



YOGA CHIKITSA SYLLABUS 2025

Educational Standards for the Training of Yoga Chikitsa Sahayaka



Credits Page

IYA Yoga Therapy Subcommittee

The Indian Yoga Association (IYA) Yoga Therapy Subcommittee has drafted the proposed EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS FOR THE TRAINING OF YOGA CHIKITSA SAHAYAKA.

Syllabus Drafting Committee

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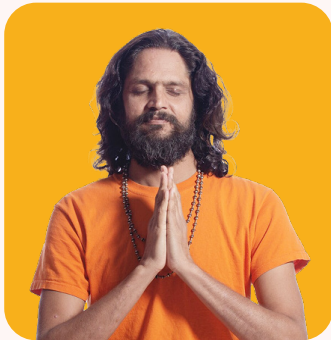
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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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- Teaching Methodology and Competency Building
- Legal and Ethical Guidelines in the Therapy Process

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Concept Note

The Yoga Therapy model being recommended by the Yoga Therapy Subcommittee of the IYA is based on the fundamental premise that every individual is unique and different at all levels of the human system.

What is 'healed' is the person as a whole and not the disease per se.

An aspiring Yoga therapist should have been trained in Yoga and Yoga Therapy for at least 1000 hours and completed an internship for at least 200 hours under a Yoga Chikitsa Ratna or Yoga Chikitsa Acharya recognized by the IYA. The internship should have a documented variety of a minimum of 50 case studies. The ideal duration should be at least 12 months or greater, as per institutional norms.

A well-structured and holistic personal practice by the aspiring therapist under the guidance of a senior therapist as a mentor must be considered a mandatory aspect of learning. Further, assessment by the mentor on how the aspiring therapist uses the tools of yoga for self-healing would also be necessary.

An advanced teacher fulfilling the following conditions and abilities can be prepared as a Yoga Therapy Sahayaka.



PROGRAM OUTCOMES (POS)

1. In-depth Knowledge and Understanding of Basic Yoga Texts

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of foundational Yoga texts such as the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, Bhagavad Gita, Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Yoga Vasistha, and other relevant scriptures, and apply their principles to Yoga Therapy.

2. Understanding and Application of Basic Principles and Practices of Yoga Therapy

- Enhance the understanding of the basic principles and practices of Yoga Therapy, incorporating holistic approaches to health, wellness, and disease prevention.

3. Anatomy, Physiology, and Basic Clinical Skills

- Demonstrate a solid understanding of

human anatomy and physiology and apply basic clinical skills to assess and address the health needs of clients through Yoga Therapy.

4. Application of Yoga Therapy Techniques and Management of Common Ailments

- Apply the knowledge of Yoga Therapy techniques, including asanas, pranayama, meditation, and relaxation methods, to manage and prevent various health conditions and common ailments such as hypertension, diabetes, asthma, anxiety, and back pain in clinical and community settings.

5. Holistic Health Promotion and Soft Skills

- Promote holistic health and wellness

by integrating physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of Yoga Therapy. Develop and demonstrate essential soft skills such as effective communication, empathy, cultural sensitivity, professional ethics, and interpersonal skills to interact effectively with clients, health-care professionals, and the community.

Subject I: **Yogic Anatomy and** **Dimensions of the Body – Insights** **based on yoga philosophy**

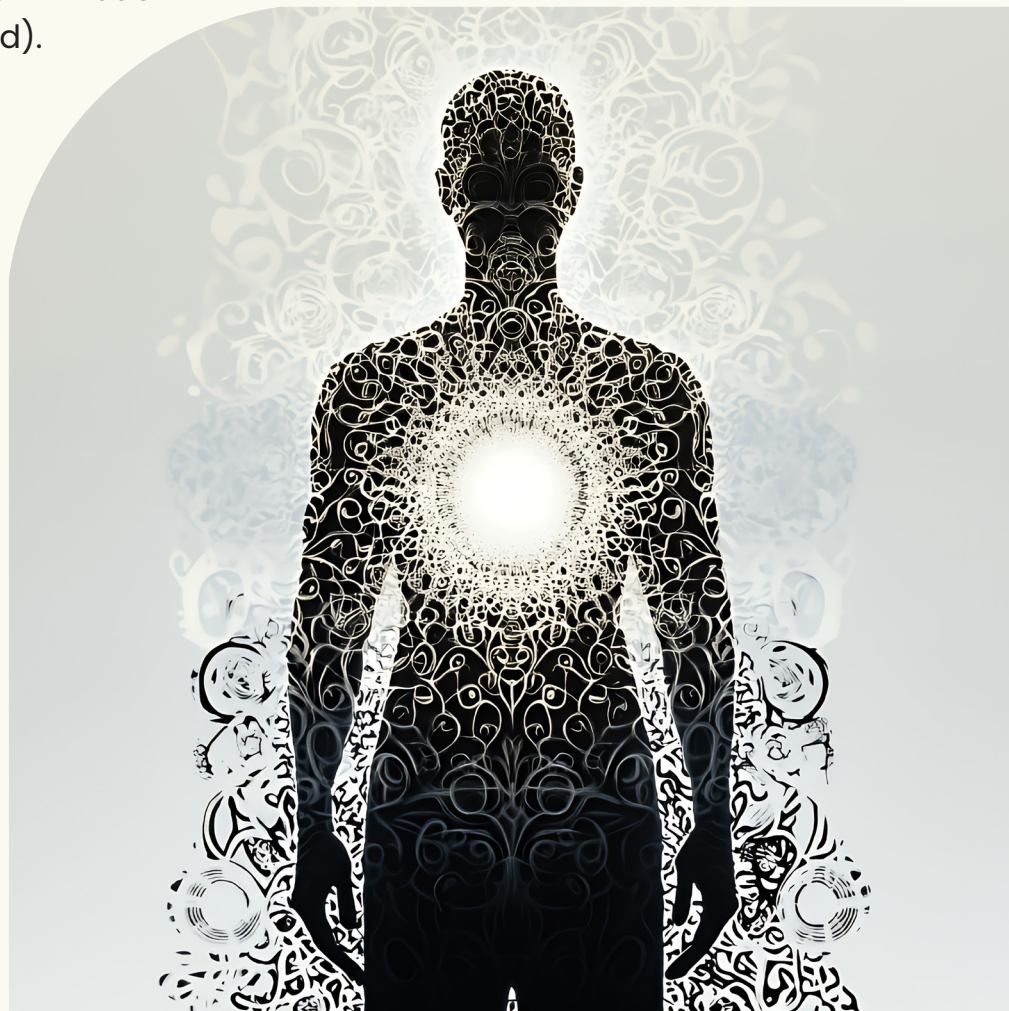
- a) A broad understanding of the origin and evolution of yoga philosophy.
- b) The Panchamahabhuta and their connection to the human system.
- c) Panchamaya structure model of the human system – Details of each maya, components, and relationship with each other (Ref: Taittiriya Upanishad).
- d) Ascertaining Heyam, Hetu, Hanam, and Upayam.
- e) The human system as seen by Yoga based on the Samkhya model of evolution

– The two distinct entities Drashta and Drishyam (Purusha and Prakriti) – Their nature, characteristics, role, and relationship between these two – Health or illness is for the Drashta but expressed through Drishyam

– Parinama (changes) are to be brought about in Drishyam alone. (Ref: Samkhya and Yoga Sutra).

f) Concept of Gunas as the basis of Prakriti in evolution – Their nature, characteristics, and role in binding the Drashta with Drishyam – Relationship between doshas & gunas, vitiated gunas; The influence of gunas by samskaras (through kleshas), by food, and by lifestyle – The relationship between the three doshas (as given in Ayurveda) and the three gunas – Yoga deals with gunas at gross and subtle levels (Ref: Samkhya, Yoga, Bhagavad Gita).

g) Prana – Its characteristics and role in the human system – Relationship between Prana and Vayu (breath) – Pancha Mukhya Pranas and Upa-Pranas



– Their characteristics and role – Interconnectedness of nadi, chakra, prana, agni, and mala.

h) Health and disease as seen in yoga texts such as Yoga Sutra, Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Gheranda Samhita, Yoga Yajnavalkya Samhita, and Yoga Vasistha.

i) Development/evolution of disease (Samprapti [pathogenesis]), including but not limited to direction, intensity, onset, and duration, and their influence on the ease or difficulty of healing and disease management.

j) Setting priorities: Symptoms/pacification (Shamana [short term]) and purification/strengthening (Shodhana [long term]).

Subject 2: Medical Understanding of Anatomy, Physiology, and Pathology and Modern Medical Approaches to Disease Management

a) Concept of health – disease – symptoms – disease management – scientific and evidence-based approach.

b) Human anatomy and physiology, including all major systems of the body and their interrelationships, as relevant to the work of a yoga therapist.

c) Biomechanics and movement as they relate to the practice of yoga and the work of a yoga therapist.

d) Integrative approaches to health and



healing: TCI Medicine of WHO, Mind-Body Medicine, Integrative Medicine, HPA axis, and PNI. Understanding the importance of diet and nutritional deficiency. CAM therapies.

e) Common pathologies and disorders of all the major systems, including symptoms, management, illness trajectories, and contraindications, as relevant to the work of a yoga therapist.

f) Basic understanding of commonly used drugs (effects and side effects) and surgical procedures, as relevant to the work of a yoga therapist.

g) Basic understanding of the diagnostic process – (physical examination) – Biomedical parameters and symptomatology associated with it. Hematology

(blood composition, pH balance, anemia, hyperlipidemia, blood sugar levels). Bio-medical investigations (X-ray, scans), clinical summary reports.

h) Biological changes associated with stress and aging – Effects on various systems of the body.

i) Musculoskeletal issues – Pain and spasm, atrophy, hypertrophy, myopathy, paralysis, muscle cramps, herniation, stress incontinence – Structural abnormalities of the vertebral column (kyphosis, lordosis, scoliosis), disc prolapse, osteoporosis – Joint-related issues (arthritis).

j) Cardiovascular issues – Tachycardia and bradycardia (pulse rates); hypo and hypertension; ischemia and heart attack; varicose veins.

k) Respiratory problems – Asthma, bronchitis, sinusitis, other lung conditions (smokers).

l) Digestion-related issues – Flatulence, obesity, constipation, irritable bowel disease.

m) Endocrine problems – Diabetes, hyper and hypothyroidism, PCOD, menopause-related problems, infertility.

n) Psychological and neurological issues – Sleep disorders, anxiety,

depression, concentration, seizure disorders, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, central sensitization disorders.

o) Lifestyle and occupation-related disorders – Stress, hypertension, diabetes, vitamin D deficiency, neck and back pain.

Subject 3: The Ayurveda Approach to Health and Healing

a) Concept of health and disease in Ayurveda – Cause of disease – Asatmya Indriya Artha Samyoga – Pranjnaparadha – Parinama; Intrinsic causes – Dosha-s.

b) Relationship between Panchabhutas – Dosha-s – Dhatu-s – Guna-s.

c) Method of examination – Asta Vidha Sthāna Pariksha, Dasa Vidha Pariksha – Method of assessment of Prakṛti – Guna-s – Āma – Estimation of ther-



apy goals:

Susādhya

– Asādhya –

Yāpya – Anu-

pakramya;

Nādi Parikśa.

d) Assess-

ing vitiated

Dośa-s – Dis-

eases of Vata

type (due to

Vata Prakopa)

and its man-

agement – Diseases of Pitta type and its
management – Diseases of Kapha type
and its management.

e) Specific properties and Dravyas – Rasa,
Vīrya, Vipāka, and Prabhāva – Properties
of specific substances: Water, Milk, Butter-
milk, Ghee, Honey, Oil, Triphala, Trikatu, etc.

f) Three pillars of the Ayurvedic approach.

g) Ayurvedic approach towards the man-
agement of specific ailments, focusing
on the musculoskeletal, cardiovascular,
respiratory, endocrine, digestive, and ner-
vous systems.

Subject 4: Diagnosis and Health – Assessment for Yoga Cikitsa

a) Diagnostic methods in Yoga Chikitsa
– Darśanam, Praśnam, Sparśanam, etc.
(Physical, Physiological, Mental, Intel-
lectual, and Emotional) – Observation of
breath.

b) Lifestyles – Relationships – Values.

c) Dwadasha Roga Lakshna Anukrama of
Swami Gitananda Giri.

d) Nādi Pariksha.

e) Setting therapy goals – Short-term
focus, process-oriented goals, and long-
term goals for care seekers and practitio-
ners.

f) Importance of ensuring safety for care
seekers at all times.

Subject 5: Application of the Tools of Yoga

a) Upaya – Ashtanga Yoga – Kriya Yoga
as Sadhana-s.

b) Shuddhi Kriyas for purification of Mala.

c) Asana – Purpose of Asana and bene-
fits, Asana-s, and other physical activities.





- d) Principles of course planning specific to therapy.
- e) Variations and modifications in Asana-s.
- f) Ratios in Pranayama – Preparing for different ratios – Impact of ratios (Brahmana, Langhana, and Samana).
- g) Types of Pranayama – Surya Bhedana, Chandra Bhedana, Nadi Shodhana, Bhramari, Bhastrika, Sitali, Sitkari, and their applications for Cikitsa.
- h) Integration of chanting and visualization in Pranayama.
- i) Importance of Yoga Nidra and guided relaxation techniques.
- j) Lifestyle modifications based on yogic principles.
- k) Antaranga Sadhana – Focusing – Sustaining focus – Purpose of meditation.
- l) Preparation for meditative processes – Contraindications.
- m) Object selection – Faith and belief – Method of teaching Dhyanam for Cikitsa.
- n) Clinical application of Dhyanam for personal transformation.
- o) Concept of Acidogenic and Alkalogenic food – Importance of natural, wholesome food as opposed to packed and preserved food.
- p) Natural living during acute diseases and fasting.

Subject 6: **Yoga and the Mind – Eastern and Western Approaches to Psychology**

- a) Understanding the mind from the modern psychological perspective and from the perspective of yoga.

- b) Process of cognition; factors that impede clarity of perception – Eastern and Western ideologies.
- c) Basic knowledge of commonly occurring mental health conditions— from psychological distress to psychiatric conditions—their symptoms, and common approaches/interventions.
- d) Yoga for prevention and rehabilitation in mental health conditions.
- e) Importance of yoga as an adjuvant therapy for mental health conditions.
- f) Yoga-based intervention for psychological disorders – stress, anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, OCD, schizophrenia, dementia, Alzheimer's, panic attacks, eating disorders, addictions.
- g) Application of yoga tools for children with broad-spectrum learning disabilities.
- h) Counselling models based on Yogasutra.

Subject 7: Teaching Methodology and Competency Building

- a) Approaches to Yoga teaching – Group Training and Individual Classes, Individual Therapy Sessions, Continuous Discipleship – Purpose of Teaching – Objectives.
- b) Communication and relationship principles in therapy.
- c) Teaching process:
 - i. Demonstration
 - ii. Instruction
 - iii. Information support
 - iv. Feedback taking and reviewing
 - v. Assessment of practice
 - vi. Goal setting for each class

Subject 8: Legal and Ethical Guidelines in the Therapy Process

- a) All therapists should maintain their own personal Sadhana.
- b) Confidentiality.
- c) Safety of the care seeker is paramount, and any injury should be avoided.
- d) Yama & Niyama principles and their applications in real-life situations.





teaching methods, adapt to unique styles of learning, provide supportive and effective feedback, acknowledge the client's/student's progress, and cope with unique difficulties/successes.

e) Sharing of information in an ethical manner.

f) Personal rights and human rights.

g) Gender sensitivity.

h) Maintaining the scope of practice as a Yoga therapist without infringing on medical and other treatment aspects that are not directly within our scope of practice.

Note 1: This syllabus is further supplemented by the mandatory requirement of completing a minimum of 50 case studies.

Note 2: This syllabus will be reviewed every year by the Subcommittee and suitable modifications would be made based on feedback of the Caretakers and Care-seekers.

Other Allied Competencies for a Yoga Therapist Certification

a) In-depth knowledge of and demonstrated ability to implement effective

b) In-depth knowledge of and demonstrated ability to transmit the value of self-awareness and self-responsibility throughout the therapeutic process.

c) In-depth knowledge of and demonstrated ability to develop and adjust appropriate practice strategies to the client/student.

d) Basic knowledge of and demonstrated ability to design, implement, and evaluate group programs.

e) Familiarity with group dynamics and techniques, including communication skills, time management, and the establishment of priorities and boundaries, as well as techniques to address the specific needs of individual participants, to the degree possible in a group setting.

f) Basic knowledge of other health care fields and their potential role in and relevance to the work of a yoga therapist.

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- Integrated Approach to Yoga Therapy for Positive Health. Dr. H R Nagendra
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 - Shuddhi-Kriyas, by – Padmashri Sadashiv Nimbalkar, Yoga Vidya Niketan, Mumbai
 - The Heart of Yoga: Developing a Personal Practice” by TKV Desikachar, KYM, Chennai
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 - The Yoga of Healing – Dr Arjun Rajagopalan & Shri TKVDesikachar, KYM
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 - Traditional theory of Evolution and its application in Yoga. Dr. Manmatha M Gharote. The Lonavala Yoga Institute
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