

# A Pilot Study on Effect of Yoga Nidra in the Management of Stress

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**Abstract:** *The aim of this Study was to find out the short term effect of Yoga Nidra on the Patients, suffering from stress syndrome. This study was conducted at the Sir Sundar Lal Hospital, BHU, Varanasi. 10 patients were kept in experimental group underwent Yoga Nidra and 10 patients were kept in control group who were taking the herbal medication. Each patient of experimental group underwent 30 minutes practice of Yoga Nidra for the total duration of 7 days. DASS- scale was used to assess the level of stress and associated anxiety in patients. The result has shown significant reduction of stress and anxiety score in the both of the groups. It was important to note that the reduction of Stress score was relatively more in experimental group as compared to control group. Therefore the practice of Yoga Nidra has an edge over the medication intake in tackling the stress.*

**Keywords:** Stress, Anxiety, Yoga Nidra.

## 1. Introduction

Stress and associated anxiety are the most prevalent mental health problem found in Indian community.

In modern era of urbanization and globalization, people are involved in variety of activities and try to co-ordinate their own self as well as their work, family, society and the other related fields. When the individual requirements are not fulfilled or they are not successful to meet the desired requirement and they feel stressed. With the increase in the stress level, they are unable to perform his activities in proper way, which forms a vicious cycle and further adds to quantum of stress.<sup>1</sup> Stress should be taken seriously as it can damage the immune system and cause different types of diseases including cardiac disorders and increases the risks of diabetes.<sup>2</sup> It is estimated that 82 % of Indian population are afflicted with the stress but majority of the people do not feel comfortable to share their problem to medical professionals, says a survey conducted by Cigna TTK Health Insurance.<sup>3</sup> Majority of the persons are unaware of their stress as the cause of their illness and are helpless to live their life with stress. Because of their poor economic status, many people are can't afford money for proper treatment. In this situation Yoga Nidra has great potential as a yogic technique in the management of stress and associated anxiety.

Yoga Nidra is a potent relaxation therapy<sup>4</sup> and its systematic method provides complete Physical, Mental and emotional relaxation.<sup>5</sup> It is sometimes called as Psychic sleep with awareness.<sup>6</sup> It is modified form of pratyahar in where the mind and thought process are made to dissociate from the cognitive pathway including sensory objects.

Yoga Nidra originated from the tantric practice of Nyasa. Nyasa refers to take the mind to the specific point. Swami Satyananda Saraswati, the Founder of Bihar School of Yoga, Munger has developed this technique of yoga nidra. Various studies have been done worldwide for observing the effect

of yoga nidra on various psychological and psychosomatic diseases. One of the study states that Yoga Nidra helps to reduce the blood glucose level in diabetic patients.<sup>7</sup> Another study shows that Yoga Nidra is helpful on psychological general wellbeing in patients with menstrual irregularities.<sup>8</sup> Yoga Nidra is therapy for both recent and long-standing psychological disturbances of all sort of neurotic problems. Yoga Nidra is useful as a intervention in the management of all types of acute and chronic mental illnesses especially in neurotic disorders. Another study indicates decrease in somatoform symptoms in patients with menstrual disorder by Yoga Nidra.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Design & Methods

The present study is an open randomized cross sectional study that consisted of two groups of patients who were suffering from Stress and associated Anxiety. The patients were recruited from Neuro – Psychiatric & Psychosomatic Medicine Manas Roga Section, Deptt. Of Kayachikitsa, Sir Sundar Lal Hospital, IMS, BHU, Varanasi. The patients of experimental group 1, underwent yoga Nidra practice for 30 minutes daily once in morning for total period of 7 days. The patients had been provided the audio recording of instruction of Yoga Nidra to avoid any variation in the practices. The patient registered under control group 2 were kept only on medication. In each group there were 10 patients aged between 25yrs to 65yr belonging to both sexes. The assessments of patients were done before the start of trial and after the one week session using the DASS-42 scale.

Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-42 was developed by Lovibond. & Lovibond in 1995, and in 2013 it was translated and validated in Hindi by Bhupinder Singh and Amol R Singh with overall reliability of the scale is .83

The Depression Anxiety Stress scale- 42 item questionnaire incorporates self report scales intended to quantify the negative emotional condition of depression, anxiety and stress. 14-14 items has been taken in each of the 3 scales

separately. The scale is further subdivided in to 2-5 subscales measuring similar content. The Anxiety scale evaluates autonomic arousal / excitement, skeletal muscle impacts, situational anxiety, anxious affect according to subjective experiences of the person. The Stress scale assesses the symptom of irritability, tension, distressing events.<sup>10</sup>

**3. Results**

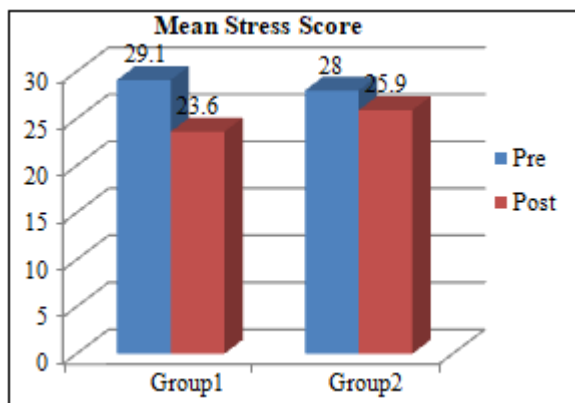
**Changes in Stress Score**

In the patients of Group1, the initial Mean Stress Score was 29.10, which reduced to 23.60 after intervention and this change of the mean was highly significant statistically. In Group2 initial Mean Stress Score was 28.00 which became 25.90 after intervention, and this change of the mean difference was also highly significant.

The intergroup comparison was not statistically significant initially as well as after intervention.

**Table 1:** Table showing changes in Mean Stress Score in the two groups of the patients of Stress syndrome

Group	Stress Score Mean ± SD		Within the group Comparison paired t test
	Pre	Post	
Group1 (Experimental)	29.10 ±4.012	23.60 ±3.718	5.50±1.581 t=11.00, p=0.000
Group2 (Control)	28.00 ±4.967	25.90 ±4.954	2.10±1.595 t=4.163, p=0.002
Between the group comparison unpaired t test	t=0.545 p=0.593	t=1.174 p=0.256	



**Figure 1:** Mean Stress Score

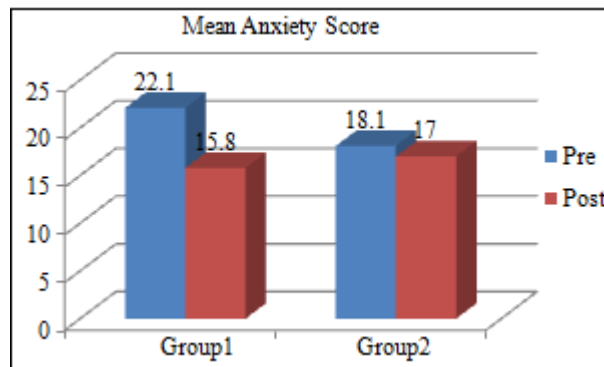
**Changes in Anxiety Score**

The Mean Anxiety Score was 22.10 in patients of Group1, which reduced to 15.80 after intervention and this change of the mean was highly significant statistically. In Group2 initially Mean Anxiety Score was 18.10 which become 17.00 after intervention, and the change of the mean difference was also highly significant.

The intergroup comparison revealed no statistical significance initially as well as at the end of the study.

**Table 2:** Table showing changes in Mean Anxiety Score in the two groups of the patients of Stress syndrome

Group	Anxiety Score Mean ± SD		Within the group Comparison paired t test
	Pre	Post	
Group1 (Experimental)	22.10 ±5.486	15.80 ±3.490	6.300±0.790 t=7.980, p=0.000
Group2 (Control)	18.10 ±3.725	17.00 ±3.432	1.100±0.568 t=6.128, p=0.000
Between the group comparison unpaired t test	t=1.907 p=0.073	t=0.775 p=0.448	



**Figure 2:** Mean Anxiety Score

Result shows significant change in the experimental group 1 as Yoga Nidra positively decreased the stress level as well as anxiety level of subjects in comparison to Group 2.

**4. Discussion**

Yoga Nidra comprise of different techniques such as deep physical relaxation, controlled breathing and feeling of opposite emotions. Different research fonder directed on the general advantages of yoga rehears have demonstrated resulting decreases in despondency, stress and anxiety levels.<sup>11,12</sup> The results also indicate improvements in mood, quality of life, and general well-being. Specifically, Yoga Nidra has been demonstrated to be extremely useful techniques, producing relaxation response, during the practice of Yoga Nidra between sleep and wakeful state without losing the awareness ,that is why it is also termed as sleeplessness sleep. Yoga nidra is qualitatively different from other form of relaxation, though being categorised as relaxation technique. The present investigation revealed that the medication control group should significant intra group results in the Stress level and Anxiety level.

Intergroup analysis showed that intervention group Yoga Nidra revealed better results as compared to the control group. However, no significant difference was found between the medication (control) and the intervention (Yoga Nidra) groups. Pre- Post result indicate that the control group represented significant intervention in reducing the stress and anxiety levels although Yoga Nidra (intervention group) is more effective when compare to control group .Thus an inclination towards a more better activity of the Yoga Nidra intervention was watched.

Yoga Nidra has been found to lessen stress of anxiety levels of patients of stress syndrome. Previous studies have likewise demonstrated that utilizing Yoga Nidra or

psychosomatic as nervousness anxiety and physical well being have beneficial results.<sup>8</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

Yoga Nidra can be considered as an effective non-pharmacological practice for reducing stress and anxiety which starts revealing effect within very short duration, as it relieved the stress and anxiety of the patients only after one week of practice. Therefore it can be said that this technique would have better and more profound effect on stress and anxiety management if practiced for longer duration.

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