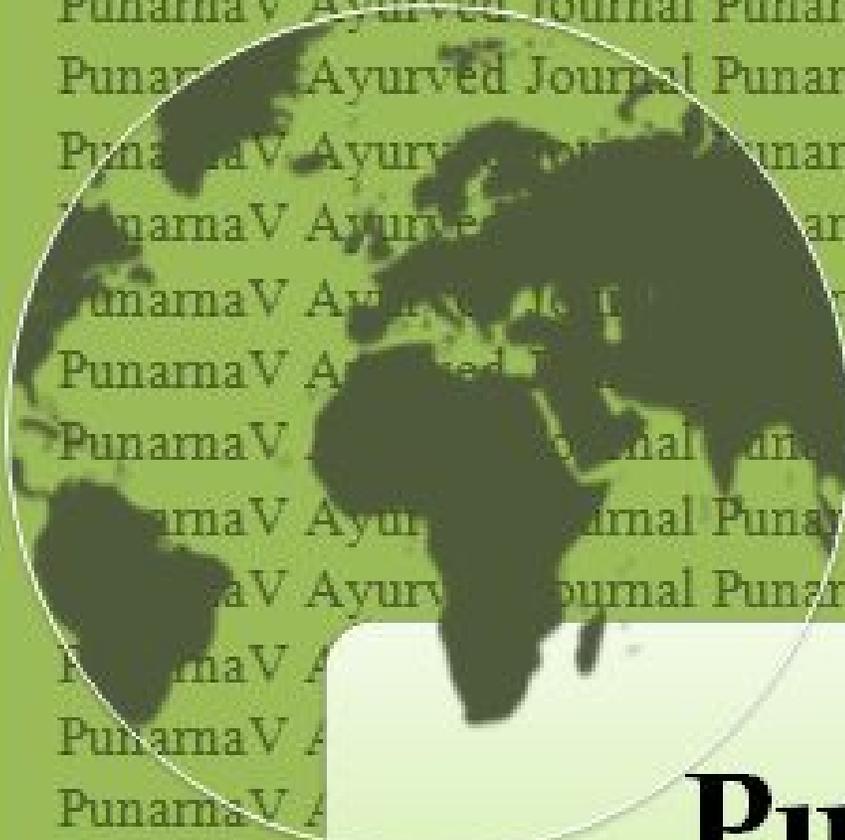


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**TITLE**

**PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF BACK PAIN THROUGH YOGA, DIET AND  
COMMON POSTURAL CORRECTIONS : A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW**

**REKHA B.V<sup>1</sup>, SUBASH CHANDRA BOSE M<sup>2</sup>**

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**PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF BACK PAIN THROUGH YOGA,  
DIET AND COMMON POSTURAL CORRECTIONS : A CONCEPTUAL**

**REKHA B.V<sup>1</sup>, SUBASH CHANDRA BOSE M<sup>2</sup>**

- <sup>1</sup> **DOCTORATE RESEARCH SCHOLAR AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,  
DEPARTMENT OF SWASTHAVRITTA AND YOGA,**
- <sup>2</sup> **PROFESSORS, DEPARTMENT OF ROGA NIDANA, JSS AYURVEDA MEDICAL  
COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL, MYSURU, KARNATAKA, INDIA.**

**ABSTRACT**

*Most of the individual have the experience of low back pain at some time or other in their lifetime. This is one of the most common musculo-Skeletal disorders. The pain affects the, lower lumbar spine, lumbosacral area and sacroiliac joints. The commonest type of low back pain is caused by some kind of mechanical stress or damage within the back which gets better quickly. Abnormal posture, excessive stresses (physical and psychological), aging problems and mechanical damage may all contribute to low back pain. The brunt of the weight of entire body has to be borne by the spinal column so has to allow enormous degree of flexibility. This is ensured by a highly complex organization of various anatomical structures such as bones, discs, ligaments, tendons, nerves, blood vessels and strong muscles. The other major reason for this increase in the incidence seems to be related to the sedentary stressful modern life style.*

**KEY WORDS: Back Pain, Posture Correction, Yoga, Management.**

## INTRODUCTION

**CORRESPONDENT:  
DR. SUBASH CHANDRA BOSE M  
PROFESSORS,  
DEPARTMENT OF ROGA NIDANA,  
JSS AYURVEDA MEDICAL  
COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL  
MYSURU,  
KARNATAKA,  
INDIA,**

Back pain is widely prevalent in these days due to sedentary living habits and hazardous work patterns. Mechanical pain accounts for about 90% of back pain episodes in persons aged between 20 and 55 years<sup>1</sup>. It forms one of the most frequent and disabling condition affecting adolescent girls, workers in their productive years thus resulting in loss of economic productivity<sup>2</sup>. There is greater role for prevention of this condition by correcting posture and alternate treatment modalities in the form of naturopathy, yoga, and physiotherapy.

Other forms of treatments include local heat application, applying of counter irritants like pain balms or sprays. All the treatments mentioned so far act effectively in management of acute back pain. But chronic low back pain is somewhat difficult problem to tackle. Management of this is a field of contradictory opinions

because of difference in recommending preventive measures and an absence of clear-cut treatment principles. Yoga techniques involving slow body movements followed by practices of deep relaxation are useful in maintaining the strength and flexibility of the spine. Regular practice of a basic set of yoga practices of 45 to 60 minutes including Suryanamaskara, loosening practices, 8 to 10 asana followed by deep relaxation, pranayama and meditation are for promotion of positive health are useful in prevention of back pain. Preventive measures include –Awareness and correction of postures while standing, sitting and lying down, Regular exercises proper diet and following.

### **The aims are:**

- Rest the painful part so that the acute injuries to the disc and soft tissues or the bone can heal faster.
- Reduce the acute inflammatory response, which is responsible for local swelling and congestion. This inflammatory swelling stretches the soft tissues in the zone and causes irritation of the nerve endings.
- Provide deep relaxation to the long thick Para-spinal muscles that would be in protective spasm.

- Immobilize the part to relieve the sharp pain that gets triggered by every small movement  
Rest the mind; worrying about the pain, its future consequences, its reflection on financial as well as family problem etc, adds to aggravation of pain. Hence it is very important to rest the mind.<sup>3</sup>
- Conventional management techniques include a combination of immobilization, local heat or cold packs, nerve blocks, anti-inflammatory medicines, muscle relaxants, pain killers, and tranquilizers to give rest and comfort.

#### **Treatment**

Rest in bed for 7 to 20 days on a firm bed with pillows beneath the knees. Local heating in the form of hot water bag or infra red lamp or short wave diathermy usually relieves symptoms. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory analgesic drugs should be prescribed. When acute symptoms have subsided gradual spinal exercises should be instituted. Recurrence is prevented by regular exercises.

#### **Chronic form**

The symptoms of chronic cases vary. Some patients only complain of 'weak back' whilst others complain of

pain and restricted movements of the spine. Sciatic pain may be present when there is nerve root pressure by narrowing of the intervertebral foramina.

#### **Treatment**

Main treatment is to increase the muscle tone by various spinal exercises. These should be designed to flatten the lumbar lordosis and to improve posture.

Lumbosacral belt or corset is only useful in cases with pendulous abdomen.

#### **Yoga during acute episodes**

During this acute phase of bed rest yoga has an important complementary role to achieve quick results. Yoga basically is a trick to give very deep rest to the mind body complex and hence can be used even during the acute phase of back pain.

The eight step yogic relaxation for low back pain is based on the principle of stimulation and relaxation as a better way of improvement rather than just a relaxation. The recommended yoga during this phase has to be practiced once in two to three hours throughout your waking hours.

#### **Yogic Management of Chronic Back Pain**

The basis of the integrated approach of Yoga therapy for back pain has already been discussed in this chapter. The details of specific practices are described.

#### **Folded Legs Lumbar Stretch<sup>4</sup>**

It should be done in Supine Posture

Lie down on your back with legs together and hands spread sideways at shoulder level. Fold the right leg at the knee, placing the right ankle by the side of the left knee concentrating to respiration can be done for five rounds. Repeat the same on the left side i.e., with the left leg folded and right leg straight on the floor.

#### **Crossed Legs Lumbar Stretch<sup>5</sup>**

Lie down on your back with legs together and arms spread sideways at shoulder level, palms facing down and firmly resting on the floor right leg crossed over left leg). Cross the right leg over the left by bending the legs at the knees and, wrapping the right foot around the left ankle joint can be done for 5 rounds.

#### **Lumbar Stretch<sup>6</sup> (Supine Posture)**

While inhaling slowly raise the right leg up to 90<sup>0</sup> without bending the knee. While exhaling bends the knee, pull it towards the chest with the hands and simultaneously raise the head trying to touch the knee with the forehead. Maintain for a while feeling the stretch of the back muscles. Then, take the head to ground and inhale stretch up the right leg to 90<sup>0</sup>. Repeat the same with both legs without lifting the head, for 5 rounds

#### **Bhujagasana Breathing<sup>7</sup> (Prone Posture).**

Place the palms near the last rib bone. While inhaling raise the head and trunk up to the navel with minimum support of the palms. While exhaling slowly bring the trunk and head back to starting position can be done for 10 rounds.

#### **Ardha Salabhasana Breathing<sup>8</sup> (Prone Posture)**

Lie down on your abdomen, legs together, hands stretched out over the head and chin on the floor. Make fists of your palms with the thumb tucked inside and place them underneath the thighs.

#### **Straight Leg Raise Breathing<sup>9</sup>**

While inhaling slowly raise the right leg without bending the knee, as far as comfortable (up to 90<sup>0</sup>, if possible). While exhaling return the leg to the floor as slowly as possible can be done for 10 rounds

#### **Side Lumbar Stretch<sup>10</sup> (Supine Posture)**

Lie down on the left side of the body. Hold the back of the neck with the left hand, bend the right leg at the knee and hold the right ankle with the right hand behind the buttocks. While inhaling move the right thigh backwards as for as

possible by pulling the right foot with the right hand and at the same time, bend the head backwards arching the spine, keep the hand straight. While exhaling bring the right thigh forward in the chest with the knee bent the right hand holding the right

### DIETIC MANAGEMENT

Now days with the change in civilization the food habits are changed. Foods of purifying and healing qualities such as fresh fruits and raw vegetables that is of more fibre content .whilst meat and bread and similar rich foods when taken in excess and under eating of the former class of foods results in 'disease'.<sup>11</sup> Fresh fruits and raw salad vegetables, root vegetables are abundant in food minerals such as calcium, potassium, sodium, iron, silicon etc, all of these plays vital part in the working of the body, and if absent virtually impair proper functioning. Fruit and Milk diet

Properly balanced dietary - By means of long fasts, short fasts all fruit diet, restricted diet, fruit and milk diet, full milk diet, variations and combinations of all these puts the patient on the road to health<sup>12</sup>. Dried fruits and honey are made to take the place of sugar, as the sugar they contain is of the best quality as judged from health standards .Butter, cream and olive oil are the three forms of natural fats favoured by a naturopath. Nuts are also highly favoured form of protein food<sup>13</sup>

ankle. Bend the head forward in the Pavanamuktasana style trying to touch the forehead to knee. This is one round. Repeat five rounds and the same on the other side.

### Foods to be avoided :

Saturated fats  
Gluten - general inflammation in other parts of the body, like the joints<sup>13</sup>

Meat - proteins found in meat encourage the growth of the more harmful bacteria in the intestines<sup>13</sup>

Nightshade family of vegetables - The solanine found in these foods can cause pain in the muscles to susceptible people<sup>13</sup>

### Common Postural Deviations

The three most common deviations from perfect posture are shown as,

Flat back  
Hollow back  
Sway back

There will be alteration in skeletal balance of body alignment<sup>14</sup>.

Feet play a vital role in the growing structural development of the body.

Good posture and Poor posture - leads to stress on joints leads to pain<sup>15</sup>

Stress on joint - leads to joint malfunction leads to pain.

Joint malfunction - leads to distortion of disc and tissue leads to pain<sup>16</sup>

Distortion of disc tissue - leads to disc bulge leads to pain.



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