

## Response to Letter to the Editor: Yoga and naturopathy for COVID 2019

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Dear Editor,

We would like to thank Alkousar et al.<sup>[1]</sup> for their valuable comments on our study “*Effect of yoga-based exercises on functional capacity, dyspnea, quality of life, depression, anxiety, and sleep of infected healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic: A prospective clinical trial*”

In this study, we aimed to investigate the effects of the yoga-based exercise program, consisting of asana, pranayama, relaxation, and meditation components, administered to healthcare professionals who had been infected during the COVID-19 pandemic. Along with positive effects on anxiety and depression, we have also provided significant improvements in muscle strength and flexibility, cardiopulmonary endurance, physical activity level, sleep quality, and quality of life.<sup>[2]</sup> Jenefer Jerrin et al.<sup>[3]</sup> studied the effects of yoga and naturopathy by a specified program consisting of asana and breathing exercises on anxiety and depression during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was similar to ours but with a shorter duration (two weeks, 60 min a day) with fewer asanas and more breathing exercises.<sup>[4]</sup> The reason for inclusion of more asana in our study was the greater frequency of musculoskeletal symptoms and tiredness among healthcare professionals. Administration of more frequent yoga sessions was not possible due to the intensive workload of healthcare professionals. However, at this moment, we realize that contrary to the study of Jenefer Jerrin et al.,<sup>[3]</sup> a long-term program provided more beneficial effects on the abovementioned systems.

Türkiye, as a country that conjectures all aspects of Western medicine and Eastern medicine, has overcome the COVID-19 pandemic with great success. Both the healthcare authorities and healthcare professionals, who have made selfless efforts, have great roles in this period. The philosophy of yoga, which emerged in India centuries ago and has spread worldwide, has recently been the subject of many studies and has become increasingly popular in Western culture. Congruently, it has also been the subject of interest in our country and is being used as a treatment method in the field of physical medicine and rehabilitation.<sup>[5-8]</sup> We believe that yoga is a beneficial treatment in terms of the cardiopulmonary system and physical and psychological well-being, according to our yoga therapy program. After the pandemic, we added a specified yoga program into treatment programs of musculoskeletal, rheumatic, and neurological diseases and heart and lung pathologies.

In light of these data, along with the presence of a dedicated team that is aware of the importance and effectiveness of yoga therapy, the presence of yoga instructors in healthcare facilities and the provision of an environment that is conducive to the application of the therapy would be sufficient for the applicability of yoga-based exercise treatment. We would like to emphasize that mindfulness for yoga for physicians is a significant step toward well-being, which may be targeted in our patients.

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