

Physical Benefits of Prayers Strengthen your Faith and Fitness

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Abstract

Prayer benefits will make the human body of the sporting and the exercise aspects will be discussed. Salah (prayer) is performed by Muslim believers and spiritual benefits of prayer (Salah) it has been widely recognized however many health care providers are unaware that process of praying promotes many physical benefits which can be used for effective exercise prescription in dynamic ways. Prayers require the worshiper to move through several distinct bodily postures while reciting specific supplications. Body goes through a unique exercise during the Salah. So, person gets a flexible and healthy body. Salah (prayer) must be performed at least five times a day by Muslim believers, consists of 40 rakaats. It involves with physical activities which include standing, bowing, prostration and sitting consecutively. Each position involves the movement of different parts of the human body in ways that encourage health and wellbeing. Salah consists of rakaats, each rakaat being a series of 7 postures. For example, before sunrise, 2 rakaats or 14 postures must be performed. Thus each Muslim is under obligation to perform 119 postures per day that is 3750 postures per month and 42,840 postures per year. Suppose, if we live up to an average of 50 years, Salah being obligatory from the age of 10 years, we would have performed 1,713,600 postures compulsorily in this lifetime. Each Rakka lasts between 3 and 6 minutes & energy cost of 2 and 4 Rakka prayers found to have a positive effect on metabolic function. For an 80 kg person, energy cost of daily prayers was about 80 calories a day, and could be considered a form of physical activity that enhances fitness. Salah postures are similar to yogic postures and therefore Salah, while being performed as a religious obligation, can simultaneously give all the benefits of yoga. Prayer movement direction outside of worship, there are benefits circulatory, respiratory, digestive, nervous, and to the hormonal system.

Keywords: Prayers; Exercise; Physical activities; Fitness

Introduction

Regular physical activity is important for living healthy lifestyle, it can improve overall physical and musculoskeletal fitness. It also helps in reducing risk of different cardiovascular disease, neurological conditions, systemic diseases, musculoskeletal conditions, depression, and fall-related injuries.

Namaz/Salah is a religious practice, a five time prayer per day which is an obligation upon every Muslim, to learn and perform without fail.

Salah include both spiritual meditation and physical movements in where, muscular system of human body becomes active without muscle fatigue and induces serenity on body and soul. Salah is believed to improve equilibrium, balance, and joint flexibility as well as maintain lower limb performance. It can also be termed as Islamic yoga because of some common postures and benefits like Yoga.

However, many health care providers are unaware that process of praying leads to several physical benefits which can be used for effective exercise prescription in dynamic ways.

Namaz has a short duration and is beneficial for mental and physical health. The procedure of the Salah includes a series of postures, movements which involves standing, bowing, prostration and sitting consecutively. Each position involves the movement of different parts of the human body in ways that encourage health and wellbeing. Each posture has its own benefit as:

- Standing up straight is a correct position for the spine
- Bowing at a right angle allows a flow of energy from the pituitary gland in the back of the head.
- Prostration (placing the head on the ground) allows a large amount of blood to enter into the brain.
- Sitting with the back straight and focusing all one's attention on the right finger while moving it helps in enhancing the concentration.

Namaz postures are similar to yogic postures and therefore it can give all the benefits of yoga and can be regarded as a type of stretching exercise. While Offering Salah, one performs continuous gentle muscle contraction and relaxation with perfect harmony and balance, inducing flexibility without over-exhaustion. These physical acts which are performed during Namaz are gentle, simple exercises suitable for all ages and conditions.

Salah must be performed at least five times a day by Islam believers. These timings are before sunrise, in the afternoon, before sunset, after sunset, and at night before sleep.

Salah consists of rakaats, each rakaat being a series of 7 postures. E.g., in Salah before sunrise, 2 rakaats or 14 postures must be performed. And so on for the complete day each person is under obligation to perform 119 postures a day, which means a count of 3750 postures per month and total of 42,840 postures per year.

An average life span of a person is considered to be 50 years, and Namaz being obligatory on a person from the age of 10 years. So in complete lifespan a person would have performed 1,713,600 postures compulsorily.

Physical Benefits that can be achieved while Offering Salah

Improved Body Posture

When a person offers Salah, while standing in the state of Niyah, it is the best exercise for body posture improvement. In this position

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the feet of an individual are evenly apart, whole body is kept firm and straight, both the hands are tied at a particular place which makes the backbone aligned and straight positioning the head looking downwards which also allows the body to loosen while being in a firm position. Thus, in such a posture the brain as well as body both at ease and when such a posture is practiced multiple times every day, it will definitely help improve the posture of the body.

Secretion of Glands

While reciting the verses of Quran, the sounds that an individual produce have great effects on the secretion of glands. Brain reads the sounds and there they either trigger or stop the secretion of the glands. During Salah in standing position an individual performs the longer recitations. During this part of the prayer an individual recites a verse of Quran by the name Surah Fatiha that contains almost all the long vowels the sound vibrations of these vowels when produced gives the signal to the brain for increasing the secretion of glands like pituitary gland, thyroid gland in addition to increasing the condition of lungs as well. Hence recitation of Surah Fatiha in the Qiyam part (Standing position) of the Salah helps improve the function of glands, function of lungs as well as the overall health.

Stretches the Body

During Namaz, after Qiyam (standing position) there occurs a state of Ruku (bending in a standing position) here an individual bends to the knees maintaining the back and the hands straight. This posture during Namaz is one of the best ways of stretching the body without exhaustion. In such a posture, the back, the thighs and the calves of a person get fully stretched and the flow of blood towards the upper part of the body also improves. Apart from stretching the body, this posture also helps work on the core of the person offering Salah. Also, it works on the abdominal muscles and serves as a crunch for them. Overall in this posture a person gets to stretch the body five times a day and also helping strengthening the core of an individual.

Abs Control

Across the world people go to gyms for various different kinds of abs exercises for controlling their belly fat and keeping it slim. In this regard, the Sajadah (bending in a sitting) posture of Namaz can help

highly in controlling the belly from expanding and accumulating fats. In this position, the knees and both the feet are touched to the ground while the head is bending towards the ground in such a way that a refined pressure is put on the abdominal muscle making them strong. This type of exercise is also advisable for women who want to hold the fetus in the proper position.

Blood Flow

Most of the people have blood pressure problems because of the blood flow. Either they have too much blood flowing in a particular part of the body or very low blood flowing to certain parts. In order to avoid such a blood flow problem which can lead to blood pressure issues, all the posture in Salat helps to regulate the blood to all the parts of the body. The Qiyam position helps to keep the blood flow in a normal position, the Ruku posture helps the blood in flowing to the upper part of the body, while in the state of Tashahhud (Sitting position) the blood flows to the lower part of the body as well. Therefore, all the postures & movements in Salah can help regulate the blood flow to all the parts of body.

Improved Digestion

During the Tashahhud state in which men sit with their right foot curled while women sit with both feet sole up under their bodies, this posture can help in improving digestion in both males and females. For males it works on the liver improving the liver function and relaxes the large intestine, while in women it provides huge relaxation which eventually aids in relaxing the body forcing the stomach contents in downward direction assisting in better bowel movement.

General Cleanliness

It is obvious that for offering an individual needs to be in a pure state of cleanliness. To obtain this a person performs Wudu before each prayer which helps clean the outer surface of the body which is the best thing that can happen for the skin. Therefore, the general cleanliness in whole body lead to the skin stays healthy making a person feel light and lively.

Hence concluding, Salah can be beneficial for the overall circulatory, respiratory, digestive, nervous, and to the hormonal system of the body leading to physical and mental fitness.