

# Clapping Yoga: An Innovative Holistic Approach to Diabetes Management

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**Abstract:** *Diabetes mellitus remains one of the most pressing global health challenges, affecting millions and causing long-term complications that compromise quality of life<sup>(1)</sup>. Beyond pharmacological and dietary measures, complementary therapies such as Clapping Yoga—a subset of Hasya (Laughter) Yoga—are gaining recognition for their psychophysiological benefits<sup>(2)</sup>. Clapping Yoga integrates rhythmic clapping, laughter, and mindful breathing to improve circulation, reduce stress, and regulate endocrine balance<sup>(3)</sup>. Evidence from small clinical and quasi-experimental studies indicates that laughter-based interventions can lower fasting blood sugar level and postprandial glucose and improve psychological well-being in people with type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM)<sup>(4,5)</sup>. This article explores the mechanisms, benefits, and scientific findings surrounding Clapping Yoga, emphasizing its role as a supportive adjunct in holistic diabetes management<sup>(6)</sup>.*

**Keywords:** Clapping Yoga, Hasya Yoga, Diabetes mellitus, Complementary therapy, Stress reduction, Laughter therapy, Mind-body medicine

## 1. Introduction

Diabetes mellitus, particularly Type 2 diabetes, is a metabolic disorder characterized by chronic hyperglycemia due to insulin resistance or impaired insulin secretion<sup>(1)</sup>. The global prevalence continues to rise, leading to significant economic and health burdens<sup>(2)</sup>. While pharmacotherapy and nutrition remain the foundation of management, the integration of complementary approaches has become increasingly relevant for addressing psychosocial and physiological aspects of chronic disease<sup>(3)</sup>.

Clapping Yoga, derived from Hasya (Laughter) Yoga traditions, combines rhythmic hand clapping, laughter, and controlled breathing<sup>(4)</sup>. This practice not only induces physical stimulation but also enhances emotional resilience by triggering endorphin release and reducing cortisol levels<sup>(5)</sup>. The resulting improvements in mood, circulation, and metabolism make it a simple yet potentially valuable adjunct to standard diabetes care<sup>(6)</sup>.

### The Physiology of Clapping Yoga

The human palms contain numerous acupressure points connected to various organ systems, including the pancreas and cardiovascular system<sup>(7)</sup>. Rhythmic clapping stimulates these nerve endings, promoting peripheral circulation and optimizing oxygen delivery to tissues<sup>(8)</sup>. Enhanced circulation supports pancreatic perfusion and may indirectly improve insulin activity<sup>(9)</sup>.

Additionally, laughter and rhythmic movement engage the parasympathetic nervous system, reducing sympathetic overactivity and stress-induced hyperglycemia<sup>(10)</sup>. The combined effect of physical activation, laughter, and mindfulness in Clapping Yoga facilitates neuroendocrine balance, decreasing cortisol while increasing serotonin and endorphins—biochemical mediators linked to emotional and metabolic health<sup>(3,4)</sup>.

## Benefits of Clapping Yoga in Diabetes Management

- 1) Improved Blood Circulation:** Clapping stimulates microcirculation and enhances oxygen and nutrient transport to vital organs, including the pancreas<sup>(7)</sup>. This process contributes to better glucose metabolism and insulin utilization, thereby supporting glycemic control<sup>(9)</sup>.
- 2) Stress Reduction and Cortisol Regulation:** Psychological stress increases cortisol levels, which antagonize insulin and elevate blood glucose<sup>(10)</sup>. Through rhythmic clapping and laughter, Clapping Yoga elicits relaxation and lowers stress hormone levels<sup>(3,4)</sup>.
- 3) Enhanced Metabolic Activity and Digestion:** Physical engagement combined with deep breathing enhances metabolism and promotes digestive efficiency, assisting in improved glucose absorption and utilization<sup>(5)</sup>.
- 4) Mental Well-being and Motivation:** Diabetes self-management often induces psychological fatigue and demotivation. Clapping Yoga increases dopamine and endorphin secretion, uplifting mood and encouraging lifestyle adherence<sup>(6,8)</sup>.
- 5) Cardiovascular Benefits:** As diabetes is associated with increased cardiovascular risk, the aerobic and rhythmic nature of Clapping Yoga contributes to improved cardiac function, heart rate variability, and reduced blood pressure<sup>(9,10)</sup>.

## 2. Research Insights

Emerging research supports the therapeutic potential of Clapping Yoga and laughter-based programs in diabetes management, though large-scale randomized controlled trials are still limited.

Mishra et al. (2023) reported significant reductions in fasting glucose, insulin, and HbA1c following a 30-day laughter-yoga and clapping intervention<sup>(1)</sup>. R. Kumar et al. (2024) observed improved glycemic markers and reduced stress indicators after similar sessions in diabetic participants<sup>(2)</sup>. Hirotsaki et al. (2023) demonstrated that a 12-week laughter-yoga program improved HbA1c and was well accepted among individuals with Type 2 diabetes<sup>(3)</sup>.

Čokolič et al. (2019) found laughter interventions suppressed postprandial glucose spikes, attributing effects to stress-hormone modulation <sup>(4)</sup>. Isworo et al. (2018) reported significant decreases in blood glucose among T2DM participants undergoing tapping therapy, which shares mechanical similarities with clapping <sup>(5)</sup>.

Other related complementary modalities, including cupping <sup>(6,7)</sup> and acupressure <sup>(8)</sup>, have shown modest improvements in glucose and lipid metabolism. Narrative reviews also highlight clapping as a low-risk, accessible wellness activity enhancing circulation and psychological resilience <sup>(9)</sup>.

An observational intervention conducted by Prof. Shilpa J. (2021) among 22 participants diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes (duration <10 years) demonstrated similar encouraging outcomes. The 45-minute sessions integrated Clapping Yoga, Yoga Nidra meditation, and slow-move dance with music. Participants showed noticeable improvements in blood sugar regulation, psychological relaxation, and sleep quality. They reported relief from tension, greater emotional well-being, and overall satisfaction with the practice. This heart-touching experience highlights the integrative potential of rhythmic clapping combined with mindful movement and meditative relaxation in holistic diabetes care <sup>(10)</sup>.

However, caution is warranted: reports exist of individuals abandoning medical treatment for unverified “slapping therapies,” leading to adverse outcomes <sup>(11)</sup>. Clapping Yoga must therefore be practiced as a complementary, not substitutive, component of diabetes care.

### 3. Clinical Application And Practice Guidelines

Clapping Yoga can be incorporated into daily routines as a non-invasive and joyful physical activity <sup>(9)</sup>.

#### Practical Recommendations:

- Begin with 5–10 minutes of rhythmic clapping combined with laughter and deep breathing.
- Gradually increase duration as comfort improves, ideally practicing in groups to encourage social interaction and motivation <sup>(1,2)</sup>.
- Maintain open palms and steady rhythm to stimulate acupressure points effectively <sup>(7)</sup>.
- Integrate Clapping Yoga with standard diabetes management—medications, diet, and physical exercise—for optimal outcomes <sup>(3,4)</sup>.
- Avoid discontinuation of prescribed medications when engaging in complementary therapies <sup>(11)</sup>.

### 4. Discussion

Clapping Yoga demonstrates a unique convergence of physiological activation, emotional release, and neuroendocrine balance <sup>(3,6,8)</sup>. Mechanistically, it acts through improved peripheral circulation, reduced sympathetic tone, and enhanced insulin sensitivity <sup>(5,6)</sup>. The laughter component further contributes to mood elevation and stress reduction, key factors in diabetes self-management <sup>(3,4)</sup>.

While current studies are primarily small-scale and quasi-experimental, consistent findings suggest short-term improvements in glycemic control, quality of life, and psychological well-being <sup>(1,2,3,5)</sup>. Integrating Clapping Yoga into diabetic education and wellness programs may therefore enhance adherence and engagement in long-term care.

However, rigorous randomized controlled trials are needed to confirm causal relationships, determine optimal frequency and intensity, and clarify the physiological mechanisms underlying observed benefits <sup>(3,9)</sup>.

### 5. Conclusion

Clapping Yoga, as an integrative and enjoyable practice, offers a promising complementary approach to diabetes management. By promoting circulation, reducing stress, and improving metabolic efficiency, it supports both physiological and psychological dimensions of health <sup>(1,3,4)</sup>. Its accessibility, safety, and joyful nature make it a practical addition to diabetes wellness programs <sup>(6,7)</sup>.

Nevertheless, it should complement—not replace—medical treatments. When practiced under guidance and alongside conventional care, Clapping Yoga can empower individuals to manage diabetes through positivity, mindfulness, and movement <sup>(8,11)</sup>.

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