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(MINI REVIEW ARTICLE)



## Posture modification through Sunjeevan Yoga

Anuradha Pandit \*

*Director and Yoga Therapist, Yoga Plus, Pune, India*

*Yoga Therapist and Professor, Kabir Baug Math Sanstha, Pune, India*

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### Abstract

In this twentieth century with dynamic changing lifestyle, more towards sedentary, growing technologies, crazy working hours, pressures, deadline, competition, responsibilities and eventually growing stress is reason for growing physical and pathological disorders. This is also the cause of early pathological disorders. One becomes victim of wrong posture due to monotonous routine, improper work environment and lack of exercises. We are conscious about our health and follow specific fitness regime and diet, but awareness of body and its structure is also equally important. We are conscious about our external look, but we ignore internal beauty of our body. Maintaining balance of well-arranged body created by the environment and our energy should be well preserved. Yoga plays an important role in creating this awareness, posture practice to keep us physically healthy, meditation to keep our mind healthy and raj yoga teaches us to have insight to know the goal of our soul which is 'peace'.

This article emphasis on posture awareness through posture modification. It emphasis on what is posture modification and how it can be achieved through posture correction. It explains the importance of posture correction and how important is body awareness with reference to effect of gravitation force on our body, to bring change in our body to maintain symmetry/ balance and preserve it. It also covers Ashtanga yoga, 8 limbs of yoga which is the best guide to teach us how to live our life, with systematic progression in setting up our goals towards the purpose of our life. When I say understanding of the body that also includes understanding of our daily routine and the flow of posture correction from foot to toe and flow of the yoga therapy which goes after identification of the problem. The article also mentions few important facts in this article, Kids learn through imitating our behavior physically and socially. Gaining knowledge and wisdom is fate, passing this knowledge to next generation is our responsibility.

As the topic says, principles of Sunjeevan Yoga are explained throughout the article. Just like various schools of Yoga, Sunjeevan Yoga is also a school of Yoga which has main aspect as Yoga Therapy using different Hatha yoga asnaas and props to treat patient with various physical deformity and supportive therapy to pathological disorders. Keeping the base of Patanjali yoga sutra as philosophy behind Sunjeevan Yoga therapy, it works more on body and mind awareness.

To summarize, Lifestyle Management is crucial and is need of an hour. This can be achieved through Yoga, that is awareness of body and mind. Lifestyle management is spending quality time at work, family, friends, and oneself. How well we manage our body and mind that is physical and virtual health and how we primacies our priorities. Yoga is just not just stretching and postures, but yoga is posture recognition and modification, stretching with awareness.

**Keywords:** Yoga; Mind; Soul; Body awareness; Posture Correction; Posture Modification; Rehabilitation; Rejuvenation; Yoga Therapy

\* Corresponding author: Anuradha Pandit; [anuradhapandit1985@gmail.com](mailto:anuradhapandit1985@gmail.com)

Director and Yoga Therapist, Yoga Plus, Mumbai, India. +91 9923322760/ [www.yogaplustherapy.com](http://www.yogaplustherapy.com)

## 1. Introduction

The word 'Yoga' comes from the Sanskrit root 'Yuj', which means union, union of body, mind and soul. If we leave soul part aside for time being and just concentrate on mind and body that will lead to posture modification. Maximum population is stuck in vicious cycle of mental and physical stress. So, we should only concentrate on mind and body and connect them with help of breathing.

In everyday life, at work, with our family, both mind and body should be in harmony to complete any action successfully. This will lead to healthy, positive, and successful life which we are striving for throughout our life. Lack of harmony leads to distress and it affects us mentally and physically. To achieve peace of mind and reach at the point of meditation, one must also go through physical stability. For meditation we need good and comfortable posture.

What is posture modification? You must have heard this word from doctors. But what does it mean? Posture modification means to understand the monotonous movements or routine, its effects on your body physically and mentally and resulting in distress. It is crucial to manage our lifestyle by spending quality time with our work, family, friends and oneself. How well one manages to maintain their health and controls mind is lifestyle management. Yoga plays an important role in achieving this, as the name says it all, it helps to keep body and mind healthy and ultimately achieve peace, which is the main objective of the soul.

Posture modification can be achieved through posture correction. What is posture correction? Gravitational force and our centre of gravity play very important role in determining our posture. Do we ever think of importance of gravitational force on our body, how it works in each posture, and whether the equilibrium of our body is maintained? Is our center of gravity in alignment or is it shifted as per our sitting posture which then disturbs the equilibrium of our body? Now how yoga will help in achieving this? As mentioned earlier yoga is union of body and mind. This is achieved through stability. That is, stability in mobility and mobility in stability. We always perform all the postures using every part of our body, towards right, left, vertical and horizontal. When we do that, we realize the asymmetry pattern of our body and correct it. We hold a posture for longer time to train those muscles which then allows us to gain more flexibility and lightness which then helps us to be agile and quick in our actions. This is mobility in stability. And when we go into some posture and stay in that posture, is stability from mobility. This is performed every day in our daily routine while working or doing other chores. This awareness is achieved through yoga practice and teacher's guidance. Mind plays an important part in understanding the symmetry and maintaining the equilibrium of the body. Once this is established, the next step that is meditation is possible.

The art of walking is not taught by anybody. It is considered as natural tendency of human being. Since walking is the special characteristics of human being, wrong walking technique or improper usage of postures described above can lead to deformity. All the daily activities like sitting, standing and lying down are not taught by anybody, they are considered natural, but all these actions have some scientific study behind it. Overuse or wrong habit can cause physical deformity which later if not cured leads to physiological deformity which still not treated changes into permanent pathology.

Body weight and obesity are not the only factors causing pain in joints. Bad posture, if not corrected in time can cause bone deformities and painful joints. It is not always the weight of the body which is causing pain in joints. Our body frame is made from bones and forms the structure of our body. And the muscles, fats and organs are placed symmetrically to form shape of our body. Everybody cannot be thin, and it is not true that thin people don't suffer from deformity or don't have pain. With yoga practice, postural correction is possible, with equal distribution of required fats, burning of unnecessary fats and maintaining the form of the body. This will give a form to the body and not thin body.

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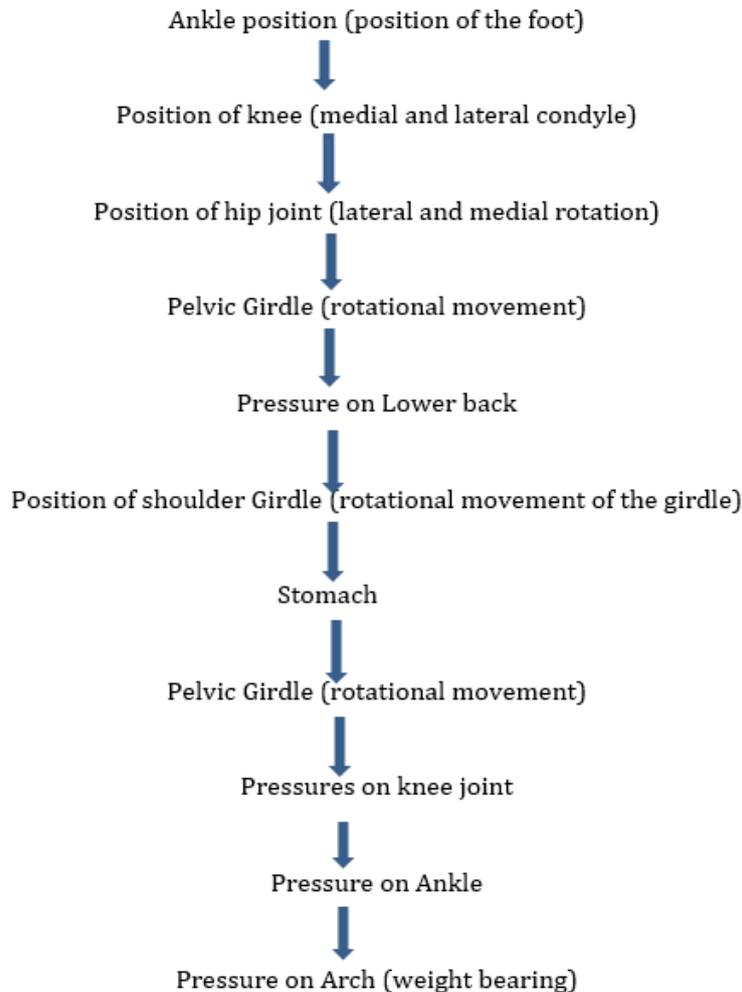
## 2. Postural correction

Postural correction starts from foot to head. The observation should be based from actions from ankle to head. Let's see the flow chart.

The position of the foot is particularly important, stepping of our foot outwards laterally or inward medially create pressure on ankle joint, thus give pressure on lateral and medial condyles of the knee, thus reducing space in the joint and increase friction between knee joint thus giving pain in knee joint. To reduce knee pain, we adjust positioning of hip joint. This increases pressure on pelvic girdle and hip muscles and six deep rotator muscles and ultimately pinches the sciatic nerve which passes through these six deep rotator muscles. This gives pain to whole leg. This brings pressure on

lower back. To avoid the lower back pain, one starts dropping shoulder, this brings pressure on chest muscles and stomach and there is downward rotation of the pelvic girdle. This again brings pressure on knee joint and ankle joint.

This flow also starts from shoulder girdle. Because of the growing new technologies, mobile phone, laptops replacing computers or desktops, the head is tilted downward, bringing pressure on neck and upper back at posterior part of the body, shoulders on anterior side of the body, thus giving pressure on chest – stomach- knee- ankle- knee- hip-thus on lower back.



**Figure 1** Evaluation of Posture Correction

Human being is different from other animals because he can stand on two legs, walk on two legs, sit down keeping back straight and lie down on back with straight legs. Also, we have intelligence which makes human race most superior of all. Like in earlier times, we don't hunt or eat raw food. In today's world we must work hard to earn money and in exchange we satisfy our basic needs and other luxuries of life. At work, the action is monotonous, using same set of muscles continuous for years which leads to disturbance of the symmetry of the body/ disturbing the balance of the body. This leads to discomfort, pain and stress which eventually leads to deformity. Physical discomfort leads to voluntary deformity like arthritis, spondylitis etc. and stress leads to involuntary deformities like diabetes, cholesterol, hypertension etc. This doesn't happen instantly, but it is a result of years of postural negligence and lack of knowledge. We evolved from active to sedentary lifestyle.

The effects of aging on joints are influenced by genetic factors and by wear and tear and vary considerably from one person to another. Although degenerative changes in joints may begin as early as age 20. Degeneration is results from a combination of aging, obesity, irritation of the joints, muscle weakness due to lack of exercises, incorrect postures,

wear and abrasion. Commonly known as wear and tear. Stretching and aerobic exercises that attempt to maintain full range of motion are helpful in minimizing the effects of aging. They help to maintain the effective functioning of ligaments, tendons, muscles, synovial fluid and articulate cartilages.

There is also one important aspect which we usually tend to forget, whatever we learn throughout our life from childhood till we are adults, is genetically or environmentally pass on to our next generation. A baby after he/she is born, he imitates (his/her parents, people round) how we walk, stand, sit, talk, express and communicate. Therefore, if we are teaching them how to be a good human being, they are also learning our attitude towards our own body.

Postural correction can also be explained as rehabilitation and rejuvenation. Rehabilitation is the action of restoring someone to health or normal life through training. Rejuvenation is the action or process of making someone or something look or feel better or more vital. This is what postural correction is. But what is missing in both above meanings as per dictionary, is giving knowledge and understanding to the person who is under distress. With help of doctor or therapist one will improve his health but unless the person is not aware of the cause of his deformity, he will again suffer and again go in the state of distress. So here rehabilitation has taken place but there is no rejuvenation. Person is already motivated to learn and understand and bring awareness as he is free from his stress, physically and mentally, therefore with knowledge and understanding, the person will come back to his normal self, maintain it and run his life with more discipline. Thus, he is also being responsible to pass this corrective knowledge to next generation.

This postural correction is also important while performing yoga posture. We must perform under guidance of the teacher. There are various postures standing, sitting, lying down, inverted, back bending and forward bending. All these postures are not done just as mentioned but one must understand how to place the appendages in each of the movement. E.g., When we are performing standing posture, we must see placement of our foot, hip, shoulders, and hands. Similarly, in sitting, lying down and forward bending postures. While performing inverted posture, we need to be aware whether the pressure is on neck or on shoulders. Our neck is very sensitive, and it is meant only to hold the weight of our head and not our whole body. Similarly, while doing back bending, the pressure should not be on lumbar area, that is we should not bend in lumbar area, which can give more pressure on the curvature and thus giving us pain. This is not only important for the person who is performing but also important for all the yoga teachers to know.

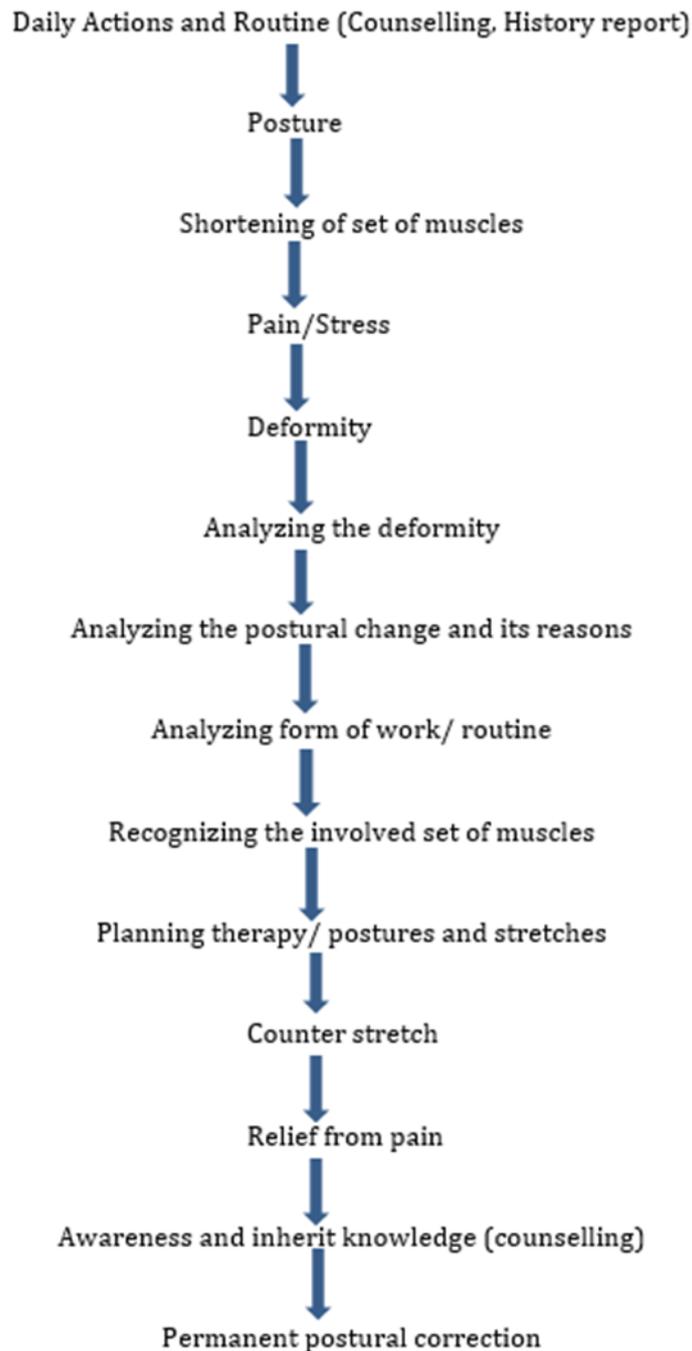
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### 3. Sunjeevan Yoga

How does a Sunjeevan yoga therapy help in rehabilitation? With help of different props and specific programme of postures/ asanas, a therapist helps to achieve posture modification.

Let us see the flow from action to deformity to rehabilitation to cure to prevention to rejuvenation to achieving the change as permanent change.

As per the flow, initially we must understand the daily routine and pattern of work and actions related to that. Even we must understand the genetic reasons behind the deformity if any or is the deformity completely mechanically. If the deformity is genetic or any medical condition is involved, it is best to consult the doctor. The mechanical deformity can be reversed through postural correction. Once the detail understanding is established regarding the work pattern, we can define the set of muscles related to it and its effects on joints, as the main reason is shortening of the muscles around it. We will understand regarding joints and its effects in the later articulate joints. With study of joints, we also learn about the degenerative process in the joint and following strain on muscles, friction in joints, pain, distress, nerve compression or pinching around that area. Usually the distress part is not actually the area of distress for the person. But because of distress, the person starts adjusting and bring changes in the normal bodily postures and the muscles are overloaded by performing its own action and also acting as support. If the problem is at earlier stage of distress where there is no postural adjustment, then the cure is comparatively faster since the recognition of the problem is done at early stage. Once the initial analyzing, postural adjustment, physiological changes (muscular skeletal) is establishes, we can plan stretches, postures and proper therapy. Since the therapy has reduced the pain and distress, the person is highly motivated to understand, learn and bring awareness and gain knowledge regarding the postural adjustments and later postural corrections we have done. This part is very important, the effect has to be sustained for lifetime. At this stage counselling to the person is also necessary to motivate him to follow and keep practicing exercises forever.



**Figure 2** Line of Treatment

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#### 4. Conclusion

Yoga is to understand the language of the body in which all parts of the body are its alphabets. To make one spelling, different alphabets must be organized with appropriate meaning. Any spelling mistakes changes the entire meaning likewise any change in the functioning of the body changes the entire language of the body. Yoga is not just doing asanas but Yoga is to bring awareness working on mind and body before jumping on Pranayama and Meditation.

## **Compliance with ethical standards**

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Single Author, there is no Conflict of Interest

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