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You Are Never Too Old To Swing.

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ABSTRACT

Unknowingly swing was incorporated in our tradition. However, in present day high-tech life style, people do not believe the importance of simple things. Hence the present article was undertaken with the intent of clarifying the present knowledge about swing and physiology of body. Swinging will stimulate vestibular apparatus, which is present in the inner ear and provides information essential for sense of equilibrium and for coordinating head movements with eye and postural movements. Gravity is the essential fact of life on earth; therefore it is not strange that the vestibular system, which relates us to gravity, is very closely connected with the entire physiology of the body. Swing can be incorporated in our routine day life style. Hence we conclude that swinging promotes health and recommend using the swing by all the age groups.

Keywords: Swing, Vestibular stimulation.

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INTRODUCTION

Swing means cause to move to and fro, sway, or oscillate, as something suspended from above [1]. The word *śikya* was used in Srimad Bhagavatam which means hanging by a swing [2]. Swings are an important staple of any playground, as well as in the backyards of many families [3]. In north Indian people used to pray for rains by swinging upside down (Figure 1). In Indian traditional houses especially in South India a swing for adults will be installed at the centre of the house to sit and pass time thinking about important matters and to relax (Figure 2) [4]. In kerala traditional architecture, "Aattu kattil": a swinging piece of wood, wide and long enough for two or three persons to sit. Four corners of this wooden piece will be firmly fixed with thick coir to the roof in large living rooms.

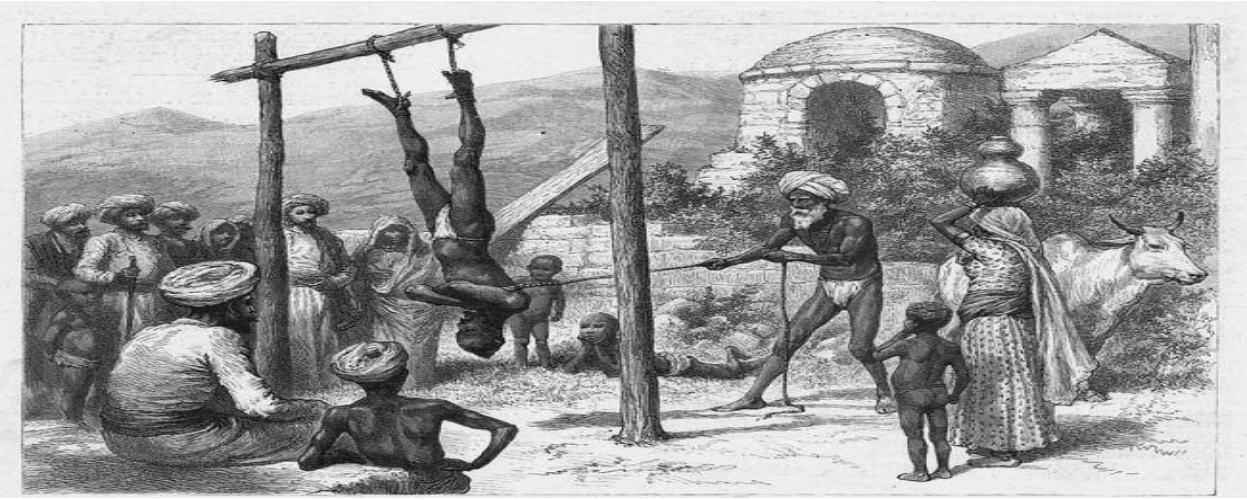

Figure 1: North Indian ritual of swinging upside down.

Figure 2:The swing for adults – to sit and pass time thinking about important matters and to relax.

In south Indian Bramhin weddings the marrying couples are seated on a swing (Oonchal). They rock forth and back, as the ladies around sing Laali songs to praise to the couple. The chains of the swing signify the eternal Karmic link with Almighty above; the to-and-fro motion represent the undulating sea-waves of life; yet, in mind and body they shall move in harmony unperturbed, steady and stable [5]. Jhulana-yatra is a festival to celebrate Radha Krishna's pastime of swinging on a golden swing everyday until Balarama-purnima [6]. Onam is an ancient festival which still survives in modern times. The swing is another integral part of Onam, especially in the rural areas. Young men and women, decked in their best, sing *Onappaatt*, or Onam songs, and rock one another on swings slung from high branches [7]. Atla Tadde is a traditional festival celebrated by

married Hindu women of Andhra region in Andhra Pradesh, India, for the health and long life of their husbands and people swings in uyyala (swing) [8]. Raja Parba or Mithuna Sankranti is a four day long festival where girls plays swing tied on tree branches [9]. Teej is the festival of swings.

It is celebrated in Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarpradesh, Madhyapradesh, Chattisgharh, Bihar [10]. Unknowingly swing was incorporated in our tradition and life style. However, in present day high-tech life style, people do not believe the importance of simple things. Hence the present article was undertaken with the intent of clarifying the present knowledge about benefits of swinging.

Swing and physiology of body

All of us are having vestibular system and it is one of the first sensory-system that starts functioning in the course of early development. Swinging will stimulate vestibular apparatus, which is present in the inner ear and provides information essential for sense of equilibrium and for coordinating head movements with eye and postural movements. Gravity is the essential fact of life on earth; therefore it is not strange that the vestibular system, which relates us to gravity, is very closely connected with the entire physiology of the body [11].

Benefits of swing

Swings offer help with sensory integration. Swinging provides essential vestibular movement to help children achieve normal developmental milestones, calming them and letting them have fun [12]. The soothing motion of swinging soothes, relaxes and increases concentration. Children who have trouble focusing on tasks such as reading or math, might find it easier to concentrate sitting in a hammock chair, their bodies engaged in a soothing motion [13]. Babies to whom vestibular stimulation is provided showed more advanced development of reflexes and motor skills [14].

On swing the feeling of weightlessness for a split of a second at each of the pendulum, feeling the wind as you accelerate down, hitting the bottom of the pendulum in full speed with extra g-force on your body is exciting. To laugh and be happy is most beneficial to both our physical and mental health. [15] Swinging helps to improve the depth of focus of eyes. While swinging the fluid in the inner ear is constantly swirling back and forth, which is great for the development of balance [15]. For every hour you swing, you burn 200 calories. Swinging is different than most workout programs, as it can make you feel like a kid again. You can get fit and spend time outdoors [16]. It is an activity that the whole family can do. If you are taking your kids to the park to play, join them [17]. Swing fitness can condition the joints, muscles, tendons and ligaments -- basically, most of the body. It can be adjusted to fit your fitness level or lack thereof [17]. One of the newest and most popular therapies for developmentally delayed children is vestibular stimulation. Controlled vestibular stimulation by swing can be applied not only as an intervention for learning disability but also to relieve stress, cancer pain, to promote sleep to improve immunity and also to treat endocrine disorders [17-26].

Disadvantages of swing

Some people, for poorly understood reasons, especially sensitive to particular motions that activate vestibular apparatus and cause symptoms of dizziness and nausea. This sensitivity is called as motion sickness [27].

CONCLUSION

Swing can be incorporated in our routine day life style.. Hence we conclude that swinging promotes health and recommend using the swing by all the age groups.

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