

Field : Physical Activity

Type : Research Article

Received: 24.03.2016 - Accepted: 15.05.2016

Benefits of Prayer as a Physical Activity

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Abstract

Purpose: Prayer benefits will make the human body of the sporting and the exercise aspects will be discussed. **Method:** It is a form of literature studies. **Results and Discussion:** Namaz, requires the worshiper to move through several distinct bodily postures while reciting specific supplications. The series of postures is fixed, and it's repeated a number of times for each act of prayer. Namaz (prayer) is performed by Muslim believers which must be performed at least five times a day, consists of 40 rakaats. Namaz can be regarded as a type of stretching and isometric contractions exercise. These movements have an effect directly and indirectly on the whole organism. Namaz improves posture, increased the intake of oxygen and enhances the functioning of the respiratory, blood flow, endocrine and excretory system. Namaz are the strengthening of ligaments and tendons, preventing muscle tears, positive effect on the joints, to relax the eyes, the removal of the accumulated electrical charge in the body, arthritis, hypertension and varicose veins as well come to the situation. In addition, brain, heart, stomach, gallbladder, pancreas, kidney and has a positive effect on the urinary tract. **Conclusion:** Prayer movement direction outside of worship, there are benefits circulatory, respiratory, digestive, nervous, and to the hormonal system. Unless it made in accordance with the specified time and rules the benefits of exercise and sport will make the human body more.

Keywords: Prayer, sports, health

Namazın Fiziksel Bir Aktivite Olarak Faydaları

Öz

Amaç: Namaz kılmanın insan vücuduna egzersiz ve sportif yönden ne tür faydaları olduğu tartışılacaktır. **Metot:** Literatür taraması şeklinde yapılmış bir çalışmadır. **Bulgular ve Tartışma:** İslam Dininin beş şartından biri olan namaz, tekrarlayıcı hareketler eşliğinde dua okuma esasına dayanan bir ibadet şeklidir. Bir günde 5 değişik zamanda 40 rekat namaz kılınması emredilmiştir. Namazda tüm büyük vücut kasları değişik ölçülerde hareket ederler. Namazda hem aktif, hem de izometrik kasılma hareketleri bulunmaktadır. Bu hareketler tüm organizmanın üzerinde direkt ve dolaylı olarak etkide bulunurlar. Namazın vücuttaki önemli kas gruplarını çalıştırması ve düzgün duruş şekli sağlması, kan dolaşımını artırması, bağ ve tendonların kuvvetlenmesi, kas yırtılmalarının önlenmesi, eklemler üzerine olumlu etkisi, gözleri dinlendirmesi, vücutta biriken elektriksel yüklerin uzaklaştırılması, kireçlenme, tansiyon ve varis gibi durumlara iyi gelmesi bazı faydalarıdır. Ayrıca beyin, kalp, mide, safra, pankreas, böbrek ve idrar yollarına olumlu etkisi vardır. **Sonuç:** Namazın ibadet yönü dışında hareket, dolaşım, solunum, sindirim, sinir ve hormonal sistemlere faydaları vardır. Belirtilen zamanlarda ve kuralına uygun kılındığı takdirde egzersiz ve sporun insan vücuduna sağladığı faydaların daha fazlasını sağlayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Namaz, spor, sağlık

Introduction

Prayer (Namaz) is an external and an internal practice: a set of physical exercises with reading various Qur'anic verses. The prayer is done by assuming each separate positions of the body and reciting various Qur'anic verses with each posture. Namaz consists of rakaats, each rakaat being a series of 7 postures. For example, before sunrise, 2 rakaats or 14 postures must be performed. Thus each Muslim is under obligation to perform 119 postures per day that is 3750 postures per month and 42,840 postures per year. Suppose, if we live up to an average of 50 years, namaz being obligatory from the age of 10 years, we would have performed 1,713,600 postures compulsorily in this lifetime(www.yogamag.net/archives). Namaz postures are similar to yogic postures and therefore namaz, while being performed as a religious obligation, can simultaneously give the namaz all the benefits of yoga. Seven postures of namaz and their impact on the nervous system. Namaz can be regarded as a type of stretching exercise; the physical acts performed during Namaz are gentle, simple exercises suitable for all ages and conditions. During Namaz, we perform continuous gentle muscle contraction and relaxation with perfect harmony and balance, inducing flexibility without over-exhaustion. The various postures of Namaz were studied and a range of joint motions were measured by goniometer, an instrument for measuring angles. Brain blood pressure was calculated from the effect of gravity on blood pressure at different positions. The physical activities involved in the performance of Namaz helps in the rehabilitation process in disabled geriatric patients by improving blood flow and increasing musculoskeletal fitness. The Namaz prayer involves little effort (standing, bowing, prostration and sitting), has a short duration and is beneficial for mental and physical health (Reza et al, 2002).

Namaz (prayer) is performed by Muslim believers which must be performed at least five times a day. It involves with physical activities which includes standing, bowing prostration and sitting consecutively. It can be seen that from this consecutive movement, Namaz can also be considered as a slow moderate exercise. Benefits of Namaz from the spiritual point of view have been discussed at length by religious scholars. However, there is still little discussion on the Namaz's benefit from science perspective even though it can be seen that performing Namaz is like performing slow and moderate exercise. Ibrahim et al have reported on the heart rate activities during Namaz performance which show positive effects to doers (İbrahim and Abbas 2008, Salleh and İbrahim 2009). The customary prayers of Muslim (Namaz), where physical movements of prayers have been beautifully conglomerated with spiritual exercise, result to many surprising health and medicinal benefits. Namaz is the prescription from Allah for better health and fitness who offers it regularly. Thus, it is the natural way to keep oneself healthy. Namaz should be offered coolly, calmly, religiously and spiritually to get maximum of its benefits (www.gyanunlimited). The prayer is understood to be invalid without a mindful witnessing of the presence of God. Physically, it exercises the major joints (especially the spinal column), massages the intestinal tract, transmits a reflex to the liver, regulates the breath, and stimulates the frontal cortex of the brain as it is brought to the ground, while momentarily leaving the heart in a higher position than the brain. Namaz is a form that integrates mindfulness, mental precision, affirmation, devotion, and stretching. Done five times a day for a lifetime, it has profound effects on the body and soul” (sujonhera.com). Studies have proven that non-Muslim participants merely going through the physical movements of Namaz also showed appreciable results from the exercise (Doufesh et al.,2012). Prayer provides spiritual benefits as follows: It provides, when performed properly, the joy of being in Allah's presence, meditation, comfort in the time of fear, pleasure in the

time of joy, sustaining the spiritual character of the soul, maintenance of faith, and a good relationship with the Divine Being. Prayer provides the following sociological benefits: The sense of coming together, knowing one another, friendship, and reinforcement of the bonds of brotherhood (www.namazzamani.net/english). Religion at large has always been at hand to lend useful guidance to approach both the physiological illnesses and psychological maladjustments (Al-Ghazal,2006). One of the most basic and mandatory acts in Islamic tenets is the 5 times daily obligatory prayer (Sayed,2003).

Discussion

The physical and physiological benefits of namaz are multiple to say the least. Most of the body muscles and joints are exercised during Namaz. In the most noteworthy movement of prostration besides the limb muscles, the back and perineum muscles as well are exercised repeatedly (Al-Ghazal,2006). The neck muscles, in particular, are strengthened such that it is uncommon to find a person offering regular Namaz prostrating at least 40 times a day to suffer from cervical spondylosis or myalgias. Prostration is the only position in which the head is in a position lower than the heart and therefore, receives increased blood supply. This surge in blood supply has a positive effect on memory, concentration, psyche and other cognitive abilities (Al- Gazal,2006;Ayad ,2008)). During Prostration dissipation of the electromagnetic energy accumulated from the atmosphere takes place by the grounding effect at regular intervals resulting in a calming feeling. A recent study investigating the alpha brain activity during Muslim prayers has reported increased amplitude in the parietal and occipital regions suggestive of parasympathetic elevation, thus indicating a state of relaxation (Doufesh,2012). As mentioned earlier, Islam is a prescription for a complete and balanced way of life, hence, Namaz besides being an act of worship doubles as a holistic health tonic (Sayeed,2013). Movement in prayer if done in the proper position is able to prevent, treat and rehabilitate a numbers of diseases. If prayer is practiced to perfection, Insha Allah this practice can nourish the heart, strengthen the kidney, treat impotence for men, improve the quality of sex and genital muscle recovery (neurotherapy-of-christian-brain,2014).

Preliminary findings of a research project carried out by University Malaya's biomedical engineering department shows that the positions Muslims take during their prayers benefit the heart and spine. The study also showed that the postures boost the capacity for memory and increase attention. Previous studies found that Muslim prayers, often directed in the direction (qibla) of the Ka'ba shrine in Mecca, can be therapeutic for the mind and the body. Since praying provides Muslims with mental satisfaction, it can also reduce anxiety, depression, stress and tension which are also considered to be contributing factors to various diseases. Performing ablution, which involves washing the face, mouth, nostrils, ears, and arms before praying, has great health advantages, like preventing tooth decay, and reducing bacterial infections (forum.bodybuilding.com,2014).

Among the other benefits uncovered by a team of biomedical researchers from University Malaya (UM) include reducing the heartbeat rate, alleviating back pain and strengthening the pelvic floor muscles. UM's Biomedical Engineering Department head, Prof Madya Dr Fatimah Ibrahim, said the study revealed that the actions in a prayer could help patients suffering from ED. Quoting a previous study by researcher Marijke Van Kampen, Dr Fatimah said pelvic floor exercises could boost blood circulation and reduce ED symptoms. "Our own trial with two ED patients saw vast improvements (in their sexual health) after a month of

‘prayer therapy’,” she told reporters after the launch of the national seminar on ‘Solat Science’ at Masjid Wilayah Persekutuan here today. Dr Fatimah said movements in a prayer could also alleviate back pain, especially in pregnant women. She said a study was conducted on patients with regular back pain and pregnant mothers from the Malay, Indian and Chinese communities. Findings from the study showed that the ‘rukuk’ (bowing with hands resting on knees) and ‘Prostration’ positions could be used as therapy as it helped relax the spinal canal and reduces the risk of pressure on the spinal nerve. “The non-Muslim mothers only acted out the positions during the therapy sessions. They showed improvement in just a month,” she said. In his research, UM Medical Centre Cardiology Consultant Specialist Prof Dr Wan Azman Wan Ahmad found that heartbeat rate could be reduced by 10 times a minute in the ‘Prostration’ (prostration) position, where Muslims knelt with their forehead, nose, hands and knees touching the floor to face the Kaabah in Mekah. He said that 12 ‘rakaat’ (unit for a set of actions in a prayer) equalled to 30 minutes of light exercises daily as recommended by health experts (zurairifm.wordpress.com/2009). One study investigated the muscles activities between Namaz (Muslim’s prayer) and stretching exercise. The findings indicate that Namaz, apart as a spiritual act, it can also act as a form of exercise that is done slowly and moderately. All Muslims must perform Namaz at least five times a day and by performing them, it could help in the joints’ flexibility and movements. This also suggests that, Namaz movements can be another alternative to the existing exercises, like yoga and pilates. Three postures in Namaz have been investigated and compared to similar stretching exercise, which were takbeer, bowing and prostration. This proves that Namaz has musculoskeletal effect like stretching. As part of spiritual act, the doers also perform slow and moderate exercise at the same time which could benefit their health (Ibrahim and Siti,2012).

Namaz also has a psychological, musculo-skeletal and cerebral effects on improving the muscular functions of the geriatric, disabled and demented patients in a rehabilitation program. Namaz is a short-duration, mild to moderate psychological, physical and brain activity. Such an activity, when performed daily, can have long-term health benefits, according to the American Heart Association. Autonomic effects such as electro dermal activity of the skin, rates of haemolysis of red blood cells and haemoglobin levels (newageislam.com/islam-and-science, newageislam.com/islam-and-spiritualism).

12 ‘rakaat’ (unit for a set of actions in a prayer) equaled to 30 minutes of light exercises daily as recommended by health experts (zurairifm.wordpress.com/2009/). The postures of the prayers stretch various muscles and nerves, giving a constant physical therapy to all the joints of our bodies. This protects arthritis, and reduces back pains and disc problems (<http://forum.bodybuilding.com>). Each Rakka lasts between 3 and 6 minutes. Dr. Ramadan looked at the energy cost of two and four Rakka prayers in thirty-two male and female adults. He found that Namazs have a positive effect on metabolic function. For an 80 kg person, energy cost of daily prayers was about 80 calories a day, and could be considered a form of physical activity that enhances fitness (<http://www.healthline.com/health/fitness-exercise>). Heart is the most important organ in the body. It supplies fresh blood to all body tissues. These body movements performed during Namaz are an excellent source of exercise for our heart as well. According to a *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet, “There is an organ in the body, when it is healthy, the whole body is healthy, and when this is sick, the entire body becomes sick”. It is the heart (www.alislam.org/library). A remarkable tissue in our body is cartilage. It is unique in being a living tissue with no direct blood supply. The only way it receives nutrients and oxygen is by movements of the joints. The pumping effect forces blood into the

joint area which would otherwise be bypassed. Those who sit at the terminals are in greater danger of ending up with dead cartilage tissues that will subsequently wear away. This will leave us with arthritis, painful joints and paralysis. Bacteria and viruses find safe haven in joints for this reason as no blood cell can get at them and in most cases neither can antibodies. Namaz therefore, has many orthopedic benefits for all Muslims. Next time you offer Namaz, thank Almighty Allah that He made you a Muslim. Indeed, there is cure in Namaz (www.alislam.org/library). Exercise is a great way to "oil and feed" the cartilage. Under-exercised joints don't get the lubricating and nourishing benefits of the in-and-out action of the joint fluid, so cartilage can become thin and dry, losing its resilience and capability to cushion the bones(www.dummies.com/how).

After Niyaaat (intention)/ Takbir (Stanging) (Figure 1), Niyyat: Duration 5 second. Bring hands, palm open, up to ears, and place thumbs behind earlobes, as "Allah Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest) is uttered (said). By offering Takbir at the beginning of Namaz, we move hand and shoulder muscles thereby increasing the flow of blood towards torso. Akamat performs a similar function. Beneficial Effects: Body feels relieved of weight owing to even distribution on both feet. Straightening back improves posture. Mind is brought under control of intellect. Vision is sharpened by focusing upon the floor, where head will prostrate. Muscles of upper and lower back are loosened. Higher and lower centers of brain are united to form singleness of purpose. Elbows bent, shoulder joint gently stretched. The shoulder blades and lower back are brought into a helpful neutral position with core muscles active. These muscles help maintain good posture and your physiotherapist can show you exercises to help strengthen these. By raising our hands in the beginning of the prayer for takbeer, we stretch the fingers, shoulder and all anterior arm muscles, and cause the elbows to flex. Several studies have been made about the movement of the muscles when we start standing up, then raising both hands placed on the takbir and put on the stomach can enlarge the chest cavity & lungs will feel spacious and move the muscles in both hands. Brain signals are in the most relaxed (<http://www.islamweb.net/en/article>, www.yogamag.net/archives, <http://therapyandislam.weebly.com>, www.medyouth.com/2012, www.onislam.net/english/health, Sayeed and Prakash 2013, Reza et al., 2002, <http://darulfiqh.com>, www.kaheel7.com/eng).

Quayam/Qiyam (standing) (Figure 2): Duration: 40-60 seconds. Place hands, right over left. Then Recite first chapter of the Qur'an and a short chapter of at least three verses should be recited from the Holy Qur'an. Upon standing, body weight is evenly distributed so that the back does not take all the strain, and the neck and shoulders are relaxed. Beneficial Effects: Body and mind feel relaxed and balanced as the weight of the body is evenly distributed on both legs. Backbone is straight, and breathing is natural and invigorating. Control of thoughts and concentration of mind become easier on account of focusing the eyes steadily on the spot of Sajda. Extends concentration, causes further relaxation of legs and back, generates feelings of humility, modesty and piety.

While reciting more verses from the Quran, the sound vibrations of the long vowels ā, ī, and ū stimulate the heart, thyroid, pineal gland, pituitary, adrenal glands, and lungs, purifying and uplifting them all. Standing posture in Namaz (Qiya'm) ensures proper blood flow the lower portion of the body. It is also good in strengthening the leg muscles.

(<http://www.islamweb.net/en/article>, www.yogamag.net/archives, <http://therapyandislam.weebly.com>, www.medyouth.com/2012, www.onislam.net/english/health, Sayeed and Prakash 2013, Reza et al., 2002, <http://darulfiqh.com>, www.kaheel7.com/eng).

Rukoo /Ruku (Bowing), (Figure 3): Duration: 12 seconds. When bow, the body bent forward, and his hands were on top of the knees and hips parallel to the floor. Bend at:3 Position waist, place hands on knees with fingers spread. Back is parallel to ground, such that if a glass were on the back, it would not spill. Eyes are looking down, directly ahead. Do not bend the knees. While bending at the waist, recite Allah Akbar, then, Subhana Rabbi Al Azim. Upon bowing (ruku), we stretch the trunk, back, pelvis, hip, thighs and leg muscles, in addition to shoulders, arms and neck muscles. The action of bowing followed by redressing is a very useful exercise for the weak back by regularly, stretching the back muscles. These muscles are called erector spinae; they span the entire length of the vertebral column, providing resistance that helps control the action of bending over at the waist. If not properly exercised, these muscles go into spasms, causing back pain. This position is capable of moving the segmentation spine, collarbone, and pelvis. Ruku' in right posture can slow the aging process; improve water balance in the body and smooth the function of the kidneys. The movement of the right bow can prevent, treat and rehabilitate back pain. This is because when bent, lumbar muscles located in the back of the body will contract and rest when the body is fully bent. Ruku' can also reduce the risk of nerve compression thus promoting flexibility of the spine. Fully stretches the muscles of the lower back, thighs and calves. Blood is pumped towards the upper half of the body. This is an effective pose for elimination of flatulence and excess fat. Spine is made supple and spinal nerves are nourished; backaches and pains are relieved. Also provides effective relief in cases of constipation. Tones muscles of stomach, abdomen and kidneys. Tones up calf and thigh muscles, backbone, abdomen, kidneys, etc. Over time, this posture improves the personality, generating sweet kindness and inner harmony. Muscles of the lower back and back of the thighs and calves are fully stretched as the waist is bent. Control of bending the lower back and hips works core muscles, both in forward bending and returning to standing position. The forward bending position of Namaz (Ruk'u) is good for your lower vertebral column. It helps to ease your back pain as per Yogic philosophy. Doing Ruku properly helps to control backache and vertebral column related diseases. Namaz Ruku is effective in developing flexibility to shoulder, elbows wrist, knees and ankle regions. Ruku exerts abdominal pressure thereby eases constipation and peristaltic movements.

During Ruku, the kidney experiences a sort of massage thus helpful to kidney problems (<http://www.islamweb.net/en/article>,www.yogamag.net/archives,<http://therapyandislam.weebly.com>, www.medyouth.com/2012, www.onislam.net/english/health, Sayeed and Prakash 2013, Rezaet al., 2002, <http://darulfiqh.com>, www.kaheel7.com/eng, gyanunlimited.com).

Quanta/Qauma (Straight standing)/ Returning to Fig. 1 (Figure 4): Duration: 6 seconds. While rising from the bending position of ruku, recite Sami Allahu Li-man Hamidah , Rabbana wa lakal Hamd . Then return to standing position, arms at side. It is a dynamic posture which involves standing up without any support, so that the entire weight of the body is on the toes. Beneficial Effects: This exercises the backbone, thighs, knees and leg muscles, increasing strength by daily repetition. The person who regularly offers namaz in this posture will be free from backache and any degenerative disease of the joints, like osteoarthritis of the knees, during his lifetime. Fresh blood pumped towards the upper half of the body now returns to its normal route. The body is again in a relaxed and evenly balanced position(<http://www.islamweb.net/en/article>,www.yogamag.net/archives,<http://therapyandislam.weebly.com>, www.medyouth.com/2012, www.onislam.net/english/health, Sayeed and Prakash 2013, Rezaet al., 2002, <http://darulfiqh.com>, www.kaheel7.com/eng).

Sajida/Prostration (Prostration) (Figure 5): Duration: 12 seconds. Lower yourself slowly into a kneeling position. Place both hands on knees and lower yourself slowly and easily into a kneeling position. Then touch the head and hands to the ground. The following seven body parts should be in contact with the ground: forehead, two palms, two knees and toes of both feet. Recite Allah Akbar while going down and then, Subhana Rabiil al-Ala (3 time). Worshipers start out standing, then bow at the waist until their upper bodies are parallel with the floor, with their hands pressed against the knees. They then return to a standing position (still reciting supplications, or prayers) before kneeling down to the fully prostrate position – foreheads fully touching the ground. After prostration, worshipers sit up on their knees briefly before returning to a final prostrating. The cycle then starts again. Each stage in this cycle of prayer lasts a few seconds, and the whole cycle lasts between 30 seconds and a full minute. Prostrating also exercises the same muscles that bowing does, with more stress on the neck, toes and legs. As the practitioner returns to the fourth position for a second time, the repetition of this pose within a few seconds produces a beneficial effect on the respiratory, circulatory and nervous systems. During Prostration, many of the muscles and joints can be moved. The entire body weight is supported on the muscles of the hands, legs, chest, stomach, back, neck and leg muscles. Sitting between the two Prostration will move the heel, hip, groin, toes and other. The habit of bending the toes while Prostration can increased rates of fat burning in the body and lowers the risk of heart disease. Research shows Prostration position is useful for someone who suffers from high blood pressure. This is because when Prostration; heart rate is low, and this can reduce the blood pressure. Done Prostration, we will sit between the two Prostration and again will fall down and get up qiyam; this movement will automatically move a large number of muscles in the chest, shoulders, arms, abdomen, buttocks, thighs, and legs. The fresh blood returns, carrying away toxins. Body regains relaxation and releases tension. It helps pump blood into the brain and upper half of the body, including eyes, ears, nose and lungs. Repetition of the deep prostration within a few seconds cleanses the respiratory circulatory, and nervous system. Gives experience of lightness of body and emotional happiness. Oxygenation of entire body is accomplished. Balances sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. Blood goes into upper parts of body, especially the head (Including eyes, ears and nose) and lungs. When you do Prostration there is drainage of sinuses and there are fewer chances that a person will have sinusitis, that is inflammation of the sinus, this drainage of module sinus, of the frontal sinus, and a person has less chances of having inflammation of the sinus, that is sinusitis. There are various benefits. [For example], when a person does Prostration even the bronchitis's, the secretion of the bronchitis, they get drained, there are less chances of having bronchitis. When you do Prostration, there is increased venes return there is less chance of having hernia, etc. Due to posture in Prostration there is less chances of having hemorrhoid that is piles. Prostration is very beneficial in the proper functioning of brain, lungs, body muscles, joints and entire vertebral column. Prostration helps to maintain smooth blood to the brain region, and also stimulates the master gland pituitary gland as well as the pineal gland. Prostration reduces the chances of brain hemorrhage and headache due to smooth blood flow to the head region. While performing Prostration, the toes are experiencing acupressure which is good for better health of the body, especially for body pains. The most important function in Namaz is Prostration where we touch the ground with our forehead. This posture increases fresh supply of blood to our brain (www.gyanunlimited.com/health, www.nairaland.com/474021, www.yogamag.net/archives, herapyandislam.weebly.com, www.medyouth.com/2012, www.onislam.net/english/health,

Sayed and Prakash 2013, darulfiqh.com, www.kaheel7.com/eng, www.patheos.com/blogs/2012, Reza et al., 2002,).

Effect of Prostration

1-Effect on muscles: When a person goes to the position of prostration his whole body is in an active motion. In this position, the Musalli (the person who offers prayer) rests his forehead on the ground while his hands are placed at the sides. This brings most of the body muscles, if not all, in active motion and gives them some exercise. The hands are then stretched out in a manner such that the forearm as well as arm muscles bear the weight in the Prostration position. This is good exercise for the muscles of the upper limbs. The Prophet in a *Hadeeth* advised people not to put the forearms flatly on the ground but to keep them elevated above the ground. From the physical point of view, this is better for the forearm and arm muscles (Ghorbani and Moosavi).

2-Effect on blood circulation: Prostration is a unique position as this is the only position in which brain (or head) becomes lower than the heart, and hence the blood gushes towards the brain with full force, whereas in all other positions (even when lying down) the brain is above the heart when it has to work against gravity to send blood to the brain. In the position of *Prostration*, due to the increased blood supply, the brain receives more nourishment, which has a good effect upon memory, vision, hearing, concentration, psyche and all other cognitive abilities. People who offer their prayers regularly may have stronger willpower and can cope with the difficulties of life in much better ways. They are less vulnerable to headaches, psychological problems and other disorders of the cognitive functions (Ghorbani and Moosavi).

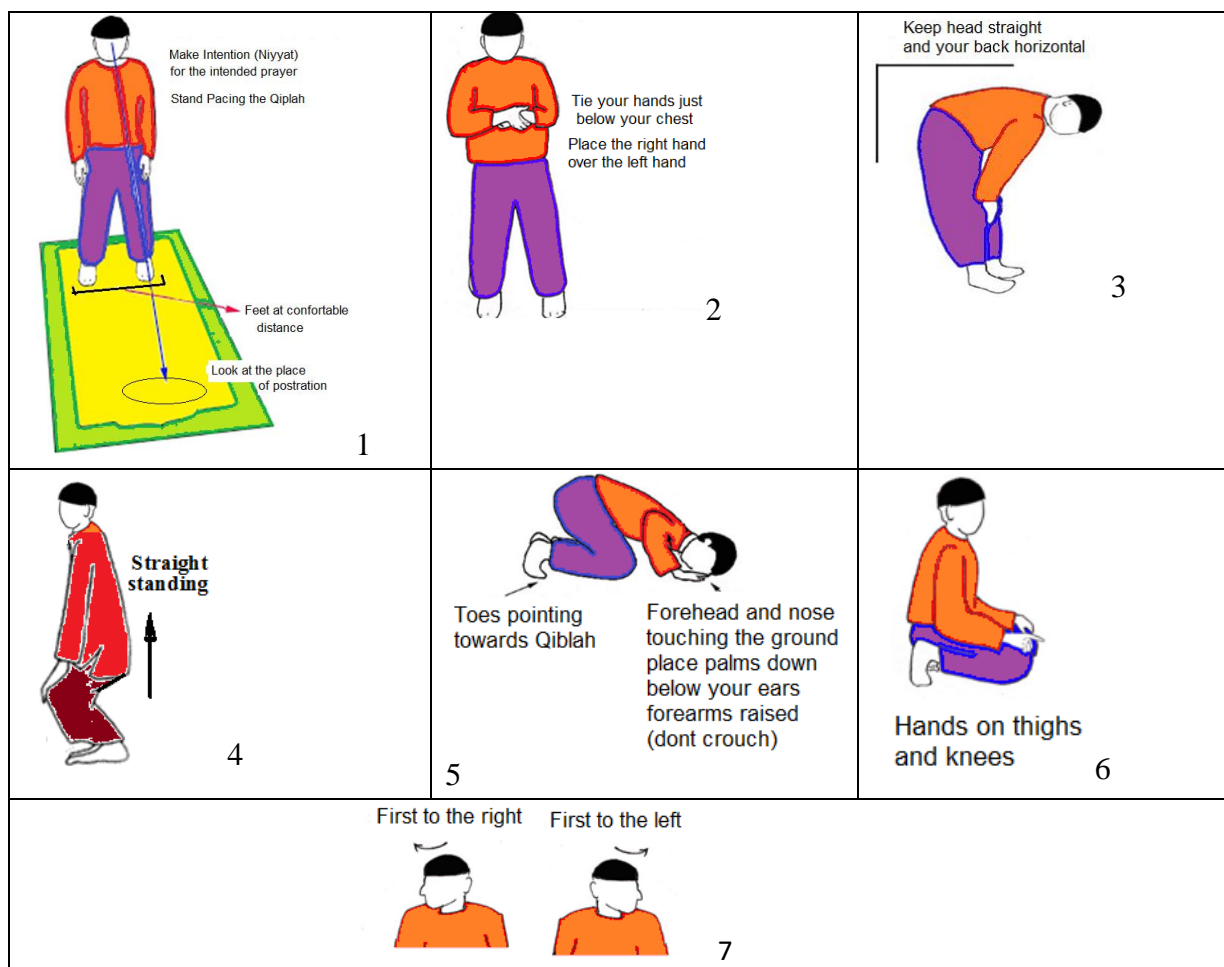
3- Effect on neck muscles: In the unique position of Prostration the neck muscles get the best exercise. They have to bear the load when the forehead touches the ground; hence, the neck muscles become stronger. One can note the tense pressure at the neck muscles in the position of Prostration, specially the active motion of the neck and the facial muscles when the head is lifted. And it will be observed that they are in a very active state. Stronger cervical muscles mean the cervical vertebra will be better protected. The strength of the cervical muscles is important, as the head rests upon cervical vertebra, supported by cervical musculature. In fact, the head performs rotator movements over the cervical vertebra. In case of an accident, examination of the cervical (neck) region is especially important to physicians. It is uncommon that a person who offers his prayers regularly will get common neck ailments like myalgias or cervical spondylosis, because the neck muscles in particular become very strong due to the Prostrations offered daily in five prayers (Ghorbani and Moosavi).

4-Effect on internal organs and muscles: The position of the Prostration is also said to be a good treatment for the retroversion of the uterus, a disease of women. Most of us do not know that the position of Prostration is an excellent exercise for men. While rising from Prostration the perineal muscles pull the trunk back to sitting position and they contract actively. Similarly, while getting up from Prostration, the perineal muscles are again actively mobilized and this gives strengthens the muscles associated with the male reproductive system. The unique position of Prostration also has positive effects upon the back muscles as while going into Prostration and getting up from it the back muscle contract actively and they become stronger. Probably, it is because of this reason that a person who is regular in prayers

seldom gets a backache. After performing Prostration either the Musalli stands up or he sits to pray. In this position the person sits calmly while his hands rest at his thighs which are folded backwards. This has a soothing effect upon one's health and mental condition. Prophet Muhammad, used to lengthen the position of Ruku' (bending) and Prostration and advised others to do so, as well (Ghorbani and Moosavi).

Jalsa/Tashahhud/Sitting: Quood (Figure 6): Sitting between the two Prostrations: Duration 6 seconds. This hardy pose is like vajrasana. Reciting Allah Akbar, rise and assume the sitting Posture. Sitting Tahayatul Awal & sitting Tahayatul Akhir: Duration: 10-30 seconds. Again the fresh blood which was pumped towards the upper half of the body now returns to normal circulation. This is the best pose for relaxing the muscles, including those related to the spine. This pose stimulates circulation in the nerves and muscles of the thighs. It eliminates indigestion and constipation, and is beneficial in the case of peptic ulcer or other stomach ailments. The pattern of bending the toes while sitting between the two Prostration, sitting Tahayatul Awal and Tahayatul Akhir are able to increase the rate of fat burning in the body and lowers the risk of heart disease. The right heel bent and the other feet weight is on it. This position helps remove poisons (toxins) from the body and move the muscle in the colon. This position enables the body to comfortably rest and help in digestion. Muscles at the front of the ankle and foot stretched, with toes extended, knee and hip flexed. Lower back in good posture will help to strengthen core muscles. In tashah'hud position, our hip, elbow, knee joints, backbone, wrist joints move in a way that it provides a form of relaxation to our entire body. Pressure is applied on the body parts as if it was a kind of massage which releases tension. (<http://www.islamweb.net/en/article>, www.yogamag.net/archives, Reza et al., 2002, <http://therapyandislam.weebly.com>, www.medyouth.com/2012, Sayeed and Prakash 2013, www.onislam.net/english/health, <http://darulfiqh.com>, www.kaheel7.com/eng).

Peace to the right and left (sitting) (Figure 7): Finally, as we say the final salutation (tasleem) at the end of the prayer, turning the head to the right and left massages the neck muscles and increases their flexibility. This is especially useful for people in sedentary jobs who sit in front of their monitors all day long, and then complain of neck strain. Physical Benefits: Turning the head to each side improves the range of motion of the neck, stretching muscles with gentle repeated movements. Health benefits of Sala'm (Neck Yoga): Salam is the excellent form of neck and upper vertebra exercise. Salam helps to refresh all the nerves passes through the neck, thus good in case of headache and contend migraine (www.gyanunlimited.com/health).



Conclusion

Namaz has multiple many health and fitness benefits. Some of the important physical health benefits are as follow: Namaz is one of the important means for health, happiness and harmony. Offering regular Namaz keeps one fit and healthy by burning extra calories thereby losing weight. Namaz is one of the effective ways for weight loss as well as to control obesity. Namaz stretches your muscles and helps to provide tone body. It is good to overcome arthritis as Namaz is good to enhance flexibility of the body and reduces stiffness. Your body goes through a unique exercise during the Namaz. So, you get a flexible and healthy body. Namaz is a good source to balance Anabolic and Catabolic bio-chemical process of the body. Namaz is good for heart, brain, above all for the entire body. During Prostration, your brain gets more blood supply. It sharpens your memory. When you stand up during Namaz, your eyes are centered to the namaz. It improves your concentration. It improves your body structure. You get rid of any malfunction of your body. Namaz is an excellent form of exercise to prevent indigestion. In the morning when stomach is empty, a Muslim is required to offer fewer number of Rak'aat whereas in the evening after the dinner we offer an extra number of Rak'aat. If you are bulky or weigh more than you should, then regular physical exercise will help you lose weight. It will increase the supply oxygen in your body. Your brain will get more oxygen, so you will be able to work more rapidly and accurately.

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