



Editorial
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Implementing yoga as an integrated part of medical curriculum

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Editorial

Stress is a part of struggle for existence, which works through a series of neuro-hormonal changes for the maintenance of normal homeostasis. Academic stress is a condition of mental distress with respect to some apprehended frustration associated with academic failure, apprehension of such failure or even knowledge of the possibility of such failure. In medical education, stress and depression is an important indicator of the students' overall health, and its impact is noticeable in their performances, including examinations. The most pitiful fact is that, enormous study pressure encourages competition rather than cooperation between learners. Psychiatric morbidity is common in medical students. Worldwide studies have shown that they are susceptible to high rates of depression which may be related to impairment in the development of professional and academic performance. Research works conducted different parts of the world have shown high rates of psychic disorders in this population. In the beginning of their medical career, especially first-semester medical students suffer from stress and depression, which may increase gradually to very high levels in the final year. This may lead to mental disorders and may have a negative impact on cognitive function and learning. So, stress, burnout and anxiety, can affect physically and mentally too many young and impressionable incoming medical students. Yoga is an easy way to reduce stress, improvement of psychological status and control high blood pressure. Ample research evidences supports the belief that yogic approaches improve physical and mental health through down-regulation of the hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal (HPA) axis and the sympathetic nervous system. The dual effect of HPA axis and sympathetic nervous system initiates a cascade of response to a physical or psychologic demand (stressor), leads to a cascade of physiologic, behavioral, and psychologic effects, primarily as a result of the release of cortisol and catecholamines. Regular practice of yoga is highly advantageous for conditions like depression, and anxiety. Yogic exercise can improve the immunological status, and autonomic nervous system performances; with a tendency to shifting toward parasympathetic nervous system dominance. Yoga also decreases pulse and respiratory rate and blood pressure. EEG - alpha waves increase, cardiovascular efficiency increases, respiratory efficiency increases, normalization and improvement

of gastrointestinal, endocrine excretory functions. Sleep improves, anxiety and depression decrease, memory boosts. So, medical council and curriculum development committee should look into these beneficial aspects. A great deal of attention is required for the implementation of yoga as an integrated part of medical curriculum, which may change the future medical professionals to overcome stress and anxiety related problems.