

## Effects of asana, pranayama and meditation practice on blood pressure

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### ■ ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study is to find out the effects of asana, pranayama and meditation practice on Blood Pressure (Systolic and Diastolic). To achieve this purpose of the study, forty students studying in Alagappa Model Higher Secondary School, Karaikudi, and Tamil Nadu were randomly selected as subjects. The age of the subjects ranged between 15 to 17 years. The selected subjects were divided into four equal groups of ten subjects each. Group I underwent asana practices, Group II underwent pranayama practice, Group III underwent meditation practice for five days per week, for eight weeks of training period and Group IV acted as control that did not participate in any special training programme apart from their regular activities as per their curriculum. The data was collected at prior to and after the training programme of eight weeks. Blood pressure (Systolic and Diastolic) was chosen as a criterion variable. The analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to analyze the data. The results of the study showed that the Blood pressure (Systolic and Diastolic) was significantly improved due to the asana, pranayama and meditation practice on Blood pressure (Systolic and Diastolic) of schoolchildren.

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■ **Key Words** : Asana, Pranayama, Meditation, Blood pressure (Systolic and diastolic), ANCOVA

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Yoga is universally benefiting all people of all ages. The study of Yoga is fascinating to those with a philosophical mind and is defined as the silencing of the mind's activities, which leads to complete realization of the intrinsic nature of the Supreme Being. It is a practical holistic philosophy designed to bring about profound state as well as an integral subject, which takes into consideration man as a whole (Iyengar, 1966). The aim of Yoga is to devise ways and means of helping the better emotional and intellectual concentration. Asana is the main yogic tool for balancing the physical body. It consists of various static postures and physical movements performed to release tension, improve flexibility, maximize the flow of energy and remove fixation (Swamy, 1934). The objective of asana is to create a free flow of energy in order to help to direct our attention within. In this study an attempt was made to find out the effects of asana, pranayama and meditation practice on resting pulse rate (Taimani, 1967). As blood drains from the arteries during

ventricular diastolic, the pressure decrease to minimum called diastolic blood pressure. Diastolic blood pressure is the lowest arterial blood pressure of the cardiac cycle occurring during diastolic of the heart. Systolic pressure is the maximum lateral pressure of blood on the wall of the blood vessels during the systole of the heart. Diastolic pressure is the lateral pressure of blood on the wall of the blood vessel during the period of diastolic. In the present study it was found out the effects of asana, pranayama and meditation practice on blood pressure.

The selected subjects were divided into four equal groups of ten subjects each. Group I underwent asana practices, Group II underwent pranayama practice Group III underwent meditation practice for five days per week for eight weeks of training period and Group IV acted as control that did not participate in any special training programme apart from their regular activities. Subjects were required to attend Yoga classes per week five days for a total of 8 weeks. Each Yoga session consisted of 10 minutes of pranayamas (breath-