

Effect of Yoga Life Style Intervention on Body Weight and Blood Chemistry of Middle Aged Women

Kumar, M., Sukh, P., Jagbir and Singh, D.
C.R.M. Jat College, Hisar – 125001 (Haryana)

Abstract

The present study aims to determine the effects of Yoga on body weight and blood chemistry [total cholesterol level, low density lipoprotein (LDL), high density lipoprotein (HDL) and serum triglyceride levels] of middle aged women. The sample for the study comprises of 50 females between the ages of 40 to 55 years. Sample was further divided into two groups (i) Experimental group (N=25), (ii) Control group (N=25). The subjects of the Experimental group went through a Yogic intervention for six months under the direct supervision of researchers. They performed – Dhanurasana, Bhujagasana, Sarvangasana, Halasana, Chakarasana, Shalabhasana, Paschimotanasana, Purnmatsyandrasana and Nadishodhana, Sithali, Sitakari, Brahmari, Bhastrika and Kapalbhatai Parayanama early in the morning at 5.00 to 6.00 a.m. daily in the campus of C.R. College of Education. The Control group was engaged in daily routine work. The subjects of both the groups were tested before and after the experimental period of three months. The data was analyzed statistically by applying t-test. The results show that the Yoga helped the Experimental group effectively in decreasing the body weight, total cholesterol, LDL and triglycerides whereas on HDL, no significant effect was obtained. No significant changes were observed in the Control group. It is concluded that Yoga intervention helped in decreasing the body weight and improving the lipid profile of middle aged women which is beneficial for healthy life.

Key Words: Body weight, total cholesterol, low density lipoprotein (LDL), high density lipoprotein (HDL) and serum triglyceride

Introduction

Rising costs of prescribed drugs and increasing population are making alternative medicine increasingly more attractive. Yet there are few rigorous, scientific studies which are examining the safety and effectiveness of alternative and complementary therapies in fighting specific symptoms or diseases. Yoga is one of the promising and most appealing therapies in the recent times. It is increasingly gaining popularity as a means of exercise and fitness training. Indian philosophy of living (i.e. Yoga life) has gained a great momentum among the people of well developed nations but caution is needed because Yoga has now become a "new fitness craze". Practicing of Yoga postures is claimed to improve the body's alignment, resulting in

increased circulation, nervous system stimulation and increased energy. However it needs to be recognized more by health care professionals for a complement to conventional medical care rather than just a trendy leisure activity. Over the last 10 years, researches have shown that the Yogic exercise improve strength, flexibility, cardiovascular endurance and many more abilities in our body.

Galantino et al (2004), through a pilot program, examined the ability of Yoga for alleviating low back pain, the practice improved balance and flexibility and decreased disability for people with chronic back problems. *Narendran et al (2005)* suggested that integrated approach to Yoga during the pregnancy is safe. It improves birth weight, decreases pre-term