

## Chiropractic and Yoga: Helping Patients Learn to Help Themselves

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Chiropractic and yoga therapy have a lot in common. Chiropractic believes in the innate ability of the body to heal itself; so does yoga. We believe in balance and coordination, homeostasis of all structural, physiological and psychological functions of our body; so does yoga. We create structural balance through manipulation of the skeletal system, while yoga achieves it through time-tested, do-it-yourself decompression / stretching and strengthening movements.

I have treated many of the leaders within the yoga movement during the 41 years I have been in practice, including Yogi Bhanan, Bikram, Anna Forrest, Dr. Larry Payne, Dotti Candler and many, more. At my [International Sports Science Institute](#) in Los Angeles, I have always had yoga classes, and we have modified yoga movements to enhance our athletes and non-athletes' ability to perform.

I have learned that yoga students, as well as teachers, are athletes with the desire to be their best. If they are out of alignment and cannot balance their bodies themselves, they seek chiropractic care. The symbiotic relationship between chiropractic and yoga is a no-brainer.

There is also a symbiotic relationship between chiropractic, meditation and Ayurveda ("science of life"), which is a sister science of yoga. Ayurvedic medicine is the fastest-growing area in sports science today. Doctors of chiropractic can greatly benefit by learning about it. Based upon the most recent yoga census, there are more than 20 million yoga students and over 100,000 certified yoga teachers in the U.S. This presents one of the greatest opportunities for the chiropractic profession to expand our influence nationally and internationally. D.D. and B.J. Palmer would be proud.

I want to encourage our profession to get involved and share in this golden opportunity to help tens of thousands of yoga teachers, which in turn influences millions of yoga students to learn more about chiropractic and the services our profession offers. There is a new branch of yoga being taught at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, offering an academic certification in four levels, including clinical internship for yoga instructors who have completed a three-year course in yoga therapy. The Loyola Marymount University program was inspired by [Larry Payne, PhD](#).

In 1984, Larry and I created the first Yoga Therapy Department at the International Sports Science Institute, which he developed into the aforementioned accredited certification program. Dr. Payne is world-renowned as an educator, author and teacher / practitioner of yoga. He is a chiropractic advocate and an inspiring lecturer who would be great to invite to annual state conventions. If chiropractic is going to benefit from the fast-moving tidal wave of yoga referrals, you'd better start learning more about what this art and science has to offer. Dr. Payne has authored several books on yoga including *Yoga for Dummies*, *Yoga Rx* and *The Business of Teaching Yoga*; as well as eight DVDs.

Loyola Marymount University course curriculum and teaching staff have included doctors of chiropractic, MDs and physical therapists since the course's conception. Rick Morris, DC, has played a major role in helping Dr. Payne develop a comprehensive yoga therapy evaluation course

and DVD to instruct yoga therapists on testing orthopedic range of motion, in order to develop an effective protocol measuring musculoskeletal strength, flexibility, quality of life, and breath / lung capacity. Another chiropractor who has been of great support to Dr. Payne is Eden Goldman, DC, who is a contributing author to a book in progress on yoga titled *The Ultimate Yoga Therapy Book*.

It is time to become proactive and get involved. To find a certified yoga instructor near you, go to the International Association of Yoga Therapist (IAYT) [website](#). Simply type in your zip code, hit "search" and a list will appear with your local yoga therapist contacts. Other yoga information sources include the *Yoga Journal's* online [teacher directory](#).

Many yoga therapists are looking for jobs / internships in chiropractic offices. This is an interesting reinforcing opportunity for both professions to benefit and share information to help our patients. If you have never participated in yoga, meditated or studied Ayurveda, your journey of enlightenment is about to begin.

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For additional information, read Dr. Payne's article, "[What Is Yoga?](#)" in the June 20, 2013 issue of the *Huffington Post* online (HuffPost Healthy Living Blog).

NOVEMBER 2013