

**YOGA - AN ADJUNCT TO PCOS THERAPY****Dr. Sushma<sup>\*1</sup>, Dr. Kaumik Verma<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Nidhi Rathore<sup>3</sup>**<sup>1</sup>M.D. Scholar P.G. Dept. Of Rachana Sharir, Himalayiya Ayurvedic (P.G) Medical College and Hospital.<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, RB Ayurvedic Medical College, Agra.<sup>3</sup>Medical Officer, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh.**\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Sushma**

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**ABSTRACT**

In this modern era of change people are drifting away from our tradition and culture. As a result, disorders from modern culture have also been including in our society. In this fast-paced modern world almost everyone is suffering from anxiety, mental tension, psychological and psychosomatic disorders, especially women. Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) is a set of symptoms caused by a problem with woman's hormones. It affects the ovaries. These are the small organs that store a woman's eggs. But it can also affect the rest of the body. PCOS is a very common condition in women of childbearing age. In some cases, it can lead to serious health issues if not treated. The science of yoga works at levels much deeper than just the physical body level. Yoga has been found to be more effective than any other exercise in reducing stress and obesity. Yoga not only provides symptomatic relief to the patients but also helps in minimizing the long-term complications, thus improves the prognosis.

**KEYWORDS:** Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), Yoga, Stress, Obesity.**INTRODUCTION**

One in every ten women suffers from polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), an emerging lifestyle disorder that is the leading cause of female infertility and also a risk factor for diabetes type -2, cardiovascular diseases, endometrial cancer etc. *Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) is a combination of disorders characterized by excessive androgens production by the ovaries which interferes with the reproductive, endocrinal and metabolic functions.*<sup>[1]</sup> Mostly women know that PCOS is an endocrinal disorder but they are unaware of it that our lifestyle also affects it. Obesity (android type) and stress both acts as trigger factor for PCOS.

Modern medical science has been successful in providing symptomatic relief to patients but still results are unsatisfactory to them. On the other hand, Yoga - an ancient traditional discipline of mind, body and spirit is not only cost effective but also free from side effects.

The science of yoga works at levels much deeper than just the physical body level. Yoga has been found to be more effective than any other exercise in reducing stress and obesity. Various yoga postures stimulate ovarian

function that can help improve PCOS symptoms. Although the exact cause for PCOS remains unknown, yoga provides a choice to do something about it.

**CLINICAL MANIFESTATION**<sup>[2]</sup>

- 1) Irregular menstruation - in the form of oligomenorrhoea, amenorrhoea or DUB.
- 2) Infertility
- 3) Hirsutism –excessive facial and body hair
- 4) Acne
- 5) Weight gain
- 6) Anxiety
- 7) Depression
- 8) Acanthosis – dark patches of skin that may be dark brown or black especially on nape of neck, inner thighs.

**DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA**Presence of any 2 of the following 3 criteria<sup>[3]</sup>

- (1) Oligo-ovulation or Anovulation
- (2) Hyperandrogenism (3) polycystic ovaries

**PATHOPHYSIOLOGY OF PCOS** – Exact pathophysiology of PCOS is unknown, certain hypothesis regarding PCOS given as-

- 1) Hypothalamo- pituitary–compartment abnormality
- 2) Hyperandrogenism
- 3) Insulin resistance
- 4) Anovulation<sup>[4]</sup>

Insulin resistance is one of the key factors responsible for PCOS. The level of insulin is increased in the blood due to desensitvity of the cells to insulin and leads to hyperinsulinemia. Increased insulin level in blood increases GnRH pulse frequency, tonically elevated LH (LH over FSH dominance), excess androgen production by the theca cells of ovary, reduces sex hormone binding globulin (SHBG), increased levels of free testosterone, anovulation, and ultimately leads to development of PCOS.<sup>[5,6]</sup>

### AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE OF PCOS

*Vata* is responsible for the movement of follicle, release of ovum, movement of ovum towards the uterus and menstrual flow. The action of hormones expresses the nature of *pitta* and *kapha* with heavy cool qualities nourishes the development of tissues that forms and support the reproductive system. According to ayurveda movement of *Vata* especially *Apana vayu* gets obstructed by the increased *Kapha*, which in turn obstruct the normal functioning of *artava* also. *Kapha* gets aggravated by the use of foods which increases moisture and leads to *slaismiki* characteristics. This *kapha* along with *ama* creates *srotodushti* in *artavavaha srotas*. *Apana vayu* in *artavavaha srotas* becomes stagnant – *sang*, hence movement (*vata*) and the transformation processes of hormones (*pitta*) are suppressed. The accumulated *kapha* is expressed in the formation of cyst in the ovary.<sup>[7]</sup>

### DIAGNOSIS

**1)-Clinical diagnosis** - Presence of features i.e. menstrual abnormalities, infertility, weight gain hirsutism, acne

**2)-Transvaginal sonography**– Increased ovarian volume upto 10 cm<sup>3</sup> or more, presence of 12 or more follicles of size 2-9 mm

**3)-Serum values** –(1) Ratio of LH : FSH > 3 : 1 ( 2) Elevated levels of androgens especially Serum testosterone (>150 ng/dl ) (3) Raised fasting insulin level > 25µ IU/ml and at 2 hours post glucose (75 gm) >300µ IU/ml suggests insulin resistance (4) Sex hormone binding globulin is reduced (SHBG).<sup>[8,9]</sup>

### HOW STRESS AND OBESITY CAUSES PCOS

Stress and Obesity both are responsible for the development of insulin resistance and associated hyperinsulinemia that favors hyperandrogenism and related clinical features as menstrual irregularities, hirsutism, acne etc.<sup>[10]</sup> The hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, regulates the body's adaptive response to stress. Stress is also associated with activation of Hypothalamo-Pituitary-Adrenal (HPA) axis and stimulation of sympathoadrenal system which in turn

causes increased production of androgens level in blood stream.<sup>[11]</sup>

Obesity (central) is recognized as an important contributing factor. Apart from excess production of androgens, obesity is also associated with insulin resistance and hyper-insulinemia which in turn increases the gonadal androgen production.<sup>[12]</sup>

### BENEFITS OF YOGA IN PCOS MANAGEMENT

1. Recalibrating the body's reaction to stress is one of our key goals in yoga for fertility. While we may not be able to remove all the stressors from our lives, we can effectively reduce our reaction to stress events. This in turn reduces the stress hormone level in blood stream. Breathing techniques of yoga brings relaxation, lowers the production of stress hormone cortisol (the major cause of visceral adiposity and weight gain).<sup>[12]</sup>
2. Weight control- by reducing stress, burns calories, builds muscle, increasing body awareness to hunger and satiety.
3. Restoring insulin sensitivity – primarily through reducing the stress and by building muscle.
4. Promoting hormonal balance – deep relaxation and certain yoga exercises helps to bring the cortisol level to normal and also stabilizes HPA axis.
5. Certain yoga postures help to open up pelvic area and stimulates ovarian functions.

### RECOMMENDED YOGA EXERCISES

1. **Nadishodhan pranayama (anulom vilom)**- very effective in stress management.<sup>[13]</sup>
2. **Meditation**- soothes mind and connects body, mind and soul.<sup>[13]</sup>
3. **Baddha konasana (butterfly pose)** - helps to open up pelvic area and relieves menstrual discomfort.<sup>[14]</sup>
4. **Bhujangasana (cobra pose )** – helps to stimulate ovarian functions.<sup>[14]</sup>
5. **Naukasana (boat pose)** – stimulates abdominal and pelvic organs functions.<sup>[14]</sup>
6. **Chakki chalanasana**- helps to reduce abdominal fat, as well as massages the uterus.<sup>[15]</sup>
7. **Padamasana**- stretches pelvic region and also helps in removing stress and menstrual discomfort.<sup>[15]</sup>
8. **Surya Namaskara (sun salutation)**- A few rounds of sun salutation at a faster pace can be good for weight loss.<sup>[15]</sup>

### CONCLUSION

Even short-term practice of yoga may reduce Insulin Resistance related risk factors for PCOS that is Stress and Obesity which ultimately stabilize the normal function of hypothalamo-pituitary-ovarian axis. Yoga not only provides symptomatic relief to the patient but also helps in minimizing the long-term complications, thus improves the prognosis.

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