

Add love, hope and joy by adding yoga to your journey towards parenthood.



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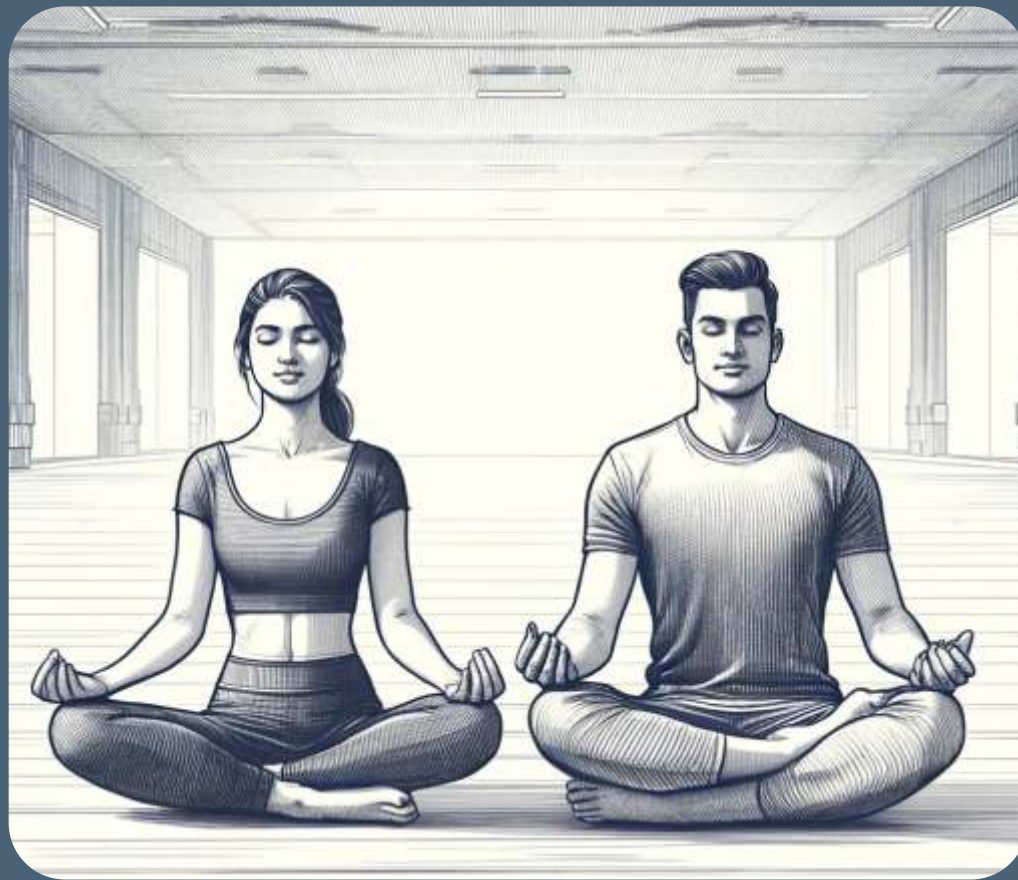
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YOGA

For Fertility and Assisted Reproductive Techniques (ART)



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Dealing with infertility or undergoing assisted reproductive techniques can be a challenging journey for individuals and couples alike. The mental stress associated with these experiences can be significant and needs to be addressed effectively.

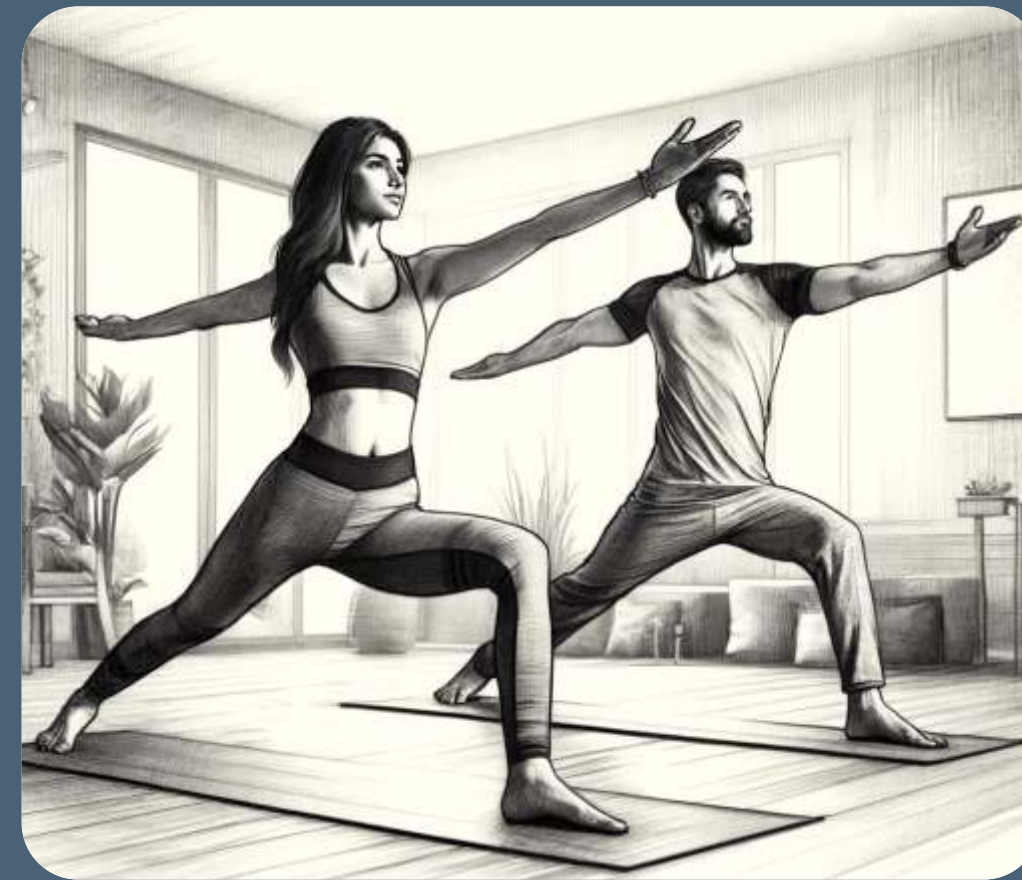
While assisted reproductive techniques offer hope and joy to aspiring parents, the process itself, coupled with anticipation, can induce considerable anxiety. **Research has consistently demonstrated that stress can adversely impact IVF outcomes, particularly during critical phases like egg retrieval.**

Therefore, integrating practices such as yoga into your IVF cycle can play a pivotal role in alleviating anxiety, reducing stress levels, and fostering a sense of acceptance and patience throughout the process.

How does yoga help?

Physiologically, yoga practices stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system and regulate the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis, thereby reducing stress hormone levels and promoting a state of relaxation. Numerous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of mind-body interventions in enhancing pregnancy probabilities during IVF cycles.

Yoga physiology explains the issue of infertility as a restricted movement of apana vayu, which controls the nishkraman kriyas (throwing out actions) of our body and is seated in the lower abdominal / pelvic region of our body. Practices that help in movement of this prana in the body can help in improving upon the issue of infertility. Thus practices that improve the blood circulation in the pelvic area, and breathing exercises that regulate the movement of prana all over the body and mudras & bandhas that help in enhancing the function of the genital organs, are specifically included in a yoga session alongside relaxation and meditation practices.



What is the most important part of the yoga regime for IVF?

The approach within Yoga therapy is to balance all the three constituents of the body – Vata, Pitta & Kapha. For this, an appropriate dietary regime alongside different yoga practices, as per the body type, is much needed. Thus a detailed case history of the couple is taken and recommendations are made accordingly so as to ensure adequate benefit of the therapy and the procedure the couple is undergoing.

Considering that a de-stressed state is one of the most difficult and most needed aspects for the couples undergoing ART, **pranayama and meditation can be considered as the two most critical aspects while practicing yoga for improving fertility.** However, in yoga one practice prepares body for the follow up practice meaning that in order to reap full benefits of pranayama and meditation, physical movement i.e asanas and kriyas are required



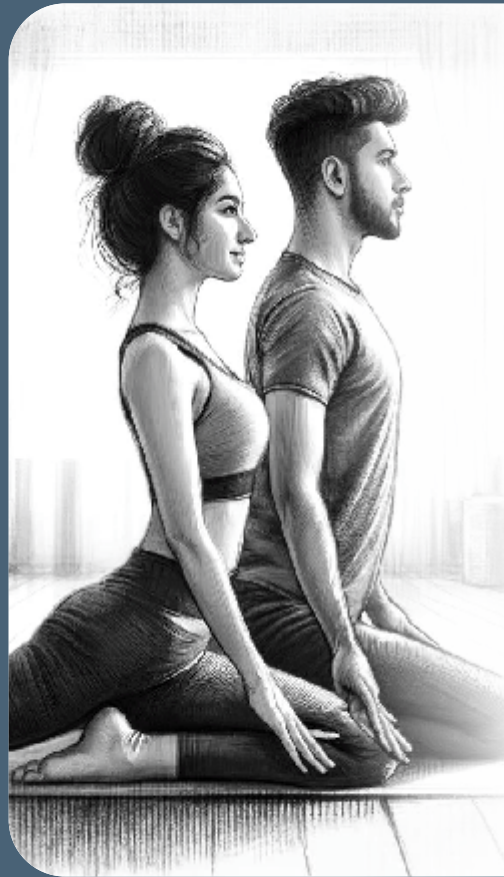
Is yoga safe during IVF?

Yoga practices are tailored to suit each phase of the IVF treatment, ensuring safety and efficacy. Practices may vary from the recruitment phase to retrieval and implantation, with a focus on diverse techniques of breathing, relaxation, and restorative practices. During the recruitment phase, practices are unrestricted and variety of motion is permissible but as one approaches the retrieval phase, de-stressing practices are focused upon and during the two week wait post implantation, practices are more restorative.

Can yoga increase conception rates with IVF?

Extensive research has demonstrated that yoga can serve as an adjunct therapy to improve pregnancy rates in couples undergoing ART especially because of its potential benefits such as reducing stress, improving hormonal balance, reducing inflammation and improving blood circulation





Is fertility yoga a couple practice?

Support from partners is invaluable throughout the journey of seeking assistance for pregnancy. **Co-participation in yoga sessions is encouraged and beneficial, fostering mutual support and understanding.** Based on the specific problems associated, the practices may differ. Lateral bending and forward bending are specifically beneficial for managing female infertility whereas practices that help in strengthening of the pelvic floor are recommended for men.

Yoga therapy encompasses various practices beyond asanas and pranayama, including kriyas, mudras, dietary guidance, and principles such as yamas and niyamas. **Couples engaging in yoga therapy experience a state of homeostasis, where hormonal balance is achieved, and sustainable stress management is systematically arrived at, thereby harmonizing bodily functions thus aiding in infertility treatments.**

About the yoga therapist

Mallika is a Yoga therapist from Kasturba Medical College, Manipal, brings over 18 years of experience in assisting individuals with male and female infertility issues. Her holistic approach to yoga therapy, rooted in her personal journey as a seeker (sadhak), extends beyond fertility support to environmental activism, particularly in the conservation of the Ganga – Himalaya region, reflecting her commitment to yoga as a way of life.