

# Thai Yoga Offers Better Pain Relief for Osteoarthritis than OTC Remedies

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## Opinion

Thai Yoga (Traditional Thai Massage),<sup>1</sup> offers better pain relief and with less, little or no adverse side effects than Ibuprofen,<sup>2</sup> and other NSAIDs.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, pain relief from a short series of individual treatments has been shown to last as long as 15 weeks according to systematic review of Traditional Thai Massage.<sup>4</sup>

SomaVeda® Thai Yoga provides solution for Osteoarthritis pain.

The most common pain remedies prescribed for OA (Osteoarthritis) such as Ibuprofen,<sup>2</sup> and other similar NSAID's such as Advil, Motrin and the like, come with a hefty price tag in respect of unwanted effects and side effects. Generally prescribed for relief of pain, swelling and inflammation.

Some will argue that a couple bottles of NSAID's like Ibuprofen are certainly cheaper than a professional series of Thai Yoga Therapy sessions. However, is that really true? (Figure 1)



**Figure 1** Thai Traditional Medicine: Thai Traditional Massage (Thai Yoga/ Thai Massage sl.) provides solution for Osteoarthritis pain.

Black Box Side effects.<sup>2</sup>

- i. Ibuprofen can increase the risk of heart trouble and has been linked to heart attacks,<sup>5</sup> strokes,<sup>6</sup> and blood clots, all of which can be deadly.
- ii. Ibuprofen can damage the lining of your stomach, putting you at risk for stomach ulcers and heartburn.

Lesser but significant risk and side effects are: rash, complications for heart patients, may cause allergic reactions, may adversely affect blood clotting, possibly causing falls in elderly persons, extreme sleepiness, feeling like throwing up, confusion, dizziness, loss of balance, heart burn, stomach cramps and severe stomach problems. In the first 29 weeks of a pregnancy these drugs can cause harm to the fetus...

According Mayo clinic,<sup>7</sup> "Nonprescription pain relievers such as acetaminophen (Tylenol, others), aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB, others) and naproxen (Aleve, others) can damage your liver".<sup>8</sup> will make you cringe and wonder why anyone would ever take one of these class of medications!

## Why take the risk?

**It's clear, thai yoga offers better pain relief**

and with less, little or no adverse side effects. Especially when coupled with the indigenous traditional Thai Herbal Compress Massage (*Nuad Prakhop Samun Praii*). In addition, pain relief from a short series of individual treatments has been shown to last as long as 15 weeks!

You can treat chronic pain Osteoarthritis pain with Thai Yoga. Thai Traditional Medicine and it's derivative practices such as Thai Traditional Massage and specifically styles such as SomaVeda® Thai Yoga have long been held to be effective solutions and remedies for chronic pain. They often are noted to provide relief when literally all else (conventional western medicine) have failed and or not worked well.

Researchers at the Faculty of Medicine, Chiang Mai University demonstrated in a randomized, evaluator-blind, controlled trial of TTM and Thai Herbal Compress treatment (TM, THC), vs oral ibuprofen caused a significant improvement of all variables determined for outcome assessments.<sup>9</sup>

All modalities provided nearly comparable clinical efficacy after a three-week symptomatic treatment of OA of the knee, in which a trend toward greatest improvement was likely to be found in THC group. TM and THC were generally safe and free from systemic adverse effects. Both modalities could be therefore considered as effective alternative options for treatment of OA of the knee, especially in individuals who do not wish to receive oral NSAIDs or who experienced systemic unwanted effects from oral NSAIDs. Research that not only did the therapy reduce key pain indexes up to 80% but that pain reduction appeared to be maintained for up to 15 weeks post therapy!

The study specifically focused on OA Knee pain... However, Knee Pain is Joint pain! Our experience in the real world of treating pain with SomaVeda® Thai Yoga (Thai Traditional Massage) bears out that we can confidently expect similar results for ANY joint pain!<sup>10</sup>

**Read the full research abstract and study here:** *Thai Massage, and Thai Herbal Compress versus Oral Ibuprofen in Symptomatic Treatment of Osteoarthritis of the Knee: A Randomized Controlled Trial.*

### Why does TTM work better than NSAID's?

Thai traditional medicine: Thai Traditional Massage (SomaVeda® Thai Yoga) addresses many Osteoarthritis pain related issues simultaneously. These issues include but are not limited to the following:

#### Spiritual/ psychological/ emotional issues

Traditionally, all chronic pain issues develop originally from past life. Literally they are reflective of old unresolved issues, called spiritual but also relating to psychological and emotional trauma. It is also understood that there is an emotional correlation with all chronic pain issues no matter what the current physiological manifestation of it is in the moment. These factors are first addressed in performance of Puja or ritual prayer and blessing ceremony before and after treatment. The contents and practice of Puja vary widely from region to region and from school tradition to school tradition. Some practitioners recite sacred Pali Mantra for Paying respect to Buddha, Shivago (Jivaka) such as the “OmNamo Shivago” mantra popularized in the Lanna Thai Nuad Boran schools (See Styles of Thai Massage and Thai Yoga) and in some it is internal and a silent observance such as is more common in the south.

#### Ayurvedic dosha

The Union of Thai Traditional Medicine Society or UTTS acknowledges and teaches Ayurveda principles of Dosha or Elemental Imbalance according to Body Type (Vata, Pitta, Kapha) as being a traditional strategy in performing effective treatments. It is taught that to first determine body type and then deviation from nominal allows the practitioner to balance the Dosha by altering or emphasizing certain aspects of treatment over other for the particular patient vs. another. Depending on the Dosha assessment the actual treatment methodology of the Thai Traditional Massage (Thai Yoga) can vary considerably from one patient to another.

#### Sen lines: thai traditional medicine

Thai Traditional Massage treatment regimen and the traditional Vinyasa or Therapeutic Sequences emphasize bringing “energy, attention, consciousness, breath (prana) and pressure to energy lines called “Sen”. Sen are synonymous with the Yoga Nadi's (pathways of Pranic Force) as described in Ayurveda text and many of the Thai Sen have the same names in Thai/ Pali speech as in Indian Sanskrit. Consider the first three Thai Traditional Sen Lines are Summana (Sushumna Nadi), Itha (Idda Nadi) and Pingala (Pinkhala Nadi) etc.

### Lom and large joint mobilization

The Thai Traditional Massage is classically structured in such a way as to take the patient through a regular sequencing of traditional Yoga Therapy postures called “Asana”. For example typically first posture is “Savasana” or supine facing corpse pose. While in this posture attention by way of pressure is brought to bear on both Sen Lines and Lom (Wind Gates– Secondary Chakra). Additionally, a sequence of mobilization follow that articulate and expose the Sen and Lom from various angles. The mobilizations are also Yoga Therapy Postures that typically involve the full range of motion possible for every major joint in every possible or accessible degree of range of motion. While the large joints are mobilized and the Sen Lines, Soft tissue (connective tissue, muscle, viscera) the points on the lines (Marma/ Lom) are treated. The mobilizations also create what we call a “Traction and Decompression” effect in all affected or emphasized joints.

All the above in a nurturing, emotionally supportive environment emphasizing sharing outcomes of Love, Compassion, Joy and Equanimity provide a consistent result for the patient less pain and less pain over time.

### Acknowledgments

None.

### Conflicts of interest

None.

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