

REVIEW ARTICLE

Therapeutic Yoga and its Positive Impact on Modern Lifestyle

Anil Thapliyal¹, Poonam Panchal², Nishita Chaudhary³, Pooja Dabral⁴

HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Anil Thapliyal, Poonam Panchal, Nishita Chaudhary et. al, Therapeutic Yoga and its positive impact on Modern lifestyle. Ind J Anct Med Yoga. 2025; 18(3): 95-101.

ABSTRACT

Modern lifestyles, characterized by rapid urbanization, reliance on digital technology, and convenience-based habits like processed foods and inactive work, have led to decreased physical activity and increased stress. This fast-paced way of living is linked to health issues like obesity, hypertension, and cardiovascular diseases. Poor nutrition, substance abuse, and reliance on technology, such as the overuse of mobile phones and late-night computer usage, contribute to mental and physical health risks, including sleep disturbances and depression. In contrast, India's ancient practice of yoga, derived from the Sanskrit word "yuj," meaning union, offers a holistic solution to modern health challenges. Yoga therapy, based on physical postures (asana), breathing techniques (pranayama), meditation (dhyana), and ethical guidelines, addresses the body, mind, and spirit. It not only relieves symptoms of lifestyle diseases but also promotes awareness of healthier choices, reducing anxiety and fostering balance in life. By integrating these practices, yoga offers a comprehensive approach to health, providing both physical and emotional well-being, and facilitating self-awareness and spiritual growth.

KEYWORDS

• Modern lifestyle • Yoga therapy • Holistic Health • Physical and mental well-being • Health and wellness

AUTHOR'S AFFILIATION:

¹Professor, School of Yogic Science and Naturopathy, Shri Guru Ram Rai University, Dehradun, India.

²Master Student, School of Yogic Science and Naturopathy, Shri Guru Ram Rai University, Dehradun, India.

³M.A., School of Yogic Science and Naturopathy, Shri Guru Ram Rai University, Dehradun, India.

⁴M.A., School of Yogic Science and Naturopathy, Shri Guru Ram Rai University, Dehradun, India.

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Poonam Panchal, Master Student, School of Yogic Science and Naturopathy, Shri Guru Ram Rai University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India.

E-mail: panchalmini@gmail.com

Received: 27-05-2025

Accepted: 28-06-2025



Creative Commons Non Commercial CC BY-NC: This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution NonCommercial 4.0 License (<http://www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>) which permits non-Commercial use, reproduction and distribution of the work without further permission provided the original work is attributed as specified on the Red Flower Publication and Open Access pages (<https://rfpl.co.in>)

INTRODUCTION

The modern lifestyle is defined by its fast-paced, technology-driven nature, heavily influenced by urbanization, digitalization, and convenience-oriented behaviours. People increasingly rely on digital devices, consume processed foods, and lead sedentary lives due to desk-bound jobs and limited physical activity. While these advancements offer convenience, they often come at the cost of physical health and mental well-being.^{1,2,3} Stress, anxiety, obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular conditions are becoming more prevalent as a result. Striking a balance between professional responsibilities, social interactions, and personal health has become a major challenge. The close connection between lifestyle choices and health outcomes underscores the need for greater awareness and proactive efforts toward wellness. Additionally, the rise of emerging information technologies, including the internet and virtual communication platforms, although beneficial in many ways, has contributed to reduced face-to-face interactions and increased screen time factors that significantly impact both mental and physical health. Addressing these issues is critical for promoting a healthier, more sustainable way of living in the digital age.^{2,3}

Problems associated with an unhealthy lifestyle lead to diseases like metabolic diseases, overweight, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, etc. Nutrition-deficient food and unhealthy additions such as smoking, alcohol consumption, drug abuse, etc., are the demonstrations of unhealthy lifestyles that are used as the central forms of lifestyle.^{2,3} In addition, citizens' lives are encountering new challenges, including poor diet and its consequences, such as obesity, which are prevalent health issues in urban societies. Commonly, unhealthy lifestyles can be evaluated through the body mass index (BMI). Urban living contributes to malnutrition problems, including the consumption of fast foods and poor-quality foods, which can lead to cardiovascular issues. While advanced technology greatly enhances human life, its misuse leads to negative consequences. For instance, using computers and other devices late into the night disrupts sleep patterns. Additionally, addiction to mobile phones has been linked to symptoms of depression.^{2,3}

Contrary to this, in our Indian society, we

have an ancient practice called 'yoga,' which came from the Sanskrit word 'yuj,' which means to join or union.^{4,5} Many yoga practitioners give multiple meanings of yoga, such as acts of yoking, joining, attaching, harnessing, etc.⁵ Another meaning of yoga, "union," signifies the aim of the practice. The ancient Indian yogi considers that to achieve a defined aim, there must also always be a practical routine. The assemblage of such practice is termed a therapeutic program, which gives relief to the problems associated with the lifestyle or daily routine (Figure 1).

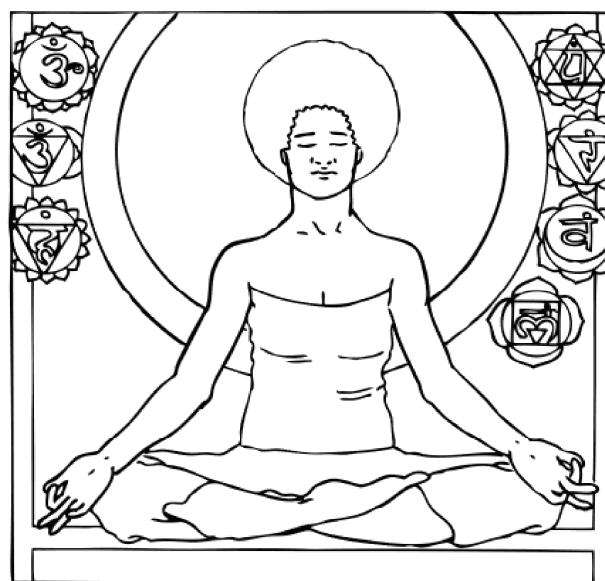


Figure 1: Animation showing yogic practice that involves physical and mental well-being.⁵

Yoga therapy aims to support individuals in addressing a wide range of physical, mental, and emotional challenges. The utmost goal of therapeutic yoga is to eliminate or significantly reduce symptoms that contribute to distress and suffering and allow individuals to recuperate a sense of comfort in their daily lives. Additionally, yoga therapy works to enhance complete function and enable individuals to accomplish daily responsibilities and activities with greater competence and fewer worries and anxiety. Beyond symptom management, it seeks to prevent the occurrence or recurrence of the primary causes of illness by fostering greater awareness of lifestyle factors and promoting healthier choices. Another important aspect of yoga therapy is its holistic methodology for improving overall health and well-being. It addresses not only the body but also the mind and spirit, endorsing a sense of balance and synchronization in all aspects of

life.⁶

The yoga therapy includes the application of yogic principles, methods, and techniques that incorporate postures, the combination of muscular activities, breathing and energy balance.

In general, people associate yoga with asana, or the physical practice, but certainly, asana is just one of many tools used to promote healing and well-being. In fact, of the 196 sutras in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, only three mention asana, while the remaining sutras explore other dynamic characteristics of yoga, such as conscious breathing (pranayama), meditation (dhyana), ethical guidelines (yamas and niyamas), lifestyle modifications, diet, visualization techniques, and the use of sound (mantra), among others.^{6,7,8} These practices are all designed to bring harmony to the mind, body, and spirit, demonstrating that yoga is a holistic approach to health, far beyond the physical postures alone.^{6,7,8} The broader scope of yoga includes tools to nurture mental clarity, emotional resilience, and spiritual vision, making it an inclusive scheme for personal transformation. Through the integration of these diverse practices, individuals can achieve deeper levels of self-awareness, inner peace, and overall well-being, addressing not only physical health but also mental and emotional balance.^{7,8} This holistic understanding of yoga reflects its original purpose as a pathway to self-realization and spiritual growth, offering a rich array of techniques for healing and self-discovery.

THERAPEUTIC YOGA, THEIR TYPES AND IMPORTANCE IN INCREASING LIFESTYLE

In therapeutic yoga, various physical postures termed asanas, breath control, meditation, relaxation, etc., are included. Regular practice of therapeutic yoga strengthens body and organ systems and establishes natural harmony between body and mind.⁹ Ancient therapeutic practices, developed over centuries, offer a holistic approach for healing and wellness by addressing the mind, body, and spirit. These practices, rooted in the wisdom of traditional systems like Ayurveda, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), and Yoga, remain highly relevant today. As modern lifestyles become increasingly fast-paced and stressful, these age-

old techniques are finding new importance in helping individuals cope with lifestyle-related challenges such as stress, chronic diseases, and mental health disorders.

Origins of Ancient Therapeutic Practices

Ayurveda, developed in India over 3,000 years ago, emphasizes a balance between body, mind, and spirit. It integrates herbal medicine, meditation, yoga, and nutrition as core components of healing. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), with over 2,500 years of history, focuses on the balance of yin and yang and harmony within the body's energy flow (Qi). Key practices in TCM include acupuncture, herbal remedies, Tai Chi, and Qigong. Greek and Roman Medicine, based on Hippocratic principles, used diet, exercise, and physiotherapy to restore balance in the body's humors. Meanwhile, Yoga, originating more than 5,000 years ago in India, incorporates physical postures, breathing exercises, and meditation to promote overall well-being. Native American Medicine emphasized healing through nature, using plants, rituals, and spiritual practices for holistic treatment.

Type of Therapies

The Tridosha theory, originated during the late Vedic period, forms the foundation of traditional Indian medicine, including Ayurveda, Siddha and other indigenous systems. This theory postulates that health arises from the balanced interplay of three doshas (biological energies) – Vata, Pitta, and Kapha – and that illness results from their imbalance. These doshas are connected with the Pancha Mahabhuta, the five fundamental elements (earth, water, fire, air, and ether), as well as the Triguna, the three qualities of nature: Sattva (purity), Rajas (activity), and Tamas (inertia).¹⁰ Keeping equilibrium between these forces is key to health, while disorders lead to disease.

The ancient Tamil article, *Tirumandiram*, composed by the saint Tirumoolar, offers practical guidance on adapting the Tridoshas through yoga practices. According to this text, different times of day are optimum for addressing specific doshic imbalances: practicing yoga in the morning practice harmonizes Pitta, noon practice balances Vata, and in the evening improves Kapha (*Tirumandiram*, verse 727).^{10,11} These insights highlight the role of daily routines and timing

in upholding health and wellness. In the context of current health challenges, especially the global rise in lifestyle disorders such as diabetes, hypertension, and obesity, a return to traditional health practices like Yoga can

be transformative. Lifestyle disorders are often worsened by modern habits and thus require thoughtful changes that individuals can implement themselves, focusing on both physical and mental well-being.

Table 1: Yogic therapies for common diseases occurred due to distress and lifestyle disorders.¹²

Common diseases	Asanas	Pranayam	Shatkriyas
<i>Cardio-vascular diseases</i>	Pawanmuktasana-1	Nadishodhan	Jalneti
	Vajarasana	Ujjayayi	—
	Sarpasana	—	—
	Yogmudrasana	—	—
	Bhunamanasana	—	—
	Gumukhasana	—	—
	Setubandhasana	—	—
<i>Digestive diseases</i>	Pawanmuktasana-2 (Vatnirodhasana)	Nadishodhan stage-2	Neti
	Vajarasana	Bhastrika	Kunjal
	—	—	Vyaghra and Agnisar Kriyas
<i>Respiratory diseases</i>	Suryanamaskar	Ujjayayi	Jalneti
	Padhasthasana	Kapalbhati	Kunjal
	Bhujngasana	Bhastrika	—
	Halasana	Nadishodhan stage-3	—

Yoga offers a broad spectrum of therapeutic modalities that can be tailored for therapeutic purposes. Puja Swamiji Gitananda Giri, a renowned yogic scholar, enumerated 52 aspects of Yoga Chikitsa (yogic therapy), which address both the physical and mental dimensions of health in a holistic manner.^{9,10} This exploration of Yoga Chikitsa serves as an association between ancient knowledge and modern healthcare practices, providing an inclusive approach to achieving harmony and health. Table 1 describes the common diseases due to an imbalanced lifestyle and therapeutic practices for well-being.^{11,12}

Physical Therapies: The physical components of Yoga Asanas (postures), Kriyas (movements), Mudras (seals), and Bandhas (locks) work synergistically to stretch, strengthen, and balance the body. These practices improve joint mobility, muscle flexibility, and overall musculoskeletal health, while also enhancing respiratory, circulatory, and digestive functions. Additionally, they stimulate the release of neurochemicals like endorphins and encephalins, which promote a sense of well-being.

Mental Therapies: The mental benefits of Yoga are equally insightful, with techniques

like Jnana and Raja Yoga practices facilitating relaxation and mental clarity. Techniques such as Trataka (focused gazing), Pranayama (breath control), Pratyahara (withdrawal of senses), Dharana (concentration), and Dhyana (meditation) help ease mental and emotional tensions, enhancing the body's natural capacity to heal. Relaxation, a central tenet of Yoga, allows the body to recharge, rejuvenating both mind and body.

The studies highlight yoga's therapeutic potential in managing various neurological disorders, including epilepsy, stroke, multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's disease, peripheral neuropathy, and fibromyalgia. Evidence-based studies demonstrate that yoga and meditation improve seizure control, motor function, mood, and fatigue while reducing stress, blood pressure, and cortisol levels. In epilepsy and fibromyalgia, yoga significantly decreased symptom severity and enhanced quality of life. Post-stroke patients reported better balance and mobility. In Multiple Sclerosis and Alzheimer's, yoga improved cognitive and psychological outcomes. Despite promising results, the review notes methodological limitations in many studies, urging larger, well-controlled trials to validate yoga's clinical effectiveness and physiological

mechanisms.¹³

In this way, ancient practices like Yoga, when integrated into modern lifestyles, offer a path toward holistic health, addressing both physical and mental well-being in a world increasingly plagued by lifestyle-related disorders.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Everyone understands the modern lifestyle and their adverse effect on health. It has been found that millions of deaths worldwide are attributed to the adoption of the modern lifestyle. Therefore, it is necessary to have a discussion on the impact of the various aspects of the modern lifestyle on our health. It is crucial to make appropriate adjustments to modern lifestyles to minimize the negative impact on health.¹⁴ Engaging in regular physical activity, maintaining a nutritious diet, and enhancing sleep quality are key steps that can significantly boost overall health. Hence, a healthy lifestyle is a way of living that moderates the risk of severe disease. The World Health Organization defines health as comprehensive physical, mental, and social health; it is not just the absence of any disease or sickness. An unhealthy diet and lack of physical activity contribute to global health risks.^{14,15} Technologists believe modern technology eases everyone's life. On the other hand, the utilization of modern gadgets such as mobile phones, the internet, and virtual communication networks results in a major challenge that threatens the physical and mental health of individuals. As a result, technological risks are emerging that pose various health-related problems, impacting our access to a healthy life.¹⁶

The adverse health impacts of a modern lifestyle can be overcome by taking the right steps and making mindful choices. Some precautions to improve health include regular exercise, where individuals should engage in physical activity, such as yoga or gym workouts, for at least 20-30 minutes daily. A balanced diet is also important, which includes high-fiber, low-fat, and properly cooked foods. Additionally, at least 7-8 hours of sleep is essential to recover from the physical and mental strains of day-to-day activities. Implementing these practices can significantly enhance the overall quality of life and well-being.^{16,17} Individuals are fortified to encourage

a deeper understanding of their condition and their connection with it, learning to view it not as a fixed or defining part of their identity but as something that can be managed and transformed. This shift in perspective often empowers individuals to take a more active role in their healing process, fostering resilience, self-awareness, and a sense of control over their health journey. People often associate yoga with asana (physical practice), but asana is just one tool in yoga's broader system for healing and well-being. Of the 196 sutras in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, only three mention asana, while the rest focus on practices like breathing (pranayama), meditation (dhyana), ethical principles, lifestyle, diet, and sound (mantra).^{6,7,8} These practices together aim to harmonize mind, body, and spirit, illustrating yoga's holistic nature beyond physical postures. Yoga nurtures mental clarity, emotional resilience, and spiritual growth, guiding individuals toward self-awareness, inner peace, and overall well-being.^{8,18} Ancient therapeutic practices, with their holistic approach to health, are highly relevant in today's world. They provide sustainable solutions for overcoming stress, improving physical and mental health, and preventing chronic diseases. The effect of therapeutic yoga on 06 children suffering from cancer is tested. The PedsQL 4.0 of each child was monitored for a two-month period of practice. The study indicates that therapeutic yoga had a positive impact on children's perceived gross motor function, as measured by the PedsQL 4.0.¹⁹ By blending the wisdom of the past with modern medical practices, individuals can cultivate a balanced and healthy lifestyle, addressing the core issues brought about by the pressures of modern living.

In today's world, traditional therapeutic practices offer vital solutions for coping with the stresses of modern life. Ancient techniques like yoga, meditation, and Tai Chi are proven to reduce stress and alleviate mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. These practices promote mindfulness and emotional balance, which are essential for dealing with the pressures of work, technology, and constant connectivity. Moreover, therapies from Ayurveda and TCM provide non-invasive, holistic solutions for managing chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease, focusing on lifestyle changes, prevention, and root-cause

treatments. Another study during pregnancy tested the effect of yoga. The study involved 362 participants and demonstrated that yoga practice significantly reduced systolic blood pressure (SBP), with a pooled standardized mean difference of -1.58 mmHg (95% CI: -2.17 to -0.99; *P* < 0.0001) compared to the control group. In contrast, the effect of yoga on diastolic blood pressure (DBP) was not statistically significant, showing a pooled standardized mean difference of -1.8 mmHg (95% CI: -3.95 to 0.34; *P* = 0.1). These findings suggest that yoga is more likely to influence SBP than DBP, possibly due to increased blood flow and cardiovascular engagement during physical activity, making changes in SBP more pronounced.²⁰

Physical Health and Flexibility

One of the most immediate benefits of traditional therapies is the improvement of physical health and flexibility. Practices like yoga and Tai Chi build strength, improve posture, and increase joint mobility, making them perfect for countering the negative effects of sedentary lifestyles, such as back pain and muscle stiffness. By incorporating movement, stretching, and breathing, these practices help prevent musculoskeletal issues caused by long hours of sitting and poor posture. The study combining yoga and swimming enhances physical, mental, and emotional well-being. The Romanian athletes who practice both report reduced stress, improved focus, and better flexibility. Factor analysis confirmed strong awareness of yoga's benefits, highlighting its value as a preventive and therapeutic tool in pre-performance swimming.^{21,22,23}

Emotional Balance and Mental Clarity

Beyond physical benefits, these therapeutic practices offer significant advantages for emotional balance and mental clarity. Meditation, breathwork, and mindfulness practices improve focus, emotional regulation, and mental resilience. In a world of constant digital distractions, these techniques provide a much-needed mental detox, helping individuals manage digital overload, enhance concentration, and achieve inner peace.

Immune System Boost and Holistic Healing

Traditional systems like Ayurveda and TCM emphasize strengthening the immune system through diet, herbal treatments, and balance in lifestyle. They provide natural

ways to improve immunity, reduce reliance on pharmaceuticals, and address physical, emotional, and spiritual pain. Their focus on holistic healing encourages preventive care, offering long-term benefits for individuals looking to lead healthier, more balanced lives.

Addressing Modern Lifestyle Issues

In a world plagued by sedentary lifestyles, chronic diseases, and mental health epidemics, ancient therapeutic practices offer solutions that modern medicine alone cannot fully provide. Integrating movement from yoga, Tai Chi, and similar practices helps counteract sedentary habits, prevent obesity, and maintain long-term health. Mental health issues like anxiety and depression, often exacerbated by modern work stress, are effectively managed through ancient practices that foster emotional resilience and promote relaxation. Additionally, these therapies can complement modern medical treatments for chronic illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease by addressing lifestyle, diet, and mental well-being. Yoga, beyond aiding weight loss, improves metabolic health and reduces inflammation, key to lowering cardiovascular risk. As a holistic, non-pharmacological therapy, it supports both physical and mental well-being. Integrating yoga into obesity management may enhance outcomes. Standardized protocols and long-term studies are needed to strengthen its role in healthcare.²⁴

Acknowledgments

The authors thank the Head of the Department, Human Consciousness and Yogic Science, School of Yogic Science and Naturopathy, Shri Guru Ram Rai University, for facilitating this research. PP also would like to extend her gratitude to Dr Anil Kumar, Scientist, Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, Dehradun for correcting the drafts.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

1. Ziglio E, Currie C, Rasmussen VB. The WHO cross-national study of health behavior in school aged children from 35 countries: findings from 2001-2002. *J School Health* 2004; 74(6):204-206.
2. Mozaffarian D, Hao T, Rimm EB, Willett W, Hu FB. Changes in diet and life style and long

- term weight gain in women & men. *N Eng Med J* 2011; 364:2392-2404.
3. Thomee S, Harenstam A, Hagberg M. Mobile phone use and stress, sleep disturbances, and symptom of depression among young adults. *BMC Public Health* 2011; 11:66-77.
4. Lasater J. The heart of pantajali. *Yoga J* 1997; 137:134-44.
5. Horovitz EG, Elgelid S (Eds.). *Yoga therapy: Theory and practice*. Routledge 2015.
6. Pandey S, Pandey AC, Kotecha VR. Yoga—A complementary and traditional medicine for human health. *J Integr Med*. 2025; 23(2): 93–105.
7. Desikachar K, Bragdon L, Bossart C. The yoga of healing: Exploring yoga's holistic model for health and well-being. *Int J Yoga Therap* 2005; 15(1):17-39.
8. Krishna CV, Das PK. Yoga and mental health: A controlled study of effectiveness. *Methods* 2020; 16:19.
9. Taylor MJ. Yoga therapeutics: an ancient, dynamic systems theory. *Techniques in Orthopaedics* 2003; 18(1):115-125.
10. Bhavanani AB. Yoga as a therapy: A perspective. *Yoga Mimamsa* 2011; 42(4): 235-241.
11. Tirumoolar. (n.d.). Tirumandiram. Verse 727.
12. Karmananda S. *Yogic management of common diseases*. Munger: Yoga Pub. Trust. Bihar, India. 2003:145-6.
13. Mishra SK, Singh P, Bunch SJ, Zhang R. The therapeutic value of yoga in neurological disorders. *Annals of Indian Academy of Neurology* 2012;15(4):247-54.
14. Ghatge MSK, Parasar A. Impact of Modern Lifestyle on Health. *PriMera Scientific Surgical Research and Practice* 2023; 2:16-19.
15. Victoire SL, Ukwandu S, Ejuone O, Monday EO. The influence of modern lifestyle on the health of medical students in a medical school in Dominica. *Journal of Advances in Medicine and Medical Research* 2022; 34(10):57-64.
16. Kaibarta LN. Modern life style and tech-related health risks. 2018.
17. Patel KK. Effect of modern food and lifestyle on human biological clocks and health: A review. *Emergent Life Sciences Research* 2022; 8:1-13.
18. Krishna CV, Nayak NN, Shankar K. Yoga: a therapeutic approach. *Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Clinics* 2004; 15(4):783-798.
19. Geyer R, Lyons A, Amazeen L, Alishio L, Cooks L. Feasibility study: the effect of therapeutic yoga on quality of life in children hospitalized with cancer. *Pediatric Physical Therapy* 2011; 23(4):375-9.
20. Gunawan FA, Rampengan DD, Ramadhan RN, Amirah S. 16. The Therapeutic Efficacy of Yoga in Hypertension during Pregnancy for Maternal Health—A Meta-Analysis of Clinical Trials. *Journal of Hypertension* 2024; 42 (Suppl 2):e4.
21. Bucea-Manea-Tonis R, Jureschi AN, Vasile L. Yoga and Swimming—A Symbiotic Approach with Positive Impacts on Health and Athletes' Performance. *Applied Sciences* 2024; 14(20):9171.
22. Tolbaños-Roche L, Menon P. Applying the S-ART framework to yoga: exploring the self-regulatory action of yoga practice in two culturally diverse samples. *Frontiers in psychology* 2021; 12:585300.
23. Martínez-Aranda LM, Sanz-Matesanz M, García-Mantilla ED, González-Fernández FT. Effects of Self-Myofascial release on athletes' physical performance: A systematic review. *Journal of functional morphology and kinesiology* 2024; 9(1):20.
24. Inbaraj G, Bajaj S, Misra P, Thapa A, Ghosal A, Sharma U, Pobbati H, Hashmi I, Bansal B, de Vos J, De D. Yoga in Obesity Management: Reducing cardiovascular risk and enhancing well-being-A review of the current literature. *Current Problems in Cardiology* 2025:103036.