INTRODUCTION TO ACYTER

The Advanced Centre for Yoga Therapy, Education and Research (ACYTER), a collaborative venture between JIPMER, Puducherry and Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), New Delhi was established by a MOU between JIPMER and MDNIY on 7th June 2008. This advanced centre will focus primarily on the role of yoga in the prevention and management of cardiovascular disorders and diabetes mellitus.

MDNIY will be providing financial assistance and necessary academic input related to yoga and take steps to initiate collaborative research projects on yoga and its applications related to cardiovascular diseases and diabetes mellitus.

JIPMER will be offering its infrastructure and faculty for purposes of collaborative ventures with MDNIY in the field of yoga and its applications to cardiovascular diseases and diabetes mellitus. JIPMER will also provide adequate space to establish ACYTER effectively and efficiently.

The monitoring committee of ACYTER is constituted as follows:

- Dr. K.S.V.K. Subba Rao, Director, JIPMER – Chairperson
- Dr. Ishwar V. Basavaraddi, Director, MDNIY - Vice-Chairperson
- Dr. A. K. Das, Medical Supdt., JIPMER - Member
- Dr. S. Badrinath Project Coordinator, JIPMER - Member
- Dr. K. S. Reddy Dean, JIPMER - Member
- Dr. J. Balachander, Dir-Prof & Head, Cardiology, JIPMER- Member
- Dr. I. N. Acharya Prog Officer (Yoga Therapy), MDNIY- Member
- Dr. Madanmohan Trakroo - Dir-Prof & Head, Physiology & Programme Director ACYTER - Member-Secretary

ACYTER has been active in conducting yoga training for medical students, organizing a mass awareness programme in 48 schools of Puducherry and organized a national workshop on “Introducing yoga in medical curriculum”. Patient care and research work will be initiated soon.
WORKSHOP ON “INTRODUCING YOGA IN MEDICAL CURRICULUM”

ACYTER and Department of Physiology, JIPMER organized a two day National Workshop on “Introducing Yoga in the medical curriculum” on 19th and 20th March 2009 at JIPMER.

The workshop was organized in collaboration with Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), New Delhi under auspices of Department of AYUSH, Govt of India.

The workshop was inaugurated by Dr KSVK Subba Rao, Director JIPMER. Dr Ishwar V Basavaraddi, Director, MDNIY, New Delhi and Dr AK Das, Medical Superintendent, JIPMER were guests of honour.

The national workshop deliberated on the need, feasibility and modality of introducing yoga science in the medical curriculum for medical students in particular and medical professionals in general.

20 resource persons from MDNIY, DIPAS, sVYASA, Karuna Trust, Iyengar Yoga Institute, Mumbai Yoga Institute, Kaivalyadhama, ICYER and JIPMER as well as 150 participants from all over the country participated in the workshop that covered the theory, practicals and therapeutic aspects of yoga and evaluation methods for such a course.

The following are the recommendations of the workshop:

1. The workshop appreciated the Department of AYUSH and Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, New Delhi for making efforts to integrate yoga science in the medical curriculum and create awareness of yoga amongst the medical students in particular and medical professionals in general.

2. It was recommended to introduce yoga science to medical students in particular and medical professionals in general through a “Foundation Course in Yoga Science”.

3. It is recommended that 14 hours of yoga theory be included in theory lectures for 1st, 2nd and 3rd professionals and 32 hours practicals be included in the 2nd professional.

4. It was also recommended that a 48 hour foundation course be conducted after class hours for interested professionals through the yoga units of the institutions as per the syllabus that has been prepared by the MDNIY in consultation with eminent yoga and medical experts.
MASS YOGA AWARENESS PROGRAMME IN SCHOOLS OF PUDUCHERRY DURING THE NATIONAL YOGA WEEK 2009

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare sponsored the NATIONAL YOGA WEEK 2009 from 16 to 22 of February 2009 and Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), New Delhi organised a mass awareness programme for health, happiness and harmony through yoga with the theme of “Role of Yoga in School Health”.

As part of the National Yoga Week, a MASS YOGA AWARENESS PROGRAMME was conducted in schools in different parts of the country through the active participation of leading and eminent yoga institutes who have come together under the banner of the Indian Yoga Association, a self regulatory body for yoga sponsored by the Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.

ACYTER organized the mass yoga awareness programme in 48 schools of Puducherry with the cooperation of the Education Department, Government of Puducherry. The inaugural ceremony for the yoga week in Puducherry was held at Kendriya Vidyalaya, JIPMER campus on 16 February 2009 and the valedictory function at the Indira Nagar Government Higher Secondary School on 20 February. Shri MA Fathimaraj, Deputy Director Education (Sports and Youth Services) was the Chief Guest at the valedictory function.

Daily yoga camps of 1½ hours duration on the theme of the national yoga week were conducted in 48 government and private schools of Puducherry by 28 yoga teachers under the direction of Prof Dr. MADANMOHAN, Director-Professor & Head, Dept of Physiology, JIPMER, and Programme Director, ACYTER and coordinated by Mrs. Meena Ramanathan, Coordinator Yoga courses, Pondicherry University Community College. The International Centre for Yoga Education and Research (ICYER) and Pondicherry Yogasana Association extended active cooperation for the conduct of the yoga classes.

More than 5,000 students as well as their teachers and parents were sensitized to the importance of yoga for school health during this programme. Yoga is the best means to improve the psychosomatic health of everyone, especially children. Regular yoga practice enhances the personality of children, improves concentration and memory power, helps endure stressful situation during examinations, increases immunity and improves overall health. The main objective of the programme was to increase awareness about the benefits of yoga among the children and there was much awakening as evidenced by feedback from the schools.
INTRODUCING YOGA TO MEDICAL STUDENTS: THE JIPMER EXPERIENCE

The holistic science of yoga has a great future as it has the potential to prevent as well as manage a number of stress-induced chronic diseases that defy allopathic medicine. A holistic physician and practitioner of yoga will be able to render better medicare and will be a boon to the society.

It was my heart’s desire to introduce yoga to medical students as a branch of physiology & contemporary medicine. The opportunity came with the active collaboration and financial support from MDNIY. The objectives of the programme were:

- To promote awareness among medical students about the effectiveness of yoga as an inexpensive means for achieving holistic health.
- To impart knowledge, skill & attitude about theoretical & practical aspects of yogic science.
- To motivate medical students to take up further studies, therapy & research in yoga.
- To introduce yoga in medical curriculum as a branch of physiology & contemporary medicine.

I designed a 60 hour programme that included i) lectures (12 h), ii) lecture-demonstrations (3 h) iii) practice sessions (36 h) iv) students seminar on yoga therapy modules (6 h) and v) pre-test, post-test, administration of questionnaires to students and programme evaluation by the students (3 h).

The programme had an overwhelming response with excellent co-operation from the medical undergraduates. In light of the encouraging student feedback, the following are the suggestions:

- Yoga should be made an integral part of medical curriculum, as a branch of physiology and contemporary medicine. Complementary and alternative health systems are already being taught in many standard modern medical schools in different parts of the world.
- The ideal time in an undergraduate medical programme where yoga can be incorporated is during the first semester and again during the sixth and seventh semesters. The former will help them in combating and adapting to the totally new and extremely stressful first year undergraduate medical curriculum. The latter will help in better understanding of the science of yoga and its applications in clinical practice.
- It is suggested that there should be a space fully furnished, having the right ambience and comfort that will facilitate the teaching and practice of yoga. The space should be exclusively devoted to the yoga training programme.
- From the students’ standpoint, practice sessions with integrated theory, morning practice sessions and training schedule within college hours are among the major recommendations. Students also wanted a facility to continue yoga practice on a regular basis even after the completion of the introductory programme.

To

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