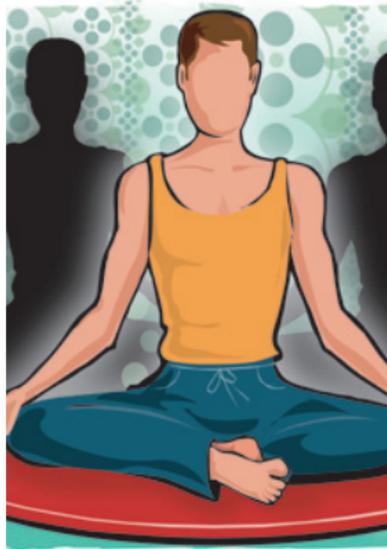


Take a deep breath...to learn more!

Meditative Breathing Aids Learned Muscle Movements

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Ahmedabad: In a study published in Scientific Reports, a journal by Nature, titled "Deep Breathing Practice Facilitates Retention of Newly Learned Motor Skills", Goldy Yadav, a PhD student, and IIT-Gandhinagar assistant professor Pratik Mutha show that a 30-minute session of deep, alternative-nostril meditative breathing, also known as 'paced deep breathing,' im-



proves capacity to retain newly learned motor skills.

The finding might be useful for artists, sportspersons, and disabled people, researchers said. Rhythmic breathing is part of a number of international well-

ness practices such as yoga. "We had two groups of young volunteers practise tracing a narrow path within two concentric circles on a tablet in two seconds," said Mutha.

"After the practice session, students in one group were made to do the breathing exercise for 30 minutes, while the students in the other group were asked to relax."

When students were told to trace the lines again after the break, the researchers found that the group that did the breathing exercise performed strikingly better than the other group.

"We are yet to determine the exact reason for the phe-

nomenon," Mutha said. "But for the first time, a study has found the facilitatory effect of deep meditative breathing techniques on skill retention, not just immediately after the breathing exercise, but also up to 24 hours later." More re-

search is required to understand various facets of the phenomenon and its applications, he said.

The study says that the results open up the possibility of incorporating breathing exercises in neuro-rehabilitation paradigms. Such regimens provide motor re-training and retention of movements lost due to neurological injuries.

IIT-GANDHINAGAR STUDY