

# Yoga Supports Physical Therapy in Rehabilitation and Chronic Pain Management

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## DESCRIPTION

The integration of yoga with physical therapy has become an innovative approach to rehabilitation, helping individuals regain strength, manage chronic pain, and restore balance. Both disciplines share a focus on mindful movement and controlled breathing. When combined, they create an environment in which healing occurs more naturally and efficiently. Physical therapy addresses the specific mechanical limitations of the body-weakness, tightness, and dysfunction. Yoga complements this by emphasizing awareness, alignment, and gentle control. It transforms rehabilitation from a set of prescribed exercises into an experience of connection.

For patients dealing with long-term pain, this shift in focus can be life-changing. Instead of viewing the body as a source of discomfort, they begin to see it as capable of recovery and renewal. Take, for example, someone living with chronic back pain. Physical therapy may include core stabilization, pelvic tilts, and stretching. When yoga elements such as mindful breathing and supported spinal movements are introduced, the patient begins to recognize subtle sensations and learns to move without triggering pain. Simple restorative poses like supported child's pose or reclining bound angle position allow the spine to decompress while calming the nervous system.

Breathing plays a central role. Shallow breathing often accompanies pain and anxiety, tightening muscles and increasing stress. Both yoga and physical therapy teach diaphragmatic breathing, which encourages relaxation and increases oxygen flow to tissues. This method supports tissue repair and helps regulate pain perception. Patients who learn to pair breath with movement often report feeling more control over their discomfort. Balance and coordination are critical for preventing falls and improving confidence in daily movement. Yoga's standing and seated balance exercises complement traditional therapy routines. Gradually improving one's ability to shift

weight or hold a position builds proprioception, an essential skill for post-rehabilitation independence.

Emotional wellness cannot be separated from physical recovery. Many physical therapists find that integrating yoga's meditative aspects enhances motivation and emotional resilience. Patients often leave sessions feeling calmer and more centered, which directly influences healing speed. Stress reduction decreases inflammation, improves immune response, and increases overall treatment compliance. This approach also encourages long-term commitment to self-care. Once formal therapy ends, patients can continue using yoga as a preventive tool. The transition from guided rehabilitation to independent practice empowers individuals to maintain mobility and comfort without constant supervision.

Incorporating yoga into physical therapy also fosters body awareness, helping patients recognize subtle signs of tension or imbalance early. This mindfulness supports safer movement patterns and reduces the risk of reinjury. Additionally, group sessions create a sense of community, offering social support that further strengthens emotional well-being. Over time, patients report not only improved physical function but also greater confidence in their ability to manage their health independently. By blending physical recovery with mental and emotional care, this holistic approach promotes sustainable, long-term wellness.

## CONCLUSION

Yoga strengthens the foundation that physical therapy establishes. It turns recovery into a mindful process rather than a mechanical one. The connection between movement and awareness enables patients to regain control of their bodies and their confidence, leading to sustainable recovery and lasting comfort. By uniting movement with mindfulness, yoga deepens the healing process, enhancing both strength and self-assurance. This holistic approach ensures recovery is lasting and resilient.

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