



YOGASANAS DURING PREGNANCY: ANTENATAL

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, as being the most ancient Science of medicine in India. Like wise, Yoga is also an ancient form of exercise that has contributed in the holistic living of individuals in the most natural and trusted way since years. Yoga is like a spiritual route to a relaxed mind and healthy body. In times of Pregnancy, when women are battling mood swings at varying levels, fatigue and sickness, painful leg cramps and breathing problems. *Yoga* exercise, techniques and postures ease all such conditions ensuring a period of relieved nine months followed by an easier labour and smooth delivery. The aim of pregnancy yoga is to help the mother to bring the unborn into the world with minimum hassle and completely no health complications. *Yogasanas* which are prescribed for pregnant women should be those that focus on strengthening the pelvic muscles that help enhance the womb space for the healthy growth of the foetus. By during *asanas* regularly, a lot of Good hormones are released called endorphins that keep a mother energetic and positive. The regular practice of yoga not only makes the body strong and flexible but it has also been scientifically proved that yoga improves the functioning of the respiratory, circulatory, digestive and endocrine systems.

KEYWORDS: Pregnancy, *Asanas*, health, *yoga*, benefits.

INTRODUCTION

During Pregnancy, the body changes rapidly but with the help of yoga practice, we can support these changes, making us strong and flexible in all the right places for easier labor, delivery and recovery. Physical changes are inevitable in pregnancy. Literally every day it is as if we have a new body. Throughout pregnancy, the women also suffers from complaints like backache, headache, heart burn, constipation, leg cramps, sleep disturbances, etc. All these potentially worsen the stress response. Medicines have been tried to reduce that stress, but though medicines can relieve minor complaints of pregnancy, their effect is temporary and might have teratogenic effects on foetus. Supportive techniques, bed rest, massage, all have been tried instead of medicines, but all have failed to reduce the pregnancy stress completely. Yoga is one of the most perfect of Indian Sciences based mainly on the principles of physiology, psychology and physics. It is a holistic treatment, which covers all aspects of health, physical as well as mental.

DISCUSSION

During pregnancy, due to the postural changes and numerous other changes in the body, choosing the right type of asana in pregnancy is important. This made us

opt for specific postures to practice during pregnancy. A few factors were considered before selecting any posture. There should be no rise in Intra-abdominal pressure, there should not be any direct pressure on the abdomen. *Yogasanas* help keep the body supple, relieving tension around the cervix, by opening up the pelvic region. This prepares to-be-mothers for labor and delivery. *Yogas* and *pranayamas* can train you to breathe deeply and relax consciously. *Yoga asanas* also help to reduce the effect of common symptoms such as morning sickness, painful leg cramps, swollen ankles and constipation.

YOGA POSES FOR WOMEN DURING PREGNANCY

1. *Marjariasana* (cat stretch pose)

It keeps the spine flexible. This is useful because the back has to support more weight as the pregnancy advances, tones the abdominal region, improves blood circulation, ensuring that the reproductive organs are well nourished.

2. *Konasanas*

It keeps the spine flexible, helps alleviate constipation, stretches and tones the arms, legs and abdominal organs.

3. *Verbhadrasana* (warrior pose)

It improves balance in the body, averting the possibility of falling during pregnancy, increases stamina.

4. *Trikonasana* (Triangle pose)

Maintains physical and mental balance especially useful for pregnant women since their center of gravity shifts, stretches and opens the hips, reduces back pain and stress.

5. *Badhakonasana* (Butterfly pose)

Improves flexibility in the hip and groin region, stretches the thighs and knees, relieving pain, helps facilitate smooth delivery when practiced till late pregnancy.

Like *yogasanas*, *pranayamas* can also be very effective during pregnancy. It release negative emotions like anger and frustration. Release stress, keeps the mind. Calm and composed, the *pranayamas* that can be done during pregnancy are *Bhramari Pranayama*, it helps to regulate blood pressure and relives headache, enhances oxygen supply. This helps with the baby's growth in the womb.

BENEFITS

Yogasanas reduce pain and *paranayamas* reduces vitiation of *doshas* and attain balance. Regularity of the *Asanas* helps to build a strong and stable physique with increased capacity to withstand illness. It provides a sense of well being, lightness, mental calmness and relaxation of the body and mind. Yogic postures taught during pregnancy improve the Muscular tone of mainly muscles of abdomen, perineum and the back. The Gastro-intestinal function normalizes and improves due to yogic postures and *pranayamas*. The contraction, relaxation and stretching of the abdominal muscles and diaphragm occurs during the practice of yogic postures and *pranayamas*. Cardiac-vascular functions improves and its efficiency increases. Yogic postures and *pranayama*, together establish a balance between sympathetic and para-sympathetic activity.

CONCLUSION

Pregnancy is a turning point in the life of a women. During pregnancy, there are numerous physiological changes which occur to adjust the growing foetus. Though these adjustments are natural, they produce some or the other minor symptoms throughout the nine months of pregnancy. Few symptoms regress as the pregnancy advances and few go on aggravating. Due to the hormonal influences and growing foetus, there are postural changes, changes in the Gastro intestinal function, respiratory function, etc, all these have a net effect of producing some tolerable and some distressing symptoms which trouble the mother throughout the pregnancy. Few complaints like constipation, sleep disturbances, anxiety and backache, there can be only a temporary improvement by the use of medications, but not a permanent cure. Medications used for these symptoms like analgesics, sedatives, anxiolytics, etc,

cannot be used for a long time; for the fear of its adverse effect on fetus. Yogic postures and *Pranayamas* have a holistic approach in taming these ailments. The practice of *yogasanas* help to cure certain symptoms like backache, leg cramps, pain in lower limb, etc. *Pranayamas* relieves psychological complaints like sleep disturbances, anxiety and fatigability. Together they help to reduce Gastric Complaints like constipation and hyperacidity. Hence, this holistic approach can bring about better improvements in pregnancy, anetnatally.

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