

Research Article

# Female Health through Yoga

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Female health concerns such as menstrual disturbances, stress-related disorders, hormonal imbalance, and lifestyle-related illness are increasingly common in modern society.<sup>1</sup> Yoga offers a holistic, low-cost, and preventive approach that may support women's physical, mental, and reproductive well-being.<sup>2</sup>

**Aims/Objectives:** To assess the role of Yoga in improving female health and to explore its potential benefits in relation to physical fitness, emotional stability, hormonal regulation, and reproductive health.<sup>3</sup>

**Materials/Methods:** This abstract is based on a narrative review of published literature related to Yoga interventions in women's health.<sup>4,5</sup> Relevant studies on asana, pranayama, and meditation were examined with attention to outcomes such as stress reduction, menstrual regularity, quality of life, and symptom improvement in common female health conditions.<sup>1-5</sup>

**Results:** Available evidence suggests that regular Yoga practice improves flexibility, muscular strength, posture, and relaxation.<sup>2</sup> It may reduce stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms while supporting better hormonal balance and menstrual health.<sup>1,2,5</sup> In women with conditions such as PCOS, menopause-related symptoms, and reproductive health concerns, Yoga appears to offer beneficial adjunctive support.<sup>4,5</sup>

**Conclusion:** Is a safe, holistic, and effective complementary intervention for promoting female health.<sup>3,5</sup> Its regular practice may improve both physical and psychological well-being and can be considered an important lifestyle measure for women across different age groups.<sup>1-3,10</sup>

**Keywords:** Female Health, Yoga, Women's Health, Hormonal Balance, Reproductive Health, Holistic Medicine.

## INTRODUCTION

Female health is influenced not only by physical factors but also by emotional balance, daily habits, and inner resilience. Across different stages of life, women may experience menstrual discomfort, fatigue, stress, anxiety, hormonal fluctuations, and changes in quality of life. In today's fast-paced environment, these concerns are often intensified by inactivity, poor sleep, and constant mental pressure. offers a gentle and holistic way to support women's well-being because it works through the body, breath, and mind together.<sup>1,2</sup>

The classical tradition has long emphasized balance, self-discipline, and harmony as foundations of health. In the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Yoga is described as a means to prepare the body and mind for steadiness and

inner strength.<sup>6</sup> The Gheranda Samhita also presents as a practical path for purification, vitality, and overall well-being.<sup>7</sup> These classical teachings remain relevant today because they show that was never only about exercise; it was also about creating a healthier and more centered life.<sup>6,7</sup>

Modern research supports this traditional understanding. Studies have shown that can improve physical functioning, reduce psychological distress, and enhance quality of life in women.<sup>2,5</sup> It has also been studied in conditions such as polycystic ovary syndrome and depression, where it appears to provide useful supportive benefits.<sup>4,5</sup> By improving flexibility, calming the nervous system, and encouraging mindful awareness, Yoga may help women feel more comfortable in their

bodies and more emotionally stable in daily life.<sup>1,3</sup>

As it is low-cost, adaptable, and generally safe, it can be used both as a preventive lifestyle practice and as a supportive therapy in women's health care.<sup>3,5</sup>

### **For Adolescent Health**

Adolescence brings a unique mix of physical growth, emotional sensitivity, and social pressures, and many young women report anxiety, mood swings, and cycle-related discomfort during this period. Gentle Yoga practices that focus on alignment, breath, and mindful awareness can help teens feel more grounded and better connected with their bodies.<sup>1,2</sup> B.K.S. Iyengar's *Light on Yoga* describes how age-appropriate asana and basic pranayama, practiced without strain, can support healthy posture, reduce classroom-related tension, and foster a sense of self-esteem.<sup>8</sup> Studies in youth also suggest that regular Yoga may reduce symptoms of anxiety and improve overall well-being, making it a suitable lifestyle support in adolescent girls.<sup>2,13</sup>

Adolescence can be eased by simple, non-competitive asanas such as Tadasana (Mountain Pose), Uttanasana (Standing Forward Bend), Balasana (Child's Pose), and Vajrasana (Thunderbolt Pose), which improve posture, reduce backache, and promote calmness.<sup>8,13</sup> Gentle Sukhasana (Easy Pose) with Nadi Shodhana (alternate-nostril breathing) can help regulate mood and reduce exam-related anxiety.<sup>1,8</sup> Classical Jalandhara Bandha (Throat Lock), when added subtly in seated breath practices, may support parasympathetic activation and mental steadiness.<sup>17</sup>

### **Yoga for Menstrual Health**

Primary dysmenorrhea and menstrual discomfort are common and often affect school or work performance. Classical Yoga texts such as the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* and *Gheranda Samhita* emphasize the use of gentle forward bends, supported pelvic postures, and deep relaxation as ways to ease tension in the lower abdomen and perineum.<sup>6,7</sup> Contemporary reviews report that women who practice yoga regularly tend to experience reduced menstrual pain and less distress, suggesting that asana and breath-based relaxation can be meaningful adjuncts to routine care.<sup>11,12</sup> Supportive practices such as reclining poses with bolsters and slow

abdominal breathing, as illustrated in *Light on Yoga*, offer a simple, self-care-friendly way for women to manage cycle-related symptoms at home.<sup>8</sup>

For menstrual discomfort, Shavasana (Corpse Pose) with Supta Baddha Konasana (Reclining Bound Angle Pose), Janu Shirshasana (Head-to-Knee Forward Bend), and Viparita Karani (Legs-up-the-Wall Pose) can relieve lower-abdominal tension and enhance pelvic circulation.<sup>8,11</sup> During flow, slow Sitali or Sitkari pranayama are traditionally used to cool the body and reduce irritability and heat-related discomfort.<sup>6,8</sup> Classical Mula Bandha (Root Lock), when gently engaged in supine or sitting poses, is believed to support pelvic-floor stability and ease cramping.<sup>17</sup>

### **Yoga for Reproductive-Age Hormonal Balance and PCOS**

In the reproductive age group, hormonal imbalance and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) are increasingly prevalent. Systematic reviews indicate that Yoga-based programs combining asana, pranayama, and relaxation may improve menstrual regularity, reduce androgen-related symptoms, and enhance metabolic and psychological parameters in women with PCOS.<sup>4,14,15</sup> Classical Yoga teachings similarly recommend regular, steady practice of physical postures and breath work to harmonize the body's internal systems and support overall vitality.<sup>6,7</sup> When combined with standard medical management, Yoga can be a low-cost, safe, and empowering addition to a woman's daily routine.<sup>4,15</sup>

Women with PCOS often benefit from regular practice of Bhujangasana (Cobra Pose), Setu Bandhasana (Bridge Pose), Ardha Matsyendrasana (Half-Spinal Twist), and Janu Shirshasana to support ovarian and pelvic circulation.<sup>4,14,15</sup> Kapalabhati and Anuloma-Viloma Pranayama (without forceful effort) are described in classical texts and modern programs as tools to balance the autonomic system and improve metabolic function.<sup>6,8,14</sup> Uddiyana Bandha (Abdominal Lock), when taught correctly and cautiously, is said to support diaphragmatic movement and abdominal tone, complementing lifestyle-based management of PCOS.<sup>17</sup>

### **Yoga during Pregnancy**

Pregnancy requires special attention to comfort, mobility, and emotional stability. *Light on Yoga* outlines modified standing poses, supported reclining postures, and gentle

breathing techniques that can help maintain flexibility, reduce backache, and prepare the body for childbirth without overload.<sup>8</sup> Classical texts also link calm, disciplined practice with a sense of inner stability, which can be particularly comforting during the emotional shifts of pregnancy.<sup>6,7</sup> Clinical evidence suggests that supervised Yoga during pregnancy can reduce musculoskeletal discomfort, lower perceived stress, and improve quality of life, while remaining safe when tailored to individual conditions.<sup>11,16</sup>

During pregnancy, Sukhasana with Nadi Shodhana pranayama, Virasana (Hero Pose), Supta Baddha Konasana, and Marjariasana-Bitilasana (Cat-Cow Stretch) can maintain flexibility and reduce lower-back strain when modified under guidance.<sup>8,11</sup> In later trimesters, Garudasana (Eagle Arms) at the wall or Savasana with a bolster between the knees can relieve hip and pelvic tension.<sup>8</sup> Sheetalī and Ujjayi Pranayama can be introduced gently to support calmness and reduce perceived stress.<sup>8</sup> Classical Jalandhara Bandha is traditionally used in seated pranayama to encourage a slow, steady breath and mental focus.<sup>6,8</sup>

### **Yoga for Menopause and Later Life**

Menopause often brings hot flushes, sleep disturbances, and mood changes that affect daily functioning. Yoga's emphasis on cooling breaths, slow movement, and seated meditation can help women regulate their nervous system and improve sleep quality.<sup>2,5</sup> As Light on Yoga and classical texts describe, softer, supported asana and longer rest periods suit older women who may need gentler load and more time to recover.<sup>6-8</sup> Modern studies support this view, showing that regular Yoga practice in mid-life and beyond can enhance physical comfort, reduce anxiety, and increase perceived well-being.<sup>2,10</sup> Menopausal women may find comfort in Sarvangasana (Shoulder Stand, with cushions for support), Halasana (Plough Pose), Bhujangasana, Setu Bandhasana, and Viparita Karani to support circulation and reduce hot-flush-related agitation.<sup>8,10</sup> Classical Sitali and Sitkari pranayama are often recommended to create a cooling effect and emotional steadiness.<sup>6,8</sup> In older women, gentle engagement of Mula and Uddiyana Bandha under expert supervision may support pelvic-floor tone and abdominal stability.<sup>17</sup>

### **Yoga for Pelvic Health**

Pelvic health, including bladder control, pelvic floor strength, and comfort during daily activities, is an essential but often under-discussed part of female health. Sequences that include poses such as Upavistha Konasana, Supta Padangusthasana, and supported forward bends, combined with mindful engagement of the pelvic floor, can improve local stability and reduce discomfort.<sup>8</sup> Classical Yoga literature links physical stability with inner calm, suggesting that steady practice of supported, pelvic-oriented postures supports both structural integrity and emotional security.<sup>6,7</sup> From a clinical perspective, Yoga can complement other pelvic-floor strategies by promoting body awareness, relaxation, and gradual strengthening without excessive strain.<sup>10,11</sup>

For pelvic health, Upavistha Konasana (Seated Wide-Angle Pose), Supta Padangusthasana (Reclining Big-Toe Pose), Supta Baddha Konasana, Malasana (Garland Pose), and supported Janu Shirshasana can improve mobility and relaxation in the pelvic region.<sup>8,11</sup> In classical Yoga, Mula Bandha is repeatedly linked with pelvic-floor vitality and continence, while Uddiyana Bandha supports abdominal strength and diaphragmatic coordination.<sup>7,8</sup> Practices such as Nadi Shodhana and gentle Bhramari Pranayama can combine breath awareness with pelvic-floor engagement, enhancing body-mind integration in pelvic-floor training.<sup>11,17</sup>

### **DISCUSSION**

Yoga offers more than a set of postures; it provides a gentle, everyday language of self-care that can travel with a woman from adolescence through menopause and beyond. In practice, this means that simple, non-competitive asanas such as Tadasana, Balasana, and Supta Baddha Konasana, combined with breath practices like Nadi Shodhana and Sitali, become familiar anchors during times of worry, transition, or discomfort.<sup>8,13,17,23</sup> For many women, Yoga is less about performance and more about learning to slow down, to feel the body, and to soften the patterns of stress that often aggravate menstrual pain, hormonal imbalance, or mood changes.<sup>1,2,5</sup>

From a clinical perspective, the evidence suggests that Yoga is not a replacement for medical care but a meaningful companion to it. Systematic reviews and controlled trials indicate that Yoga-based programs can improve physical functioning, reduce distress,

and support women dealing with conditions such as PCOS, primary dysmenorrhoea, and menopausal symptoms.<sup>4,11,12,14,15,23</sup> Classical techniques such as Kapalabhati, Anuloma-Viloma, Mula Bandha, and Uddiyana Bandha, when taught with care and individualization, add a deeper layer of physiological and psychological regulation to this support.<sup>6,8,17,18,21</sup>

For adolescent girls, the growing body and changing emotions can feel confusing and overwhelming, yet Yoga provides a quiet space where attention shifts from appearance to awareness — of breath, posture, and inner rhythm.<sup>13,16,17</sup> This mindful orientation may help explain why Yoga interventions in youth show benefits in self-esteem, anxiety, and cognitive functioning without requiring high-intensity effort.<sup>13,16,22</sup>

In the reproductive years, where hormonal fluctuations and PCOS-related challenges are common, the integration of gentle asana, breath, and bandha work appears to support both metabolic and psychological balance.<sup>4,14,15,23</sup> Descriptions in texts like Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha and Hatha Yoga Pradipika emphasize that regular, steady practice, rather than force, is what gradually refines the body's internal systems.<sup>17,21</sup> This aligns well with modern recommendations for slow, consistent lifestyle-based support in hormonal disorders rather than sudden, extreme interventions.<sup>14,15</sup>

During pregnancy and menopause, when the body undergoes deep transformation, Yoga shines as a tool for comfort and continuity. Modified poses, supported reclining postures, and cooling breaths can help women stay connected with their changing bodies without feeling like they have to “push through” symptoms.<sup>8,11,23</sup> The classical emphasis on Jalandhara, Mula, and Uddiyana Bandha in seated breathing practices reflects an ancient understanding that subtle internal engagement can influence both structure and emotion.<sup>17,21</sup>

In pelvic health, Yoga's combination of gentle stretching, postural awareness, and mindful engagement of the pelvic floor offers a non-invasive, empowering approach to stability and comfort.<sup>11,17,21</sup> Rather than viewing the pelvis only as a biomechanical unit, classical Yoga invites women to meet it through breath, awareness, and patience, which can be especially valuable in conditions such as urinary discomfort or postpartum recovery.<sup>11,17</sup>

Taken together, Yoga emerges not as a single “magic pose” but as a cumulative, lived experience. When classical knowledge from Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Gheranda Samhita, and Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha is woven together with contemporary research on Yoga's safety and benefits, the result is a coherent, practical model for supporting female health across life stages.<sup>6,7,17,18,21,22,23</sup> For women, this can mean a daily practice that feels both familiar and deeply personal — a small, quiet space where body, breath, and life rhythm can meet in balance.<sup>1,2,5,17</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Yoga stands out as a gentle, holistic, and accessible tool that can meaningfully support female health across the lifespan. From adolescence to menopause and beyond, its combination of simple asanas, mindful breathing, and subtle internal practices offers women a practical way to care for their bodies, emotions, and daily rhythms without relying on intensity or competition.<sup>8,13,17</sup> Classical Yoga texts such as the Hatha Yoga Pradipika and Gheranda Samhita describe posture, breath, and bandha work not as isolated exercises, but as an integrated path toward balance and inner steadiness, which modern research largely supports.<sup>6,7,17,21</sup>

For menstrual discomfort, PCOS, pregnancy-related fatigue, and menopausal changes, Yoga appears to function best as a complementary, rather than substitute, approach to medical care.<sup>4,11,12,14,15,23</sup> When asanas like Supta Baddha Konasana, Balasana, and Setu Bandhasana are combined with pranayamas such as Nadi Shodhana, Sitali, and gentle Ujjayi, women often report improved comfort, reduced stress, and a greater sense of control over their bodies.<sup>1,2,5,8,11,17</sup> By including mindful engagement of Mula and Uddiyana Bandha under expert guidance, Yoga can also support pelvic-floor and abdominal stability, adding another dimension to women's health promotion.<sup>11,17,21</sup>

Because Yoga is low-cost, adaptable, and generally safe, it can be integrated into daily routines at home, school, workplace, or clinic settings.<sup>3,5,10,22</sup> Its real value may lie not in dramatic change, but in the quiet, steady way it reshapes a woman's relationship with her body, breath, and life transitions.<sup>1,2,17</sup> Encouraging women to adopt a regular, personalized Yoga practice—rather than a rigid routine—aligns both classical wisdom and

modern evidence, making Yoga a relevant, humane, and sustainable companion in the journey of female health.<sup>6,7,17,21-23</sup>

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