

**Review Article**

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Yoga In The Treatment Of Stress Urinary Incontinence

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Urinary incontinence (UI) is a common health problem among adults, defined as a complaint of unconscious leakage, and is a symptom that develops due to damage to the bladder sphincter mechanism or pelvic floor muscles. Stress urinary incontinence (SUI), one of the subtypes of UI, is defined as involuntary leakage of urine upon physical exertion or sneezing or coughing. Although UI is not life-threatening, it imposes significant limitations on individuals' quality of life. Emotional problems such as shame, depression, sadness and low body image that come with UI have a negative impact on quality of life. Pharmacological, surgical and behavioral treatment methods can be applied in the treatment of UI. One of the behavioral treatment methods that can provide therapeutic benefits for UI and the symptoms it brings is yoga. With the development of awareness about yoga and its therapeutic effect, the number of studies based on muladhara yoga practices, especially in individuals with SUI, has increased recently.

Keywords: Urinary Incontinence; Stress Urinary Incontinence; Yoga; Muladhara Yoga**Abbreviations:** UI: Urinary Incontinence; SUI: Stress Urinary Incontinence**Introduction**

Urinary incontinence is a common health problem among adults [1]. SUI one of the many subtypes of UI defined as a involuntary leakage of urine upon physical exertion or sneezing or coughing [2-4]. It has been determined that the prevalence of SUI, which is more common in women, varies between 33 and 50% and this rate increases with age [2, 5,6]. Although SUI does not threaten the life of individuals, it negatively affects the quality of life [7,6]. For this reason, in recent years, the prevalence of SUI and its impact on individuals have attracted increasing attention [6].

Currently, there is no ideal treatment method for SUI, which causes significant negative effects on quality of life [8]. In general

terms, pharmacological, surgical and behavioral treatment methods can be applied in the treatment of UI [9]. However, there are various limitations in the implementations of these methods into practice. Anticholinergic drugs have been reported to be moderately effective in reducing the level of UI. However, since these types of drugs used for pharmacological treatment have disturbing side effects, individuals tend to discontinue treatment [10-12]. The development of complications (sagging, postoperative bleeding, infections, surgical wound opening) after pelvic floor surgical operations for the treatment of UI causes individuals to be less willing to use this treatment method [13, 14]. In recent years, there has been an increased tendency to apply behavioral treatment

methods such as pelvic floor muscle exercises and bladder training in the treatment of SUI [15]. However, the effectiveness of these treatment methods is closely related to their sustainability. With this; the importance of face-to-face, individualized training and frequent follow-up in learning these methods is emphasized [16,12-21]. Considering these limitations, it seems that there is a need for effective treatment alternatives that are accessible and well tolerated by many individuals in the society with UI problems [22].

One of the behavioral treatment methods for UI and the symptoms it brings is yoga. Yoga is an ancient medical practice used to ensure and enhance physical well-being and cure many diseases [23]. Yoga practices increase the tone and integrity of the pelvic floor muscles by strengthening various components of the muscles and pelvic floor ligaments [24]. Additionally, various yoga asanas can increase individuals' muscle awareness and help them learn to correct themselves [25]. Yoga practices performed on this basis are thought to be effective in reducing UI complaints, as they also enable the pelvic floor muscles to strengthen. One of the purposes of yoga practices is to maintain balance in the body's energy channels [26]. Chakras, called the seven energy centers of the body, manifest themselves as seven nerve networks (plexuses) in our physical body (starting from the pelvic plexus and ending in the limbic region of our head).

(<http://www.sahajameditasyon.org/populer-bilim-dergisi/>). The 7 most basic of the chakras are; It manifests vital activities, basic human needs, management of organs, actions and issues. When the chakras are in balance, these functions are performed perfectly. However, when the balances are disrupted, problems arise in matters that fall within the field of the relevant chakra. It includes balance practices, rooting postures, sitting postures, and pranayama exercises using Mula Bandha (Root Lock) to balance the root chakra, which is physically related to the excretory system [26].

Discussion

Recently, yoga has become a new option for strengthening pelvic floor muscles and treating symptoms related to pelvic floor dysfunctions [24]. By promoting awareness and control over muscle groups through the practice of specific yoga asanas, yoga can be used to help women identify and strengthen their pelvic floor muscles without the need for traditional pelvic floor rehabilitation [27, 22, 25]. In the literature, study results were found showing that yoga practice was significantly effective in reducing the level of UI, symptoms and complaints along with pelvic floor muscle dysfunctions in patients diagnosed with UI [27-29, 23, 30, 31-33]. In addition, it was determined that after yoga practice in patients diagnosed with UI, social isolation, sleep problems and depression symptoms decreased, as well as the quality of life increased significantly [1, 25, 30, 32] Unlike most UI treatment methods, yoga can be practiced by individuals without constant supervision from healthcare providers, thus offering an accessible and cost-effective self-management strategy for a wide range of people in the community [22].

Conclusion

It is thought that the physical comfort levels, quality of life and psychospiritual satisfaction of individuals diagnosed with SUI will increase, especially with based on muladhara yoga practices, which reduce the complaints related to the disease. For this reason, it is thought that the awareness will increase by conducting studies on practices such as yoga, meditation and breathing exercises as an effective, applicable and easily adaptable behavioral treatment method in individuals diagnosed with SUI.

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Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest has been declared by the authors.

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