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News

Yoga May Help Lower Back Pain and Depression

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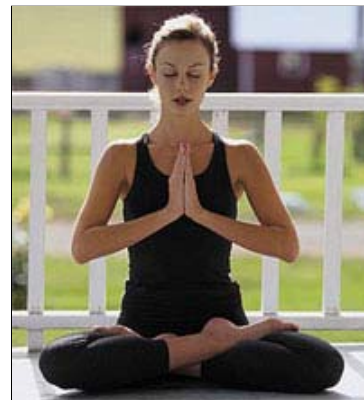
US researchers studying people with chronic lower back problems found that those who did Iyengar Yoga were better at overcoming pain and depression than those who followed conventional treatments for lower back pain.

The study, which was funded by the US National Institutes of Health to the tune of 400,000 dollars, was the work of Dr Kimberly Williams, research assistant professor in the Department of Community Medicine at West Virginia University in Morgantown, and colleagues, and can be read online in the 1 September issue of the journal *Spine*.

Low-back pain is the largest category for medical reimbursements in the US, accounting for 34 billion dollars of medical costs every year, said the researchers, reports *Medical News Today*.

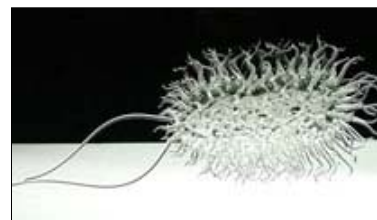
While yoga practitioners the world over have been touting the positive benefits of yoga with regards to back pain, many traditional medicine proponents were skeptical of their optimism. This study, maintains Williams, is one of the most expansive to date and gives credibility to this particular form of alternative medicine.

As for its effect on depression, yoga practitioners have maintained that the practice itself goes beyond mere physicality. Cindee Joslin, yoga



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practitioner and instructor in Northwest Arkansas encourages her students to bring their entire being "to the mat," assuring them that more will be revealed if they are patient and willing to fully engage in the practice - not a whole lot to ask for such life changing benefits, informs *Food Consumer*.

There are however, a number of natural methods that have been around for thousands of years that can successfully alleviate problems with lower back pain. One such popular method is yoga, an ancient Indian meditative discipline. While the broader term yoga has many religious and cultural connotations in India, in Western society yoga often refers to specific sets of physical exercises that help stretch and realigns muscles, bones and joints, *Health Jackal* informs.

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