Anger: An Enemy of Heart, Raj Yoga Meditation is Heart Friendly

Angry outburst has been long related with increased the incidence of heart attack.[1] Anger, a negative emotion is a burst of energy, which is considered an “Enemy of Heart.” Anger is not only burst of energy but also it is a burst of hormones, which increases the heart rate and blood pressure, ultimately increasing the load on heart and oxygen demand. On the other hand, Yoga meditation is heart friendly.

In addition to the well-known major traditional, demographic, and medical risk factors for coronary artery disease (CAD) risk factors for coronary artery, in the recent times, certain adverse factors such as anger and lack of sleep have been given due to consideration for prevention of CAD. Anger is a very common feature of most of the patients of CAD. It contributes by increasing blood pressure, elevating the demand for oxygen and keeping the mind under stress, disturbing the mental equilibrium. Physicians always suggest that anger or aggressive behavior play an important role, as a causative factor for the development of CAD.[2] The “type A” personality is highly prone for CAD.

Many studies give evidence regarding anger-CAD association.[1-3] Durel et al.[2] reported a positive association between trait anger and blood pressure (systolic and diastolic) and between trait anger and cardiovascular reactivity. In a prospective analysis, Kawachi et al.[3] reported a 3-fold increase in CAD risk among individuals with the greatest difficulty controlling their anger as compared with those with the least.

CAD is one of the major causes of morbidity and mortality in India. A number of preventive measures are used for primary, secondary, or tertiary prevention. Raj Yoga meditation and Yogic lifestyle have taken a lead as a preventive measure for all stages of prevention (Raj Yoga Brahma Kumaris) and shown regression of CAD in Mount Abu Heart Trial.[4] Raj Yoga meditation involve concentration on the inner self instead of repeating one word or chanting any mantra. By learning Raj Yoga, the mind starts behaving in a peaceful and harmonious way with feeling of well-being and control of emotions. Mind-body invention in the form of Raj Yoga Meditation has a role in stabilizing blood pressure, hypertension, and high cholesterol level.

Raj Yoga Meditation Techniques

Raj yoga (yoga meditation) of the Brahma Kumaris has spread from the organization’s headquarters at Mount Abu (Rajasthan, India) throughout India, and to other countries as well. Raj yoga meditation is a behavioral intervention, which is simple to practice.[5] Raj yoga is so-called because it is primarily concerned with the mind. In this form of meditation, the individual sits in a relaxed and comfortable position with their eyes open, and with gaze fixed on a meaningful symbol (light) and then uses visual or auditory images for concentration. Whenever the mind wanders away, it is brought back to the visual or auditory image, being used quietly and persistently. At the same time, they actively create positive thoughts about a universal force pervading all over, as light and peace. Yogic processes have a tremendous influence on the central nervous system (CNS). The body is controlled by the CNS through its relationship with the autonomic nervous system (ANS) and the neuroendocrine processes. It helps an individual to gain control over the ANS resulting in the homeostatic functioning of the body. Regular practice of meditation and various yogic exercises have been observed to maintain an optimal level of autonomic equilibrium at rest and during exposure to stressful conditions. Meditation can reduce the arousal state and may ameliorate anxiety symptoms. Anger affects physiological equilibrium leading to many pathological conditions probably through disturbance in the autonomic balance of sympathetic and parasympathetic activity.

Generally, the Following Techniques are Used for Managing Anger

Express anger – some say if you are feeling angry, then let anger be a way of expression. Moreover indeed, at that moment many become free from the anger, as they let their anger out.

Suppress anger – if one feels angry, one tries to stop oneself from expressing it and thereby trying to suppress it. However, in this attempt of suppression and pushing the fears and emotions into subconscious, these negative emotions will emerge in another form.

Sublimation of anger – changing the form and that is possible by applying spiritual principles in our practical life, for example, experiencing our inner peace, and thus, peaceful nature will become natural in our life and this is possible only by practice of meditation.

To be assertive: – it means respect for oneself, whereas anger shows respect neither for self nor for others. By getting rid of anger, one can experience the inner peace and true nature of self (Soul).

Negative emotions such as anger and mental stress have been found to be significant cause of severe and fatal arrhythmias.[6,7] Emotions may influence ventricular repolarization. The mechanism is not clearly understood but the increased autonomic input to the heart, especially
sympathetic input due to anger is associated with arrhythmia. The para-sympathetic enhancement is achieved by Raj Yoga Meditation and is believed to be protective for the heart.

CAD is a widely recognized as a lifestyle disease. Recent studies have reported that changes in lifestyle such as dietary modification, physical exercise, training, and practice of stress management and relaxation – meditation result in decreased possibility of heart attack.[4,8] In the Mount Abu Open Heart trial Gupta et al. reported that regression of coronary atherosclerosis can occur by lifestyle modification.[4] Psychosocial factors such as anger, hostility, depression or anxiety, isolation, and chronic life stress may contribute toward development and promotion of CAD. These psychosocial problems activate sympathetic adreno-medullary system. These may activate endothelial dysfunction and platelet activation as well. So prevention of CAD is possible by changing lifestyle.[4,8] When a person performs adequate exercise, has healthy timely diet, practices frequent meditation, and maintains a balance between work and spiritual development by incorporating Raj Yoga in the lifestyle (Raj Yogi Lifestyle) CAD can be prevented.

The ultimate aim of all the yoga techniques is generalizing all the energies into spiritual empowerment and thereby rejuvenating both the body and brain. The Brahma Kumaris Raja yoga meditation has spread from the organization’s headquarters at Mount Abu (Rajasthan, India) throughout India, and to other countries as well. These Raj Yoga meditation techniques of Brahma Kumaris involve concentrated thinking. Raj Yoga meditation practised by Brahma Kumaris have showed a consistent beneficial role in patients with CAD.[4] Authors own study documented application of Raj Yoga Meditation on patients with prolonged QT syndrome undergoing ASD repair.[7] Raj Yoga Meditation is complimentary for prevention of arrhythmias. Yoga in intensive care is also essential for creating a spiritual environment for the patients admitted in intensive care unit and postoperative surgical care units as observed by the author.[9]

Usha Kiran, Suruchi Ladha

Department of Cardiac Anaesthesia, CTC, AIIMS, New Delhi, India

Address for correspondence: Dr. Usha Kiran, Department of Cardiac Anaesthesia, CTC, AIIMS, New Delhi, India. E-mail: dr_ukiran@yahoo.com

References

1. Mittleman MA, Maclure M, Sherwood JB, Mulry RP, Tofler GH, Jacobs SC, et al. Triggering of acute myocardial infarction onset by episodes of anger. Determinants of Myocardial Infarction Onset Study Investigators. Circulation 1995;92:1720-5.
2. Durel LA, Carver CS, Spitzer SB, Llabre MM, Weintraub JK, Saab PG, et al. Associations of blood pressure with self-report measures of anger and hostility among black and white men and women. Health Psychol 1989;8:557-75.
3. Kawachi I, Sparrow D, Spiro A 3rd, Vokonas P, Weiss ST. A prospective study of anger and coronary heart disease. The Normative Aging Study. Circulation 1996;94:2090-5.
4. Gupta SK, Sawhney RC, Rai L, Chavan MD, Dani S, Arora RC, et al. Regression of coronary atherosclerosis through healthy lifestyle in coronary artery disease patients – Mount Abu Open Heart Trial. Indian Heart J 2011;63:461-9.
5. Telles S, Desiraju T. Autonomic changes in Brahmakumaris Raja yoga meditation. Int J Psychophysiol 1993;15:147-52.
6. Taggart P, Boyett MR, Logantha S, Lambiase PD. Anger, emotion, and arrhythmias: From brain to heart. Front Physiol 2011;2:67.
7. Jain P, Kiran U, Saxena N. Anaesthetic management of a child with long Qt-Interval syndrome. Indian J Anaesth 2002;46:395-7.
8. Manchanda SC, Narang R, Reddy KS, Sachdeva U, Prabhakaran D, Dharmanand S, et al. Retardation of coronary atherosclerosis with yoga lifestyle intervention. J Assoc Physicians India 2000;48:687-94.
9. Kiran U, Makhija N, Das S. Holistic care by Raj yoga meditation affect healing in Intensive Care Units. J Cardiovasc Med Surg 2016;2:19-23.

This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as the author is credited and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

Access this article online

Quick Response Code: www.annals.in

DOI: 10.4103/aca.ACA_29_17

How to cite this article: Kiran U, Ladha S. Anger: An enemy of heart, raj yoga meditation is heart friendly. Ann Card Anaesth 2017;20:127-8. © 2017 Annals of Cardiac Anaesthesia | Published by Wolters Kluwer - Medknow