TACSM Abstract

An Evaluation of Static and Dynamic Yoga Training Programs

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ABSTRACT

While traditional yoga programs focus on static stretching and core stability, Essentrics yoga relies more heavily on full-body stretch and strengthening regimens coupled with dynamic movements such as ceiling reaches, side-to-side bends, lunges, and side leg lifts. Through the incorporation of more dynamic movements, Essentrics yoga is thought to elicit greater improvements in overall body composition, flexibility, and balance. PURPOSE: To examine the benefits of a 6-weeks long Essentrics (dynamic) program compared to standard (static) Yoga on body composition, flexibility, and balance. METHODS: Thirty-one participants (24 females and 7 males, age = 20.4 ± 0.2yrs, and BMI = 22.58 ± 0.55kg/m²) were assigned to two groups – a standard Yoga (YOG, n = 20) and an Essentrics (ESS, n = 11) group. For 6 weeks, both groups attended a 45–50-minute class, 3 times per week. Body composition (dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry), flexibility (sit-and-reach), balance (lower extremity Y-balance), as well anthropometric measurements were assessed at the beginning and end of the 6-week program. Measurements of the balance test included 3 reaches and their combined values [anterior (ANT), posteromedial (PM), posterolateral (PL), and composite reach distance (CRD)]. All reaches were averaged for the right and left sides and then normalized to leg length. Data were analyzed using an ANOVA with repeated measures (p < 0.05), and a post-hoc test was performed if any significant main or interaction effects were found.

RESULTS: Interestingly, the total body fat percentage was significantly reduced only in the YOG group (24.44 ± 6.73 to 23.51 ± 6.32%, p = .002). There were no significant group differences between YOG and ESS in balance and flexibility. However, balance was improved after the 6-week workout programs; PM (87.13 ± 11.64cm to 92.25 ± 9.91cm, p = .001), PL (82.88 ± 11.28 to 88.62 ± 9.62cm, p = .002), CRD (225.96 ± 27.17 to 238.26 ± 22.98cm, p = .001), normalized PM (98.31 ± 11.68 to 104.27 ± 11.14%, p = .001), normalized PL (93.60 ± 11.98 to 100.15 ± 10.70%, p = .001), and normalized CRD (255.12 ± 27.89 to 269.21 ± 25.07%, p = .001). Additionally, flexibility was improved from 51.42 ± 8.24 to 53.38 ± 7.04cm (p = .010) after the 6-week workout programs, while total body fat percentage was significantly reduced only in the YOG group (24.44 ± 6.73 to 23.51 ± 6.32%, p = .002). CONCLUSION: Whether an individual prefers a static or dynamic yoga program, both show improvements in flexibility and balance; however, neither program had a significant benefit over the other.