

## Benefits of Integrated Yoga Practice for Destitute Elderly Widows in Vrindavan

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### Abstract

The current study aims to better understand the benefits of Yoga Practices for destitute elderly widows in Vrindavan. Regular Integrated Selected Yoga Practices may have significant health benefits. The majority of the women reported symptoms of Asthma, Insomnia, Blood Pressure, and Musculoskeletal Pain. Because they were left behind by their family, widowed women were unable to acquire good treatment and did not receive proper treatment support from the government. Widowed women also suffer a combination of physical and mental stress. Integrated Yoga Practices can enhance Physical and Mental health in destitute elderly widows. Yoga as part of widow's daily routine may help in promoting health. Yoga should be part of health-care facilities for the destitute elderly widows as it can enhance overall health status.

**Keywords :** Integrated Yoga, Destitute, Elderly widows

### Introduction:

The term "destitute" is defined as any female who has no independent source of livelihood or is not being cared after by any family member or relative, and includes a divorced woman, under the Destitute Women and Widows Welfare Bill 2006 (Bill No. XC of 2006). The definition of a "widow" is a woman whose husband has passed away following a valid marriage. According to **Ministry of women child development 2022** estimated 43.2 million widows in India and India's Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of widows is 4.8 million in India. According to the survey by Nagar Palika Parishad of Vrindavan in 2005 the number of destitute women in Vrindavan was 3105. Vrindavan is also known as the "City of Widows", currently an estimated large number 15,000 of them are widows, many of whom have spent over thirty years here. Large sections of these widows are living as destitute at religious points like Vrindavan, Varanasi, Mathura,

Haridwar and Puri. When a woman becomes a destitute elder widow, she has to face several hardships and disadvantages in day to day life. Vrindavan is also known as the "City of Widows", currently an estimated large number of 15,000 of them are widows, many of whom have spent over thirty years here. Most of them disowned and abandoned by their family live in pathetic and pitiable living conditions in Vrindavan and Radha Kund. Some destitute elderly widows live in Government Ashram and NGOs, at some their rented accommodation, at bhajan ashrams and in other public places such as Ghats and Temples. The majority of the women belong to West Bengal and Majority of the living in the homes are over 60 years old.

### Widow's Health

The World Health Organization in its detailed study on Mental Health for Older adults recognized the growing and

disturbing trend of mental and neurological disorders increasingly found in aged individuals and their growing vulnerability with the need for professional help, the most imminent necessity in the later stages of life.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) the state of Health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. The World Health Organization (WHO), describes Yoga as a valuable tool, one that increases physical activity, mental well-being, and decreases non-communicable diseases.

### **Yoga and Health**

Yoga is becoming popular as a preventive and therapeutic intervention and appears as safe as usual care and exercise. Yoga is a holistic system of varied mind-body practices utilized in a variety of contexts and situations that can be used to improve mental and physical health.

The Integrated Yoga approach developed by Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samasthana (S-VYASA) is based on the principle that “all psychosocial disorders begin in the mind, which create an internal imbalance as a result of frequently demanding and stressful life situations”. Intense surges of uncontrolled excessive speed of responses to these demanding situations at an emotional level (Manomaya Kosha), conflicts between value systems (Vijnanamaya Kosha), and strong likes and dislikes at the psychological level (Manomaya Kosha) are responsible for imbalances at gross levels (Pranamaya and Annamaya Kosha).

According to a case study of Vrindavan, the majority of women who have mild to severe mental illnesses go untreated. They experience medical issues as they mature because they are not given nourishing food and sufficient care, in addition to mental issues. Ageing is a natural process marked

by a decline in health, but it can be made worse by feelings of abandonment following a husband's death. Asthma, arthritis, osteoporosis, hypertension, cataracts, fatigue, restless sleep, Alzheimer's, chronic pain, stress-related ailments, and others are the most common issues among widows who are struggling.

### **Health benefits of the Yoga Practice to elderly – Research findings**

**Hypertension:** The study was conducted out at the Universal Peace Foundation and the Ozanam Home for the Elderly in Coimbatore. The experimental group included 20 elderly people, while the control group included 15 people. In the experimental group, blood pressure was measured 10 minutes before the intervention, and the researcher administered Yoga-Nidra for 20 minutes every morning between 6 and 8 a.m. for 15 days. According to the findings of this study, Yoga-Nidra is an effective method for lowering blood pressure in elderly people with hypertension who live in nursing homes.

**Sleep & QoL:** The results of this study show that a six-month yoga-based intervention had positive impacts on the physical health, psychological health, social interactions, and environment dimensions of QOL in senior people living in nursing homes. The patients in the yoga group also had a significant rise in their overall sleep quality score. Elderly residents in elderly homes in and around Bangalore city, India, over the age of 60 were recruited for a study. For the study, 152 people were screened throughout 9 nursing homes for the elderly. By studying both classical and modern yogic books, the yoga programme was created. Ten specialists in the fields of integrative medicine and yoga were asked to review this yoga package to see whether it was suitable for older persons. As a result, the verified yoga curriculum included

Nadanusandhana meditation, as well as Yogasana (physical postures), Pranayama (breathing exercises), and Sukshma Vyayam (loosening exercises) (OM Meditation). The yoga group's subjects received daily yoga instruction for 60 minutes throughout that time. After that, they had to continue practising every day for the next six months.

**Physiological Parameters :** Subjects of the study Select one welfare centre in Busan, Korea and target elderly people aged 65 or older who have been diagnosed with essential hypertension and are managed by the welfare centre. This study included 24 elderly people with essential hypertension who practised yoga three times a week for eight weeks. To assess the effectiveness of the yoga programme, blood pressure, physiological parameters (total cholesterol, HDL, LDL, triglycerides), and level of life satisfaction were measured before and after the training. The yoga programme included breathing, asana, and meditation and was broken down into stages such as warm-up exercise (15 minutes), main exercise (40 minutes), and clean-up exercise (5 minutes) so that the subjects could easily learn and adapt. The outcomes demonstrated that a yoga programme was a successful nursing intervention to lower blood pressure and promote life satisfaction in older individuals with essential hypertension.

- 1) Systolic and diastolic blood pressure both decreased significantly.
- 2) Total cholesterol, LDL, and triglycerides all showed considerable declines, while HDL levels did not change much.
- 3) Changes in blood pressure were time-dependent: After two weeks, both systolic and diastolic blood pressures had dramatically decreased.
- 4) Life satisfaction significantly increased.

**Psychological Health :** The current study examined the effects of chair yoga and

chair exercise on the psychological health of older adults. The study included 98 elderly people ranging in age from 65 to 92. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups (chair yoga, chair fitness, or wait list) at their location. Over the course of six weeks, classes met once a week for 45 minutes. Participants were instructed to attend all exercise sessions, and attendance was taken at each session. They were given simple instructions to practise specific exercises on their own for 15 minutes on each non-class day. In the current study, yoga participants improved in these areas more than control exercise participants.

**Mental Health:** The study's findings showed that after participating in a yoga treatment programme, scores generally improved, showing lower levels of depression and anxiety as well as higher levels of self-esteem. Yoga has been found to be useful in boosting mood, reducing symptoms of depression, and reducing anxiety in both young and old patients, and has consistently produced encouraging outcomes in the treatment of generalised anxiety disorder and panic disorder. Yoga has been shown to have strong mood-enhancing effects, and studies indicate that it may be just as helpful as antidepressants in treating mental problems without producing negative side effects. This research was done in Puducherry. 40 senior citizens were randomly assigned to the yoga group or the wait-list control group. For 12 weeks, a 60-minute yoga treatment programme was offered twice a week. This regimen, which was created specifically with older citizens in mind, includes static stretching postures (Asanas), breathing methods (Pranayamas), relaxation, and basic warm-up and breath-body movement coordination practises (Jathis and kriyas). Before and after the 12-week study period, both groups received administrations of the Hamilton Anxiety Scale, Hamilton

Rating Scale for Depression, and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.

### Conclusion

As a result, the Integrated Yoga can be perceived as a comprehensive paradigm that addresses imbalances on all levels—physical, mental, and emotional. In theory, each Integrated Yoga component is mutually exclusive of the others; therefore, for the Integrated Yoga model to have the desired outcome on each of the five levels of existence (Pancha Kosha), all components must be provided and integrated. No component alone may make the claim to be the Integrated Yoga or possibly have the same outcomes as the entire model. It has been found that Integrated Yoga practices reduce anger,

anxiety, and depression while also enhancing physiological and psychological well-being.

Overall, the findings show that a Yoga Practices for elderly decreased anger, anxiety, and depression while improving wellbeing, general and daily life self-efficacy, as well as perceptions of self-control. Yoga has the ability to enhance elderly persons' psychological well-being. The number of yoga practitioners both young and old, continues to increase as a result of the proven health benefits of this ancient practice. In order to better understand how Yoga can enhance life quality as people grow older, additional research on the subject is needed.

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