

The Effectiveness of Yoga Interventions in Improving the Well-being and Productivity of Desk-based Workers - A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

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Prolonged hours of sitting at work among desk-based workers have been associated with a host of physical and mental health conditions. These conditions can lead to work disability, absenteeism, and a significant economic and psychosocial burden. This systematic review and meta-analysis aimed to assess the effectiveness of yoga interventions on the well-being and productivity of desk-based workers. Nine electronic databases, ClinicalTrials.gov and the WHO International Clinical Trials Registry Platform, were searched from inception until the 28th of February 2022. Fifteen studies met the inclusion criteria, and ten studies (nine RCTs and one NRCT), comprising 1046 participants, were deemed eligible for the meta-analyses. Meta-analysis was performed using the inverse variance random-effects method on eligible outcomes and comparisons, and the remaining outcomes were reported qualitatively. Compared with passive controls, yoga was associated with statistically significant improvements in psychological and physiological well-being, perceived stress, sleep quality, and musculoskeletal discomfort. Compared with an active comparator, yoga was associated with improvements in psychological well-being. When used as an adjunct to conventional therapies, yoga was effective in improving musculoskeletal discomfort. The qualitative analysis also revealed statistically significant improvements in most physical and mental health parameters. However, the results may be limited in robustness due to methodological flaws, high risk of bias, high heterogeneity, and limited number of studies, which underscores the need for more extensive trials.

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