

Poster presentation

Yoga therapy for scoliosis: an adult case approach

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Objective

To document improvement in the curvature of adolescent idiopathic scoliosis without surgery.

Study design

An adult case report was monitored from age twenty-three until fifty-eight years of age. Idiopathic scoliosis (right thoracic with a Cobb angle of forty-nine degrees, with compensatory left lumbar curve) was diagnosed at age sixteen years, with referral to an orthopedic surgeon who recommended spinal fusion surgery. A second opinion from Dr. Harris, orthopedic surgeon at Children's Hospital, advised against immediate surgery and instead recommended swimming, general stretching and Physical Therapy. The patient became an avid swimmer and later joined the swim team in college. She then joined the Peace Corps in Brazil where she became more sedentary and began to experience pain with her scoliosis.

Methods

At age twenty-three years, she began yoga therapy with BKS Iyengar and continued to study with him over a thirty-five year period. A multimodal physical therapy/yoga therapy approach included deep tissue massage and chiropractic adjustments.

Results

Stable progressive improvement in magnitude of Cobb angle from forty-nine degrees to thirty-one degrees. Also the improved curvature occurred in correlation with progressive improvement in posture, appearance, and morphology.

Conclusion

The reduction in curvature and high quality of life as a result compares favorably with results from surgical intervention [1].

References

1. Bradford DS, Kay BKB, Hu SS: **Adult scoliosis: surgical indications, operative management, complications and outcomes.** *Spine* 1999, **24**:2617-2629.