

# South Asian Yoga Education Study (SAWYES):

*"going to yoga was  
something for myself . . ."*

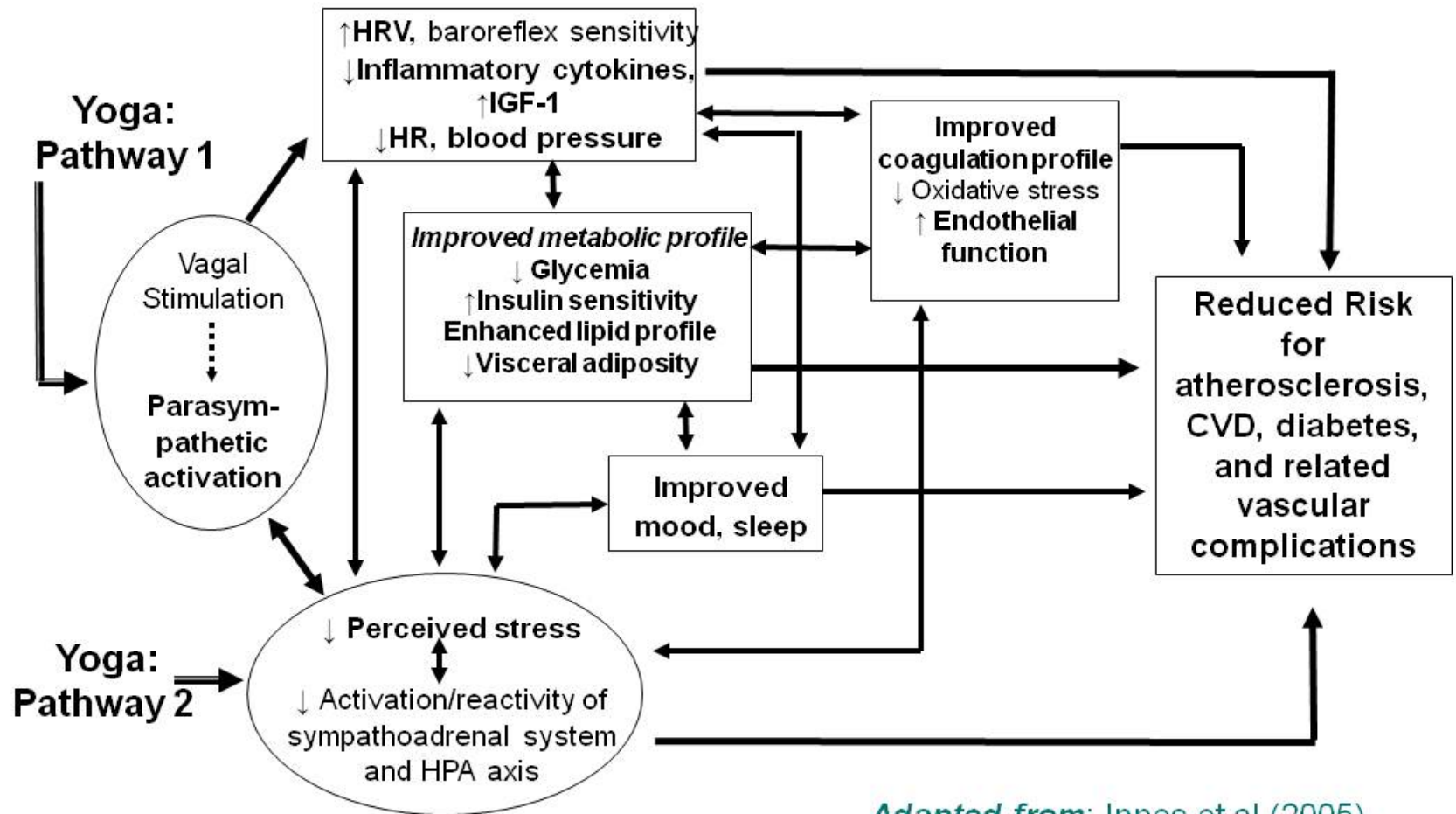
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# Introduction

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women over the age of 55 throughout the world.

Post-menopausal SA women are @ even greater risk due to the prevalence of hypertension, physical inactivity, & obesity among this population group

# Therapeutic Role of Yoga



*Adapted from:* Innes et al (2005). *JABFM*. 18 (6): 491-519. Innes et al. (2007). *ATHM*. 13 (5):44-51

Figure 1. Two Yoga Pathways:  
Health Benefits

# SA Women Yoga Education Study (SAWYES)

First in Canada to rigorously examine the specific effects of yoga education on CVD risk profiles among postmenopausal, sedentary, South Asian women





# Yoga Education

A 12 week structured Hatha  
Yoga program

- 1 hour yoga classes, 3x/week &  
daily home practice

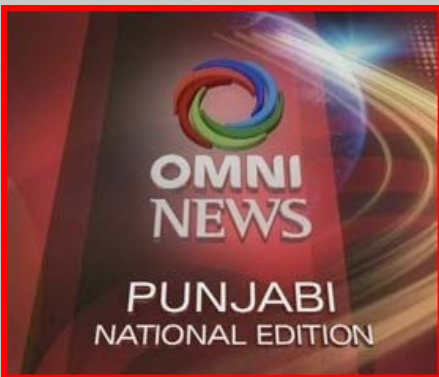
- Yoga practice consisted of  
different asanas or yoga poses,  
pranayama or controlled breathing, &  
meditation

- Yoga Poses modified to  
accommodate physical limitations  
related to being overweight & not  
physically active



# Recruitment of Study Participants

*When I saw the advertisement on TV,  
I knew I need it.  
I stay home  
all the time  
taking care of family.*



**226- Expressed interest**

**192- Pre-screened by phone**

**146- Excluded**

**56 - Met Criteria**

**41- Initial Sample**

**33- Final Sample,  
3M Post Yoga Edn**

# The Study Sample

*You know I hesitated to try yoga,  
I always wondered if it works? Until I  
saw the advertisement on TV,  
I would never have actually  
gone & tried it.*

**Women aged 45- 64 yrs.**      Average -  
55.8 yrs.

## **Generalized obesity**

(BMI cutoffs- in kg/m<sup>2</sup>)

**Overweight-** (23.0-24.9)

3 Women (24.61-24.74)

**Obesity-** ( $\geq 25$ )

30 women (26.3 to 39.4)

**Abdominal Obesity-** ( $\geq 80$  cm)

33 women (88 to 120.6 cm)





# Preliminary Findings- Yoga Education



*Easy to learn...I do not think it would make a difference [to use a chair when doing yoga]. My muscles would be sore anyways. They were used in new and different ways.*





# Study Participation – A Family Affair

*Before I started the yoga classes, I told my family, no visitors...They (other family members) can't just show up, because I can't say I got to go. ...so my son called everybody to them know [I] was only available on Tuesday ... If anybody called, my son would tell them, they could not visit- - "It's Mom's Yoga day"...*

*We live alone. Towards the end, my husband let me know he missed having dinner with me, (in his words, he says)... I am coming & you're going; and in response, I would say... "Oh my lovely man, and when I return I will be an even lovelier wife - smiling as I leave."*



# Yoga Classes

*Yoga teacher was helpful, making suggestions about how to change different poses... like I did not need to sit cross legged on the floor, especially with my bad, left knee.*

*Sometimes we were motivated because we were hungry...anxious to get finished so we could go home and eat.*

*...and I get really relaxed. I would fall asleep on the mat when doing the meditation at the end.*



# Yoga Home Practice

*After a couple of weeks, I pretty well knew the routine. A DVD could have helped me make sure I was doing everything properly.*

*I would do poses specific for pains I had in my body. Always and with relaxation.*

*My husband helped me with the home practice. I would show him and he would try doing it with me.*



## Yoga Home Practice Booklet

South Asian Women Yoga Education Study (SAWYES)

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# Transformed Lives

*Loved getting to know other women [like me]. Stay at home housewife, and mother. We talk about getting together after classes [end].*



*It was very important for me, that I was part of a research project. What I was doing was not just helping me, it would help others. I have shared this with my friends and family too.*



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