INTRODUCTION

The third trimester is the final stage of pregnancy, culminating in labor and the birth of the child. By this point, the mother has probably gained between 20 and 30 pounds. Extra weight can cause great discomfort. The pressure of the crowded uterus on the internal organs results in heartburn, frequent urination, lower back pain, cramping in the front and side abdominals, and shortness of breath. The large, unyielding mass of her belly causes interrupted sleep, difficulty moving, and clumsiness. The mother has unstable joints due to the hormone relaxin, which allows her pelvis to widen so that she can deliver, and may experience dizziness as well as swelling in the hands and feet because of slowed circulation caused by the hormone progesterone. Almost all women experience stress at some point during pregnancy. Mood swings and emotional disturbances are a completely normal reaction to the physical, emotional and lifestyle changes associated with pregnancy. While normal levels of stress are unlikely to be detrimental to the health of a pregnancy, excessive stress may be detrimental to the health of an unborn child. Yoga has vital tools for pregnancy, when followed together, they work wonders on your health and your capability to have a smooth pregnancy. “Yoga practice encourages a deep, intimate connection between the mom and baby, and it empowers a woman to trust her own instincts by listening to her body,” says Liz Owen, a Boston-based yoga teacher and the co-author of Yoga for a Healthy Lower Back.

Smooth pregnancy and a natural childbirth are just some of the benefits of yoga. But more importantly, yoga does wonders on the physical and mental development of the foetus. Ensuring a healthy baby is every woman’s dream and yoga helps you do just that.

Objectives of the study

1. To assess the level of stress among primigravid women in the third trimester of pregnancy in experimental and control groups.
2. To assess the effect of yoga on stress among primigravid women in the third trimester of pregnancy in experimental and control groups.
3. To compare the level of stress among primigravid women in the third trimester of pregnancy between the experimental and control groups.
4. To associate demographic variables and the level of stress among primigravid women in the third trimester of pregnancy in experimental and control groups.

Hypotheses

There will be a significant difference in the stress level after Yoga therapy among primigravid women in the third trimester of pregnancy in the experimental and control groups.
Effectiveness of yoga on stress among primigravid women in third trimester

Research methodology
A true experimental study was chosen to assess the effect of yoga on stress. The study was done at the Mangalam Hospital at Chennai. 60 Primigravid women in the third trimester of pregnancy (30 in experimental group and 30 in control group) were selected by simple random sampling technique. A structured interview schedule was used to conduct a study.

Major findings of this study
1. In pretest in the experimental group four (13.3%) had mild stress, 10 (33.3%) had moderate stress and 16 (53.3%) had severe stress. The mean value was 3.70 with a standard deviation of 9.68.
2. In pretest in the control group, nine (30.0%) had moderate stress and 21 (70.0%) had severe stress, the mean value was 37.23 with a standard deviation of 5.30.
3. In post-test in the experimental group 29 (96.7%) had a mild stress one (3.3%) had moderate stress, the mean value was 13.03 with the standard deviation of 3.24.
4. In post-test in the control group, 9 (30%) had moderate stress, 21 (70%) had severe stress and the mean value was 38.37 with a standard deviation of 5.63.
5. The effectiveness of yoga on primigravid women in the third trimester in the pretest, the paired ‘t’ value was 2.79 and post-test paired ‘t’ value was 1.62, in post-test there is a significant difference between experimental and control groups at $P < 0.05$.
6. There is no significant association between the demographic variables such as age, religion, education, occupation, income, type of marriage, type of family, gestational age and the level of stress among primigravid women in the third trimester at $P > 0.05$ level.

DISCUSSION
Yoga during third trimester of pregnancy can provide lot of benefits to both mother and baby. Benefits of yoga are innumerable, but it should be practiced under right guidance of yoga expert. Read on to know more about yoga asanas for third trimester pregnancy. Yoga in third trimester pregnancy can be a little bit difficult as the fetus has grown in size. During labor and delivery, usually the most anxiety-provoking aspects of pregnancy, many women spend weeks, if not months, fretting over whether they’ll be able to deliver the baby. But women who develop a prenatal yoga practice before giving birth may learn how to minimize anxiety over labor. When it comes to labor and delivery, the mind-body connection is paramount, and prenatal yoga is one way to help women access deep stores of emotional strength and confidence that they can put to use during contractions and pushing the baby out of the womb. Poses like a deep squat (in Sanskrit: malasana) can help relax and open the hips, providing control over strong, toned pelvic and hip muscles so they won’t tense up when under stress. Research has connected “self-efficacy,” or the level of confidence a woman has in her ability to perform a task, with easier and more satisfying labor and delivery experiences. One 1999 study found that high self-efficacy during the third trimester, when labor is looming, plays an important role in labor pain perception: Women stay in control of their bodies even during the most physically painful parts of the process. A 2009 study conducted in Taiwan directly connected regular prenatal yoga practice with the high self-efficacy that contributes to smoother deliveries. “Any kind of learned behavior of relaxation, breathing, or concentrating on a focal point can help,” adds Adam Romoff, M.D., an ob-gyn at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City. Yoga poses may also help optimize the baby’s position for birth, by allowing the pelvic bones and ligaments to open and move apart from each other. This allows the baby’s head to find more room to nestle at the bottom of the uterus as birth nears. Some yoga poses, like pelvic tilts, might even encourage a breech or posterior birth baby to turn into the head-down position that most hospitals require for a vaginal birth.
The study revealed that the practice of yoga during antenatal period especially in the third trimester was very effective and had brought excellent changes in stress reduction.

CONCLUSION

Health education sessions regarding yoga, meditation and exercises can be scheduled periodically in all antenatal clinics. Training can be given to community health workers on yoga so that they can practice at the community level.

REFERENCES