

## Yoga as Recovery from Birth Trauma

**Sharmistha Roy\***

Research Scholar, Nirwan University Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

\*Corresponding Author: roysharmistha467@gmail.com

*Citation: Roy, S. (2025). Yoga as Recovery from Birth Trauma. International Journal of Global Research Innovations & Technology, 03(04), 47–50*

### ABSTRACT

*Birth is one of the most powerful and transformative experiences in a person's life. Yet alongside the joy and wonder of bringing a new life into the world, there can also be pain, fear, or a sense of loss. Unexpected intervention, medical complication, loss of control, any many more. Yet it often remains unspoken. Society tends to focus on the healthy baby and overlook the emotional wellbeing of the mother. Childbirth can be a joyful experience, but this silence can leave women feeling isolated, disconnected, from their normal lifestyle. But it can also cause physical and emotional stress, sometimes leading to birth trauma. This trauma can make women feel disconnected from their bodies and affect their mental health. birth trauma define as the emotional distress or physical pain after childbirth that can lead to symptoms of stress disorder. Yoga combines gentle movements, breathing exercises, and mindfulness to calm the mind and body, research shows that yoga can support emotional healing, reduce stress and help mothers feel stronger and more connected to themselves. By practicing yoga after childbirth, women can improve both their physical recovery and emotional well-beings, making it can effective and supportive tool for postpartum healing. yoga not just as exercise, but as a therapeutic ritual of return a gentle reintroduction to self after the rupture of childbirth, this article explore the therapeutic potential of yoga in healing birth trauma, with body awareness, nervous system regulation, and emotional integration. This systematic review addresses this, aiming to comprehensively assess the impact of postnatal yoga on maternal mental health and well-being.*

**Keywords:** Birth Trauma, Postpartum Recovery, Yoga Therapy, Maternal Mental Health, Mind -Body Healing.

### Introduction

Trauma isn't just a memory is the mind, it's something that can live the body, affecting how we move, breathe, and feel .Childbirth is a significant and often transformative experience in a women's life. While many mothers experience joy and fulfillment, but some face physical and emotional difficulties during or after birth, which can lead to birth trauma.

Birth trauma may result from complicated labor, emergency interventions, or feelings of fear. These experiences can affect both physical recovery and mental well- beings, making the postpartum period challenging for many women. Yoga as a mind-body practice has gained attention for its potential to support maternal recovery. Through gentle movement, controlled breathing, and mindfulness, yoga helps women reconnect with their bodies, reduce stress, and process emotional associated with childbirth. This article explore how yoga can serve as a therapeutic tool for women recovering from birth trauma, supporting both physical healing and emotional well-being during postpartum period.

### About Birth Trauma

Birth trauma whether physical or emotional or psychological, can leave mothers feeling fragmented, disconnected or unseen, yoga in it's mindful union of birth, body and awareness, becomes a pathway for rein habiting the body and restoring inner harmony. Birth trauma can mean difficult labor, emergency interventions , or emotional disconnection.

Birth trauma isn't limited to physical injury. it may include

- Feeling powerless or unheard during birth.
- Unexpected medical emergencies or interventions.
- Fear for one's own or the baby's life.
- Difficult postpartum recovery or complications.

For some, these experiences can lead to symptoms similar to post- traumatic stress- flashback, anxiety, numbness, or disconnection from the body. So, healing requires more than physical recovery. it involves restoring, motivation in her emotions.

### **Yoga as a Healing**

Explore how yoga engages the nervous system.

- Yoga brings awareness back to the body in a gentle way. It encourages to slow down, breathe deeply, and feel what's happening inside without trying to push it away.
- It's improving breath control- yogic breathing techniques help open up the lungs and calm the mind. Reducing anxiety and promoting relaxation.
- Builds inner strength- beyond physical flexibility, yoga fosters emotional resilience, helping individuals approach challenges with a greater sense of calm and control.
- Creates a safe space for release- c certain posture can trigger the release of stored emotions. It's not uncommon for pregnant women's to feel sudden sadness, anger, or mood swings. Yoga helps to feel better and active your mind in a positive way.
- Yoga encourages body awareness- many mothers those are facing birth trauma become disconnected from their bodies. Increase body weight and loose their confidence . in this condition yoga provides a safe way to rebuilt that connection, helping to build a positive mind and a healthy life.
- Asanas like tarasana, Balasana, Setu bandasanas, yogindra, helps to motive there mentle and physical strength.

### **The Role of Yoga in Postpartum Recovery**

Yoga is a holistic practice that combines physical movement, breathing exercises and mindfulness. After childbirth the body undergoes significant changes, including muscle weakness, hormonal shifts. Yoga postures asanas can help strengthen key muscles, and improve there flexibility, with support of proper posture, which is very important for mothers those who experience back pain and pelvic discomfort after there pregnancy.

In a same way if we talk about physical benefits, yoga also supports emotional and psychological healing, and with the help of pranayama it controlled breathing exercises and it regulate the nervous system, it reduce stress, and also decrease anxiety or depression. It also helps to reconnect with their babies after the trauma of childbirth it helps release tension allowing mothers to process difficult experiences and gradually regain a sense of control and confidence. It's also important for new mother's to consult healthcare professionals before resuming physical activity, especially after cesarean or complicated births. Yoga can be adapted to any stage of postpartum recovery- whether weeks or years after birth. Regular yoga practice during the postpartum period can lead to improved physical recovery, reduced stress, and enhanced overall well-beings. Yoga provides a supportive approach for women healing from birth trauma.

### **Yoga Practices for Birth Trauma Recovery**

- **Simple Asanas**

**The benefits of yoga extend beyond the physical practice in the early postpartum period, restorative and gentle yoga poses are most beneficial.**

Poses like cat-cow supported child pose (Balasana) and legs up the wall, Viparita Karani, all joinrotations, and relaxation and support body's natural healing processes it relieves back tension, improves spinal flexibility. Gentle spinal movements also can release tension pelvis.

**Baddhakonasana – opens hips, improves pelvic circulation.**

Over time, as strength return, gradual reintroduction of stabilizing poses such as Bridge pose and Mountain pose can enhance body awareness and confidence. Yoga is the only way to move slowly and mindfully, staying attuned to sensation without pushing beyond comfort.

- **Pranayama**

**Breathwork is very important for emotional regulation.**

**Anulomvilom-(alternate nostril breathing) calms mind, balances body.**

**Bhramri- (humming bee breath)- Reduces anxiety, deep diaphragmatic breathing supports oxygen flow for mother and baby both.**

simple mindfulness and breath awareness practices, such as Nari Shodhan, Anulom Vilom pranayama, can help to stabilize the nervous system.

- **Yog Nidra (Yogic Sleep)**

A guided relaxation technique that encourages deep rest, reduces anxiety, and helps reestablish a sense of safety within the body.

- **Meditation**

**Meditative practices allow the mind to settle and the nervous system to reset.**

Practices that cultivate compassion, self-acceptance, and forgiveness support emotional integration and resilience.

Through pranayama, meditation and yogic asanas, yoga helps shift the nervous system from hyperarousal to parasympathetic dominance- the state associated with calmness, safety and healing.

Practices like Nadi shodhana (alternate nostril breathing) reduce anxiety and promote relaxation. The postpartum period involves significant hormonal fluctuations, which can affect mood and recovery. So Gentle yoga postures stimulate blood flow to pelvic organs and supporting hormonal equilibrium. It also helps to regulate menstrual cycles, reduce postpartum pain, and improve sleep quality. It is important to note that yoga should not replace professional medical or psychological treatment but complement it. Regular yoga practice has been associated with lower stress levels, improved mood, and enhanced maternal bonding.

**Building Strength and Stability**

Physical recovery after childbirth is crucial.

Yoga strengthens the pelvic floor, abdominal, and back muscles, improving posture and stamina. This physical empowerment contributes to psychological resilience, helping women feel capable and confident in their bodies once more.

Psychological and emotional benefits:

- **Reduced trauma symptoms**

Yoga has been shown to significantly decrease the perception of traumatic birth, reduce anxiety, fear and emotional distress, and its' effective in lowering stress disorder.

- **Enhance breathing and relaxation**

Deep breathing exercises increase oxygen flow to both mother and baby. It also teaches techniques that can be very useful during labour to stay calm and manage pain.

- **Enhanced emotional regulation**

Through breathwork and mindfulness, yoga promotes better emotional regulation and can help feelings of sadness, guilt, and helplessness.

- **Improved mood and quality of life**

Yoga is associated with improved mood, enhanced emotional well-being, and a higher overall quality of life for new mothers.

- **Prepares the body for labour**

Many poses help open the hips and pelvis making the birthing process smoother and less stressful.

- **Better sleep**  
By reducing hypervigilance and ruminating thought yoga can improve sleep quality .
- **Improved physiological markers**  
Some research indicates yoga improves blood flow and can aid in postpartum reduction.
- **Stress and Cortisol Reduction**  
Yoga is linked to lower cortisol levels, which helps mitigate the harmful effects of chronic stress common in the postpartum period.

### Discussion

Yoga, a popular mind-body medicine, is frequently recommended for pregnant women. The current systematic review and meta-analysis revealed evidence that antenatal yoga can reduce labour pain during delivery. In a recent meta-analysis investigating the effects of prenatal yoga on childbirth pain, practice of pranayama and breathing awareness brings mindfulness, during the practice of yoga nidra and dhyana, their positive perception towards effective management of labour pain influences women in attaining better control over pain also induces deeper state of relaxation.

Though this review revealed positive results for yoga, there are several limitations. It can effectively manage pain by alleviating stress, fear and tension associated with labour. This systematic review addresses this, aiming to comprehensively assess the impact of postnatal yoga on maternal mental health and well-being. The intervention contributed positively to emotional well-being and supported recovery in the postpartum period.

Conclusion yoga is an effective method to reduce childbirth, related trauma and strengthen psychological resilience during pregnancy. Results yoga practice significantly increased psychological resilience and reduced anxiety, fear of childbirth, perception of traumatic birth.

### Conclusion

Yoga can rebuilt the bridge between body, mind and spirit rather than focusing on fitness and flexibility. Creating an environment where the body feels supported and respected. This approach helps calm the nervous system, release stored tension and renewed sense of agency and peace. Yoga offers a compassionate and integrative pathway for recovery from birth trauma. Through mindful movement, breath awareness, and embodied presence, it helps individuals reclaim ownership of their bodies and restore emotional balance. Yoga offers great potential as an accessible and effective complementary therapy for women recovering from birth trauma. Yoga has the potential to transform postpartum healing into a process of empowerment and renewal. Yoga does not erase what happened in your past, but it offers a space to transform your pain into presence into strength, As you learn to listen to your body with kindness. You reclaim not only your physical well- beings but also your sense of peace and self- worth.

Yoga during pregnancy is more than just physical exercise it's holistic practice that nurtures the mind, body and soul, By practicing regularly and safely, expecting mothers can enjoy a healthier, calmer and connected pregnancy experience.

### References

1. Indian journal of holistic nursing 13(2), public health research and insights review, <https://medicaljournalshouse.com/index.php>
2. MINISTRY OF AYUSH, Government of India 2022, yoga for women's health- official yoga protocols.
3. Central council for research in yoga and naturopathy (CCRYN), NEW DELHI
4. Kaushik, R., & Joshi, R (2019). Yoga as a complementary therapy for postpartum emotional disorders.
5. Ministry of health and family welfare, Government of India (2023). Guidelines for mental health care during and after pregnancy.

