Pune University, IISc, and FRLHT. Furthermore, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) funds multidisciplinary research aiming at integrating

Ayurveda with modern scientific understanding. These organizations work together to advance Ayurveda research and integrate it into modern healthcare delivery systems.

### Review Of Literature:

Balodhi and Keshavan (2011) discussed the relationship between Yoga, Ayurveda, and mental health and highlighted the importance of lifestyle-oriented approaches in promoting psychological well-being. Their work suggests that Yoga practices such as meditation, relaxation, and controlled breathing may contribute to improved emotional balance, while Ayurvedic principles provide a broader framework for healthy living.

Lad (2002) explained the fundamental principles of Ayurveda and emphasized the importance of maintaining balance among the *doshas*, appropriate diet, daily routines, and preventive health practices. The Ayurvedic approach considers individual constitution and lifestyle when recommending practices for maintaining health. This individualized perspective can complement Yoga-based approaches to wellness. Frawley (1999) presented Ayurveda as a comprehensive system of healing that incorporates diet, lifestyle, meditation, Yoga, and other traditional practices. According to this perspective, health is not merely the absence of disease but a state of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual balance. The integration of Yoga and Ayurveda therefore provides a broader framework for preventive and holistic health.

Iyengar (2005) emphasized the transformative role of Yoga in developing physical awareness, mental stability, and inner balance. Regular practice of *asanas*, *pranayama*, and meditation can support flexibility, strength, relaxation, concentration, and self-awareness. These outcomes are consistent with the Ayurvedic emphasis on maintaining harmony between the individual and the environment.

Patwardhan (2010) examined Ayurveda within the context of integrative medicine and argued for greater scientific evaluation of traditional health practices. The author highlighted the importance of developing evidence-based approaches while retaining the holistic principles underlying traditional systems. This perspective is particularly relevant to contemporary research on combining Yoga and Ayurveda with modern wellness practices.

Mishra (2004) examined the scientific basis of Ayurvedic therapies and discussed the potential contribution of traditional interventions to health promotion. The literature indicates that Ayurvedic approaches may be particularly relevant to preventive healthcare, lifestyle management, and individualized wellness. However, systematic scientific evaluation remains necessary for establishing the effectiveness and safety of specific interventions.

Larson and Bhattacharya (2008) examined Yoga from philosophical and historical perspectives, emphasizing its broader objective of achieving harmony between the body, mind, and consciousness. The literature indicates that Yoga extends beyond physical exercise and includes ethical, mental, and contemplative dimensions. This holistic understanding creates significant conceptual connections with Ayurveda.

The World Health Organization (2019) recognized the continuing global importance of traditional and complementary medicine and emphasized the need for evidence, safety, quality, and appropriate integration into healthcare systems. This provides an important contemporary context for examining Yoga and Ayurveda as complementary approaches to wellness.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- An overview of yoga and Ayurveda education in India, including historical history, problems, and opportunities.
- The article examines how stakeholders promote and strengthen yoga and Ayurveda education, including curriculum, course structure, regulatory agencies, infrastructure, and the impact of technology on learning outcomes.
- Emphasize the role of research and innovation in determining the future of Yoga and Ayurveda education and its global acceptance.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

The present study adopts a **descriptive and conceptual research design**. It examines the theoretical and practical relationship between Yoga and Ayurveda and their potential contribution to holistic wellness. The study is based primarily on secondary sources, including: Classical Yoga literature; Classical Ayurvedic literature; Books and scholarly publications; Peer-reviewed research articles; Reports and publications concerning Yoga, traditional medicine, physical activity, and wellness.

**Integrated Yoga-Ayurveda Wellness Framework**

The proposed framework consists of five interconnected components:

**Individual Assessment**

The wellness programme should consider age, physical capacity, lifestyle, dietary habits, sleep, stress, and existing health conditions. Ayurvedic assessment may be incorporated by appropriately trained practitioners, while conventional health assessment should not be neglected.

**Personalized Lifestyle**

Individuals should develop sustainable daily routines that incorporate appropriate physical activity, Yoga, nutrition, rest, and sleep.

**Yoga Practice**

Yoga practices should be selected according to individual capacity. Beginners may start with basic postures, breathing awareness, relaxation, and meditation before progressing to more demanding practices.

**Dietary and Behavioral Practices**

Dietary recommendations should prioritize balanced nutrition and individual requirements. Traditional Ayurvedic dietary principles may be incorporated where appropriate and consistent with contemporary nutritional evidence.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Wellness programmes should be evaluated through measurable indicators such as physical fitness, flexibility, perceived stress, sleep quality, quality of life, dietary behavior, and adherence to healthy routines.

**CONCLUSION:**

Yoga and Ayurveda education in India has progressed greatly, embracing modern teaching methods, research, and technology. The government, professional organizations, and research organizations have all made significant contributions to promoting Ayurvedic education and resolving various difficulties. The integration of technology, research, and collaborations can help to promote Ayurvedic education and its global appeal.

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