



Does This Ancient Practice Really Extend Your Life?

Description

Yoga has been associated with a plethora of [health benefits](#). But does it also hold the key to longevity? Daisy Taylor, a centenarian hailing from Chelmsford, England, certainly believes so. In a [recent interview](#) commemorating her 105th birthday, she shared with the BBC that her remarkable lifespan can be attributed to her yoga practice, accompanied by a steadfast optimism and an appreciation for life's simple pleasures. Taylor emphasizes that yoga significantly contributes to her mental acuity, continuing to practice it in a chair rather than on a mat at her advanced age.

As a senior practitioner of yoga who exemplifies both physical and mental vitality, Taylor is not an isolated case. Numerous esteemed yoga practitioners have enjoyed lengthy and healthy lives. For instance, B.K.S. Iyengar, arguably the most renowned yoga instructor of our time, overcame dire health conditions in his youth—given only a few years to live after contracting malaria, typhoid, and tuberculosis—by dedicating ten hours daily to yoga, ultimately living until the age of 95.

Similarly, Tirumalai Krishnamacharya, the progenitor of vinyasa yoga, [reached the age of 100](#), while Krishna Pattabhi Jois, another prominent student of Krishnamacharya and the developer of Ashtanga yoga, [lived to 93](#).

The benefits of yoga, particularly in later years, are supported by various studies illustrating its positive impact on age-related ailments by [lowering blood pressure](#), [reducing lipid levels](#), and combating [obesity](#). Furthermore, yoga has been shown to alleviate [depression](#), [stress](#), and [anxiety](#), promoting a [healthier lifestyle](#) overall.

Examining the Link Between Yoga and Aging

Research suggests yoga may influence aging at a cellular level. In one study, participants practicing yoga exhibited a 43% increase in telomerase activity, a crucial enzyme related to cellular aging, compared to a mere 4% increase in those engaged in relaxation alone.

Moreover, adept yogis can significantly slow their metabolism, paralleling states observed in hibernating animals, which can lead to increased lifespan in those species. Some researchers posit that similar effects may be applicable to humans.

Furthermore, yoga fosters mental agility as one ages. Evidence indicates that seasoned practitioners generally possess a greater brain mass compared to their non-yogi peers. Intriguingly, the longer the duration of practice, the more pronounced the increase in brain volume, particularly in the hippocampus, which is vital for memory formation.

A study contrasting brain mass between middle-aged meditators and non-meditators found that the former exhibited brain volumes akin to much younger individuals, further highlighting the potential cognitive benefits of meditation within the yoga practice.



While various studies adjust for lifestyle and genetic factors, making definitive conclusions challenging, there is substantial evidence supporting the notion that yoga and meditation contribute to sustained cognitive health.

Ultimately, while yoga may not conclusively extend lifespan, it appears to significantly enhance quality of life and mental fitness in later years, alleviating the apprehensions that often accompany aging.

Vocabulary List:

1. **Plethora** /'plɛθərə/ (noun): A large or excessive amount of something.
2. **Acuity** /ə'kju:ɪti/ (noun): Sharpness or keenness of thought vision or hearing.
3. **Cognitive** /'kɒɡ.nɪ.tɪv/ (adjective): Relating to the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding.
4. **Telomerase** /tɛ'lɒməreɪz/ (noun): An enzyme that adds nucleotide sequences to the ends of chromosomes affecting cellular aging.
5. **Alleviate** /ə'li:vi.eɪt/ (verb): Make (suffering deficiency or a problem) less severe.
6. **Advocate** /'æd.və.keɪt/ (verb): Publicly recommend or support.

Comprehension Questions

Multiple Choice

1. What does Daisy Taylor attribute her remarkable lifespan to?
Option: Eating a vegan diet
Option: Regular meditation practice
Option: Yoga practice
Option: Weightlifting routine
2. Who is known as the progenitor of vinyasa yoga?
Option: B.K.S. Iyengar
Option: Tirumalai Krishnamacharya
Option: Krishna Pattabhi Jois
Option: Daisy Taylor
3. Which enzyme related to cellular aging showed a significant increase in participants practicing yoga compared to those engaged in relaxation alone?



- Option: Glucagon
- Option: Insulin
- Option: Telomerase
- Option: Adrenaline

4. What part of the brain, vital for memory formation, experiences a pronounced increase in brain volume in seasoned yoga practitioners?

- Option: Frontal lobe
- Option: Cerebellum
- Option: Hippocampus
- Option: Occipital lobe

5. According to the text, what effect can yoga have on metabolism?

- Option: Speed it up
- Option: No effect on metabolism
- Option: Slow it down
- Option: Reverse it

6. What did Krishna Pattabhi Jois develop?

- Option: Hatha yoga
- Option: Vinyasa yoga
- Option: Kundalini yoga
- Option: Bikram yoga

True-False

7. Yoga and meditation may contribute to sustained cognitive health according to various studies.

8. Tirumalai Krishnamacharya lived to be 106 years old.

9. Yoga has been shown to exacerbate depression and anxiety in individuals.

10. Regular meditation practice has no effect on brain mass according to studies.

11. Yoga conclusively extends lifespan according to research findings.

12. The longer the duration of yoga practice, the greater the increase in brain volume.



Gap-Fill

13. Daisy Taylor celebrated her _____ birthday in a recent interview.
14. B.K.S. Iyengar lived until the age of _____ despite dire health conditions in his youth.
15. The enzyme telomerase activity increased by 43% in participants practicing yoga compared to a mere 4% increase in those engaged in _____.
16. Some researchers suggest that the effects of slowing metabolism observed in adept yogis may lead to increased lifespan, similar to states found in _____ animals.
17. Research suggests that the potential cognitive benefits of meditation within the yoga practice can result in brain volumes akin to those of _____ individuals.
18. Yoga appears to significantly enhance quality of life and mental fitness in later years, alleviating the apprehensions that often accompany _____.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Yoga practice 2. Tirumalai Krishnamacharya 3. Telomerase 4. Hippocampus 5. Slow it down 6. Ashtanga yoga

True-False: 7. True 8. False 9. False 10. False 11. False 12. True

Gap-Fill: 13. 105th 14. 95 15. relaxation alone 16. hibernating 17. much younger 18. aging

Vocabulary quizzes

Multiple Choice (Select the Correct answer for each question.)

1. Which term refers to the process of water falling to the ground from the atmosphere?



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- Option: Phenomena
Option: Anticipate
Option: Exploit
Option: Precipitation
2. What does the term "proximity" mean?
- Option: Trajectory
Option: Pervasive
Option: Proximity
Option: Extravagant
3. Which term describes the ability to withstand prolonged stress or activity?
- Option: Manifest
Option: Endurance
Option: Severity
Option: Propensity
4. Which term relates to mental processes such as thinking learning and remembering?
- Option: Cognitive
Option: Plethora
Option: Acuity
Option: Interconnectedness
5. What is the enzyme responsible for maintaining the length of telomeres?
- Option: Advocate
Option: Telomerase
Option: Self-healing
Option: Durability
6. Which term refers to the feeling of tiredness or exhaustion?
- Option: Phenomenon
Option: Fatigue
Option: Microscopic
Option: Exploit
7. What does the term "severity" imply?
- Option: Severity
Option: Anticipate
Option: Trajectory
Option: Proactive
8. To alleviate means to:
- Option: Alleviate



- Option: Advocate
- Option: Extravagant
- Option: Endurance

9. What does the term "propensity" refer to?

- Option: Manifest
- Option: Propensity
- Option: Pervasive
- Option: Proximity

10. Which term means to display or show clearly?

- Option: Cognitive
- Option: Manifest
- Option: Interconnectedness
- Option: Endurance

Gap-Fill (Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

11. This year has seen a _____ increase in online shopping due to the pandemic.
12. The theory of _____ suggests that everything is connected in some way.
13. She threw an _____ birthday party with fireworks and live music.
14. It is better to be _____ in preventing problems rather than dealing with them after they occur.
15. The buffet offered a _____ of options from salads to desserts.
16. Taking a pain reliever can help _____ headache symptoms.
17. The storm caused _____ damage to buildings and vehicles.
18. The organization works to _____ for animal rights and welfare.
19. Marathon runners need great _____ to complete a 26.2-mile race.
20. _____ is an enzyme that adds DNA sequence repeats to the ends of chromosomes.



Matching Sentences (Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

21. occur when one celestial body passes in front of another obscuring it from view.
22. Pilots need to perform quick and precise when flying in challenging conditions.
23. Being able to potential issues can help in avoiding last-minute problems.
24. The influence of social media is in modern society affecting people of all ages.
25. Certain materials have the ability to undergo processes to repair cracks and damage.
26. Products that are known for their are more likely to last longer and withstand wear and tear.
27. A solar eclipse is a natural that captivates people around the world.
28. organisms play a crucial role in various ecosystems despite their small size.
29. The of a rocket determines its path through space and back to Earth.
30. Some companies may try to legal loopholes for their benefit which can lead to ethical issues.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Precipitation 2. Proximity 3. Endurance 4. Cognitive 5. Telomerase 6. Fatigue 7. Severity 8. Alleviate 9. Propensity 10. Manifest

Gap-Fill: 11. Phenomenal 12. Interconnectedness 13. Extravagant 14. Proactive 15. Plethora 16. Alleviate 17. Severe 18. Advocate 19. Endurance 20. Telomerase

Matching sentence: 1. Occultations 2. Maneuvers 3. Anticipate 4. Pervasive 5. Self-healing 6. Durability 7. Phenomenon 8. Microscopic 9. Trajectory 10. Exploit

CATEGORY

1. Sci/Tech - LEVEL5

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