



Yoga Therapy in the World

A brief overview of this emerging
profession & standards of
education

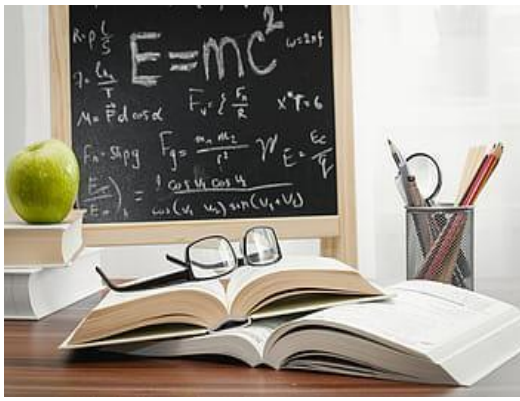
Rachel Krentzman and Michal
Yarkoni



What is Yoga Therapy

“Yoga therapy is the professional application of the principles and practices of yoga to promote health and well-being within a therapeutic relationship that includes personalized assessment, goal setting, lifestyle management, and yoga practices for individuals or small groups.” - IAYT.org

- Yoga therapy is the application of Yoga to individuals to empower them to progress toward greater health and freedom from disease. [Ganesh Mohan, Svastha Yoga and Ayurveda](#)
- Yoga therapy is a self-empowering process, where the care-seeker, with the help of the Yoga therapist, implements a personalized and evolving Yoga practice, that not only addresses the illness in a multi-dimensional manner, but also aims to alleviate his/her suffering in a progressive, non-invasive and complementary manner. Depending upon the nature of the illness, Yoga therapy can not only be preventative or curative, but also serve a means to manage the illness, or facilitate healing in the person at all levels. [TKV Desikachar & Kausthub Desikachar](#)
- Yoga therapy, derived from the Yoga tradition of Patanjali and the Ayurvedic system of health care refers to the adaptation and application of Yoga techniques and practices to help individuals facing health challenges at any level manage their condition, reduce symptoms, restore balance, increase vitality, and improve attitude. [Gary Kraftsow American Viniyoga Institute](#)
- The use of the techniques of Yoga to create, stimulate, and maintain an optimum state of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health. [Judith Hanson Lasater, Ph.D.](#)



Standards for Education



IAYT – International Association of Yoga Therapists

- **1989:** Non profit organization originally founded by Larry Payne, PhD, and Richard Miller, PhD. USA
- **2006:** IAYT joined the Academic Consortium for Complementary and Alternative Health Care (ACCAHC). Yoga was the first non-licensed discipline represented.
- **2007:** IAYT's first Symposium on Yoga Therapy and Research (SYTAR) was held in Los Angeles with 800 in attendance.
- **2008:** The first Meeting of Schools was held to discuss the rapid growth in the field of yoga therapy and the need for standards. Twenty schools were represented at this initial meeting.
- **2010:** IAYT first Symposium on Yoga Research (SYR) was held.
- **2011:** International Journal of Yoga Therapy (IJYT) was accepted into PubMed.
- **2012:** *Educational Standards for the Training of Yoga Therapists* were published. The IAYT Accreditation Committee was formed.
- **2016:** IAYT's long-awaited professional yoga therapy certification program is launched, with a unique credential (C-IAYT). More than 500 IAYT members attained the credential by year's end. IAYT also published a [Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibilities](#), along with a [Scope of Practice for Yoga Therapy](#).
- **2021:** 66 accredited Yoga Therapy Programs to date. www.IAYT.org for info.

IAYT Standards - 800 hours

Requirements: minimum 200 hour YTT with one year teaching experience

Section 1: Foundations: Philosophy & Ayurveda - 120 hours minimum

Section 2: Biomedical and Psychological: Anatomy, Mental Health, Biomedical knowledge - 155 hours

Section 3: Yoga Therapy Tools and Therapeutic Relationship - 140 hours

Section 4: Practicum & Mentorship - 205 hours

Section 5: Professional Practice: Ethics, Law, Prof. Development - 30 hours



WHO - World Health Organization

- Global Yoga Therapy Consortium - group of professionals from all over world.
- WHO - in charge of all health care providers and standards of education, they exist to set a world standard.
- July 2021: Met to approve world health organization guidelines for yoga therapy.
- Proposed minimum hours for licensed yoga therapy professionals = **2400 hours**



**World Health
Organization**

British Organizations– Heather Mason

- “The Minded Institute” - Heather Mason- bringing yoga into healthcare is the only IAYT accredited Only in UK.
- Yoga In Healthcare Alliance - organization created to help bring platform of yoga globally into healthcare
- Social Prescribing Program - gardening, arts etc. helps decrease medical visits - yoga program created as part of this project, was assessed: showed cost savings, is used for mental health, chronic pain, metabolic, cardiovascular - trained 300 teachers
- All Party Parliamentary Group: Yoga in Parliament - influence policy over time, Heather is liason from parliament to public
- British Council of Yoga Therapy: only other accrediting body for yoga therapy www.bcyt.org

BCYT Standards; 550 learning hours which includes 300 hours of direct contact (face to face) learning with yoga therapy trainers and 250 hours of non-contact learning, plus 600 hours of recommended home study = 550+600=1150 hours

Yoga Australia - Leanne Davis

- 2 Yoga Therapy Associations
- Leigh Blashki set up AAYT Australian association of yoga therapy
- Leanne Davis president of Yoga Australia - taken over yoga therapy
- Both organizations adopted the IAYT standards
- Yoga teacher standards: 350 hours of training - level 1, 500 hours plus 5 years teaching - level 2, senior teacher - 10 years teaching 1000 hours
- Yoga Therapy trainings - 650 hours after 350 teacher training
- Private health insurance - covered yoga but took it away, changed review after going over research - to reinstate coverage for natural and complementary therapies

Japan – Kazuo Keishin Kimura, Director, Japan Vivekananda Yoga Kendra

- YICC - Yoga Instructors Certification Course - 70 hours
- YTIC - Yoga Therapy Instructor's Course - 140 hours
- *“Total training hours might look short compared to similar programs in other countries. We believe, however, that our program is sufficient because Japanese people already have experience in Indian spiritual culture.”*
- **The Japan Yoga Therapy Society (JYTS)** was established in August 2003.
- This academic society has about 500 members, including medical doctors, nurses, yoga instructors, and various types of therapists.
- There are no governmental regulations for yoga therapy at this time.



Yoga Therapy in the Healthcare System



Sweden - Goran Boll

- MediYoga: founded by Goran Boll
- 90% of Yoga research in Sweden
- Yoga is now in over 280 hospitals in Sweden
- Trains hospital staff to bring programs into the hospitals
- Very specific Kundalini sequences that were researched.

Hospitals in North America with yoga therapy on staff

- The New York Times reports that 93 percent of 755 integrative medical facilities throughout the United States offer Yoga as therapy. This means yoga therapy is in over 702 hospitals in the USA.
- Yoga, as a complementary health approach, increased from 9.5% in 2012 to 14.3% in 2017 (2018 National Health Statistics Reports).

Some examples:

- MUIH - Maryland University of Integrative Health - Acute Care
- Duke Integrative Medicine - North Carolina
- Cleveland Clinic Center for Lifestyle Medicine - Chronic Pain
- Beth Israel Medical Center - New York - Cancer
- Hillman Cancer Center - Pittsburgh Medical Center
- UCLA - Medical Students get yoga classes
- Veteran's Health Administration - Yoga is part of medical benefits

What's happening in Israel?

- **Rehabilitation Hospital - Reut** - 15 + yoga teachers on staff
- **National Institute of Neuropsychiatric Rehabilitation** - body-mind group for patients 12 sessions, 2 rounds.
- **Psychiatry- Ilanit** - one yoga teacher on staff.
- **Addictions Recovery** - Kiryat Aryeh, group class, 2 teachers.
- **Cancer Centers** offering Integrative care - Rabin and Hadassa.
- **Afula Hospital** - Michal Yarkoni, Volunteer to Staff - Psychiatric Unit - outpatient community clinic/ post trauma from Ministry of Defense, private and group setting possible research study of HRV and yoga therapy.
- **Sheba Medical Center (Tel Hashomer)** - Internship Program for Wisdom-Body Yoga Therapy students, Launching yoga therapy program in Tal Center for Integrative Medicine - Oncology department for a full time yoga therapist as paid position.