



Welcome to the Summer 2022 edition of our e-newsletter.

www.oriy.org.uk

Dear Members,

As I received such positive feedback for the last newsletter that focused on the feet I have decided once again to look at an aspect of our health and explore this in some detail. This time I'm going to be looking at the immune system. It's a stressful time for us all at the moment (and has been since the start of the pandemic in 2020) and that is why yoga for our immune system is so important. Stress as we know weakens our immune system but often we have no idea that we are living with too much stress. Yoga helps us to become sensitive to the signs of too much stress . It can show us how to switch off all those thoughts that can make us anxious. Particularly those thoughts that can stop us sleeping at night. And we all know how important sleep is!

Of course it's not just all about stress, the immune system is an amazingly complex system that protects us from disease. I spent some time revisiting the literature about how the immune system works and what can happen if it weakened or compromised in any way which was all rather scary so, rather than depressing you all with all that doom and gloom I have simply included Guruji's brief explanation from the Dorling Kindersley book – YOGA the path to holistic health with his list of 14 asanas that can help. (Several years ago when suffering with shingles I practiced this sequence and found it most helpful) Next, I've included some reseach on how yoga can boost one's immune system and finally a look at how the lymphatic system is a key factor in longevity and disease prevention from a book by Dr Gerald M. Lemole.

Tanya De Leersnyder our ORIY Rep has produced a summary of the last Exec meeting also included - many thanks to Tanya.

In case you were wondering we hope to arrange another workshop in the Autumn term – will let you all know when our plans are finalised. I'm writing this newsletter during the heatwave so it's pretty hot here as I languish over the laptop - this time you get two of my favourite very simple salads recipes for hot days – a Greek Salad and Heritage Tomato and Watermelon.

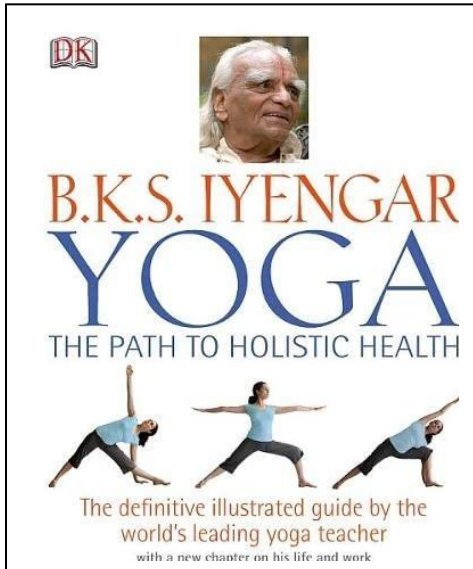
Finally, a number of you have asked if we intend to produce some more ORIY T-shirts and the answer is yes- they will be available in the Autumn term.

Love and best wishes - keep safe

Mary x

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Immune System – by B.K.S. Iyengar

The immune system is the defence mechanism of the body and protects us from disease. Its main agent is the blood, a fluid consisting of plasma red and white corpuscles or blood cells. It is the white corpuscles that inhibit the invasion of the bloodstream by micro-organisms. There are two types of immunity: natural and aquired. Yoga strengthens both, and regular practice of the recommended asanas can help counter the disorders that affect them.

For a low immune system (where the body's immunity is impaired, resulting in a wide sprectum of illnesses. The symptoms include weight loss, increased susceptibility to infections, fatigue, fevers and malignant disorders)

The following sequence of 14 supported asanas can help those with a low immune system.

1.Setubandha Sarvangasana	8. Salamba Sarvangasana (over a chair)
2.Supta Baddhakonasana	9.Halasana 
3.Supta Virasana	10. Setubandha Sarvangasana
4. Setubandha Sarvangasana	11. Viparita Karani 
5. Adho Mukha Svanasana	12.Savasana
6. Salamba Sirsasana	13. Ujjayi Pranayama
7. Viparita Dandasana 	14. Viloma 2 Pranayama

Research on How Yoga Boosts Your Immune System

Researchers find that yoga reduces the harmful effects of chronic inflammation.

February 22, 2018

New research published in the *Journal of Behavioral Medicine* suggests that yoga can be a helpful way to boost your immune system and decrease inflammation in the body.

Psychological stress can impact many systems in the body, including weakening the immune system and increasing chronic inflammation. Inflammation is a natural part of the immune response and in the short term can be helpful to heal wounds, injuries, and infections, but chronic inflammation can do more harm than good.

Researchers collectively reviewed 15 randomized controlled trials that examined whether the regular practice of yoga postures could strengthen the immune system and reduce chronic inflammation. The average sample size of the trials was 70, and sample sizes ranged from 11 to as many as 140 participants. The majority of studies used Hatha yoga, a general term that indicates a style that includes postures.

Scientists in these yoga trials examined the immune system response by measuring blood or saliva levels of circulating pro-inflammatory markers such as cytokines, a protein called C-reactive protein (CRP), as well as immune cell counts, antibodies, and markers of gene expression in immune cells.

Researchers found an overall pattern that yoga reduces pro-inflammatory markers, with the strongest evidence for the reduction of a cytokine called IL-1beta. There are mixed but promising results regarding other types of pro-inflammatory markers. One study found that yoga increased levels of anti-inflammatory cytokines such as IL-10. Another trial found that yoga could mediate inflammation at the genomic level, changing levels of proteins that control the DNA transcription of proinflammatory cytokine genes.

Overall, the collection of research trials indicate yoga has a promising anti-inflammatory effect in the body.

How often and how long do you need to practice yoga to get this effect? So far researchers do not have a conclusive answer, but most of these research studies implemented yoga programs that lasted from eight to 12 weeks with a frequency between once weekly to daily. Yoga classes in the research studies range from 30 to 90 minutes. As with most mind-body practices, regular consistent practice yields the most promise.



EX Committee Meeting summary – 07May22 by Tanya De Leersnyder



Chair: Assessment fees were discussed and after considering various financial models, an assessment fee of £700 is proposed. For this to be sustainable, membership fees are proposed to be increased by £3 for all members, and Teachers' supplement to be increased by £2 per year. Further efficiencies in costs will need to be made to help cover the assessment costs still estimated at £900 per candidate. This will be brought to the AGM for voting on.

The complaints policy was discussed – apart from the existing formal complaints procedure, the “Speak up for Change” policy aims to address this by enabling issues to be reported in a more informal way. Complaint procedures can be found on the IYUK website in the Policies and Contact tab.

The convention was discussed and at the time of the committee meeting, there had been 226 bookings and 270 bookings were required for the convention to achieve break-even. People cited other commitments as well as the cost of travel and accommodation. It was suggested that in future, smaller and more regionally based events might help address this. There is also a perception that the word “Convention” is scary and perhaps a change to the wording would help it to sound less intimidating. Covid-19 was still a concern for some.

Abhijata has been asked to teach next year and it is likely to be a small, two day event in the south (none of the bank holidays are possible).

Secretary: The roles of Deputy Chair and Deputy Secretary are still vacant and applications from members of the EX would be welcomed. The role of Deputy Treasurer is still open too and it is open to ALL members.

Archives committee: A survey of member groups is planned to ascertain a short history of each which may form the base for regional archives. To be discussed in the member group rep meeting. A number of videos have been digitised including teacher training courses recorded in Pune with Guruji and Geeta – as long as permission is granted by Pune, these should become widely available.

ATC (Assessment and Training): The following appointments as assessors for the ATC were approved: Edgar Stringer, Isabel Jones Fielding, Shaili Shafai, Lin Craddock, Frances McKee and Rachel Lovegrove.

MAT meetings are being held more frequently than the previous annual meetings until the new system is up and running. The meetings are intended to be self-funded in future and organised as Professional Development.

CYAF (Children, Young Adults and Families): Korina Pilifidis-Williams was co-opted onto the Committee as a result of Michelle Pendergast standing down from the committee.

Communications and PR: Jo Mitchell was co-opted onto the committee and her background in marketing will help.

Equity: The equity policy was agreed unanimously, and Margaret Hall expressed the hope that the policy would be a living and active policy throughout the organisation. The next area of focus would be to work with the ATC/PD committee to discuss diversity and inclusion training for Mentors. It would be delivered by an external organisation.

Ethics and appeals: Frances McKee has been elected as the new Chair of this committee after Aisling Guirke stood down having completed her term as Chair.

Finance: The car expense allowance has been agreed at 45p per mile for the 1st 100 miles and then 25p per mile. Michelle Pendergast stated that budget proposals for committees should be in by 31Mar but there have only been two submitted by the exec meeting so therefore, she has created a draft budget for 2023 using actuals from 2022 with adjustments for one-off payments.

Iyengar Yoga Development Fund (IYDF): The criteria for a teacher to be eligible for IYDF funding has been reviewed by the Committee. The normal period for which a teacher should have been qualified in order to access IYDF funding should be three years (reduced from five years). Exceptions to this requirement were stated as:

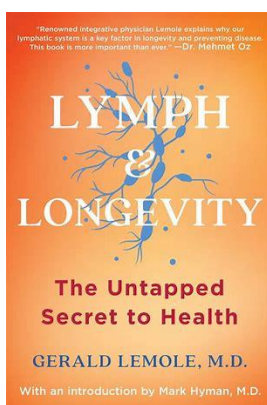
1. The teacher concerned has been qualified for at least 18 months
2. For at least the previous six months, s/he has been teaching a class to a group who meet the IYDF criteria;
3. That class has had an average attendance of at least five students over the previous six months;
4. Either the funding for the teacher's fee has ended, or the teacher has received no fee during the previous six months

Membership: Membership numbers are still down – due to many reasons including Covid and increased cost of living. A possible collaboration with the PR and Comms committee is to be discussed to help improve membership numbers.

Therapy: Sheila Haswell has consulted Abhijata regarding the proposals for enabling Level 1 and 2 teachers to have access to study topics such as muscular/skeletal issues, digestion and elimination, pulmonary system, nervous system, endocrine system, men and women's issues etc. This is envisaged as 6 weekend modules that teachers can study. In addition, the therapy committee is providing some workshops and presentations on Zoom that will eventually be available in a therapy archive for reference and for future training opportunities.

AOB: The next committee meeting in September will be face-to-face with a possibility of a hybrid version too. Philippe Harari will research possible suitable venues.

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**Good yoga helps your lymph system clear toxins, delivers nutrients, & relieves stress – taken from Lymph and Longevity by Dr Gerald M. Lemole**

Dr Lemole is a lymph system expert. He says that unlike any other system in your body, **the lymph system works without a pump**. It's like a secret river within our bodies. When it is clear and pristine, it delivers health to every other system in the body. However, when its polluted, dirty and stagnant, every other system in our bodies is at risk of disease. In other words, the lymphatic system plays a vital role in maintaining the health of your immune system.

**First**, it delivers information about toxins to the immune cells so it can destroy or neutralize harmful substances.

**Second**, is carries away harmful substances.

**Third**, it aids in the clean-up and rebuilding of cells in that area.



## Lymph, longevity, & yoga for stress – a review of Dr Lemole’s recent book by Chris Lalor based in Darwin, Australia.

Dr Gerald Lemole was an eminent cardiothoracic surgeon for many years. In addition, he is a pioneer in the study of lymph. He’s seen first hand how lymph influences all aspects of our health. I was attracted to the book when I read the chapter on how yoga improves lymphatic flow. As a certified Senior Yoga Teacher at Flametree, I can see that Dr Lemole understands how yoga works.

Dr Lemole says that **if you have written off yoga in the past, then perhaps it’s time to reconsider.** At the end of the book, he also provides simple yoga poses for stress relief, your immune system, and overall health.

Here’s a very short summary of some sections of the book. What I outline is also very useful for stress, plus your overall health.

### Lymph system for the rest of us!

Dr Lemole considers few people understand how vital the proper functioning of the lymphatic system is to health and longevity. The book is written with the intention of helping the lay person understand how the lymphatic system works. He believes that the average person, when armed with knowledge of how the lymphatic system works, can use that knowledge to improve their overall health. Yoga students, in particular, can do this via improving the overall functioning of their lymphatic system. Fortunately, we are in fact all able to improve the lymphatic flow within our



bodies. We can do this via exercise, through yoga, breath work, **meditation**, learning how to relax, laughing, chanting, and eating well.

*Notice the straight legs in trikonasana. They work well for your lymph flow.*

Dr Lemole also looks at the role of food to heal the body. He explains what foods to avoid, and what foods to eat, so as to promote good lymphatic flow within the body.

In addition, he discusses the **link between the brain and the lymphatic system.** He outlines the current thinking in a way that demystifies it for the average reader. While there is still much to discover, it now appears that the lymphatic system plays a significant role in **preserving cognitive function.** The lymph channels help clear the brain of toxins, as well as of damage and plaques that build up in the brain.

## Why is exercise essential to maintain health.

Dr Lemole explains that exercise has been scientifically proven to help with a wide range of health issues. In terms of the lymphatic system, exercise clears toxins, and improves circulation. It also keeps your lymphatic tubes clear, flexible, and optimally open.

As if that were not enough, exercise also improves brain function, and improves your mood and memory. Active exercise, like moderate cardio exercise, rapid yoga sun salutes, strength training, short bursts of high intensity training, and jumping movements (like is also done in yoga standing poses), all increase the flow rate of lymph. In the process, they add to your “secret river of health”.

I add that you should also include yoga poses that are held for longish periods of time. In particular, if you have done **lyengar yoga**, you’ll know that holding most poses correctly will also increase your heart rate. In other words, it is quite sufficiently strenuous to get any of the normal benefits of exercise.

It is especially important that you straighten your legs and arms in these poses. This will allow you to



strengthen and stretch muscles, and relax them. All these things, taken together, will improve the smooth flow of your lymph fluid. Most importantly, this approach is unique to **lyengar yoga**.

*Standing poses, so long as they are held, are excellent “exercise” for your lymph & immune system*

## Yoga also works on your lymph system in a different way

**Less active yoga** works by gently **getting the lymph fluid to circulate through the whole body**. It thereby improves the overall functioning of the lymph. Yoga results in what Dr Lemole calls the “smooth flow” of lymph.

As I said, some yoga postures are also so-called “held” positions. When holding each pose, a number of things are happening that promote lymphatic flow. First, you are slowing down your breathing by **using deep diaphragmatic breathing**.

Second, you are using your muscles in a way that lengthens and stretches them (not shortens and tightens, as in conventional exercise). When you hold each pose you **learn to relax into the stretch**. Third, in yoga, you learn to relax in each pose. This **softens the muscles** onto the bones. (You may be able to observe this in the Triangle pose above, where muscles are lean and stretched, rather than bunched up, as you’ll again see in conventional gym type exercise).

Therefore, in terms of lymph flow, as you relax in each pose and let go of tension in each pose, there is **more room for lymph to flow**.

The nervous system and hormonal system also respond by delivering chemical changes that further help expand the lymph vessels.

## Specific types of yoga postures also help lymph

Many yoga poses systematically target various parts of the body. This is also of special benefit, **unlike regular exercise**. For example, postures like **twists, squeeze the lymph**, thereby moving it around the body. In addition, **inversions move lymph along through gravity**. They help via the nervous system, and hormonal system, to impact the rate and flow of lymph. In this manner, an added bonus of yoga is that **lymph can flow better through the whole body**.



This is in contrast to just having it flow mainly in the arms, legs, and heart, as in the case of active cardio exercise.

*Twists **squeeze the lymph**, thereby moving it around the body.*

## Yoga helps stress

In addition, Dr Lemole notes that yoga already has a proven track record in being able to help people deal with stress. Many of the postures activate the **parasympathetic nervous system**. It happens via the stimulation of the **vagus nerve**. In turn, this allows lymph to flow, and thereby lets your bodily systems calm down. As well as all that, yoga is a system which helps to quieten the mind. As a result, we become calmer, less explosive, less reactionary and less emotional. Stress, anger, irritability are all emotions that raise blood pressure. The outcome is that the blood vessels stiffen. This tightens muscles and prevents fluid flow. Consequently, such heightened emotions further impair the lymph from flowing to where it needs to go.

## Spirituality is a plus, whatever it means for you

Apart from the above, Dr Lemole sees a connection between spirituality and lymph flow. He explains that stress is not just something to which we react. **Stress is something that attacks us**. Dr Lemole therefore argues that it's important for well-being to **find meaning** in how we live our lives. He believes the nourishing of your spiritual side, and so-called finding the soul, plays a key role in optimum health. He says "...think of what gives you assurance, and a feeling of safety". Our spiritual understanding gives us choices around compassion, empathy, forgiveness, kindness. He concludes suggesting that nourishing the spiritual side, through meditation, prayer, contemplation, mindfulness, laughter, and / or finding community, will also help total body wellness. In addition, it will help physical, mental and spiritual aspects of you, and also keep your lymph flowing.

At the end of the book is a "flow-friendly diet", including recipes. To clarify, he is talking about recipes that improve your lymph flow. He also has suggestions for supplements, as well as simple yoga poses for stress relief, and promotion of your lymph flow.



## Greek salad



Make a fresh and colourful Greek salad in no time. It's great with grilled meats at a barbecue, or on its own as a veggie main.

### Ingredients

- 4 large vine tomatoes, cut into irregular wedges
- 1 cucumber, peeled, deseeded, then roughly chopped
- ½ a red onion thinly sliced
- 16 Kalamata olives
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 85g feta cheese, cut into chunks (barrel matured feta is the best)
- 4 tbsp Greek extra virgin olive oil

### Method

1. Place 4 large vine tomatoes, cut into wedges, 1 peeled, deseeded and chopped cucumber, ½ a thinly sliced red onion, 16 Kalamata olives, 1 tsp dried oregano, 85g feta cheese chunks and 4 tbsp Greek extra virgin olive oil in a large bowl.
2. Lightly season, then serve with crusty bread to mop up all of the juices.

## Heritage tomato & watermelon salad



Use a variety of colours and sizes of juicy tomatoes in this simple, seasonal side dish with fresh mint and creamy crumbled feta

### Ingredients

- 300g heritage tomatoes (a mixture of colours and sizes looks nice), halved or quartered if large
- A quarter of a large or half a small watermelon
- Handful mint, leaves picked
- 100g feta
- Optional - a little drizzle of olive oil

### Method

1. Put the tomatoes in a large bowl. Remove the outer rind of the watermelon, cut the flesh into medium-sized cubes and add to the tomatoes.
2. Roughly chop the mint leaves, discarding the stalks but leaving a little for the garnish, and add the rest to the bowl. Crumble over the feta, toss everything together lightly and garnish with the reserved mint.



Enjoy the rest of the summer xx