

Role of Meditation during Pregnancy

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To the mind that is still, the whole world surrenders

—Anonymous

When meditation is mastered, the mind is unwavering like the flame of lamp in a windless place

—Bhagavad Gita



INTRODUCTION

Meditation and medicine have come from the Greek word “*medri*”, which means “to heal”. It is a mental exercise, which has many physiological and psychological benefits in mind and body. Pregnancy is a condition in which women undergo various physiological changes and is accompanied by unique physical and psychological demands. Maternal stress and anxiety, which are very common even in uncomplicated pregnancy is associated with a host of negative consequences for the fetus and subsequent development. Hence, there is a need to manage the various physical, emotional, and mental pain that arise throughout the stages of pregnancy and labor. Meditation not only takes care of physical and emotional health, but also helps to improve the state of spiritual health. The word “Holistic”, means “whole” or “complete”.

Around 70–80 years back, when the dichotomy in the state of being of the human being used to be emphasized, i.e. “spirit” the psyche and consciousness energy that drives the force “being”. So, the multidimensional health model is the need of the hour.

Spiritual health refers to that part of the individual, which reaches out and strives for meaning and purpose in life. However, present medical scenario is devoid of this aspect. We need to understand spirituality to comprehend and become spiritual healthy. Spirituality is to know oneself and the higher self, i.e. to explore “*swa*”, the inner self (soul) and “*sth*”, the consciousness. Ipso facto, the Hindi word for health “*swasth*” literally means “the inner self-consciousness”. The inner self-consciousness encompasses aspects of the enduring and the immortal spirit. Practicing this fact will lead to stability and security, which, in turn, would lead to peace, love, and happiness. On the contrary, the outer self-consciousness encompasses aspects, role, or material things that are ever-changing and mortal. Focusing merely on the of the outer leads to instability and insecurity, which, in turn, leads to anger, anxiety, depression, type-A behavior, isolation, and chronic life stresses. By abstraction, we can conclude that a healthy lifestyle means an “inner self-conscious lifestyle”¹.

Meditation enables us to look within and make contact with our inner truth. The inner peace and silence that emanate during meditation also affect our physical bodies. Various types of meditation are practiced by the individuals, few of them are:

- ✦ **Mantra meditation:** Wiki describes “Mantra” as a sacred utterance, a numinous sound, a syllable, word or phonemes, or group of words in Sanskrit believed by practitioners to have psychological and spiritual powers. An alternate meaning of the sacred word is “advice”. The mantra “Om Shanti” advises us to be conscious of our essential spirituality. We should chant this mantra with its true understanding—“*I am a spiritual being and my essence is peace*”.
- ✦ **Dhyan meditation:** Aimed at developing concentration on a sacred object. When one focuses upon a sacred

object for a long period of time, the impact of that vision can bring an internal state of sacred awareness.

- ✦ *Pranayam*: Meditation upon breath is a favored technique, because breath is considered to be sacred life force. Pranayama improves our physical health.
- ✦ *Rajyoga meditation*: Rajyoga meditation is the communion of inner self with supreme. It is also known as “Sahaja yoga” and taught by Brahma Kumaris. “Yoga” means “union”. It is the science and art of harmonizing spiritual, mental, and physical energy through a connection with the ultimate source of spiritual energy called the “supreme soul” (power house of spiritual energy).¹ It is the state of soul consciousness and a positive lifestyle. Rajyoga has two components:
 - *Soul*: Soul is the metaphysical energy, which controls the body. Soul is eternal, immortal, imperishable, and divine metaphysical entity. It should be clear; fetus in womb has a same life as an adult. Every human being either adult or fetus is made up of physical energy and metaphysical energy.

Human being – Human + being

Up to 3 month’s body of fetus formed completely in mother’s womb. “Soul” enters in body, which is imperishable entity with subconscious mind (Sanskar) carrying from previous birth.

Soul is located in the center of forehead between hypothalamus, pituitary gland, and pineal gland. Surface marking is center of forehead. Soul has seven innate qualities—(1) knowledge, (2) purity, (3) love, (4) peace, (5) happiness, (6) bliss, and (7) power. These innate qualities (metaphysical energies) are manifesting as thoughts forms a quantum field, which has no mass. Thoughts are not mere vibrations, but they are definite electrochemical phenomenon occurring in hypothalamus of brain. This metaphysical energy acts through the mind “thoughts, judgments, feelings, and emotions”, integrates with the biological energy of the body through the nervous and endocrine system, thereby nourishing every cell of body.² So physical health is dependent on positive vibration of metaphysical energy. In fact, mind radiates its energy to each cell of body.

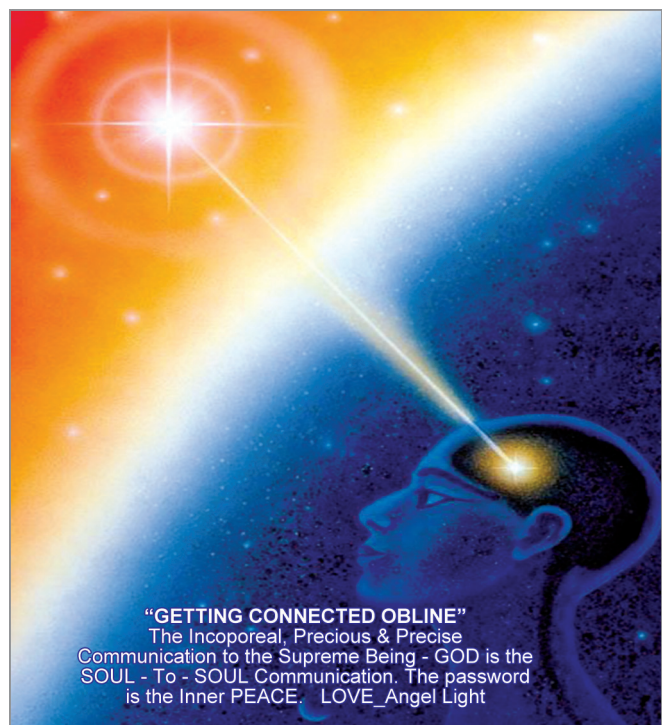
Scientific evidence of soul:

- ✦ In 40 epileptic patients while practicing meditation positron-emission tomography (PET) scan was done. It was observed that during meditation, the prefrontal area of the seat of the soul showed increased light energy. The scientists termed this as “God’s Spot”.
- ✦ Near death experiences and out of body experiences—Dr Raymond Modi in his book recorded 100 cases

about near death and out of body experiences and came to conclusion that death is not the end of life.

- ✦ Past birth regression therapy—Dr Ian Stevenson devoted 40 years to the scientific documentation of past life memories of children. He has over 3,000 cases in the files and found that reincarnation is true.
 - *Supreme*: It is a powerhouse. He is ocean of knowledge, peace, purity, power, bliss, love, and happiness. The most accepted form of Supreme is point of light and might in all religions.

■ METHOD OF RAJYOGA MEDITATION



Meditation is practiced while sitting in morning and evening two times at least for 20 minutes. Everyday sit in a clean and pure spot with no TV or other distractions. In this simple yoga, we can sit quietly in the lotus posture or the half lotus posture.

Sit comfortably and relax your body from head to feet. Take a few deep breaths. During inhalation, visualize positive energy from the environment entering in your body. Negative energy is going out during exhalation. Experience calmness and watch your thoughts. Thoughts are slowing down.

Visualize a point of light, symbolic of your spirit, in center of your forehead. This peaceful light is emitting rays of tranquility, rays of peace. These rays are reaching my brain, which is now filled with divine peaceful rays. I am now becoming peaceful. The rays have spread throughout

my body. I am relaxed and peaceful. Now, I am shifting my attention to the space outside the body, where exists another powerful point of light that is the ocean of peace and ocean of love. Different colored rays are falling upon me; I am absorbing love, peace and healing energy from the supreme surgeon, the Godfather. The energy is entering through my face and eyes and is spreading out to fill every cell of my body. I am now feeling restored and healed. Healing energy is radiating from within me to my baby inside the womb. He/she is also a point of divine light playing a part in his/her body. The baby inside the womb is also experiencing unconditional love and peaceful vibrations. Staying connected to the ocean of peace is making my child's mind powerful and his/her body is becoming healthier.

Experiment 1

Offer water and meal to supreme father and surgeon, God, before taking it. Experience that the powerful rays coming from supreme energy are charging water and food. This healing energy in the food and water is healing your baby now.

Experiment 2

At night and early morning after meditation, visualize God's power falling on your hands. Touch your abdomen, while thinking healing energy of God is entering to my baby through my hand.

Rajyoga can also be practiced while walking and moving around which changes the aura (thought, emotions, attitude, and memory) of person that affects the health of expectant mother and her fetus inside the womb.

With continuous practice of meditation life changes. When we want to join two wires, we must remove the insulating rubber. Similarly, when we remove the rubber of the body from the mind and concentrate on supreme (God is not the body or the rubber) then spiritual current flows easily.

■ BENEFITS OF MEDITATION—PHYSIOLOGICAL BENEFITS

- ✦ Meditation decreases metabolic rate and lowers the heart rate, thus indicating a state of deep rest and regeneration.
- ✦ Meditation reduces stress by decreasing stress hormones. In various studies, it was found that the number of preterm labor and pregnancy induced hypertension with associated intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR), were significantly lower, in the group of mothers that practiced yoga and meditation.³

- ✦ Endorphins and enkephalins are secreted due to yogic lifestyle, which helps in detaching oneself from the various kinds of pains.
- ✦ It raises energy level and strengthens the immune system to ward of infections.
- ✦ Positive changes in electrocardiogram (ECG) and electromyogram (EMG) and increases skin resistance.
- ✦ Creates a state of deep relaxation and reduces anxiety due to decreased level of blood lactate.
- ✦ Improves sleep and digestion.
- ✦ It helps to give up addictions, and decrease depression anxiety, diabetes, hypertension, and migraine tension headache.⁴

Psychological Benefits of Meditation

- ✦ It enhances positivity of a person and reduces stress; lessen catastrophic reaction, caused by adverse environment, unwanted pregnancy, and economic problems by changing attitude and belief system.
- ✦ It strengthens patients to tolerate various types of pains during antenatal period as well as during labor and promotes vaginal delivery.
- ✦ Meditation improves memory.
- ✦ Meditation increases the subjective feeling of happiness and contentment.
- ✦ Meditation increases emotional stability. Increases concentration and strengthens the mind.

Spiritual Benefits of Meditation

- ✦ Studies show that people who meditate are likely to report a shift in their outlook and goals in life toward growth and spiritual fulfillment rather than more materialistic goals.
- ✦ Pure vibrations give healing touch to others.
- ✦ As subconscious mind becomes active, visualization power increases which can be used for self-progress and self-healing.
- ✦ Meditation increases the spiritual energy within, neutralizes the cause and effect of karma, and improves birth outcome.
- ✦ By nourishing fetus with spiritual energy, it can be protected from the negative environment and by nourishing brain and body make the baby healthy.

■ CONCLUSION

Meditation is a simple technique that brings profound results. Rajyoga meditation makes the process of self-transformation light and natural and helpful in reducing stress. Thus, it contributes in decreasing the

risk of premature delivery or low birth weight babies, the complications like pregnancy-induced hypertension (PIH) and IUGR and eventually would decrease:

- ✦ Developmental and behavioral problems in the children, as a toddler and adolescent.
- ✦ Risk of developing depression later in life.
- ✦ Mental health problems in the mother.
- ✦ Fetal origin of adult diseases such as insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus, hypertension, and coronary heart disease.

All the suffering, stress and addiction come from not realizing you already are what you looking for

—Jon Kabat-Zinn

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