

IELTS READING

Match headings 7

- In this task, there are more headings than sections, so read the sections first. (If there were the same number of sections as headings, it would be a good idea to read the headings first.)
- For each section of the passage, read the beginning and the end. Some of the sentences are long so there is no need to read the whole sentence. Underline some key words.
- Read the headings next. If they are long, underline some key words.
- You may now already be able to match some of the headings to the sections.
- Look at the remaining sections in more detail to help you match them to the headings.

The Science of Yoga

The term yoga comes from the Sanskrit word 'yujī' meaning yoke or union. Yoga is said to unite the mind and body. There are many different forms but all include physical poses, meditation and breathing exercises intended to bring relaxation and stress reduction. It's physical and mental benefits have been lauded for centuries and now science can back up some of these claims.

A number of studies have looked at the effect of yoga on stress. Research carried out in 2005 by Andreas Michalsen of the University of Duisberg- Essen in Germany, followed 24 women suffering from emotional distress on a three-month yoga programme. Findings showed a significant reduction in their levels of cortisol which is the primary stress hormone. Their levels of anxiety, stress, fatigue and depression also dropped considerably.

A comparable study was carried out in 2007 at the University of South Australia by researcher Caroline Smith, in this case, comparing the effect of yoga and relaxation on stress and anxiety. Smith's work with 131 people over a period of 10 weeks showed similar results. In addition, yoga did appear to provide a comparable improvement in stress, anxiety and health status compared to relaxation.

Another area of health that has been subject to research is heart health. Scientists at the Department of Physiology, Government College, Nagpur, focused their research on the effect of yoga on the cardiovascular system in subjects over 40 years old. The results were encouraging with Vijay Bharshankar reporting that, "participants over 40 years of age who practiced yoga for five years had a lower blood pressure and pulse rate than those who didn't".

Other research suggests that making yoga a part of a healthy lifestyle can actually help to slow the progression of heart disease. A study on 113 patients with heart disease conducted by Dr J. Yogendra of The Yoga Institute, Santacruz, Mumbai, looked at the effects of a lifestyle change that included one year of yoga training combined with dietary modifications and stress management. The encouraging results showed an average decrease in cholesterol of 23% and the progression of heart disease stopped in 47% of patients. While it was unclear how much of a role yoga had versus other factors like diet, yoga was shown to reduce stress which is one of the major contributors to heart disease.

**The Science of Yoga**

Look at the following ideas (Questions 1–4) and the list of researchers below.

Match each idea with the correct researcher, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.

Write the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**, in the boxes 1–4 on your answer sheet.

- 1 the importance of yoga in decreasing the main hormone linked to stress
- 2 the advantage of yoga compared to relaxation in decreasing stress and anxiety
- 3 the significance of yoga in relation to existing cases of heart disease
- 4 the connection between practicing yoga and improvements in the circulatory system

List of Researchers

- A** Caroline Smith
- B** Jayadeva Yogendra
- C** Andreas Michalsen
- D** Vijay Bharshankar