

## One more benefit of yoga: Improved sperm quality

According to the study conducted by AIIMS, daily yoga routine significantly improves sperm quality. The study, published in Nature Review Urology, an international medical journal, was conducted by experts in department of anatomy at AIIMS in collaboration with the department of Urology and Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

The study was conducted on 200 men who practiced yoga for six months. Dr Rima Dada, professor in-charge of laboratory of molecular reproduction and genetics, department of anatomy at AIIMS said they observed a significant decline in seminal oxidative stress (within 21 days) and improvement in DNA quality. “There was decrease in inflammation and normalisation in levels of sperm transcripts and maintenance of telomere length. There was reduction in severity of depression, stress and anxiety scores,” she added.

Sperm DNA damage leads to increased chances of de-novo germ line mutations and accumulation of mutagenic bases. This leads to the offspring being at increased risk of genetic and epigenetic disorders. The major cause of DNA damage is oxidative stress, a condition in which there is an imbalance between free radical levels and anti-oxygen capacity in the body. The male germ cell is the most vulnerable to oxidative stress.

These factors are preventable and simple modifications in our lifestyle can positively improve the DNA quality, which in turn can reduce incidents of male infertility. Performing yoga regularly reduces oxidative stress, decreases DNA damage and aids in maintenance of telomere lengths, Dr Dada added.