

To determine the effect of a 7-week hatha yoga practice on hamstring flexibility

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Purpose: To determine the effect of a 7-week Hatha yoga intervention on hamstrings flexibility using a digital goniometer. It was hypothesized that hamstring flexibility will increase in a young healthy adult population.

Methods: Thirty-one college-aged males and females (21 ± 2.6 years) participated in a progressive yoga intervention consisting of 110 minutes twice per week for a 7-week. Pre and post-test measurements were taken to determine right and left hamstring flexibility using a digital goniometer.

Results: A paired samples t-test indicated a significant difference in the pre and post-test on hamstring flexibility ($p < .05$). Results for the right leg pre- and post-ROM tests ($t(30) = -6.64$, $p < 0.05$, 95% CI (-6.14, -3.25), $d = 0.77$, $p < 0.05$ as well as a significant difference in the left pre and post-ROM tests ($t(30) = -6.93$, $p < 0.05$, 95% CI (-2.97, -6.79), $d = 0.52$, $p < 0.05$ indicated an improvement after the intervention. The average range of motion increase was 4 degrees in both legs.

Conclusion: Hamstring flexibility can be improved over the course of 7 weeks through the practice of Hatha yoga. This modality can also be used to improve flexibility and function in activities of daily living as well and athletic performance.

Biography

Toni LaSala, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Exercise Science at the Department of Kinesiology at William Paterson University, New Jersey, USA. She is also a certified Exercise Physiologist by the American College of Sports Medicine, Registered Kripalu Yoga Teacher, certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS), by the National Strength and Conditioning Association, certified Group Fitness Instructor (ACE and AFAA), licensed Massage Therapist (LMT), and certified American Red Cross CPR/AED instructor. She has been teaching fitness and yoga classes since 1984 and specializes in exercise programs and therapeutic massage modalities for all populations. She is a member of the Arthritis Foundation, American College of Sports Medicine, the National Strength and Conditioning Association, The American Council on Exercise, the American Massage Therapy Association, The National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork, Kripalu Yoga Teachers Association and the Yoga Alliance. Dr. LaSala enjoys traveling and spending time exercising outdoors.

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Michael A. Figueroa earned his Ed. D. from Teachers College, Columbia University in 2006. Since 2008 he has been a professor of Exercise Science at William Paterson University, New Jersey, USA. He has collaborated with faculty and students on a variety of research topics producing publications and presentations at the National and International level. Dr. Figueroa has been a life-long practitioner of the martial arts. For over 42 years, he has practiced various styles including Jujutsu, Judo, Tai Chi, Boxing and Karate. He continues to train with his teacher in Connecticut and Japan. Dr. Figueroa enjoys spending time with his wife and daughters, traveling, exercising, and living life to the fullest.

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