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## “Role of Yoga in the Management of PCOS/PCOD”

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### Abstract:

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) and Polycystic Ovary Disorder (PCOD) are among the most prevalent endocrine and metabolic disorders affecting women of reproductive age across the world. These disorders are characterized by hormonal imbalance, chronic anovulation, hyperandrogenism, metabolic disturbances, and psychological stress. The increasing prevalence of PCOS has been linked to sedentary lifestyle, poor dietary habits, obesity, and chronic stress. Conventional medical treatment generally focuses on hormonal therapy and pharmacological interventions, which primarily address symptoms rather than underlying lifestyle factors. In recent decades, yoga has emerged as an effective complementary therapy for managing PCOS symptoms and improving overall well-being. Yoga is a holistic discipline that integrates physical postures (āsana), breathing techniques (prāṇāyāma), and meditation (dhyāna). Scientific studies indicate that regular yoga practice may regulate endocrine function, reduce stress levels, improve insulin sensitivity, and enhance reproductive health. The present study examines the role of yoga in managing PCOS and PCOD through a comprehensive review of existing literature. The findings suggest that yoga-based lifestyle interventions significantly improve menstrual regularity, hormonal balance, metabolic health, and psychological well-being among women suffering from PCOS/PCOD.

**Keywords:** Yoga, PCOS, PCOD, endocrine health, hormonal imbalance, lifestyle therapy, reproductive health.

### Introduction

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is a complex endocrine disorder that affects women during their reproductive years. The disorder is characterized by irregular ovulation, elevated androgen levels, and polycystic ovarian morphology. According to international health estimates, PCOS affects nearly 20% of women globally, making it one of the most common endocrine disorders in women.

Closely related to PCOS is Polycystic Ovary Disorder (PCOD), a condition in which the ovaries produce numerous immatures or partially mature follicles that develop into cysts. These cysts interfere with normal ovarian function and disrupt the hormonal balance of the body.

Women with PCOS frequently experience a wide range of symptoms, including irregular menstruation, infertility, obesity, acne, excessive hair growth (hirsutism), and metabolic disturbances such as insulin resistance. In addition to physical symptoms, PCOS is also associated with psychological conditions such as anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem.

The increasing prevalence of PCOS has been attributed to several factors, including sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy diet, environmental influences, and chronic stress. While modern medical treatments focus primarily on hormonal therapy and pharmacological management, lifestyle interventions have become an essential component of PCOS treatment.

Yoga, a traditional Indian system of health and well-being, offers a holistic approach to managing lifestyle-related disorders. Classical yogic philosophy, as described in the teachings of Patanjali in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, emphasizes the integration of physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions of health. Contemporary research indicates that yoga can positively influence hormonal regulation, metabolic health, and psychological well-being. Therefore, yoga has gained increasing recognition as a complementary therapy for PCOS management.

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**Objectives of the Study**

The primary objectives of this study are:

- 1.To analyze the causes and symptoms of PCOS and PCOD.
- 2.To examine the physiological mechanisms through which yoga influences endocrine and metabolic processes.
- 3.To review existing scientific literature related to yoga and PCOS management.
- 4.To identify specific yogic practices beneficial for improving reproductive health.
- 5.To evaluate the effectiveness of yoga as a complementary therapy for PCOS/PCOD.

**Expanded Literature Review**

Several scientific studies have explored the therapeutic effects of yoga in managing PCOS symptoms. A clinical study conducted by Shivarama Varambally reported that yoga therapy significantly reduced testosterone levels and improved menstrual regularity in adolescent girls with PCOS. The study demonstrated that yoga-based lifestyle interventions could positively influence hormonal balance. Research conducted at the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences found that women who practiced yoga regularly experienced significant improvements in insulin sensitivity, body mass index, and psychological well-being. Another study published in the *International Journal of Yoga* indicated that yoga practice led to improvements in endocrine function and metabolic health among women with PCOS.

Furthermore, research supported by the National Institutes of Health suggests that mind–body interventions such as yoga can significantly reduce stress levels and improve quality of life in individuals suffering from chronic health conditions

PCOD OR PCOS	
Symptoms	Increased risk
Intermittent	Gestational diabetes
Unpredictable or absent periods	High blood pressure in pregnancy
heavy or long and/or painful periods	Weight gain, especially around the belly
Difficult conceiving or infertility	Risk to type 2 diabetes
Excessive hair on the face or body	High cholesterol
	Metabolic steatohepatitis
pattern baldness or hair thinning	Cardiovascular disease
Acne or oily skin.	Sleep apnea

Aasan/Pranayama/Meditation for PCOD OR PCOS		
ASAN	PRANAYAMA	MEDITATION
BHADRASANA	NADISHODHAN	
BHUJANGASANA	UJJAI	
DHANURASAN	BHRAMARI	Transcendental Meditation
SETU BANDHASANA	KAPALBHANTI	
SURYA NANASKAR		

**Before the Asan/ Pranayama**

- ⇒ Prayer 1 min
- ⇒ 2. Loosening Practices
- ⇒ 2 rounds 3 min
- ⇒ Neck Movement Left and Right (Road crossing movement)
- ⇒ Neck Movement Up and Down (Watch sky & earth)
- ⇒ Shoulder rotation (Clock and anti-clockwise)
- ⇒ Back Twisting Movement (Pass the ball to other)
- ⇒ Side Bending (See-saw movement)

**1.Asanas**

**BHADRĀSANA (Gracious Posture/ Butterfly Pose)**

In Sanskrit language, 'Bhadra' means noble or good. This Āsana destroys many diseases.

**Technique**

- ⇒ Sit on the ground stretching both the legs together in front. Place your hands by the side, with palms resting on the ground. Fingers should remain together pointing forwards.



- ⇒ Fold the legs slowly at knees; join both soles with each other.
- ⇒ Hold the toes by the hands.
- ⇒ Slowly bring the legs towards perineum till they reach under the perineum.
- ⇒ The knees should touch the ground. Head, neck and back should be straight.

**Benefits**

- This Asana is good for lumbar region and keeps it healthy.
- Improves pelvic blood circulation and stimulates ovarian function.
- It is beneficial in women's problems and facilitates easy child birth.

**2.BHUJANGĀSANA (Cobra Posture)**

'Bhujanga' means cobra. The final position of this Asana resembles the shape of a cobra.

- ⇒ Lie down on stomach with legs together, toes pointing outwards, hands by the sides of the thighs, palm facing upwards and forehead resting on the ground.



- ⇒ Fold hands at the elbows, place palms on the ground to the sides of the shoulder, thumbs should be under the armpit.
- ⇒ Bring chin forwards and place it on the ground, gaze in front.
- ⇒ Slowly raise the head, neck and shoulders. Raise the trunk up to the navel. Raise the chin as high as possible.
- ⇒ Maintain the posture for as long as comfortable. Then, slowly bring the body down on the ground, starting from upper part of the navel region, thorax, shoulder and chin; and lastly, place the forehead on the ground.

Place the hands by the sides of the thighs; and relax.

#### Benefits

- This posture affects the muscles of the back.
- It is beneficial for relieving flatulence after meals.
- It can relocate slipped disc, removes backache and keeps spine supple and healthy.
- tones the ovaries and uterus, and helps alleviate menstrual and other **gynecological** disorders.

**Contra-indications-** It is strictly prohibited for patients of hernia, peptic ulcer, intestinal tuberculosis, hyperthyroidism, and in the case of abdominal injuries

### 3.Dhanurasana (Bow Pose)

in Sanskrit, 'Dhanu' means bow. In the final pose of this Asana, the body takes the shape of a bow.

#### Technique

- ⇒ Lie down in prone position.
- ⇒ Exhaling **bends** the knees and hold the ankles with hands.
- ⇒ While inhaling raise the thighs, head and chest as high as possible.
- ⇒ Try to maintain weight of the body on lower abdomen. Join the ankles. Look upward and breathe normally.
- ⇒ While exhaling bring down the head and the legs up to knee joint Maintain this position for some time and slowly come back to the original position.

#### Benefits

- Dhanurasana decongests the entire abdominal region and its organs.
- The liver and pancreas are massaged in this Asana. It is, therefore, useful in diabetes mellitus.
- The ligaments, muscles and nerves in the back are given good stretch and the spinal column is rejuvenated. It is beneficial for treating back pain.
- It helps to alleviate constipation, dyspepsia and sluggishness of the liver.
- It straightens the hunched back and drooping shoulders.
- It helps restoring the displaced navel to its normal position.
- It regulates the digestive, excretory and reproductive organs in the body.
- It is useful in treatment of chest ailments.
- It stimulates and regulates the thyroid and adrenal glands.

**Precaution-** People suffering from hernia, peptic ulcer or duodenal ulcer, appendicitis, colitis, high blood pressure should consult a Yoga expert before practising this Asana.

### 4.Setubandhsarvāṅgāsana.

Setubandha' means formation of bridge. The body, in this posture, is positioned like a bridge. Hence, it is called Setubandhsarvāṅgāsana.

#### Technique



**Step 6-**Body flat on the floor. (Inhale, Breath No.3, and then exhale while lowering the body

⇒ Take the position of Sarvāṅgāsana.

⇒ Keeping the palms on the back, bring the legs down to 45°.

⇒ Lower the legs gradually so that the feet approach the floor. Let the feet rest on the floor.

⇒ Raise the spine. Resting on the back of the head, shoulders, upper arms, elbows and soles of the feet, whole body forms a bridge.

⇒ Stay in this final position with normal breathing initially up to 30 seconds.

⇒ Come back gradually to the Sarvangasana, then to Savasana and relax.

#### Variation

- Come gradually to the Sarvangasana.
- Keeping the palms on the back bend the legs at knees; bring the legs further down with the bent knees so that the soles may touch the floor.
- Remove the hands from the back and hold the ankles with hands. The body now forms a bridge.
- In the final position, back of the head and neck, the shoulders, arms and the feet will be in contact with the floor.
- Stay in this position for 30 seconds; the duration can be increased gradually.
- Gradually, come back to the Sarvāṅgāsana by reversing the steps; and then, co'Bhujanga' means cobra. The final position of this Asana resembles the shape of a cobra.

#### Benefits

- Stimulates endocrine glands and improves hormonal balance.
- It removes strain on the back and neck.
- It stretches and massages the colon and other abdominal organ
- It tones female reproductive organs.

**Contra-indications-** People suffering from high blood pressure, cardiac diseases, and stomach ulcers should not perform this Asana.

### 5.Surya namaskar

**Step 1-** Stand upright and exhale fully, (namaskar aasan)

**Step 2-** Inhaling, stretch arms vertically above head and hold the breath. Bend back, holding the breath. (hastothanasan)

**Step-3** Exhale Double over ( )

**Step 4-** Inhale Left leg back (ASHVSANCHALANASAN)

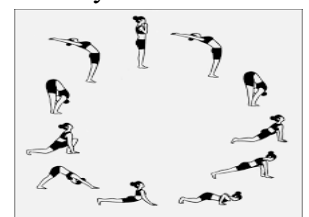
**Step 5-** Exhale Right leg back

(MOUNTAN POSE/ PARVATASAN)

and hold out the breath while maintaining the Position).

**Step 7-** Inhale Head and trunk raised on arms

**Step 8-** exhale Inverted 'V'



**Step 9-** Inhale Left foot brought forward

**Step 10-** Exhale Right foot brought forward and double over

**Step 11-** Inhaling, stretch arms vertically above head and bend back, holding the breath.

**Step 12-** Exhale Stand upright

A dynamic sequence that improves metabolism and flexibility.

## 2. Prāṇāyāma

### 1. NADI SHODHAN

**Hand position:** Nasagra Mudra (nosetip position)

This is one of the fundamental types of Pranayama. This practice is also known as Anuloma-viloma as Viloma means produced in the reverse order. This variety gets the name from the fact that the order of using the nostrils for inhalation and exhalation is reversed every time.

**Technique:** Sit in any comfortable meditative asana. Keep the head and spine straight. The eyes should be closed. Place right hand in jnana mudra. Close the right nostril with the right thumb. Inhale through the left nostril for 5 counts. After 5 counts of breath release the pressure of thumb from the right nostril and close the left nostril with the ring finger. Exhale through the right nostril for 10 counts, keeping the respiration rate slow, deep and silent. Then, inhale through the right nostril for 5 counts. Exhale through the left nostril for 10 counts. This is one round. Practice 5 rounds or for 3 to 5 minutes, making sure that no sound is produced as the air passes through the nostrils.

#### Benefits:

- ⇒ Calms and steadies the mind, improves focus and concentration. Balances left and right hemispheres.
- ⇒ Strengthens the immune system.
- ⇒ Manages hypertension.
- ⇒ Provide sufficient oxygen for the functioning of every cell in our body
- ⇒ Removes waste products such as Carbon dioxide and other toxic gases from the body, so that they do not remain in the blood stream.

#### Contra-indication

People suffering from cardiac problems should perform it without Kumbhaka.

### 2.UJJAYI PRANAYAMA

In this variety both the nostrils are used for inhaling air and the left one for exhaling. The sound represented by the letters 'Aum' is to be produced during the practice, by a partial closure of the glottis. This sound is a peculiarity of this Pranayama and its name is derived from this fact.

**Technique:** Sit in any meditative posture. Close the mouth. Inhale slowly through both the nostrils in a smooth, uniform manner. Retain the breath as long as you can do it comfortably and then exhale slowly through the left nostril by closing the right nostril with your right thumb. Expand the chest when you inhale. During

inhalation a peculiar hissing sound is produced owing to the partial closing of Glottis. The sound produced during inhalation should be of a mild and uniform pitch. It should be continuously practiced.

#### Benefits:

- ⇒ Removes the heat from the head.
- ⇒ The practitioner's voice becomes clear and melodious.
- ⇒ The gastric fire is increased.
- ⇒ It removes phlegm in the throat and all sorts of pulmonary diseases are managed effectively.
- ⇒ It is good for Asthmatic patients and also for the patients of respiratory disorders.

**Contra-indications-** Persons with low blood pressure should not practise this Pranayama.

Persons suffering from hypertension and cardiac disorders should not apply Kumbhaka, they should perform this without Kumbhaka.

### 3.Bhramari pranayama

The word 'Bhramari' is derived from 'Bhramara', which means a black bee. While practicing this Pranayama, the sound produced resembles the buzzing of a black bee.

**Technique:** - Sit in the position of Padmasana or any comfortable sitting position. Close your eyes, lips, and ears. Inhale deeply and exhale making a humming sound as black bee does. In order to get more benefits from this Pranayama you should close your both ears with your thumbs and exhale making the humming sound of the bee.

#### Benefits:

- ⇒ The practice of Bhramari delights the mind.
- ⇒ Bhramari is beneficial to pregnant women as preparation for labor
- ⇒ Blood circulation improves in the brain, clear the ears, eyes, nose and throat

**Contra-indications-** It should not be practiced during ear infection. People suffering from heart diseases should practise it without Kumbhaka.

### 4.BHASTRIKA PRANAYAMA

In Sanskrit Bhastrika means "bellows. Rapid succession of forcible expulsion is a characteristic feature of Bhastrika. Just as a blacksmith blows his bellows rapidly, so also you should move your breath rapidly.

#### Technique:

Sit in Padmasana. Keep the body, neck and head erect. Close the mouth. Inhale from left nostril by closing your right nostril and exhale from right nostril by closing your left nostril. Similarly inhale from left nostril and exhale from right nostril. This practice should be done forcefully. Continue doing this for 25 times. The sound produced during inhalation and exhalation should be like a bellows of the blacksmith. When you practice this Pranayama a hissing sound is produced. The practitioner should start with rapid expulsions of breath following one another in rapid succession. When the required number of expulsions, say ten for a round, is finished, the final

expulsion is followed by a deepest possible inhalation. The breath is suspended as long as it could be done with comfort. Then deepest possible exhalation is done very slowly. The end of this deep exhalation completes one round of Bhastrika. Rest for a while after one round is over by taking a few normal breaths. This will give yourself some rest which makes you fit for starting the second round. Do three rounds daily in the morning. You can do another three rounds in the evening also. Busy people who find it difficult to do three rounds of Bhastrika can do one round at least. This also will keep them quite fit.

#### **Benefits:**

- ⇒ Bhastrika relieves inflammation of the throat.
- ⇒ It increases gastric fire, destroys phlegm, removes diseases of the nose and chest.
- Reduces stress and promotes mental calmness.

#### **Contra-indications**

It should not be practiced during ear infection. People suffering from heart diseases should practise it without Kumbhaka.

#### **4.Kapalabhati** (frontal brain cleansing)

Kapalabhati is a breathing practice where the lower abdominal muscles are used like black smith's bellows for exhalation (Rechaka). In this, breathing is done like the pumping action of a pair of bellows. In Kapalabhati, exhalation is done forcefully by contracting abdominal muscles; while inhalation remains automatic and passive; and occurs spontaneously as a result of forced exhalation. Kapalabhati actively reduces the volume of air in the lungs through forced exhalation.

#### **Health benefits**

- ⇒ Kapalabhati clears the respiratory passage and keeps it free from impurities and excess mucus.
- ⇒ It is useful in treating cold, rhinitis (inflammation of the mucus membrane of the nose), sinusitis, and bronchial infections
- ⇒ It stimulates nerves in the abdominal region; massages abdominal organs; and improves digestion.
- ⇒ It increases the capacity of lung.
- ⇒ It purifies the frontal air sinuses and stimulates the brain.

**Contraindications:-** Avoid it in the case of high blood pressure, any heart ailments, peptic and duodenal ulcers, hernias, vertigo, migraines, headaches, glaucoma.

**Yogic Perspective on Health-**Yoga is a holistic discipline that aims to harmonize the body, mind, and spirit. According to classical yogic philosophy, health is achieved when there is balance among physical, mental, and emotional dimensions of life. Yogic practices influence several physiological systems, including:

- ⇒ Endocrine system
- ⇒ Nervous system
- ⇒ Cardiovascular system
- ⇒ Reproductive system

Through the combined practice of physical postures, breathing techniques, and meditation, yoga promotes physiological balance and psychological stability

## **7. Psychological Benefits of Yoga**

- ⇒ Reduction of stress and anxiety
- ⇒ Improvement in mood and emotional stability
- ⇒ Increased self-confidence
- ⇒ Enhanced mindfulness and relaxation

### **1.Transcendental meditation**

Transcendental meditation is a form of Mantra meditation, which was introduced by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Transcendental Meditation involves redirecting one's attention from the surface level of ordinary thoughts to increasingly subtle levels until the subtlest level is reached and ultimately transcended. The meditator's attention goes beyond (transcend means "to go beyond") the finest level of thought to the source of thought—the pure, undifferentiated consciousness in which all thoughts and perceptions take shape. TM provides a simple and direct means of freeing oneself of tension and developing greater awareness and clarity of thought.

**Benefit-** Meditation practices help calm the mind and improve mental resilience, thereby supporting overall well-being.

### **8. Conclusion**

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome and Polycystic Ovary Disorder are complex endocrine disorders affecting millions of women worldwide. Effective management requires a comprehensive approach that addresses hormonal, metabolic, and psychological factors.

Yoga provides a holistic and non-pharmacological method for managing PCOS symptoms. Through regular practice of asanas, pranayama, and meditation, women can achieve improved hormonal balance, better metabolic health, and enhanced psychological well-being.

Therefore, yoga can be considered a valuable complementary therapy alongside conventional medical treatment for PCOS and PCOD.

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