



Introduction

Yoga is expansion of human capabilities. The practitioner of different branches of *yoga* can get many benefits and can achieve a lot of amazing *siddhis* (perfections) which are described in *Patanjali Yoga sūtra* and various texts of *Hatha Yoga*.

Benefits of practice of limbs of Yoga

By the practice of steps of *yoga*, all impurities are reduced and there is an illumination of knowledge. It culminates in the highest knowledge of discrimination between *Purusa* and *Prakriti*. (*Patanjali Yoga sūtra* II/28)

dhyana and 7) *Nirlipta* (non-involvement or liberation) achieved by *samadhi*. (*Gheranda Samhita* 1/9,11)

Signs of Success of Hatha Yoga

1) Slimness of the body, 2) cheerful face, 3) hearing of the mystical sound, 4) shining eyes, 5) sense of wellness, 6) control over the bindu, 7) increase in gastric fire and 8) purification of *nadīs*.

Āsanas alleviates diseases, *pranayama* removes the sins, and practice of *pratyahara* brings an end to mental ills of a *yogī*. (*Hatharatnavali* 1/59, 3/77)

Siddhis and Benefits Achieved by Practice of Hatha Yoga and Raja Yoga

Dr. Saroj Kumar Sahu

By practice of various *asanas*, *kumbhakas* and *mudras*, *kundalinī* is aroused and the *prana* dissolves into *sūnya* or *Brahmarandhra*. (*Hatha Yoga Pradipika* IV/10)

By mastering *yoga*, self-realization is achieved. (*Gheranda Samhita* 1/5)

Saptasadhana of Ghata achieved by Yoga

1) *Sodhana* (purification of body) achieved by *satkarma*, 2) *Dhridhata* (firmness) by *asana*, 3) *Sthirata* (steadiness) by *mudra*, 4) *Dhirata* (patience) by *pratyahara*, 5) *Laghava* (lightness) by *pranayama*, 6) *Pratyaksha Ātman* (self realization) by

Description

1) Benefits of practice of Yama

i) When the *yogī* perfects in the practice of *ahimsa* (non-violence), others around him give up enmity. ii) When the *yogī* perfects himself on *satya* (truthfulness) his speech becomes true. iii) When the *yogī* perfects in the practice of *asteya* (non-stealing), all the wealth of the world become available to him, iv) When the *yogī* perfects in the practice of *brahmacharya* (continence), he acquires immense strength (physical, mental and spiritual), v) When the *yogī* perfects in the practice of *aparigraha* (non-receiving), he gets the knowledge of the present birth.



(*Patanjali Yoga sūtra* II/ 35, 36, 37, 38, 39)

2) Benefits of practice of *Niyama*

i) When the *yogī* perfects in the practice of *saucha*, he develops dislike towards his own body and has no attachment for any other's body. The *yogī*'s mind becomes pure, joyful and concentrated. He develops a complete control over the *indriyas*. He becomes capable of self realization. ii) Supreme happiness got by *santosa* (contentment). iii) Supernormal capabilities of body and mind are achieved when the impurities of the body and mind are reduced by the practice of *tapa*. iv) By *svadhyaya*, the *yogī* can have interaction with god, *siddhas* and sages. He can receive divine help. v) By meditating on *Isvara* along with repetition of *Om*, the practitioner gains two fold results. He acquires internal consciousness and his obstacles on the way of *yoga* are also removed. By *Isvarapranidhana*, the *yogī* can attain *samadhi*.

(*Patanjali Yoga sūtra* I/29, II/ 40,41,42, 43, 44, 45)

3) Benefits of practice of *Āsana*

When *asana* is perfected, the *yogī* is not disturbed by the pairs of opposites like pleasure and pain, heat and cold etc. (*Patanjali Yoga sūtra* II/48)

Āsanās make one's body and mind steady, keep one healthy and light (flexible) of the limbs.

(*Hatha Yoga Pradipika* I/17)

Practice of *asana* alleviates diseases and contributes to *sthairya* (stability), *arogya* (health) and *angapataba* (efficient body). (*Hatharatnavali* 3/5)

4) Benefits of practice of *Pranayama*

By regular practice of *pranayama*, the obstructions of knowledge (caused by impurities of mind) are reduced. Then the mind becomes capable of practicing *dharana*.

(*Patanjali Yoga sūtra* II- 52,53)

When the *prana* (breath) is steady, the mind attains steadiness. By this steadiness of *prana* the *yogī* attains steadiness. By proper practice of *pranayama* all diseases are eradicated. All impurities of the *nadīs* are removed by *pranayama*. Even *Brahma* and other *Devas* regularly do *pranayama* to get rid of the fear of death. The practice of various *kumbhakās* one obtains different *siddhis* or wondrous perfections.

(*Hatha Yoga Pradipika* II-2,16,37,39, 47)

The group of *nadīs* is purified and *prana* easily pierces the opening of *susumna* and enters into it. Mind becomes steady as the *prana* moves into *susumna*. This poised state of mind is called *manonmani*. Proper practice of *pranayama* alleviates all the diseases. Whereas improper practice invites all the disorders.

(*Hatharatnavali* II/2, 3 & III/91)

Through the practice of *pranayama*, *khecharatva* (travel in space), elimination of disease and awakening of *kundalinī* is achieved. Bliss manifests in the mind and one becomes happy.

(*Gheranda Samhita* 5/57)

The practitioner surely destroys all his *karma*, whether acquired in this life or in the past through regulation of breath. The *yogī* destroys various virtues and vices accumulated in his past life. *Pranayama* makes the *yogī* free from sin; next destroys the bonds of all his good action.



The *yogî* achieves psychic powers and having crossed the ocean of virtue and vice, moves about freely through the three worlds.

The *yogî* acquires the following *siddhis* –1) *Bakya siddhi* (prophecy). 2) *Kamachari* (transporting himself everywhere at will). 3) *Dûradristi* (clairvoyance). 4) *Dûrasriti* (clairaudience). 5) *Shukshmadristi* (subtle sight). 6) *Parakayaprabesana* (power of entering another's body). 7) *Vinmutralepanesvarna* (turning base metals to gold by rubbing them with his excrements and urine). 8) *Adrussyakarana* (power of becoming invisible). 9) *Khecharatva* (moving in the air). (*Siva Samhita* III/49-52, 54)

5) Benefits of practice of *Pratyâhâra*

By the perfection of *pratyâhâra* the *yogî* develops supreme control over the *indriyas*.

(*Patanjalî Yoga sûtra* II- 55)

6) Benefits of practice of *Dhâranâ*

The wise *yogî* who continuously practices *dhâranâ* (concentration) never dies through hundred cycles of the great *Brahmâ*.

(*Siva Samhita* III/65)

7) Results of *Samadhi*

The *yogî* in *samadhi* is not swallowed up by the process of time (death). He is not influenced by good or bad *karma*, nor is he affected by anything done against him. He experiences neither smell, taste, form, touch, sound nor colour.

He does not cognize his self (ego) nor that of others. He is not affected by heat or cold, pain or pleasure, honour or dishonour. He can not be killed by any weapon; all the world can

not overpower him. He is beyond the powers of *mantras* and *yantras*.

(*Hatha Yoga Pradipika* IV/108, 109, 111, 113)

8) Benefits of practice of *Samyama* (*Dhyana, Dhâranâ & Samadhi* together) on different objects

i) If the *yogî* practices *samyama* on the three *parinamas* or *mutations* (*dharmâ, laksanâ, abasthâ*), he acquires the knowledge of past, present and future. ii) The *yogî* who practices *samyama* on the differentiation of a word, its meaning and its knowledge, he acquires the knowledge of all the living beings. iii) When the *yogî* observes the *samskara* he gets the knowledge of past life. iv) If he practices *samyama* on the *vrttis* of his own *citta*, he can acquire the knowledge of another person's *citta*. v) When the *yogî* practices *samyama* on the appearance of his own body, then he obstructs its ability to be seen. At this stage he becomes invisible. vi) Like this the *yogî* can concentrate on his own voice, smell, touchability and taste and stop the reception by another person's organs. vii) By practicing *samyama* on the two kinds of *karmas* (*sopakrama and nirûpakrama*) one gets the knowledge of death, it's time etc. This knowledge can also be gained by practicing *samyama* directed towards omens (*aristas*). viii) If the *yogî* practices *samyama* on *maitrî* (friendliness), *karuna* (compassion), *mudita* (delight) and *upeksha* (indifference), then these will be strengthened. ix) If the *yogî* practices *samyama* on *bala* (strength), he acquires the strength of elephant etc. x) The knowledge of all the *lokas* is acquired if the *yogî* practices *samyama* on the Sun. xi) The knowledge of structure and arrangement of stars is acquired when the *yogî* practices *samyama* on Moon. xii) The knowledge of movement of other stars is



acquired when the *yogī* practices *samyama* on the *Dhruba* star. xii) If the *yogī* practices *samyama* on the navel (*manipuracakra*), he acquires the knowledge of structure of the body. xiii) If the *yogī* practices *samyama* on the throat pit, he is not affected by hunger and thirst. xiv) If the *yogī* practices *samyama* on the *Kurmanadi*, his body becomes steady. xv) If the *yogī* practices *samyama* on the cranial light, he can see the *siddhas*. xv) If the *yogī* practices *samyama* on the heart, he gets complete knowledge of *citta*. xvi) When the *yogī* practices *samyama* on the *udanavayu*, he gets the power to walk on water, mud, thorny bush and similar objects and the power to levitate. xvii) By controlling the *samanavayu*, the body becomes effulgent and radiant. xviii) *By practice of samyama* on the relation between ear and space, one gains power to hear divine sounds. xix) *By practice of samyama* on the relation between body and space, and when there is complete absorption of the weightlessness of cotton, one gets the power to move in space with ease. xx) *By samyama* on the *vritti* of the Bodiless, the veil that covers the light is removed. xxi) *By practice of samyama* on the gross and subtle forms of the elements and their relative characteristics and their objectivity, there arises perfect mastery over the elements. Then comes the power like *anima* etc and also the perfection of the body which is no longer subject to the harm created by the elements. xxii) *By practice of samyama* on how the senses act, their characteristics and the ego-sense and their mutual relationship and their meaningfulness one gets mastery over the sense organs. Then the *yogī* can physically move with the speed of mind, can use the *indriyas* without the help of physical body and can conquer the *Prakriti*. xxiii) *By practice of samyama* on the knowledge that *Purusa* and *Prakriti* are different

from each other, one becomes master of all actions and knowledge. xiv) *By practice of samyama* on single moments and their sequence in time, one gets the distinguishing knowledge. Then he can distinguish between two similar characteristics objects, their species or location i.e. one becomes capable of distinguishing between reality and appearance.

(*Patanjali Yoga sūtra* III/ 5, 16-19, 21, 24, 25, 27-33, 35, 40-42-46, 48-50, 53, 54)

9) Benefits of practice of *Satkarma* (6 Purificatory processes)

Satkarma effect purification of the body. These six *karmas* completely cure obesity, phlegmatic disorders and remove impurities of a physical nature. (*Hatha Yoga Pradipika* II-23, 36)

10) Benefits of practice of *Astakarma* (8 Purificatory processes)

1) Practice of *pranayama* becomes successful, 2) all the six *chakras* are properly purified. 3) all the diseases are removed, 4) liberation is achieved, 5) physical wellness is gained.

(*Hatharatnavali* 1/62, 62)

11) Benefits of practice of *Mudra*

Practice of *mudras* destroys old age and death. *By practicing mudras, yogis* gain eight *siddhis*.

(*Hatha Yoga Pradipika* III/7,8)

12) Benefits of practice of *Nadanusandhana*

By constant practice of concentration on nada, all vices are destroyed. The mind and *prana* verily get absorbed in that pure state or *caitanya* (*Niranjana*). (*Hatha Yoga Pradipika* IV/105)



Conclusion

Āsanas, kumbhakas and mudras of hatha yoga should be practiced meticulously till one attains *raja yoga*. All the *hathayoga* practices are meant for attainment of *raja yoga (samadhi)*. Those perfected in *raja yoga* cheat death. (*Hatha Yoga Pradipika* I/67, IV/103)

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Dr. Saroj Kumar Sahu, Guest Faculty (Dept. of Yoga and Naturopathy, NOU, Baripada, Gopabandhu Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Puri & AYUSH Medical Officer (National Health Mission)