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ABSTRACT

Yoga began as an ancient practice and its origin is in India. *Yoga* was developed as a way to achieve harmony between the heart and soul on the path to divine enlightenment. Along the way, it was discovered that *yoga* has a practical benefit of curing many diseases and it is effective in alleviating physical injuries and chronic pains. To achieve state of *YogaNidra* practices of *yoga* is very essential. *YogaNidra* is effortless relaxation of body as it is a state of consciousness in deep sleep. Practices of *yoga* increases energy level in the body while *yoga nidra* helps to conserve and consolidate this energy and relax the entire system. Our body is composed of five elements- *Akash, Vayu, Tej, Jal, Prutvi*. *YogaNidra* is basically *Akash Tatva Chikitsa*. After *yoga* practices, there should be sufficient time for practicing *YogaNidra*. It has shown positive effect in many diseases. In diseases, *YogaNidra* practices helps to recover from illness and increases endurance capacity of patient. Developing consciousness and for self-healing it is useful. It is useful in both, chronic and acute diseases. This article is a sincere effort to highlight on *Yoga nidra* subject.

Keywords: *Yoganidra, Panchmahabhuta, tatva, consciousness.*

INTRODUCTION: *Yoga nidra*, lucid sleeping is among the deepest possible states of relaxation while still maintaining full consciousness. It has been known for thousands of years. Of the three states of consciousness of Waking, Dreaming and Deep Sleep, as expounded in the Upanishads, particularly the *Mandukya Upanishad*, *YogaNidra* refers to the conscious awareness of the Deep Sleep state, referred to as *prajna* in *Mandukya Upanishad*.^[1] This is the third of the four levels of consciousness of AUM mantra, relating to the state represented by the M of AUM.^[2] The state of *Yoga Nidra*, conscious Deep Sleep, is beyond or subtler than the imagery and mental process of the Waking and Dreaming states.^[3] As a state of

conscious Deep Sleep, *Yoga Nidra* is a universal principle, and is not the exclusive domain of any more recent teachers or traditions.

Yoganidra is a state of consciousness in deep sleep. It is considered to be an active or preliminary form of meditation though many of the benefits of meditation are also realized through this state of consciousness. In the state of *YogaNidra* the body appears to be asleep but awareness is acutely present. The mind does not wander aimlessly or drift into dramas or dreams. Rather, the “witness” emerges. This is that part of the self that watches our experience from a place of detachment. Unemotional and absent of thought, awareness of the witness brings about great joy and peace.

The *Panchabhautik* theory-

This universe and all its contents are basically composed of *panchtatva* or five basic elements comprising of *Prithvi* (earth), *Apas* (water), *Tejas* (light), *Maruta* (wind) and *Aakaash* (sky). Our body is also composed of the same basic elements.^[4] Our personality and wellbeing is dependent on which of the five elements predominates in our nature. To keep a balance of all these five elements or *tatvas* of life is important to keep us healthy and happy. When it comes to spiritual journey, simply keeping the body healthy is not the aim. This physical body is temporary and won't carry on with us on our journey to connect to the Infinite one. To keep our consciousness rooted to just *Prithvi*, *Apas* and *Agnitattva* won't help in the journey. To get connected and merged with the Infinite, our consciousness needs to be raised and get tuned with *Vayu Tatva* and *Aakash tatva*.^[5]

Role of Yoga: Identification of five *tatvas* and tune in to them to reach the Infinite supreme Consciousness should be the goal to achieve balance in these five *tatvas*, and for that meditation and yoga techniques need to be followed so as to awaken the *kundalini*. By awakening the *kundalini* one can transcend our finite nature and merge with the Infinite consciousness. *Yog Nidra* is basically “*Aakash tatva chikitsa*”.^[6]

AIM AND OBJECTIVE:

AIM:

To study *Yoganidra* and highlights its benefits in healthy person and various diseases.

OBJECTIVE

1. To review literature on *Yoganidra*.

2. To study the literature on the efficacy of *Yoganidra* in various diseases.

MATERIAL AND METHODS: This is review article. Information given in concerned text is studied in detail for this article. *Mandukya Upanishada* and *Swami satyanandasaraswati*'s *yoga nidra* books are having many references. Also relevant references are taken from other research article available on internet.

Procedures of performing Yog Nidra: There are many procedures. Here is simple procedure of doing it - Lie down straight on your back in (*Shavasana*). Close your eyes and relax. Take a few deep breaths in and out. Remember to take slow and relaxed breaths. If you feel any discomfort adjusts your posture or use a pillow to elevate the legs a little, for more comfort. Start by gently taking your attention to your right foot. Keep your attention there for a few seconds, while relaxing your foot. Then gently move your attention up to the right knee, right thigh and hip (again for a couple of seconds). Become aware of your whole right leg. Repeat this process for the left leg. Similarly, take your attention to all parts of the body: genital area, stomach, navel region, chest, right shoulder and right arm, followed by the left shoulder and left arm, throat, face and the top of the head. Take a deep breath in, observe the sensations in your body, and relax in this still state for a few minutes. Now, slowly becoming aware of your body and surroundings, turn to your right side and keep lying down for a few more minutes. Taking your own time, you may then slowly sit up, and whenever you feel comfortable, slowly and gradually open your eyes.

In this one can concentrate on “*sapta chakras*” present in body. Also one can witness the trip which enjoyed in the past or imagine the presence of favourite thing. In *Yoga Nidra*, you *leave* the Waking state, go *through* the Dreaming state, and *into* the Deep Sleep state, yet remain fully awake.^[7]

Benefits of Yoga Nidra: The practice of *yoga Nidra* has been found to reduce tension and anxiety. The autonomic symptoms of high anxiety^[8] such as headache, giddiness, chest pain, palpitations, sweating and abdominal pain respond well. *Yoga Nidra* is an extraordinary technique for both developing consciousness and for self-healing. In our deepest states of relaxation, the physiology of the body returns to a state of balance from which healing occurs.^[9] *Yoga Nidra* is not magic. It works within the laws of nature. Where healing is possible, *Yoga Nidra* will maximize the ability of the body and mind to heal itself. It supports the immune system, the nervous system, the endocrine system and all of the organs of the body.^[10] It is an outstanding complementary approach to supporting the healing process of patients suffering from cancer, heart disease, autoimmune disorders, chronic fatigue, pain and much more. After doing yoga postures, one needs to cool the body with *yoga nidra*. It helps conserve and consolidate the energy from the yoga poses (active) practices.^[11]

Yoga nidra relaxes the entire system, preparing it for *pranayama* and meditation. It is therefore important to keep aside sufficient time for *yoga nidra* after yoga postures. In *yoga nidra*, we consciously take our attention to different parts of the body, which activates the nerves in those areas and

helps to integrate the impact of the *asanas* (yoga postures) into our system.

DISCUSSION: In this review article detail study is done on literature of *Yoganidra* subject. Mechanism of action *Yoganidra* in human body and its importance is studied carefully. Also it has promising results in various diseases. Before starting *Yoganidra*, role of yoga practices is studied.

RESULT: A *Yoganidra* practice is effective in healthy person as well as in disease state.

CONCLUSION: While most people treat yoga as a body workout, the truth is a yoga routine provides deep restoration to body and mind. And to make practice more effective, it's ideal to end yoga sequence with *yoga nidra*. *Yoga Nidra* is the single most powerful tool that can help to reshape life, rebuild health, and renew life.

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