
A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY ON THE EFFECT OF YOGA DURING GESTATION: A BLESSING TO MATERNITY

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ABSTRACT

Life on earth continues from time immortal. Women play an important role in continuing the life circle by delivering child. Pregnancy is the time period of forming and growing of a new life in women. A physically and mentally healthy women gives birth to a healthy child and thus the life tree continues to spread its seeds on this earth pregnancy is a condition in which woman face many physiological and psychological discomforts and problems. Pregnancy is a most special time for woman life and for her family too. This time many change occurs in the pregnant woman's body. These all changes create a new stress to the lives of a pregnant lady. Yoga may work as a boon during pregnancy. Yoga practice includes both asanas(physical postures) and Pranayama (Deep breathing techniques) So, Through the practice of yoga health of the fetus and pregnant lady can be maintain and the stress and anxiety can be reduce of the pregnant lady. Additionally yoga trains a person to cope with daily stressors and improves one's Overall health (physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual). This study has been conducted to identify the effect of yoga during pregnancy.

Keywords : Yoga, Gestation, pregnancy

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INTRODUCTION:

Yoga is an ancient mind-body practice that originated in India and is becoming increasingly recognized and used in developed nations as a health practice for a variety of immunological, neuromuscular, psychological, and pain conditions [1]. Yoga is described as the link between the individual and the universe (Parmatma). It can play an important role in our life by controlling the function of our mind i.e. ego, desire and intellect[2]. Pregnancy is a condition in which women undergo distinct physiological changes and stress and is accompanied by unique physical and psychological demands .there is a need to manage the various physical, emotional, mental and pain states that arise throughout the stages of pregnancy and labour .The well being and quality of life of the mother is critical for optimal pregnancy outcomes; self-soothing techniques, psycho-education, and relaxation are particularly important in this transitional and meaningful time [3]. Yoga is a safe and effective way to reduce the stresses faced during pregnancy, through different postures, breathing techniques, meditation or chanting. The techniques of yoga not only help with the calm progress through pre-natal stages and birth, it also assists in preventing the stresses after birthing. This includes calmer interaction with the new baby, preventing sleep deprivation and other stressful situations created by a newborn, as well as assisting the mother return to her pre-birth figure [4].

SIGNIFICANCE OF YOGA IN PREGNANCY:

Yoga is a comprehensive system that uses physical postures (Asana), Breathing exercises (Pranayama), Concentration and Meditation (Dharana and Dhyana), and contemplative practice [5]. Yoga impacts on nervous system regulation and physiological system functioning (e.g., immune, endocrine, neurotransmitter, and cardiovascular) and improve psychological wellbeing (e.g., frequency of positive mood states and optimism) and physical fitness (e.g., strength, flexibility, and endurance) [6]. Yoga, is an old application which emerged in India thousands of years ago. It focuses on meditation together with physical stance, and it is the perfect harmony of body, mind and soul, achieved by releasing the mind [7] Yoga which us utilise in many areas today is being employed in pregnancy since the 20th century [8].The positive effects of prenatal yoga for the pregnant women are stated in many studies. It is emphasized that pregnant women who regularly do yoga have less pregnancy problems, stress, depression and sleep lose [9]. Yoga reduces anxiety, depression and pregnancy related uncomfortable experiences [10]. Meditation gives soothing and calming effect to mind, and prepare the pregnant lady psychologically for easy labour. There are different kinds of asanas that provide more space in the pelvis region that facilitates in easy expulsion of fetus during the delivery.

THREE TRIMESTER OF PREGNANCY:

A typical pregnancy lasts 40 weeks from the first day of your last menstrual period (LMP) to the birth of the baby. It is divided into three stages, called trimesters: first trimester, second trimester, and third trimester. The fetus undergoes many changes throughout maturation [11].

FIRST TRIMESTER (0 TO 13 WEEKS):

The first trimester is the most crucial to the baby's development. During the period, the baby's body structure and organ systems develop. Most miscarriages and birth defects occur during this period. Women body also undergoes major changes during the first

trimester. These changes often cause a variety of symptoms, including nausea, fatigue, breast tenderness and frequent urination. All thought these are common pregnancy symptoms, every women has a different experiences. For example, while some may experience an I [12].

YOGIC PRACTICES IN PREGNANCY:

Pregnancy-related low back, pelvic, or leg pain is a common pregnancy problem[13]. More than two-thirds of women experience low back pain and almost one-fifth experience pelvic pain [14].

YOGIC PRACTICES IN FIRST TRIMESTER:

Poorna Titali Asana or Baddha Konasana (Full Butterfly),This pose helps in reducing fatigue, stimulating the adrenal glands, treating menstrual problems, and improving overall blood circulation in the body[15]. Marjariasana(cat stretch pose)Marjariasana improves your digestion. It relaxes your mind, improves blood circulation and also purifies it. The pose works best for stress relief [16].

Side Angle Pose (Parsvakonasana),Strength- and stability-boosting poses are highly recommended during pregnancy because our bodies are particularly flexible during this time. Relaxing is a hormone that is produced throughout pregnancy and birth, loosening the connective tissue throughout the body to prepare it for the changes of growing and delivering a baby[17]. Virabhadrasana (Warrior Pose)Benefits-Strengthens the musclesThe Warrior II Pose energizes the body, promotes balance and stability, improves respiration, builds stamina and focus and finally, enhances blood circulation [18]. Viparita Karani, Benefits it is great to treat tired feet and legs. It treats a headache and relieves symptoms of insomnia. The pose quiets your mind and calms the nerves[19]. Garland pose(Malasana), This posture is similar to the squat which is often a position chosen for labour and delivery. This Malasana improve the range of motion of the hip joints [20].

Breathing exercises, which might be comparable to a yogic breath practice (pranayama), have been shown to be associated with acute changes in fetal heart rate in response to uterine stimulation[21]. But remember that during pranayama avoid retention of breath during the pregnancy period because it can lead to discomforts to the pregnant lady and fetus too.

Note: *Inverted postures should be performed in the first three months, when there is a chance of miscarriage especially for those who are prone to miscarriages and abortions [22].*

SECOND TRIMESTER (14 TO 26 WEEKS):

During the second trimester of pregnancy many women feels comfortable of all three. With the arrival of this milestone, women experience some welcome changes. Most early pregnancy symptoms will ease up or even disappear. This trimester certain pregnancy symptoms may persist (like heart burn and Constipation)[23]. Most women begin their prenatal practice during the second trimester. Often they may feel very good. "They are not too huge and can do just about anything they feel comfortable doing, with or without props, as long as they can breathe deeply [24].

YOGIC PRACTICES IN SECOND TRIMESTER:

Uttanasana (standing forward fold), chair pose, or child's pose, it helps to create space between the legs to allow physical room for your belly. Simply bring your legs wider apart in these poses. This extra space will also provide greater standing stability [25]. Hero's pose,It's Relieves stomach ailments like acid reflux, a trouble often faced during pregnancy. Alters the blood flow and nervous impulses in the pelvic region and strengthens pelvic muscles. Assists women in labor[26]. Matsyakridasan(Flapping fish pose)Benefits-Stimulates digestion and relieves constipation. It relaxes the nerves of legs and this is an ideal asana for relaxed sleep. It improves blood circulation[27]. Parvatasana(Downward dog Pose),It makes your legs stronger, and it affects you internally by stimulating digestion, improving breathing, and bringing mental calm [28].

Cat-Cows are beneficial for any stage of pregnancy. They help you release tension in the back and gently warm up the spine and core before moving on to other postures.To create more space in the abdominal area and move your spine in different directions[29] Tadasana(The palm tree pose)The entire vertebral column gets a workout, loosening stiffness and helping achieve a strong balance, physically and mentally [28]. Maintaining balance will become trickier as your pregnancy progresses. So, working on balance can help you stay strong and more stable [29]. Chest and hip openers are favorite poses for this trimester. The muscles of the upper back have the added weight of new breast tissue to support, so poses such as Gomukhasana (Cow Face Pose) and Viparita Namaskar (Reverse Prayer Pose) help release tension [30].

This trimester is a good time to introduce such pranayama exercises as Ujjayi Pranayama (Victorious Breath) and Nadi Shodhana Pranayama (Alternate-Nostril breathing). They teach a woman how to focus on her breath, which helps her relax, and they're also good practice for breathing techniques that will help during labor and delivery[31].

THIRD TRIMESTER (27 TO 40 WEEKS):

Many women suffer from fear and anxiety during pregnancy which is more likely due to the concerns about the health of the fetus, changes in marital relations and problems in accepting new role of mother. Such anxiety during third trimester is more concerned with child birth, which may be due to the formation of the physical changes related to the pregnancy and childbirth that seems to be an out of control process [32].

It is the final stretch of pregnancy which is probably very exciting and anxious for the women for the birth of baby. Some of the physical symptoms women may experience during this period include shortness of breath, hemorrhoids, urinary incontinence, varicose veins and sleeping problems [33].

YOGA IN THIRD TRIMESTER:

Cobbler's pose(Baddha Konasana): This technique is said to improve the health of the reproductive system. During pregnancy, it aids in opening up the pelvis, therefore ensuring an easy and fast labor [34].

Chakkichalanasan(Churning mill pose): It is an excellent asana for toning the nerves and muscles of pelvis and abdomen and prepare them for deliver [35].

Ardha titli Asana(Half butterfly pose): This not only stimulates the legs but also affects the joints in the hip and the knee, which directly affect the ease of delivery, speeding up the process of labour [36].

Meditation: During the last trimester of pregnancy, meditation can help to move gracefully to approach labour. It will help to ascertain a more peaceful state of mind by avoiding stress and anxiety [37].

IMPORTANCE OF PRANAYAMA DURING GESTATION:

Pranayama is known to modulate automatic output. The pranayama also helps in achieving and maintain autonomic Balance between the components of autonomic nervous system [38].

Mula Bandha: The name can be translated from Sanskrit as the root lock, since mula (or moola) means 'root', and bandha – 'lock'. This is an external meaning. The internal or deeper meaning is that mula or the root is the source of energy for our body, and through the practice of this bandha we can gain a certain amount of control over this energy [39].

Mula Bandha in Pregnancy: It is especially beneficial when practiced regularly before the conceiving the child, because it is beneficial for fertility. But during the pregnancy it helps to prepare the muscles for easier delivery. It is also good for postpartum period. You can do it as a substitute for uddiyana bandha, which is usually not recommended during pregnancy [40].

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Yoga during gestation can be a great way to prepare for childbirth. one of the best benefits of yoga during is that it helps the lady to breath and relax. Antenatal yoga was associated with significant reduction in fear of childbirth and is potentially preventive against increases in depression symptoms [41]. Traditional goals of childbirth education have been to reduce pain and anxiety through relaxation techniques that have their roots in yoga [42].

In conclusion, we can say that Prenatal yoga is an excellent choice for any healthy pregnant woman to use in order to prepare herself physically and emotionally for childbirth. Physical poses can help to strengthen muscles and relieve pain while breathing techniques and relaxation can help to relieve stress and improve quality of sleep [43]. Prenatal yoga is an effective method in increasing the pregnant's psychosocial health level and prenatal attachment [44].

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