Modern medical advancements provide rationale for the integration of various traditional healing techniques including Yoga to promote healing, health, and longevity. It is imperative that advances in medicine include the wholistic approach of Yoga to face the current challenges in health care.

At first glance, conventional medicine and Yoga may seem to be totally incompatible and at times antagonistic to each other. Practitioners of either system are often found at loggerheads in typical modern one-upmanship. However both modern medicine and Yoga understand the need for total health and the WHO has now included “spiritual health” in its definition of the “state of health”.

While modern medicine has a lot to offer humankind in management of acute illness, accidents and communicable diseases, Yoga has a lot to offer in terms of preventive, promotive and rehabilitative methods in addition to management methods.

To facilitate this integration a “path-breathing” National Workshop on “Introducing Yoga in the medical curriculum” was held at JIPMER, Puducherry in March 2009. This was organized at JIPMER in collaboration with Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, New Delhi under auspices of Department of AYUSH, Govt. of India.

The National Workshop deliberated the need, feasibility and modality of introducing Yoga in the medical curriculum and covered the syllabus and evaluation methods for such a course.

The following were 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 and medical professionals through a “Foundation Course in Yoga Science”.

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

4. It was also recommended that an optional foundation course be conducted after class hours for interested professionals through the yoga units of the institutions. This can utilize the 48 hour foundation course syllabus that has been prepared by MDNIY in consultation with eminent yoga and medical experts.