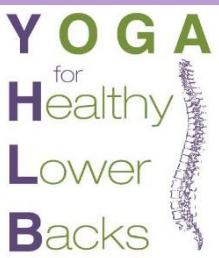


'It's a pain in the back...' 'Yoga for Healthy Lower Backs' in NHS staff: back pain outcomes evaluation



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NHS Primary Care Staff Scheme 2017

Introduction

- NICE recommends a group exercise programme (biomechanical, aerobic, mind-body or a combination of approaches) for low back pain.^[1]
- Yoga meets this criteria as it involves strengthening and stretching movements and postural, breathing and relaxation techniques.
- An RCT (University of York, 2011)^[2] with 313 participants found the Yoga for Healthy Lower Backs (YHLB) programme to be an effective treatment for low back pain (lbp), as well as being cost-effective.^[3]
- YHLB was offered to NHS staff in a primary care trust and outcomes evaluated.^[4]

Methods

8 NHS employees attended the 12 week YHLB course in 2017 alongside other attendees (class sizes around 10).

Employees included both clinical and non-clinical staff. The employer subsidised 50% of the cost.

Outcome measure questionnaires were completed pre- and post-course:

- Visual Analogue Pain Scale (VAS)
- Bournemouth Back Pain Questionnaire (BBPQ)
- Roland Morris Disability Questionnaire (RMDQ)
- Attendance
- Recommend to friends and family

Student feedback forms measured other outcomes such as positive benefits on back and general health.

Results

Preliminary data (7/8 attendees completed outcome measures).

Average attendance **9/12** classes

VAS pain score:

- 36% reduction**

RMDQ:

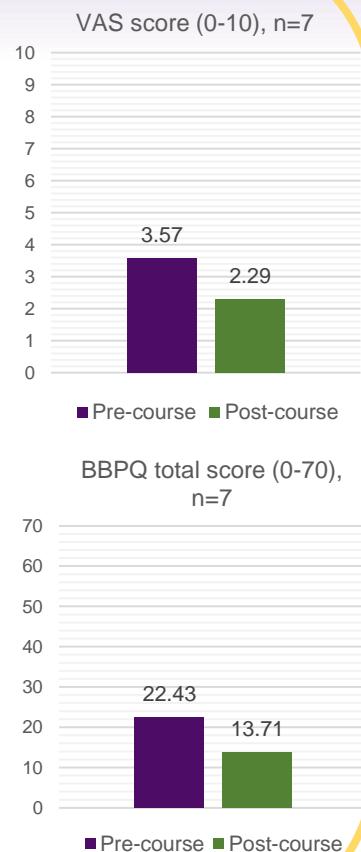
- Effect of back pain on daily function
- 3.3 point improvement (74%)**
- University of York trial: 2.17 point significant difference between yoga and usual care at 3 months.^[2]

BBPQ:

- Biopsychosocial measure of lbp
- 39% reduction**
- 63% decrease in lbp affecting work**

YHLB's Positive Benefits on Back Health = Average **8 on 0-10 scale**.

F&F test = **100%** would recommend



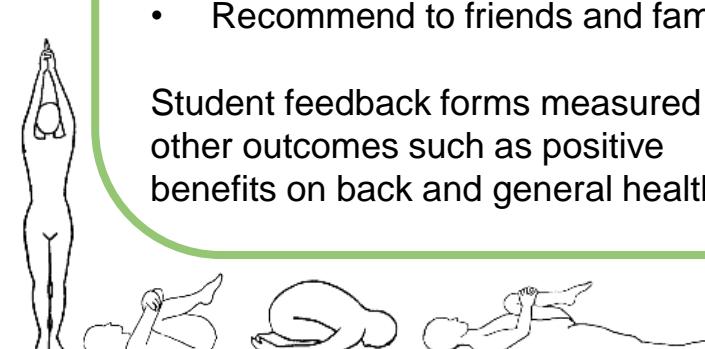
Discussion

- YHLB improves back pain and function and has biopsychosocial benefits according to preliminary data.
- RMDQ demonstrates fewer limited daily activities post-course. RMDQ improvement supports and surpasses findings of the University of York trial.^[2]
- YHLB is sustainable and encourages long-term self-management. Improvements have been shown to last 9 months after classes finish.^[2]
- Yoga manual, relaxations CD and practice sheets encourage home practice and offers continuity of care and group support.
- YHLB reduces work absenteeism by 70%.^[3]

The future...

The staff scheme is ongoing. As more data is collected the sample size will grow.

Raising the profile of yoga for low back pain in the NHS setting is a step towards its integration into health and social care.



References:

[1] National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2016) Low back pain and sciatica in over 16s: assessment and management. NICE guideline NG59. [2] Tilbrook A et al. Yoga for Chronic Low Back Pain: A Randomized Trial. *Ann Intern Med.* 2011;155: 569-578. [3] Chuang LH et al. A Pragmatic Multicentred Randomized Controlled Trial of Yoga for Chronic Low Back Pain: Economic Evaluation. *Spine.* 2012;37(18): 1593-1601. [4] Trehwela A. NHS Staff Scheme Evaluation, 2017.