



# The Role of Kathak Dance on Body Composition



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### ABSTRACT

Indian classical dancing has a glorious tradition and is still popular. Kathak is a typical form of Indian classical dancing originating in northern India. Besides rhythmic footwork, other basic elements of Kathak include linear and circular extension of the body with controlled coordination between body and hand and accordingly this dance form may have some impact on body composition. Regular practicing Kathak dance has significant beneficial effect on maintaining favorable body composition. Dance, sequence of non-verbal rhythmic body movements with creative nature and scope for expression, it has been an enjoyable experience through centuries. Dance is regarded as a not only art form with technical and expressive aspect but also sports form due to its high physiological capacity. It is important to understand the physiology of strain on the dancers since dance performance is regarded as a sports form as well as an art form.

**Key words:** Indian dancing, Indian Classical, Kathak Dance, Body composition, Dance, physiology, Dance science.

### Introduction

Dance is a sequence of non-verbal rhythmic body movements with creative nature and scope for expression. It has been an enjoyable experience through centuries. Dancing also reduces stress and increases stamina. Obesity has a far-ranging negative effect on health. Reduced energy expenditure and intake of high calorie food are the major reasons behind it. Physical activity, any form of muscular activity, results in the expenditure of energy proportional to muscular work and it is related to physical fitness. Exercise represents a subset of physical activity that is planned with a goal of improving or maintaining fitness. Dance is mainly an integrated art form between technical and expressive aspects. In addition, since most dance performance is required high physiological capacity due to its characteristics included a moderate- high intensity, high skill, and predominantly intermittent activity. Dance science has been growing and is a relatively new field, thus it needs to be known and be taught to dancers how to improve their performance as well as how to ensure the appropriate preparation within their training.

## Effect of Kathak Dancing on Body Composition

Kathak, a typical form of Indian classical dancing originates in northern India. It involves rhythmic footwork, linear and circular extension of the body with controlled coordination between body and hand. In this dance all the body parts move smoothly, and it demands high level of physical activity. There are some special movements like skips, jumps and turns in all direction which ensures better posture and flexibility. It also prevents back and neck pain in today's otherwise sedentary lifestyle where people spend long hours before the computer monitor. In Kathak dance, the dancer puts her weight on the floor and taps the feet to rhythm with ankle bells or 'Ghungroos' secured round the ankles. These ankle bells are very important for the dancer. It is very energy consuming and brings about an active lifestyle.

Kathak dancing exercise might play an important role in the prevention of becoming overweight and obese reducing the risk of obesity in adulthood. The positive influence of this training on the reduction of the body fat could be noted. The kathak dance consisted of a combination of numerous movements and hand swings in different directions with simultaneous skips and leg movements. Regular dancing activity prevents unhealthy weight gain and obesity, whereas sedentary behaviors such as watching television promote them. Regular exercise can markedly reduce body weight and fat mass without dietary caloric restriction in overweight individuals. An increase in total energy expenditure appears to be the most important determinant of successful exercise-induced weight loss.

Kathak Dance is an enjoyable health promoting physical activity. This physical activity appeals to some who may not be active and therefore may be another alternative of exercise. Dance for health has become an important factor in the prevention, treatment and management in several health circumstances. It is not only significant for your physical health but it also contributes to your mental health and subsidizes social communication. Dancing can be a way to stay fit for people of all ages, shapes and sizes. It has a wide range of physical and mental benefits including:

- improved condition of your heart and lungs
- increased muscular strength, endurance and motor fitness
- increased aerobic fitness

- improved muscle tone and strength
- weight management
- better coordination, agility and flexibility
- improved balance and spatial awareness
- increased physical confidence
- improved mental functioning
- improved general and psychological wellbeing
- greater self-confidence and self-esteem
- better social skills.

Kathak is a stimulus that affects the body in its entirety. The fast footwork helps to release anger and tension. The 'Thaat' performed in this dance form includes the therapeutic torso movements and it is now used for the treatment purpose also as a form of physical exercise. Kathak signifies the importance of dance and is the revolutionary new way to communicate.

### **Energy System in Dance**

Energy source varies during various activities. With dance, depending on different forms the energy source also varies. The field of exercise physiology encompasses knowledge about different energy systems and how they come into play. Getting knowledge about energy systems and various training protocols to improve energy sources can aid to improve dance performance. Like in kathak, the dancer performs 'Thaat' in very slow pace, in which dancer hold his energy and release slowly with minute movement of eye, neck and wrist. Whereas in 'Paran' dancer perform very vigorously using the energy and force of whole body. Amalgamation of various aspects of Exercise Physiology like Biomechanics, Motor Control, Kinesiology, and Psychology with dance is widely used. Focusing on these aspects can improve the efficiency and quality of dance performance. Classical dance takes place between sport and art involving rhythm's sense, aesthetic and technical ideals, and a good level of training.

### **Physical Fitness in Dance**

The training system of Indian classical dances are structured in such a way that they generally don't required any extra training. But various training protocols including aerobic training, resistance training as well as combination of both can improve fitness in dancers. It is important to evaluate physical fitness during resting and performance in each individual. Exercise Physiology explains various mechanisms of how different modes of exercise can bring about physiological changes in dancers to improve fitness and it would improve their performance. Various energy systems, analyzing movements and muscle work, providing appropriate training, proper diet and psychological support play important role in the dance. Sometimes dancers may be forced to perform with minor injuries, causing more severe injuries. Many factors that contribute to injury in dancers can be modified. Fatigue and low fitness levels can be circumvented by supplemental training. Insufficient warm-up routines can be revised to better prepare dancers for difficult choreography. In kathak rough surfaces are also implicated, and dancing on even, sprung floors may decrease

injury incidence.

In Indian classical dance kathak, the 'Upaj' and 'Chalan' comprise different foot patterns in various pace and momentum engaging the core muscles, that become one type of cardio exercise. The format of kathak repertoire set in a way that body stimulate with every performance. As the pace of the music and the movement increased, the dancer can easily manage to keep up with the rhythm.

### **Conclusion**

As dance is mainly dealing with physical movements, it has an immense role in health science as well as from the therapeutic point of view. Other cultural aspects like drama also have such type of effect on human health, but the exercise like dance needs much confidence, body control, regular practice and proper movements. Kathak dancing exercise is a cost-effective beneficial way of exercising which has specific beneficial impact on maintaining favorable body composition. Dance activity is frequently described as: complex, diverse, non-steady state, intermittent, of moderate to high intensity, and with not able differences between training and performance intensities and durations. It is important to understand the physiology of strain on the dancers since dance performance is regarded as a sports form as well as an art form.

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