

Āyurvedic Yoga Therapist: Educational Outline for Competency

Definition:

Applications of Āyurvedic Principles to the practice and principles of Yoga based on the Āyurvedic understanding of the nature of patient, the nature of imbalance and the nature of therapies, to promote healing and achieve a harmonious state of body and mind with respect to individual consciousness.

Scope of Practice:

The Āyurvedic Yoga Therapist shall have competency to design, implement, demonstrate, instruct and teach an individual a yoga therapy program to help with their healing process based on the Āyurvedic Prakṛti/Vikṛti paradigm and Āyurvedic definition of health. (Susrūta, Sūtra Sthāna, 15/38)

*“Samadoṣaḥ samāgniśca samadhātumalakriyaḥ
Prasannātmendriyamanāḥ svastha ityabhidhīyate”*

Competency of Āyurvedic Yoga Therapist:

- Āyurvedic Yoga therapist would be competent enough to assess Prakṛti, Vikṛti, Status of Agni, Āma, Dhātu, Mala, Srotas, and Saṁprāpti of a disease.
- They would be competent to design, implement and provide instruction to their patients regarding various yoga practices including Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prānāyāma, Pratyahāra, Samyama, Mudra, Bandha, Śatkriya, as any of these practices can be effectively utilized for therapeutic purpose.
- They would be competent to discuss implications of Yama and Niyama on achieving balance, and advise appropriate diet and life style to achieve balance.
- They would be familiar with different paths of Yoga like Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga etc.
- Any diagnosis of disease with western medical nomenclature can be viewed through the Āyurvedic understanding of Doṣa and Saṁprāpti of the disease process and hence can be helped using Āyurvedic yoga therapy techniques.
- Hence they should be familiar with western nomenclature of the diseases, and able to interact with western healthcare providers.
- They would be competent enough to refer the patients to an Āyurvedic Practitioner (AP) or Āyurvedic Doctor (AD) for additional therapeutic interventions like use of herbs, pañca karma etc.

Yoga Education:

- Prior foundational yoga theory and practice training of a minimum verifiable 200hrs.
- In-depth knowledge of yoga practices as described in classic Yoga texts.
- Yoga Philosophy as described in Yoga Sutra’s of Patanjali, Haṭha Yoga Pradīpika and Bhagavad Gīta.
- Different paths of Yoga viz. Raja Yoga, Haṭha Yoga, Kriya Yoga, Jñāna Yoga, Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga.
- Familiarity of different yoga practices viz. Yama, Niyama, Āsana, Prānāyāma, Pratyahāra, Dhyāna, Dhāraṇa, Samādhi, Mūdras, Bandha, Mantra, Japa, Śatkriya and potential therapeutic effect of these practices, indication and contraindications of these practices.

Āyurvedic Education:

- Āyurvedic education equivalent of Ayurvedic Health Counselor (AHC)-NAMA is the baseline.
- Detailed understanding of Saṁprāpti of different diseases.
- Able to understand from an Āyurvedic perspective: modern anatomy, physiology, and diagnosis of different diseases.

Āyurvedic Yoga Therapy education:

- In depth knowledge of effect of different yoga practices on Prakṛti, Vikṛti, Agni, Āma, Doṣa, Dhātu, Mala, Srotas, Kośa, and Cakra.
- Indications and contraindications of different yoga practices for therapeutic purposes.

- Basic knowledge of implications of different paths of yoga so as to be able to guide appropriately their patients to achieve desired goal, be that physiological, psycho-emotional or spiritual in orientation. Extensive internship and direct hands on experience in dealing with patients will be required.

Sanskrit education:

- An understanding of Sanskrit terminology as it is used in yoga and Āyurveda.

MERGED GUIDELINES

SECTION ONE: FOUNDATIONS OF YOGA AND ĀYURVEDA (Minimum 65 hours)

The AYT will be knowledgeable about and able to integrate related history, philosophy, fundamental principles and **relevant** shared concepts across Yoga and Āyurveda.

- I. History and Lineage of Āyurveda (15 hours suggested)
- II. History and Lineage of Yoga (20 hours suggested)
- III. Philosophical Pillars of Yoga (15 hours suggested)
- IV. Philosophical Pillars of Āyurveda (15 hours suggested)

SECTION TWO: CONCEPTS OF ĀYURVEDA (85 hours suggested)

The AYT will have in-depth knowledge of important concepts within Āyurveda, including the guṇas, the doṣas, agni, mala, āma, prāna, téjas and ojas. The AYT will demonstrate an ability to integrate Āyurvedic concepts into the therapeutic usage of yoga.

1. Twenty Qualities: 10 opposing pairs (5 hours suggested)
2. Doṣa Prakṛti & Vikṛti related primarily to physiology (18 hours suggested)
3. Manas Prakṛti & Vikṛti related primarily to Āyurvedic Psychologies (15-20 hours suggested)
4. Agni, Āma and Mala: metabolism, toxicity, waste elimination. (12 hours suggested)
5. Prāna, Téjas and Ojas: cellular respiration, immunity and metabolism (10 hours suggested)
6. Integration of Ayurvedic concepts into the practices of Yoga Therapy (20-25 hours suggested)

SECTION THREE: YOGA THERAPY PHYSIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS (115 hours suggested)

AYT has in depth knowledge of biomedical, physiological, biomechanical, energetic states in relationship to Ayurvedic Yoga Therapy

1. Anatomy and Physiology of Yoga Therapy (30 hours suggested)
2. Sub Doṣa, Dhātu and Srotas (50 hours suggested)
3. Energetic Anatomy (nādi, cakra, kośa) (15 hours suggested)
4. Western Pathophysiology for reference and referral purposes (10 hours suggested)
5. Biomechanics and energetics for cross reference and referral purposes (10 hours suggested)

SECTION FOUR: ĀYURVEDIC & YOGIC ASSESSMENT SKILLS AND INTERPRETATION OF CLINICAL FINDINGS (160 hours suggested)

AYT will have in-depth knowledge and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge in assessing the client and interpreting clinical findings.

1. Personal and Family Health History: Vidya Parikṣa: Questioning and Observation (15 suggested)
2. Interpretation of Vital Signs: May include blood pressure, pulse rate, respiratory, or bowel sounds (10 suggested)

3. Chief Complaints and Symptoms: Rūpa and Pūrva Rūpa (25 suggested)
4. Analyze Client Strengths and Weaknesses and Willingness to Follow Instructions (15 suggested)
5. Etiological Factors including Pañca Maya Model (40 suggested)
6. Pathogenesis: Saṃprāpti (25 suggested)
7. Knowledge of the appropriate Āyurvedic and yogic medical literature and evidence base. (20 suggested)
8. Contextual Understanding of Biomedical terminologies, concepts and relevant healthcare information (10 suggested)

SECTION FIVE: THERAPEUTIC RECOMMENDATIONS AND TREATMENT THROUGH Ayurvedic Yoga Therapy (260 hours suggested)

AYT is able to recommend the appropriate therapeutic plan in accordance with doṣa, agni, āma, age, season, bala, and saṃprāpti of the client

1. Food and Diet (30)
 1. Lifestyle (20)
 2. Senses (15)
 3. Psychology, the Mind and Counseling (25)
 4. Doshic Management: pacification, cleansing and rejuvenation through yoga therapy techniques (30)
 5. Reduction and Tonification (10)
 6. General Adult Āyurvedic Medicine: Kāya Cikitsa (15)
 7. Children's Health (15) *note: someone spending more time with children will need additional training*
 8. Reproductive Health (15)
 9. Gerontology (15) *note: someone spending more time with seniors will need additional training*
 10. Head and Neck Health (10)
 11. Contextual Knowledge of Jyotiśa and Vāstu Shastra relevant to Yoga Therapy (10)
 12. Top 20 Culinary Herbs and Spices in Āyurvedic Yoga Therapy for Prevention and Health Promotion (Per NAMA guidelines for AHC) (20)
 13. Contextual knowledge of biomedical diagnostic categories and medicines for referral purposes (10)
 14. Referral practices for Advanced Āyurvedic practitioners and other health professionals. (5)
 15. Understanding of the Śat Kārma and the Pañca Karma models, their relationship and their differences. (5)
 16. Understanding of Acara Rasāyana and how it relates to the Yama-Niyama model (10)

SECTION SIX: TEACHING AND THERAPEUTIC SKILLS (360 hours suggested)

Student has in depth knowledge and demonstrated ability to teach, demonstrate and adapt yoga and Ayurveda practices to meet the individual needs of client(s).

1. Yoga practices to include but not limited to āsana, prāṇayāma (amantra and samantra), bandha, pratyahāra, mūdra, mantra, samyama. (100)
2. Demonstrate the necessary skills to convey information, to listen, to understand, to support the client, to earn trust, to communicate effectively, to make recommendations. (50)
3. Demonstrate ability to conduct intake and assess the client/student. (50)
4. Demonstrate ability to elicit the goals, expectations, and aspirations of the client/student. (25)
5. Demonstrate ability to integrate information from the intake, evaluation, and observation to develop a working assessment of the client's condition, limitations, and possibilities. (90)
6. Demonstrate ability to apply knowledge of how to determine which aspects of a client/student's conditions, goals and aspirations might be addressed through Ayurvedic yoga therapy. (30)
7. Demonstrate ability to identify priorities and set both long and short-term goals with the client/student. (20)

SECTION SEVEN: PRACTICUM AND CLINICAL INTERNSHIP (250 hours suggested)

150 of the 250 total hours need to be in supervised face-to-face interactions with clients in treatment sessions, be they initial consultations or follow-up sessions:

- The first 15 hours need to be directly supervised in real-time (in person or via Skype/other video) and then an additional 10% of hours will be reviewed by the supervisor via the means specified below:
 - 100 hours of the 250 total hours are for mentorship by supervisors, chart preparation and review, and research necessary to deliver care.
 - Supervisory activity includes: guided review of client cases through video, or review of files and treatment plans via phone, email, Skype or in-person contact.
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1. Demonstrate ability to apply knowledge of strategies that address common disorders and pathologies of the major human systems and common mental health conditions, as well as other goals and aspirations of the student as relevant to the work of an Āyurveda yoga therapist.
 2. Demonstrate ability to apply knowledge of how to combine intake, evaluation, observations, and working assessment to develop an appropriate practice or session strategy for individual clients/students as well as group classes, taking into consideration the holistic nature of the individual.
 3. Demonstrate knowledge of how to choose and prioritize the use of Āyurvedic yoga tools and techniques, including selecting, sequencing, adapting, and modifying yoga practices appropriate to the needs of clients.
 4. Demonstrate ability to teach and deliver the appropriate practices for individuals as well as groups, taking into consideration the assessment of their conditions, limitations, possibilities, and the overall practice strategy.
 5. Demonstrate ability to facilitate the client/student's experience of the practice.
 6. Assess and determine the client's strengths and willingness to follow recommendations
 7. Demonstrate ability to develop and maintain therapeutic relationships.
 8. Demonstrate ability to provide follow up and re-planning.

CONCLUSION:

We believe the Āyurveda and Yoga Therapy training for an AYT, as stated above, through an integrated curriculum, can be achieved in 1100-1500 hrs. (High and low ends based on Competencies)

Above are suggested hours that add up to 1300. The median.