

APPLIED YOGA IN SPORTS ACTIVITY

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Introduction : Today sports is not just a physiological phenomenon, and is a strong interaction of the mind and body. It is a day by day becoming more competitive and looked upon as a career option for monetary gains, and desire to win at any cost.

So the changing face of sports scene today seeks for important solutions. A sportsman mostly needs basic qualities.

The Basic qualities -- of fitness & Yoga in sports. 1.Speed 2.Balance 3. Flexibility 4. Mind 5. Meditation 6.Strength, & Stamina.

Routine and consistent practice of various Yogasanas has help build strength and muscle mass, several muscle group of athlete i.e. swimming, cycling & running increase core body stability and less overuse injury, the more utilized muscles create a more balance and overall strength.As a swimmer, Golfer, Running and Jumping do constant yoga practice, improve the Balance, Control,& Co-ordination.Yoga invariably improves joint & muscle flexibility and translate to great range of motion an increase the performance that is swimmer forward movement per stroke, increase range of motion and less overuse injury. The ability to create a stress free mind is a significant benefit yoga practice and controlled the breath. Improve concentration and clear decision. Mental practice is controlled of your emotions and anxiety level.Meditation is a mental practice prove reduce anxiety and stress level, Reduce cortical level increase calming hormones , improve cognitive functions, reduce Blood pressure and heart rate, Increase immunity functions, these benefits combine to better rest, sleep and recovery, balance diet, as well as provide ability to think more clearly under pressure.

1. Professional sportsman calls for discipline in training
2. A balanced diet.
3. A balanced Lifestyle.
4. Inner focus and determination.

Yoga comes in to help many a person's to seek, to control over the mind, control over the body, good breathing habits, relaxation under pressure, highly developed concentration skills and the ability to focus on the present.

Asanas, Pranayama and Meditation bring in and merge the forces of the body and mind, thus a greater body awareness and vitality and concentration is developed.

Yoga A Boon To The Sports Person : Yoga routines incorporates slow, steady flexibility exercise that is ideal for athletes, frequently yoga training may increase flexibility and range of motion . While relieving muscle tension, whether you are a runner or a golfer improve range of motion can often help improve performance.

Yoga understands the body needs more perfectly. Thus the athlete now freely works on areas that need attention with confidence.

Yoga prevents injuries, as an athlete gets extra agile which avoids damage, provides more strength and players ability to react increases.Generally in competition athletes at all levels tend to have a fear of losing over other competitions and excellent performance. Yoga

is ultimate as it maintains equanimity in every situation. Thus yoga breaks all the barriers and crosses all other limitations.

Yoga works through the mind this tango of mind and body ,this works all around the limb and helps it to knit the muscle fibers and thus building it resilient to injury. The areas of concern are pre strengthened as stress related areas are anticipated.Yoga's practice as integration, balance and harmony are the key words in Yoga. Long term sports training ,muscular imbalances can lead to body injury. Thus yoga brings in harmony which corrects the one sided effect of training by promoting general harmony of the body and by improving whole physical system.

Yoga is a natural remedy as Asanas are gentle stretching of muscles which induces relaxation and increases blood supply. These residual tension is released and regeneration of any body part is done.Sports training is very intensive over along extended time period. thus an imbalance is formed where muscles or the body as a whole becomes weak through exertion. Yoga regeneration can be of much good help as the exercises are based on the principle that after contracting for a specific time period in an isometric movement against a specific resistance, muscles to release and relax. Yoga provides a conscious effort and hence this practice is natural and effective for so many years.

Practices In Yoga : Daily yoga exercises.

1. Backward & Forward Bending Asanas
2. Surya Namaskara
3. Inverted and Balancing Asanas.
4. Pranayama.
5. Relaxation & Meditation Techniques
6. Shatkarmas

Daily Yoga Exercises : Removal of stiff joints and increase flexibility in muscles is obtained through Preparatory Exercises. These exercises also help in co-ordination between bones, muscles, joints, ligaments and make them work naturally. Further injuries in knee, hip, ankle, shoulder, wrist joints can be overcome by practicing these Asanas daily.

Backward And Forward Bending Asanas : Spine flexibility and strength is enhanced through these type of Asanas. Posture of the body is depended on the proper spine pose, free flow of energy, nervous activities & all the body reflexes. Thus the whole body balance depends on spine flexibility and adjacent muscles. Back pain problem can be minimized. The stress in the spine accumulates in the lower spine or at the neck and shoulders. To remove these problems it is suggested that we use forward and backward bending followed by one or two twisting Asanas relax spine and we become alert.

Psychologically speaking forward bending Asanas gives the players confidence to remove out hesitation and uncertainty. Where as backward bending Asanas helps the players to face any situations with courage and optimism.

Surya Namaskara (Salute To The Sun God) : This is a complete Asana and its daily use is highly beneficial. One can be always fit and fit throughout the body. Warm up forms a very important part for game. Any type of stressful situations can be overcome. Effectively way of

loosening, stretching, massaging, Toning up joints muscles & internal body organs. Overall stimulation and balance is provided through this exercise.

Inverted Asanas : These type of Asanas force in a rich blood supply to the brain and also help to reverse gravity effect on the body. Breath becomes slow & deep maximizing carbon dioxide and oxygen exchange, so that respiration is correct. Body parts like Liver, spleen, stomach, kidneys & pancreas are activated and function efficiently. Blood and lymph accumulation in lower limbs & abdomen is drained back to the heart, then to lungs purified and re - circulated to all body parts. Pituitary gland also operates efficiently tuning the endocrine system.

Balancing Asanas : They induce physical balance as movements are done unconsciously. Connections between mind and body is achieved through developed brain centers. Body parts coordination is achieved, this brings in a balance and a sense of pose. The body energy is used efficiently. The body tries to become alert and free to rely on other more subtle forces to support & propel it. Thus a proper conservation of body energy is done and the motion is now more smooth and graceful.

Pranayama : The most effectively we can increase lung capacity, energy, stamina through these exercises. A control over involuntary muscles can be achieved through this a proper concentration and also a balance of emotions is done better. Practicing this systematically and regularly .The Pranic energy management is developed through breath control.

Bhramari Pranayama (humming bee breath) and Ujjayi Pranayama (psychic breath) can be used at the start of any sporting event to induce relaxation and reduce mental stress. Mind is now calm and quiet

Sheetali & Sheetakari are cooling Pranayama & best towards off heat and keep the body cool and clean in hot summer season..

Bhastrika Pranayama(rapid breathing from the abdomen) generates heat and vitality and raises the natural energy level, it makes the second wind more accessible in sport after near exhaustion.

Nadi Shodhana Pranayama (alternate nostril breathing) with kumbhaka (breath retention) also increases lung capacity as well as balances the Pranic energy by stimulating both brain hemispheres.

Abdominal Pranayama : This breathing is most simple and effective which can be done at any time in the present form.

Shatkarmas : Neti, Kunjal, Laghoo Shankhprakashalana and Trataka are four cleansing practices also important for sportsman.

NETI : It cleans and clears nasal passages, making mind clear and ready to take react sharply It induces calmness and balances the body mind relation by helping balance both hemispheres of brain.

Kunjal : (regurgitative cleansing) helps to reduce the fear of failure and encourages to face challenges. Induction of confidence and positivity so that they can express properly and give their best performance without holding back fear or any form of anxiety.

Laghoo Shakhprakashalana : It is must for every sports person as it cleanses the intestines but this is advised to be done under proper guidance of qualified instructor. The whole

intestinal track is cleansed of the impurities and toxins. Thus mind appears fresh and the digestion is done properly.

Trataka : Trataka is constant gazing at one single point. All the games demand a one point concentration and awareness. Practicing this not only increases our concentration and counter distraction. It increases awareness and intuitive knowledge and discretion.

Yoga Nidra : It is systematic method for inducing complete physical, mental and emotional relaxation simultaneously this works at three level - the conscious, sub conscious & unconscious. The depth of relaxation, helps to increase the level of awareness and focus, Receptivity level is also geared up. Hence it is also helpful in learning skills & techniques. We have stages practice in sports. Visualization being one, while the body lies in a state of physical sleep, the mind remains awake & relaxed. In such circumstances it is possible to learn & rehearse moves mentally by Visualizing them. An important Yoga- Nidra stage is to breached where a resolve is made which increases willpower & single mindedness to achieve success on the field. Players through proper training of this " Yoga Nidra " can develop the appropriate state of mind so at the required time the player can balance their physical, mental, emotional states. Players find it difficult to control negative emotional response, including rage fear and aggression especially when stress levels are high.

In Yoga - Nidra players are purposely asked to submit voluntarily to strong emotions while presenting a state of deep relaxation & the whole process is witnessed by them. This helps them to have an equanimity and in control over any type of situation.

Conclusion : Sports is such a subject which is highly demanding and a confluence of various issues, but Yoga moves in just the opposite direction with its emphasis on a relaxed approach and detached mind state. One always notice the state of mind of successful players & their physical preparedness this is brought about by Yoga, Performance at his level best while being relaxed, ready & yet confident.

Only a Yogi draws in him that equanimity & tranquillity of the mind wherein he is ready to face and accept a victory or a defeat in the name of the body, mind and spirit.

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