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# Yoga and Health in The Siddha System of Medicine

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### Abstract

Globally, the Siddha tradition improves the concentration of the mind by organizing the five senses as in 'Ashtanga Yogam', branch into eight limbs, including Yogic posture stands as the third limb. Definition of Yoga is Union and the root word 'Yoga' means 'to unite'. Yoga methods cover the association of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual to the highest self-realization. Asanam is the main yogic posture for stabilizing the physical body. Perfect pose, Shoulder stand, Loin pose, Triangle pose, Easy cobra pose. A yogic diet emphasizes the development of air and the ether elements. Branches of the yogic path are Swara yoga, Agni yoga, Atchi yoga, Parianga yoga. Yoga postures and breathing techniques must be practiced minimum of 30 minutes per day, to prevent various metabolic and other diseases, and bring the state of equilibrium in balancing the three humors, the derangement of which is the main cause of several diseases.

**Keywords:** Siddha System, Ashtanga Yogam, good diet, Sattvic Food, Asanam-Yoga postures, Yoga effects.

### Introduction

Globally, the Siddha tradition improves the concentration of the mind by organizing the five senses as in 'Ashtanga Yogam', branch into eight limbs of the Yogic system, including "Iyamam, Niyamam, Aathanam, Piranayamam, Pirthiyagaram, Tharanai, Dhiyanam, and Samathi". Asanam (i.e) Yogic posture stands as the third limb. The definition of Yoga is Union and the root word 'Yoga' means 'to unite'. Yoga methods cover the association of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual to the highest self-realization was mainly said by the saint "Ptanjali". Siddha system is based on three humors Vatham (Air element), Pitham Fire (element), and Kabam (Water element), that derangement causes diseases [1]. Entire life expresses one person in some form concerning the World, with our neighborhood, our situations, or with other individual beings. In the Siddha System, Yoga for each person who dangles in our scattered appearance of nature using a living map [2]. The ancient Siddhas brought an evolution in humanity- through physical postures, ethical disciplines, breath control, etc. [3]. The right diet is not only the food type but the quality of food; it should be of a *sattvic* diet. The modern food quandary is forcing all of us to become more conscious of our diets. The heritage of Yoga in India regards dairy products and other foods are magnificent [4]. The forms created by wise sages contain the untold paths and dynamics leading to the ambrosia of divine well-being within our bodies [1]. Recently people are acquainted with yogic postures and practice them for reasons like health, and meditation, and for reducing the risk of diseases like musculoskeletal disorders, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, depression, etc. [5]. Fortunately, the awareness of certain implications remains unseen. Asanam is the main yogic posture for stabilizing the physical body [6]. Just as a person has a unique constitution, similarly each Yogic posture has its unique features [1]. The first practice in the Yogic alchemy of the Siddhas is the prana which means life, through yogic therapy diseases are alleviated by restoring the state of equilibrium [7]. Everyone should practice 30 minutes a day of asana to prevent dosam from developing in excess. Asana is most needed by the vatham type, who mostly is prone to postural distortions [5].

## 2. Yoga postures

**2.1 Siddhasanam (Perfect pose):** It is the best posture for concentration and meditation and promotes spiritual knowledge. It calms vatham and abana vayu. It does not aggravate the other doshas.

**2.2 Shoulder stand (Sarvangasana):** It prevents aging, and regulates the circulation and thyroid glands. It cures diseases related to the uterus. This pose relieves constipation and headache.

**2.3 Lion pose: (Singadhasanam):** It increases the Agni and pitha on all levels, energizing the head, eyes, throat, and digestive system. It reduces kapha and vatham.

**2.4 Triangle pose: (Trigonasana):** It is good for all doshas, particularly for vata and vyana.

**2.5 Easy cobra Pose (Bhujangasana):** Harmonizes the pitha and regulates the samana vayu. It calms vatham in the colon and improves circulation in the digestive region. It also stimulates the kundalini, whose energy is like a cobra. It enhances immunity.

**2.6 Corpse pose (Savasana):** Savasana is considered to be the most important asana and always follows and completes any asana practice. It helps relieve accumulated vatham or stress, particularly at the end of asana, and cools down pitha as well. It calms the mind. It gives relaxation and refreshes the whole body <sup>[1]</sup>. It is beneficial to perform asanas in a calm environment with ventilation <sup>[9]</sup>.

## 3. Yogic Gesture

In the Siddha tattva system, our hands are classified as one of the five organs of action. Monkeys and apes use their hands for locomotion but human hands can move and make gestures. Our hands express ourselves. The ancient Siddhas structured an entire system of yogic practices based on the use of hands, aimed at healing mind and body, and for the spiritual experience of integrated body-mind-spirit. The specific hand applications are called Mudras. The word Mudra means gesture, indication, or seal.

The thumb-ether

Fore finger-air

Middle finger-Fire

Ring finger-Water

Little finger-Earth <sup>[8]</sup>

## 4. Yogic Diet

A yogic diet emphasizes the development of air and the ether elements, not only for detoxification but also for opening the mind. Raw food brings the pranic force not only to the body but also to the mind and is a part of the yogic diet for cleansing the nadis or the channels, which occurs through increasing the pranayama. Great Yogis were said to be able to live with air or pranayama alone, some of them live with only water, yet others on a little fruit, milk, or ghee only.

In addition, those who want to cleanse the physical body but the subtle body can do so with the aid of raw food diets combined with asana, pranayama, tantra, mantra, and meditation <sup>[3]</sup>.

## 5. Branches of the yogic path

### 5.1 Swara yoga

The science of yoga deals with the different pranic rhythms along with the five elements within the body esoteric five bird astrology called Pancha patchi vidya.

### 5.2 Agni yoga

The yoga of fire dealing with the five-fold heat is called the Pancha agni (five agni) yoga.

### 5.3 Atchi yoga

Atchi is revealed by Siddha saint 'Ramalingam' deals with the yogic incorporation of eye stratagem and the removal of inertia associated with the several colors symbolized by the seven curtains unfold self-realization through his moral teachings.

### 5.4 Parianga Yoga

Parianga yoga is the yogic art of sex. It is how human passions can unfold inner mysteries. The higher left-hand tantric practices involve a few others such as invoking the personal deity in the act of divine union, etc. <sup>[2]</sup>.

## 6. The ultimate goal of yoga is energy conservation

Yoga helps in strengthening the receptivity of the subconscious mind, thereby achieving harmony between mind and body which helps in the prevention of psychosomatic disorders.

The importance and realization of the Mind and Body concept are once again emerging as a powerfully effective means of Healing rather than therapy, in its sense and with its potential and limitations. Yoga postures bring flexibility, coordination, strength to the body, balance, and endurance, and they can decrease hypertension and inflammation in the heart <sup>[10]</sup>.

**6.1 The analgesic effect of yoga:** (Asanas and Pranayama) Brings balance between the peripheral nervous system and the autonomic system and helps in alleviating and preventing many painful syndromes.

**6.2 The motor recovery effect of yoga:** (Asanas, pranayama, pratyahara), it improves the postural mechanisms by neural conditioning enhancing functional recovery in neurological disorders.

**6.3 The tranquilizing effect of yoga:** (pranayama and meditation). Sedates the mind, strengthens the stress coping mechanism, and improves immunity, thereby overcoming, and relieving cardiovascular disorders.

**6.4 The immunological effect of yoga:** (Asana, pranayama, and Meditation), activates the reticuloendothelial system, thereby increasing the body's resistance to disease, preventing complications, and recovery from respiratory disorders.

**6.5 The Homeostatic effect of yoga:** (The Raja yoga-Ashtanga Yogam ladder of eight steps- Iyama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dhyana, Samadhi), regulates the harmonizes the nervous system, endocrine glands, recovery and relief of metabolic disorders <sup>[3]</sup>. Globally people searched for alternative medicine systems for the treatment of COVID-19, they commonly searched for Yoga and continued with AYUSH systems <sup>[11]</sup>.

## 7. Conclusion

Siddha system emphasizes 'Ashtanga yogam' with eight limbs including the Yoga and breathing techniques, kundalini all together is associated intently. This brings out the nectar essence in our body which acts as a rejuvenating factor of life and body, called the 'Yoga Muppu'. It is beneficial to perform asanas (yogic posture) in a calm environment with ventilation. Worldwide every person should practice Yoga and breathing techniques for 30 minutes per day, to prevent various metabolic and other diseases, and to bring a state of equilibrium in balancing

the three humors, derangement of which is the main cause of several diseases and to lead a healthy life.

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