



**International Society for Heart & Lung Transplantation**  
[www.isHLT.org](http://www.isHLT.org)

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### **Yoga Shows Promise as Way to Improve Quality of Life in Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (PAH) Patients**

**Washington, D.C. (April, 28, 2016)** – Today at the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation (ISHLT) Meeting & Scientific Sessions, researchers from the Universities of Calgary and Alberta in Canada presented findings from a study testing the effects of Iyengar Yoga (IY) on patients suffering from varying stages of Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (PAH). The study was aimed at determining if two-hour IY sessions over 12 weeks would improve health-related quality of life, particularly in patients suffering anxiety and depression. The results show that with a regimen of IY, patients reduced their levels of anxiety and depression while showing no adverse effects to the treatment therapy. Researchers are hopeful the results will lead to an adoption of IY into the patients' management of PAH, and those with other chronic lung disease.

The study looked at 48 patients with varying levels of PAH severity. Researchers sought to improve the health-related quality of life by specifically reducing anxiety and depression. By analyzing patients using the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS), Chronic Respiratory Questionnaire (CRQ) and a 6-minute walk test, the study tested IY effectiveness. The HADS-anxiety score was reduced by 2.25 from the baseline of 6.97 and HADS-depression reduced by 2.78 from the baseline 7.81 score.

"This study provides evidence that alternative therapies such as Iyengar Yoga may be effective in improving the quality of life for a patient suffering from PAH," said Andrew Fisher, FRCP, Ph.D., 2016 ISHLT Meeting and Scientific Session Program Chair. "A highlight in the findings is that this therapy did not result in adverse side effects to the patient, which is promising as a supportive approach for PAH patients."

IY was created by [B.K.S. Iyengar](#), a yoga guru from India who has been credited for bringing yoga to the western world. What makes IY unique is its emphasis on using props during a session, along with a high level attention paid to alignment. The use of props is designed to make yoga accessible to anyone, and is one of the primary reasons it was the exercise of choice for the study.

PAH is a chronic, life-threatening disorder characterized by abnormally high blood pressure in the arteries between the heart and lungs of an affected individual.

The symptoms of PAH are nonspecific and can range from mild breathlessness and fatigue during normal daily activity to symptoms of right heart failure and severe restrictions on exercise capacity and ultimately reduced life expectancy. PAH is one group within the classification of pulmonary hypertension (PH).

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### **About ISHLT**

The International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation (ISHLT) is a not-for-profit professional organization with more than 2,700 members from over 45 countries dedicated to improving the care of patients with advanced heart or lung disease through transplantation, mechanical support and innovative therapies via research, education and advocacy. For more information, visit [www.isHLT.org](http://www.isHLT.org).

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