

YOGA EDUCATION

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CC201 YOGA EDUCATION

Unit - I: Foundation of Yoga

- j Meaning and Definition of Yoga
- j Aims and Objectives of Yoga
- j The Yoga Sutra: General Consideration
- j Difference between yogic practices and physical exercises
- j Need and Importance of Yoga in Physical Education and Sports

Unit - II: Paths of Yoga

- j The Astanga Yoga: Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi
- j Karma Yoga, Raja Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga

Unit - III Asanas

- j **Asanas:** Definitions - meaning and classifications and benefits of asanas.
- j **Pranayama:** Definitions-meaning -types - phases- ratios-benefits.
- j **Bhandas:** Definitions-meaning - types, benefits.

Unit - IV Kriyas and Meditation

- j **Shat Kriyas:** Definitions-meaning - types, benefits.
- j **Mudras:** Definitions-meaning.
- j **Meditation:** Definitions - meaning - concept of meditation.

Unit-V Yogic Diet

- j **Yogic diet:** Classifications: Satvic food - Tamasic food - Rajasic food
- j Three Gunas
- j Five Khoshas

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YOGA EDUCATION

Unit-I

FOUNDATION OF YOGA

- **Meaning and Definition of Yoga**

The word Yoga is derived from the Sanskrit term ‘Yuj’ which means to join, or to unite, or to bind. Different authors give different meanings. We can say that the basic meaning of the word Yoga is union or merger. It is a union of spiritual nature. It is the true union of the so called human beings, jeevathma with the God Paramathma. The merger of soul with God, and the experience of oneness with him, is what are achieved by Yoga.

Patanjali's Second Sutra has only four words.

They are: “Yogaha Citta Vritti Nirodhaha”

Citta - Mind stuff

Vritti - Mind's Movement or Oscillation Nirodhaha -Controlling

They denote the following:

Hence, Patanjali defines that Yoga is controlling or stilling the mind's movement.

According to B.K.S. Iyengar, “Yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root ‘yug’ [also: ‘yuj’] meaning to bind, join, attach and yoke, to direct and concentrate one's attention

on, to use and apply. It also means union or communion.” He also describes it as “wisdom in work or skillful living amongst activities, harmony and moderation.”

- **Aim and objectives of Yoga**

The aim of yoga is to have all round progress in human life physically, intellectually and spiritually. If yoga is properly practiced and followed in life, virtues like morality, morally sound conduct and good character are developed in man.

Concept of yoga

The concept of yoga is to teach the means by which the human soul may be completely united with supreme spirit pervading the universe and thus absolution. Yoga helps to secure purity of body, mind and soul for the final communication with god.

Scope of yoga

- j Yoga plays an important role in physical education and sports
- j Yoga can be treated as yogic exercise.
- j Yoga exercises can be prevented and cured through yogic therapy. Diseases like heart attack, blood pressure and similar can be treated with yogic exercise for better health.
- j Application of yoga exercise is very much needed for international competitors.
- j Lot of researches and studies are conducted on physiological and psychological aspects of yoga. Yoga gives homeo-static mechanism in the body.
- j All age groups can practice yoga and both sex.
- j Yoga has been included in the school curriculum as a compulsory subject in many states in India.
- j A large number of training institutes are established to impart yoga training.
- j Yoga instructors and teachers are appointed in schools and colleges to teach yoga.

- **The Yoga sutra: general consideration**

The *Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali* are 196 Indian sutras (aphorisms). The *Yoga Sutras* were compiled around 400 CE by Patanjali, taking materials about yoga from older traditions. Together with his commentary they form the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*.

The *Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali* was the most translated ancient Indian text in the medieval era, having been translated into about forty Indian languages and two non-Indian languages: Old Javanese and Arabic. The text fell into obscurity for nearly 700 years from the 12th to 19th century, and made a comeback in late 19th century due to the

efforts of Swami Vivekananda. It gained prominence again as a comeback classic in the 20th century.

Before the 20th century, history indicates the Indian yoga scene was dominated by the Bhagavad Gita, Yoga Vasistha, texts attributed to Yajnavalkya and Hiranyagarbha, as well as literature on hatha yoga, tantric yoga and pashupata yoga rather than the *Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali*. In the 20th century the corporate Yoga subculture elevated the *Yoga Sūtras* to a status it never knew previously. Scholars consider the *Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali* formulations as one of the foundations of classical yoga philosophy.

Patañjali divided his *Yoga Sūtras* into four chapters or books (Sanskrit *pada*), containing in all 196 aphorisms, divided as follows: Wikipedia

Samadhi Pada (51 sutras):

Samadhi refers to a blissful state where the yogi is absorbed into the One. Samadhi is the main technique the yogin learns by which to dive into the depths of the mind to achieve Kaivalya. The author describes yoga and then the nature and the means to attaining samādhi. This chapter contains the famous definitional verse: “*Yogaś citta-vritti-nirodhah*” («Yoga is the restraint of mental modifications»).

Sadhana Pada (55 sutras):

j Sadhana is the Sanskrit word for «practice» or «discipline». Here the author outlines two forms of Yoga: *Kriya Yoga* (Action Yoga) and *Ashtanga Yoga* (Eightfold or Eightlimbed Yoga).

j *Kriya Yoga* is closely related to Karma Yoga, which is also expounded in Chapter 3 of the *Bhagavad Gita*, where Arjuna is encouraged by Krishna to act without attachment to the results or fruit of action and activity. It is the yoga of selfless action and service.

j *Ashtanga Yoga* describes the eight limbs that together constitute Rāja Yoga.

Vibhuti Pada (56 sutras):

Vibhuti is the Sanskrit word for “power” or “manifestation”. ‘Supra-normal powers’ (Sanskrit: *siddhi*) are acquired by the practice of yoga. Combined simultaneous practice of Dhāranā, Dhyana and Samādhi is referred to as Samyama, and is considered a tool of achieving various perfections, or Siddhis. The temptation of these powers should be avoided and the attention should be fixed only on liberation. The purpose of using samadhi is not to gain siddhis but to achieve Kaivalya. Siddhis are but distractions from Kaivalaya and are to be discouraged. Siddhis are but *maya*, or illusion.

Kaivalya Pada (34 sutras):

Kaivalya literally means «isolation», but as used in the *Sutras* stands for emancipation, liberation and used interchangeably with moksha (liberation), which is the goal of yoga. The Kaivalya Pada describes the process of liberation and the reality of the transcendental ego.

- **Difference between the physical exercises and yogasana**

S. No.	PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES	ASANAS
1	Its starts with slow pace then gradually increase the speed of the movements	Slow pace is maintaining from starting to end of the session
2	Physical activities having more no of repetitions in a session	Only one repetition in a session. (its depending upon the individual health)

3	Heart beat is increase from 72 beat / minute upto maximum level	Normal heart beat is maintaining throughout the session
4	Breathing rate is increase from normal (12-20 rep / minute) to maximum 50-60 rep/minute	Normal Breathing rate is maintaining throughout the session
5	In physical activities there is no chance to concentrate on any object etc.	While doing Asanas mind is focusing on breathing or any object.
6	In Physical activities body and mind gets tense	In Asanas body and mind gets fully relaxation
7	Physical exercises are concerned with muscular, respiratory and circulatory systems only.	Asanas are develops various vital systems namely endocrine, digestive, respiratory, circulatory, excretory, muscular and nervous
8	To get benefits we have to spend more energy	To get benefits we have to spend minimum energy only.

- **Need and importance of yoga in physical education and sports**

Yoga helps a sports person to feel and understand the body processes more accurately, thereby learning what the body needs. By understanding an athlete can work on areas that need attention with confidence.

Yoga is useful for all types of sports to help prevent injuries. One gets extra agility which helps to avoid damage, provides more strength and improves a player's ability to react to a situation.

In competitions - players/athletes at all ability levels tend to have a fear of losing of other competitors or of developing mental deterrents to excellent performance.

Yoga trains us to be our best every single moment to hold ourselves at our highest standard and to go beyond our pre conceived limitations.

Yoga is a psycho-somatic-spiritual discipline for achieving union & harmony between our mind, body and soul and the ultimate union of our individual consciousness with the Universal consciousness. This article will highlight the importance of yoga in the field of physical education and sports.

Fitness and Yoga in sports

- Improved Strength Routine and consistent practice of the various yoga asanas has helped me build strength and improve lean muscle mass.

Most notably with respect to several muscle groups under-utilized in my chosen athletic disciplines of swimming, cycling and running.

These gains have enhanced core body stability and significantly impeded overuse injury by strengthening the supportive but otherwise under-developed muscles surrounding the more utilized muscles, creating a more balanced and optimally functional overall strength.

- Balance As a swimmer, I have always been rather flexible. But my balance is historically horrible. But through a consistent yoga practice, my coordination and balance have improved immensely. Why is this important? Better balance and coordination means enhanced control over how I move my body, which in turn leads to better technique and form -- the brass ring every athlete spends a career refining, whether your focus is a swim stroke, golf swing, running stride, and jump shot or wrestling move.
- Flexibility Yoga invariably improves joint and muscular flexibility, which is crucial to the body's overall structural soundness. Enhanced joint and muscle pliancy translates to a greater range of motion, or an increase in the performance latitude for a particular movement or series of movements. For example, a swimmer with

supple shoulder and hip joints is able to capture and pull more water than a swimmer with a more limited range of motion. The result is more forward movement per stroke as well as enhanced muscular economy. In turn, this increased range of motion provides a greater ability to strength condition a particular muscle group due to the amelioration in overall force that can be exerted with each movement. And although there is some dispute about the advisability of “over” stretching (for runners in particular), I remain a huge advocate, finding that the more I work to maintain my flexibility (something that wanes with age), the less likely I am to suffer an overuse injury.

- **Free Your Mind** The ability to create a stress free mind is a significant benefit of yoga practice. The physical practice is used as a tool to enhance breath control, which helps improve focus and concentration, allowing clarity of thought and clear decision making. A valuable tool in any sporting arena. Mental practice in any sport will teach you how to gain control of your emotional states, so arousal levels and anxiety don't impede your performance.
- **Meditation** is a mental practice proven to
 - Reduce anxiety and stress
 - Reduce cortisol levels and increase calming hormones
 - Improve cognitive function
 - Reduce blood pressure and heart rate
 - Increase immune functionThese benefits combine to allow for better rest, sleep and recovery, as well as provide the ability to think more clearly under pressure.

Objectives of Yoga in Sports

Health, physical fitness and emotional stability are the objectives which bring yoga and physical education on a common platform for the benefit of the human individual.

Health is a more general and comprehensive term conveying the ‘feeling of well-being’, while physical fitness is a more specific term.

Physical fitness is the capacity of an individual to perform a given task at a particular time. Health and physical fitness are not static. They are always changing they follow the law can be maintained only by carefully selected physical activities which are called ‘exercise’.

The utility of the particular exercise program can be evaluated only in the forms of the effects that one obtained in promoting a particular factor of physical fitness.

Health and Yoga in Sports

Yoga has both preventive and therapeutic benefits. It has been shown to offer both physical and mental benefits to the body and the mind. The many physical benefits of hatha yoga are:

- j Improves flexibility and muscle joint mobility;
- j Strengthens, tones, and builds muscles;
- j Corrects posture;
- j Strengthens the spine; eases back pain;
- j Improves muscular-skeletal conditions such as bad knees, tight shoulders and neck, swayback and scoliosis;
- j Increases stamina; creates balance and grace; j Stimulates the glands of the endocrine system; j Improves digestion and elimination;
- j Increases circulation; improves heart conditions;
- j Improves breathing disorders;
- j Boosts immune response;
- j Decreases cholesterol and blood sugar levels; and encourages weight loss.
- j The mental benefits include: it increases body awareness; relieves chronic stress patterns in the body; refreshes the body, relaxes the mind and body; centers attention; sharpens concentration; and frees the spirit.

Health Benefits of Yoga

- j Stable autonomic nervous system equilibrium, with a tendency toward parasympathetic nervous system dominance rather than the usual stress-induced sympathetic nervous system dominance.
- j Pulse rate decreases.
- j Respiratory rate decreases
- j Blood pressure decreases (of special significance for hypo reactors)
- j Galvanic Skin Response (GSR) increases
- j EEG-alpha waves increase (theta, delta and beta waves also increase during various stages of meditation)
- j Cardiovascular efficiency increases
- j Respiratory efficiency increases (respiratory amplitude and smoothness increase, tidal volume increases, vital capacity increases, breath-holding time increases).

- j Gastrointestinal function normalizes
- j Endocrine function normalizes
- j Excretory functions improve
- j Muscular-skeletal flexibility and joint range of motion increases
- j Posture improves
- j Strength and resiliency increase
- j Endurance
- increases j Energy
- level increases j
- Weight
- normalizes
- j Sleep improves
- j Immunity increases
- j Pain decreases.

Unit-II

PATHS OF YOGA

- **The Astanga yoga**

- **YAMA - Abstinence - Code of Character**

Yamas are ethical rules in Hinduism and can be thought of as moral imperatives. The five yamas listed by Patañjali

- Ahimsā : Nonviolence, non-harming other living beings
- Satya : Truthfulness, non-falsehood
- Asteya : Non-stealing
- Brahmachārya : Celibacy, non-cheating on one's partner
- Aparigraha : Non-avarice, non-possessiveness

- **NIYAMA - Observance - Code of Conduct**

The second limb in Patanjali's Yoga philosophy is called niyamas, which include virtuous habits, behaviors and observances (the "dos"). Sadhana Pada Verse 32 lists the niyamas as:

- Śauca: purity, clearness of mind, speech and body
 - Santosa: contentment, acceptance of others, acceptance of one's circumstances as they are in order to get past or change them, optimism for self
 - Tapas: persistence, perseverance, austerity
 - Svādhyāya: study of Vedas (see Sabda in epistemology section), study of self, self-reflection, introspection of self's thoughts, speeches and actions.
 - Īśvarapranidhāna: contemplation of the Ishvara (God/Supreme Being, Brahman, True Self, Unchanging Reality)
- **ASANAS - Posture**

The third anga is Asana. Asana means postures. We are giving all possible movements to the body by making our body into different postures, and hold on that postures for some time, then relax the whole body. Thus the wide range of posturing, improving suppleness and flexibility in the body are achieved. Particularly toning up the nervous systems, functions of all vital internal organs, stimulation of the glands, and regulation of the blood flow are achieved by proper postures. The muscles in our body are thus firmed and strengthened.

During the asana practice, the mind will be free from joys and sorrows and the body will be free from heat and cold waves.

The Hatha Yoga Pradipika describes the technique of 84 asanas, stating four of these as most important: Padmasana (lotus), Bhadrasana (decent), Sinhasana (lion), and Siddhasana (accomplished). The Gheranda Samhita discussed 32 asanas, while Svatantra describes 15 asanas.

• **PRANAYAMA - Breath Control**

Pranayama is the fourth anga in Raja Yoga. Pranayama means the breath control. In other words it is the control of air by means of inhalation, holding the air and exhalation. Mainly the pranayama is used to prepare the mind for meditation.

• **PRATYAHARA - Sense Withdrawal**

Pratyāhāra is a combination of two Sanskrit words *pratyā* - belief and *ahāra* - bringing near, fetch.

The living involves exercise of the five senses are at the disposal of our body. Self-control means controlling our sense organs namely the eyes, nose, the mouth, the ears and the body. In Pratyahara Patanjali advocates sense withdrawal to save a Yogi from sense involvement. Moha or attraction is repulsed by pratyahara. This is possible by disciplined practice of the sense organs. When one is taken away by sensations of sight, touching, hearing, smelling and taste, concentration or meditation is not possible. To control thoughts of sensation, pratyahara is recommended.

- **DHĀRANA - Concentration**

Dharana is Sanskrit: means concentration, introspective focus and one-pointedness of mind.

The root of word is dhr, which has a meaning of “to hold, maintain, keep”.

Dharana means concentration. Patanjali says that concentration is the fixing of the mind on something. It is a preparatory stage for next stage of Dhyana. In this stage the concentration of mind is practiced by keeping the eyes that is focusing the eyes by restricting our attention on a particular spot or an object.

For Example, we are focusing our eyes on a flower which is chosen as the object for concentration. Here our mind should be focused only at the flower alone. The other thoughts about the object like the colour, size, smell, and weight of the flower should not come into our mind. So during the practice we should still our concentration only at the chosen object. Whenever our mind wanders from its fixed attention the mind should be gently brought back, coaxed rather than dragged.

The following are some of the important practicing methods:

- j NASAL GAZING

Here we focus our eyes at the tip of our nose

- j FRONTAL GAZING

In this method we focus our eyes at the centre of the forehead.

- j JOTHI GAZING

Here the eyes are focused on the flame of a candle which is kept in front.

- j OBJECT GAZING

In this type of practice we keep an object in front of us and focus our eyes on the object alone

- **DHYANA - Meditation**

In yoga Sutra dhyana means the unity of the mind achieved through contemplation.

Concentration results in meditation. Dhyana is a deep meditative stage in which the entire mind is fixed on an object or thought. It is done so intensively and entirely so that the meditating mind is united with the object contemplated. It is a stage of total concentration insulated from all kinds of distractions or interruptions. Such a stage is called dhyana, the seventh anga of patanjali yoga.

- **SAMADHI - Self-Realisation**

Samadhi (Sanskrit:) literally means “putting together, joining, combining with, union, harmonious whole, trance”.

Samadhi is a highly integrated consciousness in which the person meditating, the objects, and the act of meditation are unified into a one whole. This is such a stage in which self-realization is attended.

The last three stages are connected with one another and are practiced one after the other. Dharana is the first step, it leads to dhyana, and Samadhi is the culmination stage. Put together these three stages are referred to a triple stage of meditation namely Samyama.

- **KARMA YOGA**

Karma yoga is the discipline of selfless action as a way to perfection.

Karma yoga, or the “discipline of action” is a form of yoga based on the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita*, a sacred Sanskrit scripture of Hinduism. Of the three paths to realization, karma yoga is the process of achieving perfection in action. Karma yoga is said to be the most effective way to progress in spiritual life. Found in the *Bhagavad Gita*, karma yoga is a part of nature. Karma yoga is taught by teachers of zen who promote tranquility. Karma yoga is an intrinsic part of many derivative types of yoga, such as Natya Yoga. Karma yoga is often understood as a yoga of selfless (altruistic) service.

Karma yoga is described as a way of acting, thinking and willing by which one orients oneself towards realization by acting in accordance with one’s duty (dharma) without consideration of

personal self-centered desires, likes or dislikes. One acts without being attached to the results of one’s deeds.

Simply put, one does not get emotionally involved in the action being performed, becoming overly excited, upset or angry when the result of a deed is not as expected. The result may be negative or positive. Geeta also talks about “Meta”-Karma Yoga. i.e.

not getting irritated, annoyed or unhappy when one gets attached to the result even after trying to practice Karma Yoga.

Krishna explains that work done without selfish expectations purifies one's mind and gradually makes an individual fit to see the value of reason. He states that it is not necessary to remain in external solitude, or remain actionless, in order to practice a spiritual life, since the state of action or inaction is primarily determined in the mind.

RAJA YOGA

Raja yoga is a form of yoga intended to achieve control over the mind and emotions.

Raja Yoga, sometimes called the "Royal Yoga" is inclusive of all yogas, and its philosophy goes beyond the boundaries of the many styles of yoga today. Raja Yoga emphasizes the benefits of meditation for spiritual self-realization and the purposeful evolution of consciousness.

"Raja Yoga is a science, art and a path in life to enhance, enrich and strengthen our spiritual focus." - Walt Baptiste

JNANA YOGA

Jnana yoga ("union due to pure knowledge") is one of the three classical *margas*, or types of yoga, mentioned in Hindu texts, the other two being karma yoga and bhakti. Jñāna in Sanskrit means "knowledge".

Jñāna is a cognitive event which is recognized when experienced. It is knowledge inseparable from the total experience of reality, especially a total or divine reality. In Indian religions, it is knowledge which gives release from bondage.

Jñāna yoga is the path towards attaining jnana. It is one of the three classical types of yoga mentioned in Hindu philosophies, the other two being karma yoga and bhakti. In modern classifications, classical yoga, being called Raja yoga, is mentioned as a fourth one, an extension introduced by vivekananda. While classical yoga emphasizes the practice of dhyana (meditation), Jñāna yoga states that knowing suffices for liberation.

BHAKTI YOGA

The Sanskrit word **bhakti** comes from the root bhaj, which means "to adore or worship God." Bhakti yoga has been called "love for love's sake" and "union through love and devotion." Bhakti yoga, like any other form of yoga, is a path to self-realization, to having an experience of oneness with everything.

Bhakti yoga is a spiritual path or spiritual practice within Hinduism focused on the cultivation of love and devotion toward God. It has been defined as a practice of devotion toward God, solely motivated by the sincere, loving desire to please God, rather than the hope of divine reward or the fear of divine punishment. It is a means toward a state of spiritual liberation or enlightenment through the “realisation”, or the attainment of “oneness” with God. *Bhakti yoga* is often considered by Hindus to be the easiest way for ordinary people to attain such a spiritually liberated state, because although it is a form of *yoga*, its practice is not as rigorous as most other yogic schools, and it is possible to practice *bhakti yoga* without needing to become a full-time yogi.

The origins of Bhakti can be seen in the upanishads, specifically the Shvetashvatara Upanishad. The *Bhagavad Gita*, and the *Puranas* are important scriptures that expound the philosophy of *bhakti yoga*. Hindu movements in which *bhakti yoga* is the main practice are called *bhakti* movements - the major schools of which are Vaishnavism, Shaivism, and Shaktism

Unit-III

ASANAS

The third limb of yoga is the most important Yogic physical exercise in promoting the health and efficiency of the vital internal organs of our body. According to traditional belief, lord shiva is said to have demonstrated 84 lakhs of asanas, as many as are the living species, so as. However, a selective course of 15 to 20 asanas are enough to maintain or established our perfect health.

Asanas form a major part of what is known as the system of the Yogic physical culture, and are handed down to us through our worthy practitioners. Each asana is said to have wonderful physiological value. They have a good influence on our body systems, particularly the respiratory, the circulatory, the nervous and the endocrine. The main purpose of the asanas is to tone-up our body systems and grant healthy life to people. Movements of the muscles, particularly the extremities, are not so much emphasized in Asanas, yet the thoracic and abdominal regions are strongly influenced during the asana practices.

Asanas can be recommended to girls and women also. Asanas have posture training and health values, and are claimed to have spiritual values. Hence, the asanas practices are included a part of physical Education programmes in schools. Asanas are taught to Indian children from the age of twelve onwards.

MEANING AND DEFINITION

“STHIRA SUKAM ASANAM PRAYATHILYA”

Sthira means stable, sukam means comfort, asanam means attain the posture, prayathila means attend your mind.

CLASSIFICATION OF ASANAS

Asanas are many in nature. Some are easy and some are difficult. The value of an asana does not depend upon it being easy or difficult, but on its systematic and regular practice.

Different authors have classified asanas in different ways. On the basis of the movements and final pose, the asanas are classified as follows:

- j
- MEDIT
- ATIVE j
- RELAX
- ATION j
- CULTU
- RAL

Some authors have classified on the basis of the difficulty of the asanas as:

- j BEGINNER
- j INTERMEDIATE
- j ADVANCED

Another method of classification is on the basis of the starting position of the asanas. This is the major type of the asanas. This is the major type of classification. In this book the asanas are classified according to their initial or starting position of the particular asanas. Thus the given asanas are classified into five types.

- j LONG SITTING
- j SUPINE
- j PRONE
- j STANDING
- j KNEELING

They are described here under further:

LONG SITTING POSITION

Sit on the floor, with the legs extended forward. The toes and heels are pointed together. The body should be kept erect. Hands should be placed on the floor nearer the knees. Ex: Janusirasasana, Vakrasana, Patchimothanasana, etc

SUPINE POSITION

Lie on the floor with face facing upward. Keep the legs straight. The heels and toes should be joined together. The toes should point upward. Hands should be placed close to the body, with palm facing downwards. Ex: Pavanamukdasana, Uthida padasana, Chakrasana, Sarvangasana, Halasana etc.

PRONE POSITION

Lie on the floor with face downward. Keep the legs straight. Join the heels and toes together, point the toes toward. Place the hands close to the body with palm facing downward. Ex: Bhujangasana, Dhanurasana, Salabhasana, Makarasana etc.

STANDING POSITION

Stand in normal position with the heels joined together, with the toes split apart. Keep the hands close to the body. ex: Thadasana, Konasana, Trikonasana, Akpadasana, Virikjasana, Garudasana, Piraiasana, etc.

KNEELING POSITION

Fold the legs and stand on the knees. The knees are placed as shoulder width. Place the hands close to the body sideward. Ex: Vajrasana, Ustrasana, Subtha vajrasana, etc.

The following symbols are allotted to denote the nature and the difficulty levels of asanas. The readers are advised to begin from the beginning and also practice the asanas fully aware of the positions and difficulty levels. Of course, any good Yoga teacher will leave you on the right path from simple to superior positions. In the asana-description pages of this book, the each asana has been given the symbol and the mark that reveals the nature and difficulty. For example, Padmasana is termed as: M which means that it is meditative asana and it is intended for beginners.

CLASSIFICATION	SYMBOL
MEDITATIVE ASANAS	M
RELAXATION ASANAS	R
CULTURAL ASANAS	C
BEGINNER ASANAS	

INTERMEDIATE ASANAS	
ADVANCED ASANAS	

Top 10 Benefits of Yoga in daily Life

- **All-round fitness**

You are truly healthy when you are not just physically fit but also mentally and emotionally balanced. As Sri Sri Ravi Shankar puts it, "Health is not a mere absence of disease. It is a dynamic expression of life - in terms of how joyful, loving and enthusiastic you are." This is where yoga helps: postures, pranayama (breathing techniques) and meditation are a holistic fitness package.

- **Weight loss**

What many want! Yoga benefits here too. Sun Salutations and Kapal Bhati pranayama are some ways to help lose weight with yoga. Moreover, with regular practice of yoga, we tend to become more sensitive to the kind of food our body asks for and when. This can also help keep a check on weight.

- **Stress relief**

A few minutes of yoga during the day can be a great way to get rid of stress that accumulates daily - in both the body and mind. Yoga postures, pranayama and meditation are effective techniques to release stress. You can also experience how yoga helps de-tox the body and de-stress the mind at the Sri Yoga Level 2 Course.

- **Inner peace**

We all love to visit peaceful, serene spots, rich in natural beauty. Little do we realize that peace can be found right within us and we can take a mini-vacation to experience this any time of the day! Benefit from a small holiday every day with yoga and meditation. Yoga is also one of the best ways to calm a disturbed mind.

- **Improved immunity**

Our system is a seamless blend of the body, mind and spirit. An irregularity in the body affects the mind and similarly unpleasantness or restlessness in the mind can manifest as an ailment in the body. Yoga poses massage organs and strengthen muscles; breathing techniques and meditation release stress and improve immunity.

- **Living with greater awareness**

The mind is constantly involved in activity - swinging from the past to the future - but never staying in the present. By simply being aware of this tendency of the mind, we can actually save ourselves from getting stressed or worked up and relax the mind. Yoga

and pranayama help create that awareness and bring the mind back to the present moment, where it can stay happy and focused.

- **Better relationships**

Yoga can even help improve your relationship with your spouse, parents, friends or loved ones! A mind that is relaxed, happy and contented is better able to deal with sensitive relationship matters. Yoga and meditation work on keeping the mind happy and peaceful; benefit from the strengthened special bond you share with people close to you.

- **Increased energy**

Do you feel completely drained out by the end of the day? Shuttling between multiple tasks through the day can sometimes be quite exhausting. A few minutes of yoga everyday provides the secret to feeling fresh and energetic even after a long day. A 10-minute online guided meditation benefits you immensely, leaving you refreshed and recharged in the middle of a hectic day.

- **Better flexibility & posture**

You only need to include yoga in your daily routine to benefit from a body that is strong, supple and flexible. Regular yoga practice stretches and tones the body muscles and also makes them strong. It also helps improve your body posture when you stand, sit, sleep or walk. This would, in turn, help relieve you of body pain due to incorrect posture.

- **Better intuition**

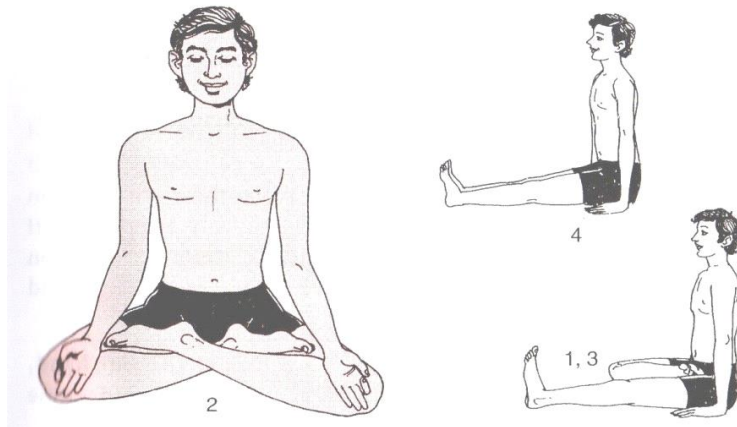
Yoga and meditation have the power to improve your intuitive ability so that you effortlessly realize what needs to be done, when and how, to yield positive results. It works. You only need to experience it yourself.

ASANAS AND THEIR PRACTICE

In this section, the various yogic asanas are listed and their practices are described, in terms of position, stages, duration, observance rules, closure and the important benefits.

PADMASANA

Lotus Posture



POSTURE

Padmanasa is a lotus posture. The name of this asana is called padmasana because the final position of this asana seems to be like lotus.

POSITION

Long sitting position: Sit with the legs extended forward.

PROCEDURES

- j Stage 1: Slowly bring the right leg and place it on the left thigh. The heel of the right foot should as much as possible touch the groin.
- j Stage 2: Slowly bring the left leg and place it on the right thigh. The heel of the left foot should as much as possible touch the groin.
- j Stage 3: Keep the hands straight and rest them on your knees. Touch your thumb with your index finger, and spread out the other fingers close to each other, thus forming Chin Mudra.

DURATION

In the final position relax the whole body as much as possible. Remain in the pose for minimum of 15 to 30 seconds, and at the maximum for 60 to 90 seconds.

CLOSURE

Slowly come back to the starting position by realizing the stages in the reverse order i.e. third, second, and first stages.

REMEMBER AND OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING

- Care should be taken that the knees touch the ground.
- The vertebral column and the body from the waist upward should be kept erect.

- Keep the normal breath and normal eyesight.

BENEFITS

GENERAL

- j Padmasana is used for meditation, prayer and worship and for pranayama practice.
- j It develops the physical and mental stability
- j It relieves the stiffness of joints, particularly knees and guards from rheumatism.
- j This asana helps for the players to obtain mental control.
- j Padmasana keeps a person young.

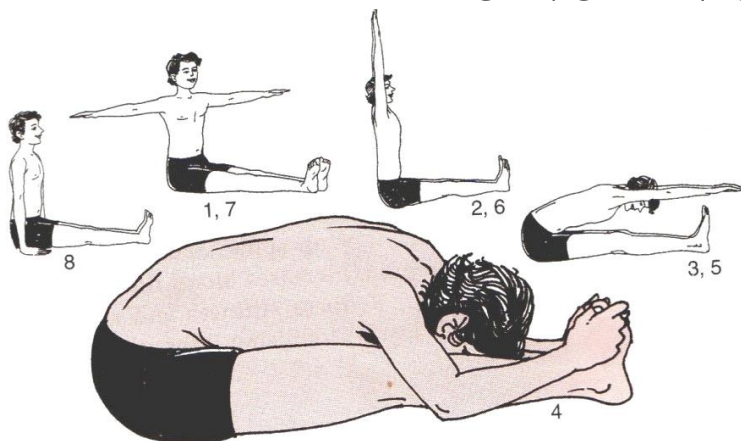
PHYSIOLOGICAL

- j The abdominal region receives more supply of the blood.
- j Padmasana improves the digestion process.
- j It activates the function of kidney

THERAPEUTIC

- j Padmasana relieves constipation, and indigestion.
- j It is very good asana for curing knee ailments.
- j Padmasana is useful in curing the flatulence, i.e., gastric trouble at the stomach.
- j It also cures piles complaints.

PACHIMOTTANASANA



BACK-STRETCHING

POSTURE POSTURE

This asana is called the back-stretching posture.

POSTION

Long sitting position.

PROCEDURE

- j STAGE 1: Slowly bring the hands upward above the head through sideways.
- j STAGE2: Slowly bring the hands downward on forward direction and try to catch the big toes with fingers.
- j STAGE 3: Slowly bend the body forward and try to touch the knees with the forehead.

DURATION

In the final position relax the whole body as much as possible. Remain in the pose for minimum of 15 to 30 seconds, and at the maximum for 60 to 90 seconds.

CLOSURE

Slowly come back to the starting position by releasing the stages in the reverse order.

REMEMBER AND OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING

- j The hands should be always straight and fingers together with open palms.
- j The knees should not bend at any time.
- j The range of forward bend should be slowly increased.

- j Sudden movement and excessive strain are to be avoided.
- j If you feel any undue pain doesn't continue it.

BENEFITS

GENERAL

- j Pascimottanasana strengthens the hamstring, calf and back muscles.
- j It removes excess fat in the abdominal region.
- j It gives more flexibility to the vertebral column.

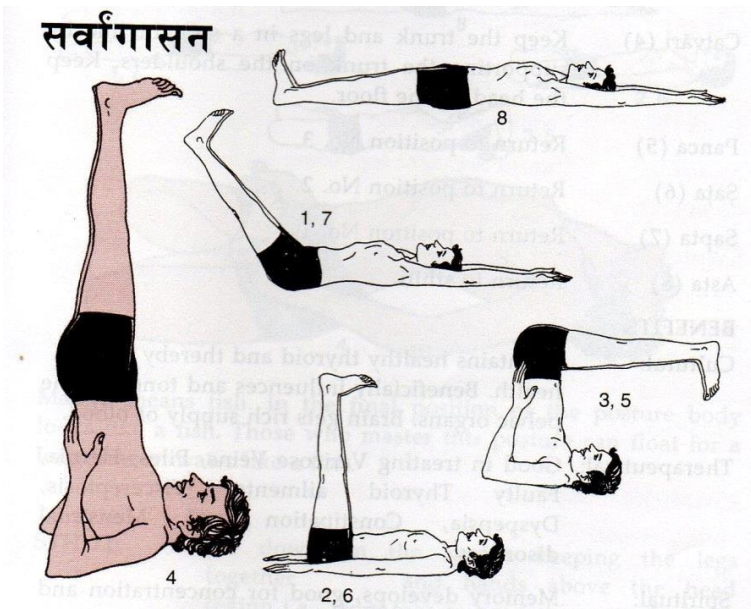
PHYSIOLOGICAL

j Pascimottanasana activates the kidneys, liver, pancreas and adrenal glands. j It is useful for a good flow of fresh blood to the spinal nerves and muscles. j It increases the functions of the circulatory and respiratory systems.

THERAPEUTIC

j Pascimottanasana is a good remedy for constipation.
j It can check and even cure diabetes.
j It is useful for curing the obesity.
j It is very good asana for the pile complaints.

SARVANGASANA



Shoulder stand Posture

POSTURE

This asana is called the shoulder stand posture.

POSITION

Suspine Position

PROCEDURE

- j STAGE1: Raise the legs slowly upto 90-degree, and hold them in the position for a few seconds. While raising maintain the legs straight and together
- j STAGE2: Raise the trunk slowly with the support of the hands with the palm placed at the centre of the back.
- j STAGE3: Hold the body at an angle of 90 degrees, with head, shoulder and upper arm alone on the ground.
- j STAGE4: Maintain the same body position. Keep the total body perpendicular to the ground.

DURATION

Remain in the pose for minimum of 15 to 30 seconds, and at the maximum for 60 to 90 seconds.

CLOSURE

In the final position, try to relax the whole body as much as possible. Then slowly come back to the starting position by releasing the stages in the reverse order.

Remember and observe the following

- j Always maintain the legs straight and keep the toes together.
- j Maintain the legs for few seconds at 90-degree position.
- j Should not make any jerking movement while raising the body.
- j When returning, you should not raise the head from the floor.
- j While returning bring the legs as slow as possible, keeping the legs straight and together.
- j In the final pose chest should touch the chin.

BENEFITS

GENERAL

- j Sarvangasana develops the memory and concentration power.
- j It will reduce the excess fat at the stomach region.
- j It gives more flexibility to the spinal column.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

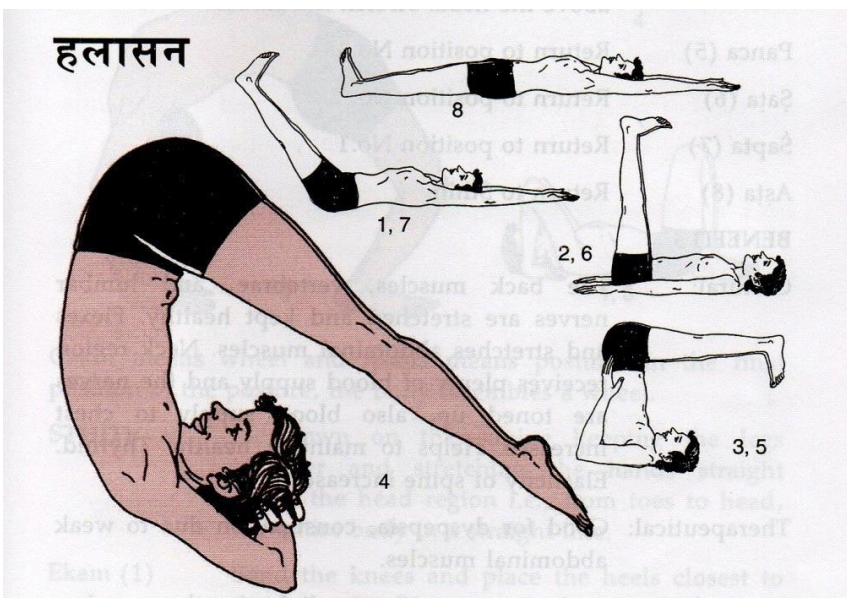
- j Sarvangasana particularly stimulates the thyroid gland.
- j It has a beneficial effect on the endocrine and digestive system.

- j It activates the functions of pituitary glands, which is the master gland that controls all the ductless glands functions.
- j It increases the more amount of blood flow to the head region.

THERAPEUTIC

- j Sarvangasana relives headaches, asthma etc.
- j It is a very good asana to relieve impotency and throat ailments.
- j It is a good remedy for menstrual disorders, varicose veins and obesity.
- j It regulates the nervous debility.

HALSANA



Plough Posture

POSTURE:

This asana is called as plough posture

POSITION:

Supine Position

PROCEDURE

- j STAGE 1: Raise the legs slowly upto 90-degree and hold them in the position for a few seconds. Raising the legs with straight and together.
- j STAGE2: Gently lower the legs behind the head until the toes are touching the ground.

j STAGE 3: Extend the feet a little further behind the head with toes pointing outward.

DURATION:

Be in the pose for minimum of 15 to 30 seconds, and at the maximum for 60 to 90 seconds. In the final position, try to relax the whole body as much as possible.

CLOSURE:

Then slowly come back to the starting position by releasing the stages in the reverse order.

REMEMBER AND OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING

- Always keep the legs straight and toes together.
- Maintain the legs for few seconds at 90-degree position.
- When returning , you should not raise the head from the floor.
- It should never be performed with jerks.

BENEFITS

GENERAL

- j Halasana is extremely beneficial to the spinal column.
- j It develops the memory and concentration power.
- j It will reduce the excess fat at the stomach region.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

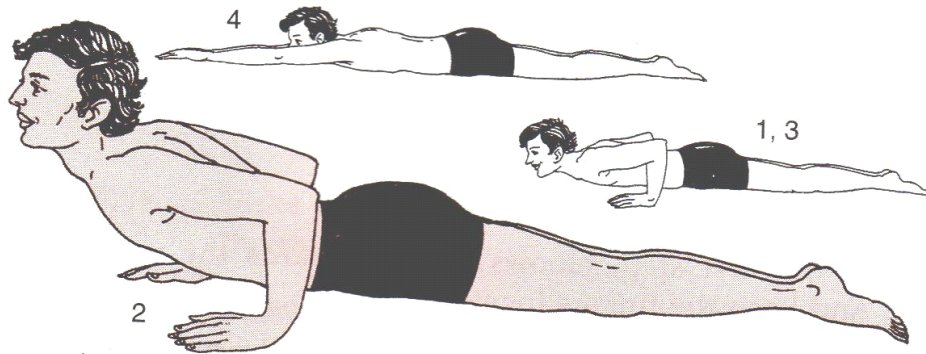
- j It regulates the functions of circulatory and respiratory systems.
- j It activates the functions of pituitary glands, which is the master gland that controls all the ductless gland function.
- j It increases the more amount of blood flow to the head region.

THERAPEUTIC

- j Halasana relieves backache, low back pain and rheumatism.
- j It regulates the nervous debility.
- j It is a good remedy for menstrual disorder and obesity.

BHUJANGASANA

COBRA POSTURE



POSTURE

This asana is called the cobra posture.

POSITION

Prone Position.

PROCEDURE

- j STAGE 1: Slowly bring the arms sideways nearer to the chest and place the palm on the floor with fingers pointing towards head.
- j STAGE 2: Slowly raise and make an arch backward on the head, neck and shoulder as much as possible.
- j STAGE 3 : Slowly raise the chest as much as possible in such a way that the lower abdomen should be in touch with the ground.

DURATION

Be in the pose for minimum of 15 to 30 seconds, and at the maximum for 60 to 90 seconds.

CLOSURE

In the final position try to relax the whole body as much as possible. Keep your eyesight on the forehead. Then slowly come back to the starting position by realizing the stages in the reverse order.

REMEMBER AND OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING

- While raising the body first raise the head, then neck, and later the chest.
- The knees should not be bent and raised in any circumstance.

- In the final pose, keep your eyesight on the forehead.
- The elbows should be close to the body.
- While returning, first bring the chest down , then the neck, and finally bring back the head. Maintain the sequence properly.

BENEFITS

GENERAL

- j Bhujangasana strengthens the neck and back muscles.
- j It will give more flexibility to the vertebral column.
- j It will develop the concentration and memory power.
- j It will enlarge the thoracic cavity.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

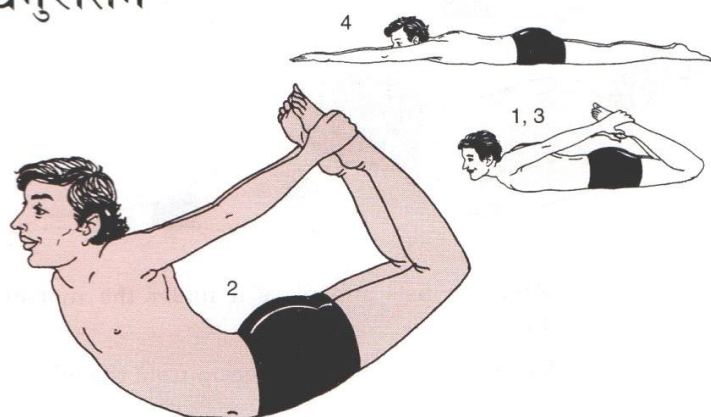
- j Bhujangasana activates the functions of the thyroid gland.
- j It regulates the free flow of breathing process.
- j It allows the flow of more blood to the thoracic region.

THERAPEUTIC

- j Bhujangasana stimulates the digestion.
- j It relocates the slipped discs.
- j It is very good asana for neck pain.
- j It helps to reform the vertebral disorder of khypos.
- j It is a good remedy for paralysis and rheumatism.

DHANURASANA

धनुरासन



BOW POSTURE

POSTURE

This asana is called the bow posture.

POSITION

Prone Position

PROCEDURE

- j STAGE 1: Gently fold the right leg at knee and hold the ankle with right hand.
- j STAGE 2: Slowly fold the left leg at knee and hold the ankle with left hand.
- j STAGE 3: Raise the head, chest and thighs as high as possible by gradual application of force on the hands and legs.
- j STAGE 4: Raise the body and make a perfect back arch on the vertebral column as much as possible.

DURATION

Be in the pose for minimum of 15 to 30 seconds, and at the maximum for 60 to 90 seconds.

CLOSURE

In the final position try to relax the whole body as much as possible. Keep your eyesight on the forehead. Then slowly come back to the starting position by releasing the stages in the reverse order.

REMEMBER AND OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING

- In the final pose the arms should be straight.

- The legs can be split apart in order to maintain the balance.
- In the final pose keep your eyesight on the forehead.
- In the final pose the lower abdomen only should touch the ground.

BENEFITS

GENERAL

- j Dhanurasana loosens the spinal column.
- j It will strengthen the back and abdomen muscles.
- j It develops the balancing power in the body.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

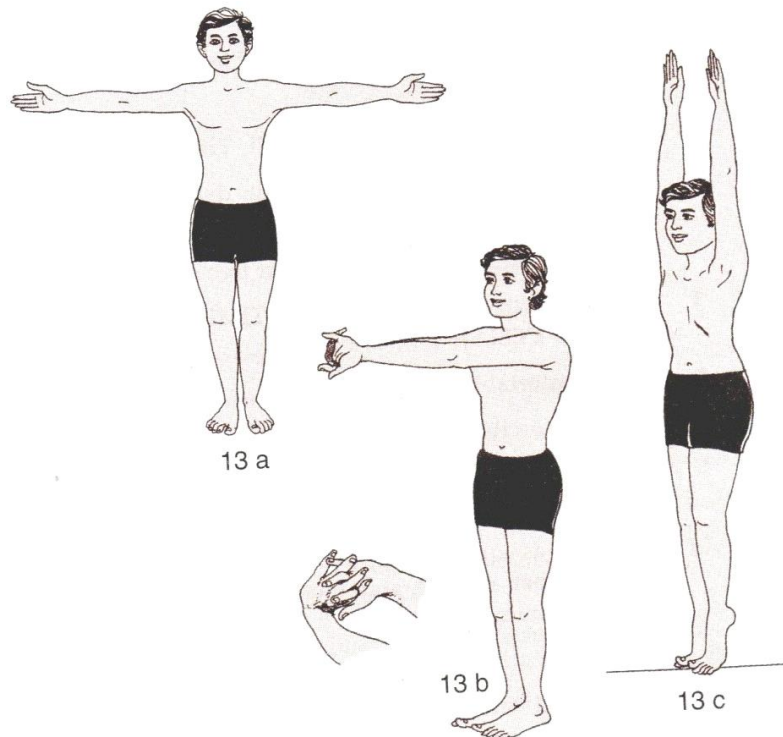
- j Dhanurasana stimulates the endocrine glands.
- j Particularly it activates the functions of liver, kidney, and pancreas.
- j It brings a large supply of blood to the kidney, heart and lungs.

THERAPEUTIC

- j Dhanurasana is useful for women suffering from irregular periods.
- j It is a very good asana for curing many disorders like asthma, diabetic, constipation, sexual debility etc...

TADASANA

MOUNTAIN POSTURE



POSTURE:

This asana is called the mountain posture.

POSITION:

Standing position.

PROCEDURE

- j STAGE1: Slightly place the feet apart in the normal stance to sideward. It is normally to the shoulder width of the individual.
- j STAGE2: Slowly raise the arms sideward above the head without any bend at the elbows.
- j STAGE3: Above the head interlock the fingers, and rotate the hands in such a way that the palms face upward.
- j STAGE4: Slowly lift the heels and stand on your toes, and balance the whole body.
- j STAGE5: Then slowly raise the head and look up at the hands, without making any oscillations in the body.

DURATION

Be in the pose for minimum 15 to 30 seconds, and maximum for 60 to 90 seconds.

CLOSURE

In the final position try to relax the whole body as much as possible. Then slowly come back to the starting position by releasing the stages in the reverse order.

REMEMBER AND OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING

- The elbows should not be bent.
- The feet should be placed shoulder width only.
- In the final pose the body should be balanced without any oscillations.

BENEFITS

GENERAL

- j Tadasana promotes the proper spinal bone growth.
- j It develops the balancing power in the body.
- j It will strengthen the leg muscles.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

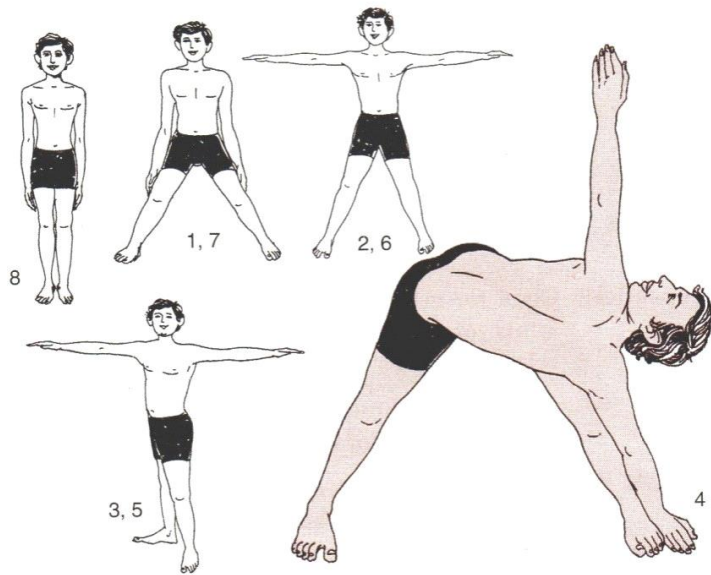
- j Tadasana will aid for the smooth functioning of the respiratory process.
- j The spinal nerves are toned up.
- j It regulates the circulatory system.

THERAPEUTIC

- j It is helpful to reform the vertebral disorders like KYPHOSIS, LORDOSIS and SCOLIOSIS
- j It is useful in curing paralysis.
- j It is a good remedial asana for back pain and neck pain.

TRIKONASANA

TRIANGLE POSTURE



POSTURE

This asana is called the triangle posture.

POSITION

Standing Position.

PROCEDURE

- j STAGE1: Place the right leg to the right side in such a way that the legs are 3 to 4 feet apart.
- j STAGE2 : Slowly raise the arms sideward up to the shoulder level without bending at the elbows with palm facing down.
- j STAGE3 : Slowly bend sideways towards the right leg and try to touch the right foot or floor as much as possible with right hand.
- j STAGE4: Keep the left arm perpendicular to the floor with the palm facing forward. Slowly turn the head and look up if you feel stiffness at the neck, keep the head facing forward.

DURATION

Be in the pose for minimum of 15 to 30 seconds, and maximum for 60 to 90 seconds.

CLOSURE

In the final position try to relax the whole body as much as possible. Then slowly come back to the starting position by realizing the stages in the reverse order.

REMEMBER AND OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING

- While raising the arms the elbow should not be bent.
- In bending sideward if you feel any undue pain stop the movements.
- The legs should be always kept erect.

BENEFITS

GENERAL

- j Trikonasana reduces the excess fat in the sideways
- j It improves the balancing power in the body.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

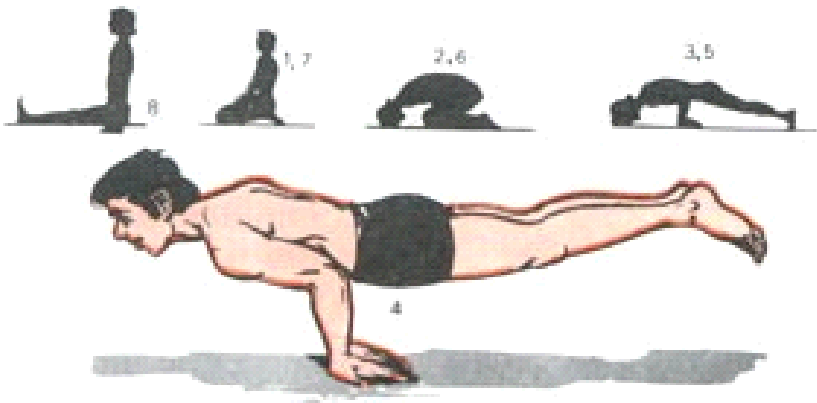
- j Trikonasana regulates the digestive and circulatory systems.
- j The spinal nerves are toned up, thus it develops the concentration.

THERAPEUTIC

- j Trikonasana is helpful to reform the vertebral disorders scoliosis.
- j It is very useful in curing some of the functional and organic disorders like acidity, arthritis, heart diseases etc.

MAYURASANA

PEACOCK POSTURE



POSTURE

This asana is called the peacock posture. This is also considered as queen of asana.

POSITION

Kneeling Position

PROCEDURE

- j STAGE1 : Slowly bend forward and place the palms flat on the ground, in between the knees in such a way that fingers pointing towards the feet keeping the elbows and forearms together.
- j STAGE2 : Slowly bend further forward and rest the abdomen on the elbows and the chest on the upper arms.
- j STAGE3 : Gently stretch the legs backward with straight, and together, and slightly bend the head downward.
- j STAGE4 : Slowly raise the legs, keep and balance the body in a position approximately parallel to the ground by supporting it entirely on the arms.

DURATION

Be in the pose for minimum of 15 to 30 seconds, and maximum for 60 to 90 seconds.

CLOSURE

In the final position try to relax the whole body as much as possible. Then slowly come back to the starting position by releasing the stages in the reverse order.

REMEMBER AND OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING

- The fingers, should be pointing towards the feet.
- The elbows and the legs should be together.
- Take care of the face. That is you should not raise the legs all of sudden.
- Slowly raise the legs with maintaining the body in a balanced position.

BENEFITS

GENERAL

- j The hands and arms become extremely strong
- j The stomach region will get more benefits than any other asana.

- j It develops the body balancing power too.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

- j Mayurasana stimulates the metabolic process.
- j Toxins are eliminated from the blood.
- j More amount of blood will be supplied to the head region.
- j The circulatory and respiratory systems will be activated to large extent.

THERAPEUTIC

- j Mayurasana is useful in curing most of abdominal problems and diabetes.
- j It relieves constipation, indigestion and gas trouble.
- j It is very good remedy for liver ailments.
- j It is also useful for the psychological disorder like nightmares.

SIRSASANA



HEAD STAND POSTURE

POSTURE

This asana is called head stand posture. It is also considered as the king of asana.

POSITION

Kneeling Position

PROCEDURE

- j STAGE1 : Bend forward and place the forearms on the ground with fingers interlocked and the elbows in front of the knees. Place the center of the head between the hands.
- j STAGE2: Lift the knees from the ground and raise the hip under until the legs are straight.
- j STAGE3: Slowly bring the knees to the chest by raising the toes from the ground.
- j STAGE4: When balanced in the third stage, raise and straighten the hip as slow as possible.

- j STAGE5 : After coming to the balanced position in the fourth stage straighten the legs and toes. If necessary you can split the legs while straightening the legs, in order to gain the balance in the body.

DURATION

Be in the pose for minimum of 15 to 30 seconds, and minimum for 60 to 90 seconds.

CLOSURE

In the final position try to relax the whole body as much as possible. Then slowly come back to the starting position by releasing the stages in the reverse order. While releasing the first stage be in the position for some times in order to regulate the more blood in the head region to become normal level.

REMEMBER AND OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING

- Keep the elbows at the shoulder width.
- The legs should be joined in all stages, except the fifth stage.
- In the fifth stage in order to gain balance to the body the legs can be split accordingly.
- At every stage, get the perfect balance and then go for the next stage.

- While releasing be in the first stage for some time and come to the starting position as slow as possible

BENEFITS

GENERAL

- j Sirsasana develops the memory and power of concentration.
- j It strengthens the neck and shoulder muscles.
- j It increases the power of vision.

PHYSIOLOGICAL

- j Sirsasana stimulates the thyroid gland.
- j It has a beneficial effect on the endocrine and digestive system.
- j It increases the blood flow to the brain and pituitary gland.

THERAPEUTIC

- j Sirsasana relieves headache, asthma, anemia etc.
- j It regulates the nervous debility.
- j It is a good remedy for impotency, tuberculosis, ulcer etc..

• PRANAYAMA

Pranayama is an exercise that prolongs life. The word pranayama is derived from two Sanskrit root called Prana and Ayama. The syllable prana denotes the air that leaves from the body. Ayama has two meanings to elongate to withhold.

The act of breathing has three distinct stages. Normally we think that breathing is just inhalation and exhalation. But there is a third stage which is a the brief pause in between inhalation and exhalation. This is known as the suspension of the breath. Pranayama is the control of air which include the three steps-inhalation, suspension and exhalation.

Meaning

Pranayama means, “to extend prana” (vital force). According to the great Rishi patanjali pranayamaa is the process in which respiration is interrupted and “Prana” is controlled and regulated.

Prana means breath and Amyama means length, holding, control, stretching, or restraint. Thus pranayama means the extension of breath and its control.

Definition of pranayam

“SWASA PRASWASA GATHI VITCHATA PRANAYAMA”

- Patanjali yoga sutra

SWASA - inhalation

PRASWASA - exhalation

GATHI - controlling the breath or inhibition

VITCHATA - attain your mind towards breathing system.

PRANAYAMA can be defined as a series of techniques, which stimulates and increases the vital energy. Ultimately bringing about perfect control over the flow of Prana(O₂) within the body.

Concepts of pranayama

Before going into the pranayama practice one should understand of pranayama so as to attain the maximum benefits.

These are very important for pranayama practices. Each point is discussed briefly hereunder:

Stages of pranayama

There are three stages; they are purakha, kumbaka and rachaka

PURAKA-Inhalation

This is a continuous process, evenly controlled, breathing the air into the lungs at the maximum, through nostril or alternate nostril or through mouth.

KUMBHAKA-Suspension

This is holding the breathe or retaining the air in the lungs for a short time with a comfortable condition by applying all the three types of bandhas.

RECHAKA-Exhalation

This is a smooth and continuous breathing out the air from the lungs at the maximum, through both nostrils or alternate nostril.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

PLACE

Pranayama should be practised in a clean, calm, even and airy place in your home. If you are in a position to perform inside the room under fan, don't keep the fan on full speed.

TIME

Pranayama can be practised both in the morning and evening. But early morning is the best and beneficial time for pranayama practice.

DURATION

As far as the pranayama practice duration is concerned, in the initial stages 5 to 10 minutes are sufficient. The practice duration should be gradually increased upto 30 minutes or even one hour during the advanced practice stages. One should be regular in maintaining the duration of the practice. That is, it should not be fluctuated like having 10 minutes practice one day, and on the other day 20 minutes practice.

POSTURE

The best suitable posture for the pranayama practice is padmasana or sukhasana. It is a very important aspect in pranayama practice. Mainly the mind should be free from all disturbances and ready for concentrating on a particular object or action. For that, the body should be stable, and in a relaxed state without any undue pain anywhere in the body.

BATHING

It is not advisable to take bath, immediately after the pranayama practice.

SEASONAL PRACTICE:

Most of the pranayamas have seasonal effectiveness in its technique of practice. Especially surya Bhedana and Bhastrika pranayama are very useful during the winter season. Sitali and Sitakari pranayamas are very useful in summer season. Ujjayi, Nadi Shodhana, Kapalabhati are good for throughout the year.

CAUTION:

One who is suffering from high or low blood pressure should not do kumbhaka in their initial practice. The kumbhaka period should be slowly increased without any undue strain or discomfort in the body.

BENEFITS OF PRANAYAMA:

- It is the fourth and very important stage of astanga yoga. It keeps the body fit and healthy. It reduces excessive fat.
- It improves the power of memory and eliminates mental disorders.

- Pranayama tones up the stomach, the liver, the bladder, the small and the large intestines and the digestive system.
- It purifies tubular channels and removes sluggishness from the body.
- Pranayama kindles gastric fire, the body becomes healthy and inner voice begins to be heard.
- The constant practice of pranayama strengthens the nervous system. The mind becomes calm and capable of concentration.
- The constant practice of pranayama rouses spiritual power. It gives spiritual joy, spiritual light and mental peace.
- Pranayama techniques are beneficial in treating a range of stress related disorder.
- Pranayama improves the autonomic functions.
- It helps relieving the symptoms of asthma.
- It reduces the signs of oxidative stress in the body
- Practicing pranayama everyday can assist in steady mind, strong will power and sound judgement.
- Regular pranayama can extend life and enhance one's perception of life.
- Numbers of studies show that pranayama causes change in the cardio respiratory system including lowering of blood pressure.
- Certain pranayama's are excellent for weight loss.

TYPES OF PRANAYAMA

- **NADI SUDDHI (Sun and Moon**

Breathe) MEANING

Nadi Suddhi means the alternate nostrils breath or sun and moon breath. It is also called Anuloma Viloma Pranayama, Anuloma and Viloma means with the hair and against the hair respectively or we might say, with the grain and against the grain.

Summary

Inhalation: By both nostrils alternately Suspension : No suspension

Exhalation: By both nostrils alternately

PROCEDURE

Sit in a comfortable sitting posture. Close the right nostril by right thumb and slowly, smoothly and deeply inhale the air through the left nostril. Then close the left nostril by right hand little and ring fingers open the right nostrils by releasing the right thumb, now slowly and smoothly breathe out the air through right nostril. Then slowly, smoothly, and deeply inhale the air through right nostril. Then close the right nostril by the thumb. Gently open the left nostril by releasing right hand little and ring finger. Now slowly and smoothly breathe out the air through left nostril. This is called one round or cycle. 3 to 5 cycles can be practiced in a practice session.

BENEFITS

- It cleans the right and left channels.
- It is useful in curing some of the diseases of the lungs.
- It increases the amount of oxygen mixed with the blood.
- It removes the carbon-di-oxide from the blood to great extent.

• NADI SHODHANA

Alternate Nostril Breath

MEANING

It is also called as alternate nostril breath with suspension phase.

SUMMARY

Inhalation : By both nostrils

alternately Suspension : It is

racticed

Exhalation : By both nostrils alternately

PROCEDURE

Sit in a comfortable sitting posture. Close the right nostrils by right thumb and slowly, smoothly and deeply inhale the air through the left nostril. Close both the nostrils by the Yogic traditional method. Then hold the breath comfortably for a few seconds by applying all the three bandhas. Slowly open the right nostril by releasing the right thumb, now slowly and smoothly breathe out. Exhale the air through right nostril. After completely exhale the air, then slowly, smoothly, and deeply inhale the air through right

nostril with closing the left nostril by right hand little and ring fingers. Close both the nostrils by the yogic traditional method. Then hold the breath comfortably for a few seconds by applying all the three bandhas. Slowly open the left nostril by releasing the right hand little and ring fingers, now slowly and smoothly breathe out. Exhale the air through left nostril.

This is called one round or one cycle. 3 to 5 cycles can be practiced in a practice session.

BENEFITS

- It cleanses the nasal passages and purifies the nadis.
- It is very useful pranayama for sinus problems.
- This pranayama tones-up and soothes the nervous system.
- It increases the amount of oxygen mixes with the blood, thus purifies the blood to great extent.
- It brings calmness and steadiness in the mind.
- It stimulates the appetite and improves the digestion.
- It is very useful for the arousal and for the control of the latent psychic force within the body.

• SURYA BHEDANA

Sun Piercing Breath

MEANING

SUMMARY

Inhalation: By both nostril
alone
Suspension : It is
practiced
Exhalation : By
nostril alone

Surya means sun and bhedana means to pierce. Surya Bhedana means piercing the pingala Nadi.

PROCEDURE

Sit in a comfortable sitting posture. Close the left nostril by right hand little and ring fingers and slowly, smoothly and deeply inhale the air through the right nostril. Close

both the nostrils by the Yogic traditional method. Then hold the breath comfortably for a few seconds by applying all the three bandhas. Slowly open the left nostril by releasing the right hand little and ring fingers, now slowly and smoothly breath out . i.e. exhale the air through left nostril. This is called one round or one cycle. Three to five rounds can be practiced in a practice session.

BENEFITS

- Surya Bhedana practice produces heat in our body and thus purifies the blood to great extent.
 - It activates the physiological functions of liver.
 - It is useful in curing rheumatism and some of the skin diseases.
 - The constant practice of this pranayama will arouse and increase the latent powers of the individual .
- **KAPALABHATI**
Cleaning Breath

MEANING

In Sanskrit kapala means skull and bhati means light. The aim is to purify the channels inside the nose in addition to all the other parts of the respiratory system, thus allowing the brain to be cleared as well

SUMMARY

Inhalation : By both nostrils Suspension : No suspension Exhalation : By both nostrils

PROCEDURE

Sit in a comfortable pose. In this the inhalation and exhalation are performed very quickly like a pair of bellows of a black smith. Forcefully exhale the air through both nostrils. You should not take any effort to inhale the air through nose. It will take place naturally. Here we are giving much importance to the exhaling phase only. In the initial stage do it slowly. After some practice slowly increase the speed. For example at the beginning the exhalation and inhalation to be at the rate of 20 to 25 times per minute. This can be slowly increased up to 100 to 120 per minute according to one's capacity.

After forceful exhalation counts are over, take a deep breath in and out. This is called one round or cycle 3 to 5 cycles can be practiced in a practice session.

BENEFITS

- It purifies the frontal portion of the brain.
- It increases the concentration power, thoughts and visions.
- It is useful for curing asthma patient , by eliminating the cough accumulated in the windpipe.
- Mainly it controls the sense organs and keeps the mind at rest.

CAUTION

Those in good health may perform this exercise, but those suffering from pulmonary or cardiac disorders should only undertake it under the guidance of experienced teachers of yoga.

- **BHASTRIKA**

Bellows Breath

MEANING

In Sanskrit bhastrika means bellows . In this type of pranayama the inhalation and exhalation process is done with full force. Mechanism of this pranayama movements are more or less similar to that of the bellows of the blacksmith.

Bhastrika pranayama can be practiced in two types . In type-1 the inhalation of air is through both nostrils and in type-2 the inhalation of air by alternate nostrils.

BHASTRIKA TYPE-1

Bellows Breath by Both Nostrils

SUMMARY

Inhalation : By both nostrils Suspension : It is Practised Exhalation : By both nostrils

PROCEDURE

Sit in a comfortable sitting posture like Padmasana or Sulhasana. Keep the body, the neck and the head erect, concentrate your mind in your breathing and be in a relaxed mood.

The inhalation and exhalation of air is done with full force through both nostrils, like a pair of bellows of a blacksmith, quickly for about 10 to 20 times. After the final rapid breath is over, take one slow, smooth, and deep inhalation through both the nostrils. Close both the nostrils by the Yogic traditional method. Then hold the breath comfortably for a few seconds by applying all the three bandhas. Then slowly release all the bandhas and exhale the air fully through both nostrils. The kumbhaka period may be slowly increased according to the capacity of the individual. This is called one round three to five rounds can be practiced in a single session.

Bhastrika breathing through both nostrils will influence the sushumna nadi. It is called as sampurnang bhastrika.

BHASTRIKA TYPE-II

SUMMARY

Inhalation : By both nostrils alternately Suspension : It is practiced

Exhalation : By both nostrils alternately

Bellows Breath by Alternate Nostrils

PROCEDURE

Sit in a comfortable sitting posture like Padmasana or Sukhasana keep the body, the neck and the head to be erect. Concentrate your mind in your breathing and be in a relaxed mood.

Close the right nostril by the right thumb. The inhalation and exhalation of air is done with full force through left nostril, like a pair of bellows of the blacksmith, quickly for about 10 to 20 times. After the final rapid breath is over, take one slow, smooth, and deep inhalation through the left nostril. Close both the nostrils by the Yogic traditional method. Then hold the breath comfortably for a few seconds by applying all the three bandhas. Then slowly release all the bandhas and exhale the air fully through right nostrils by closing the left nostril with the right hand ring and little finger.

Again the inhalation and exhalation of air is done with full force through right nostrils, like a pair of bellows of a blacksmith, quickly for about 10 to 20 times. After the final rapid breath is over, take one slow, smooth and deep inhalation through right nostril. Closing both the nostrils by the yogic traditional method. Then hold the breath

comfortably for a few seconds by applying all the three bandhas. Then slowly release all the bandhas and exhale the air fully through left nostril by closing the right nostril with the right thumb. This is called one round. Three to five rounds can be practiced in a single session.

The kumbhaka period may be slowly increased according to the capacity of the individual.

The left nostril breathing will influence the Ida Nadi. It is called as chandrang bhasrika. The right nostril breathing will influence the pingala nadi. It is called as suryang bhasrika.

BENEFITS

- It is very good practice for the asthma, tuberculosis and for the chest ailments.
- It produces warmth to the body.
- The sampoornang bhasrika strengthens the central nervous system.
- The chandrang bhasrika is useful to control and purify thoughts, emotions and will power.
- The suryang bhasrika strengthens the prana in our body.
- It paves the better way for dhyana practice.

NOTE

Before the practice of bhasrika pranayama we should practice contracting and expanding the belly without moving other parts of the body. This will increase the efficiency of this bhasrika pranayama.

• UJJAYI

Victorious Breath

MEANING

SUMMARY

Inhalation : By both
nostrils Suspension : It
is practiced Exhalation :
By both nostrils

In Sanskrit jaya means victory.

PROCEDURE

Sit in a comfortable pose. Exhale fully, using either nostrils or mouth. This is preparatory to the start of the breath proper. Draw air in through both nostrils in a slow and continuous flow, by partly closing the glottis. The abdominal muscles must be kept under control and contracted slightly throughout in order to get expansion at the thoracic cage. Hold the breath comfortably for a few seconds by applying all the three bandhas. The air should then be exhaled, while the glottis is kept half-closed and the abdominal muscles are slightly contracted tighter in order for the lungs to be emptied as much as possible.

This could be called as one round or cycle. Practice 3 rounds in the initial stage, later or two extra repetitions may be added each week to reach a total of 10 rounds.

BENEFITS

- Digestive and pulmonary complications especially indigestion coughing are cured.
- Both the circulatory and the nervous systems are strengthened .
- Low blood pressure can be raised to the normal level.
- The thyroid gland, is greatly stimulated.

• BHRAMARI

Bee Breath

MEANING

Bhramari means bee. In this pranayama practice the sound that produced by a black bee is observed in the mind, during the inhalation and the exhalation phases.

SUMMARY

Inhalation: By both

nostrils Suspension : It

is practiced Exhalation :

By both nostrils

PROCEDURE

Sit in a comfortable sitting posture like padmasana or sukhasana. Keep the body, the neck and the head erect. Concentrate your mind in your breathing and be in a relaxed mood.

Close both the ears by respective thumbs, that is the right ear with the right thumb and the left ear with left thumb. Keep the palms open and gently rest the other fingers on the head. Keep your mind on the inhalation and exhalation of the air. Now slowly , smoothly and deeply inhale the air through both nostrils. Observe the sound of the air being drawn into the lungs. After the inhalation is over, do kumbhaka by applying all the three bandhas. Remove the thumbs from the ears and close the nostrils by the traditional method for few seconds. Then again place the thumb on the ears and release the bandhas. Exhale the air slowly and smoothly through both nostrils. Observe the sound of the air coming out from the lungs. This is called one round. Three to five rounds can be practiced in a single session.

BENEFITS

- Bhramari pranayama is useful to lead our mind to dharana and dyana stage.
- It relieves the mental tension and keeping the mind is in alert.
- It awakens the spirituality.

• SITALI

Cooling Breath through Tongue

MEANING

SUMMARY

Inhalation : Through

Mouth Suspension : It is

practiced Exhalation :

By both nostrils

Sitali means cool. Sitali pranayama produces the cooling effect on the body and mind.

PROCEDURE

Sit in any meditative pose. Extend the tongue and fold the sides to form a narrow tube. Inhale slowly and deeply through the folded tongue. Close the mouth and keep the tongue as it is in the normal. Retain the breath for few seconds by performing jalandhara bandha, uddiyana bandha and mula bandha, and close the nostrils by the traditional yogic method. Slowly release the jalandhara bandha and open the nostril passage. Gently

let the air out slowly and continuously through both nostrils. After the complete exhalation of the air, slowly release the uddiyana bandha and mula bandha. This is called one cycle. 3 to 5 cycle can be practiced in a practice session.

BENEFITS

- Sitali pranayama eliminates the thirst.
- During summer it reduces the body temperature to a great extent.
- It encourages free flow of prana through the body.
- Sitali is very useful for the persons who are having very hot-temperament in nature.
- It is useful in curing the ailments of high blood pressure and some of the skin diseases.

• SITAKARI

Cooling Breath through Teeth

SUMMARY

Inhalation : Through

mouth Suspension : It is

practiced Exhalation : By

both nostrils

Sitakari also produces the cooling effect on the body and mind

PROCEDURE

Sit in a comfortable pose. Keep the body, the neck and the head erect. Concentrate your mind in your breathing and be relaxed. This is very similar to sitali pranayama. Extend the tongue and fold back in such a way that the lower surface of the tongue touches the upper palate. Clench the teeth together and keep the lips are slightly parted. Now forcefully inhale the air through the teeth by producing a hissing sound.

The air thus going through the tongue has a cooling effect. The lungs are comfortably filled then the lips are closed. The tongue inside the mouth is placed as it is in the normal. Closing both the nostrils by the yogic traditional method. Then hold the breath comfortably for a few seconds by applying all the three bandhas. Then slowly release all the bandhas and open both the nostrils and exhale the air fully through both the nostrils. This is called one round. 3 to 5 rounds can be practiced in a single session.

BENEFITS

- Sitakari is useful in appeasing hunger and quenching thirst.
- It purifies the blood as well as cool down the circulatory system.
- It encourages free flow of prana through the body.
- Sitali is very useful for the persons who are having very hot-temperament in nature.

- **BHANDAS**

Bandha' (bond, arrest) is a term for the "body locks" in Hatha Yoga, treated under the heading of mudra. Specific bandhas are: MulaBandha, contraction of the perineum. Uddiyana bandha, contraction of the abdomen into the rib cage. Jalandhara Bandha, tucking the chin close to the chest.

Bandha means to lock, close-off, to stop. In the practice of a Bandha, the energy flow to a particular area of the body is blocked. When the Bandha is released, this causes the energy to flood more strongly through the body with an increased pressure.

There are four types of Bandhas:

- j **Mula Bandha** - Anal Lock
- j **Uddiyana Bandha** - Lifting of the Diaphragm
- j **Jalandhara Bandha** - Chin Lock
- j **Maha Bandha** - Practice of all three Bandhas at the same time.

Benefits of Yoga Bandhas

Let us take a look at some of the ways in which utilizing Yoga Bandhas can enhance the benefits that you gain from the practice of yoga:

- j Understanding and utilizing the appropriate Bandhas can simplify the performance of complex yoga poses.
- j When you make use of these yoga Bandhas, you also amplify the benefits that the practice of yoga grants your body.
- j Bandhas help you to control and improve the function of your body's internal organ systems such as the nervous system, digestive system, reproductive system, and hormonal system.
- j The practice of yoga Bandhas will also allow you to increase the duration for which you hold your postures.

Type of Bandhas

There are three basic types of yoga bandhas—the Mula Bandha, Uddiyana Bandha, and Jalandhara Bandha. These different yoga bandhas can also be combined into the Maha Bandha.

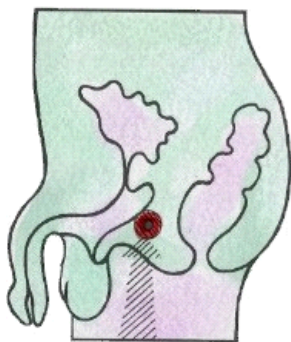
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Mula Bandha

The word Mula means root. Thus, the Mula Bandha is the most basic of all the Bandhas. It is also the easiest of yoga bandhas to master. This Bandha can be performed in any of the yoga postures, whether standing, sitting, or supine. In order to perform this Bandha, you should contract the perineum—the area between your anus and genital organs.

Engaging the Mula Bandha allows you to perform your yoga practice for longer without getting fatigued. It also makes you feel lighter on your feet, thereby making the other asanas easier to perform. Performing the Mula Bandha also stimulates the digestive, excretory and reproductive system. It can also help with digestive ailments and is also good for treating depression.



Mula Bandha

the root lock

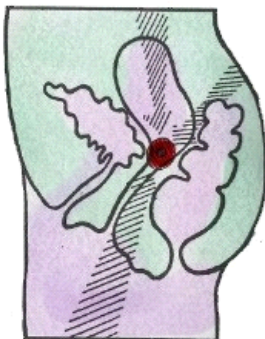
Mula means 'root', 'origin', or 'foundation'. In human body, it is located in the perinium.

how-to

Contract the same muscles used in holding the urine mid-stream.

benefits

The bandha helps balance the sexual desires. It moves apana vayu or the downward wind (in the body) up to meet with prana vayu or the master wind creating a yogic state.



Uddiyana Bandha

The Uddiyana Bandha means flying lock. This refers to the fact that by practicing this Bandha, you direct the energy in your body upwards. In order to practice this Bandha, stand up straight with your feet slightly apart. Inhale and lift your arms straight up over your head. Exhale and bend forward from the back and place your hands just above the knees to support the body. Hold your breath on the exhale as you straighten your arms and arch your back so that your abdominal organs are pushed upwards towards your back. You know you are performing the Uddiyana Bandha properly when your ribs protrude outwards while your abdominal section is sucked in towards your back.

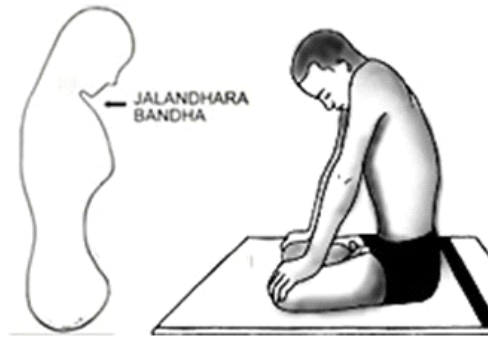


Engaging the Uddiyana Bandha makes inverted postures and airborne exercises easier. In addition to strengthening and massaging the abdominal organs, it also stimulates the muscles of the lower back. The Uddiyana Bandha is one of the best exercises for the entire digestive system and can help to cure a wide variety of digestive ailments. It also stimulates the adrenal system. If you are looking for washboard abdominals, the Uddiyana Bandha is also a great exercise.

Jalandhara Bandha

The Jalandhara Bandha is a throat lock that is performed in conjunction with breathing exercises. To perform this lock, sit in the Padma Asana or Lotus Pose. Now inhale slowly as you bring your chin towards your chest. Try to maintain this posture while holding your breath as you try to further deepen the lock by straightening your elbows and trying to tuck your chin into your throat. You should be able to feel a double chin forming when you practice this posture correctly. To come out of this lock inhale some more, slowly lift your chin back to the normal position and then exhale.

The Jalandhara Bandha is one of the best yoga bandhas for relieving stress. It also helps to stimulate the circulatory and respiratory systems and is beneficial for those who suffer from respiratory disorders.



Jalandhara Bandha

the throat lock



Jala means a net or a web.
The bandha is the first bandha
that a yogi should master

how-to

contract the throat and neck and
bring the chin to the chest in the notch
between the collar bones.

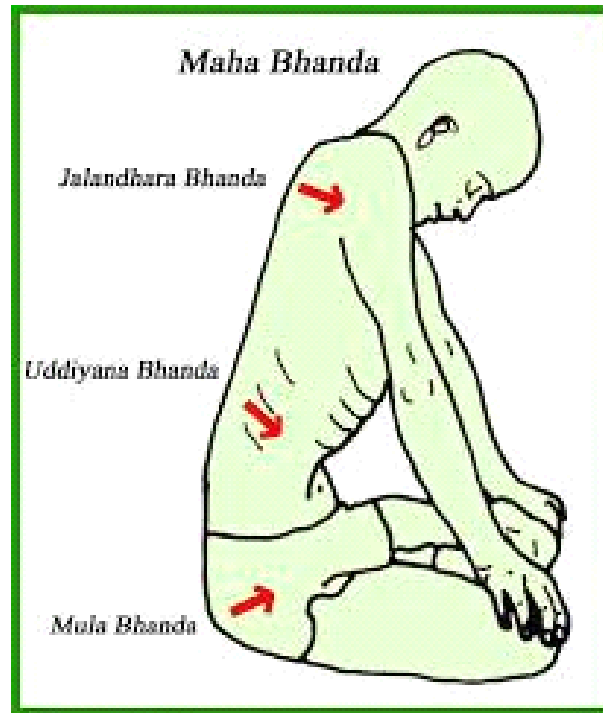
benefits

The bandha regulates the blood flow to
the heart, the neck and head regions.
It also guides the upward flow of energy
down to fuse with the downward.

Maha Bandha

The Maha Bandha or Great Lock is so called because it combines all three of the previously mentioned Bandhas into one comprehensive exercise. The Maha Bandha should only be attempted once you have mastered the Uddiyana Bandha, Jalandhara Bandha, and Mula Bandha individually. This Bandha is also performed in the Lotus Pose. While sitting in the Lotus Pose inhale deeply and then try to exhale all the breath out of your body. Hold the exhale and first engage the Mula Bandha. Once you have done so, attempt to engage the Uddiyana Bandha while sitting in the same posture. Now inhale slowly to expand your chest and engage the Jalandhara Bandha.

The Maha Bandha provides the benefits of all three of the Yoga Bandhas. It increases your stamina and endurance and also helps to balance the endocrine system.



Unit IV

KRIYAS AND MEDITATION

- K

riyas

KRIY

AS

There is no yoga without cleanliness. We take our daily bath to remove the dust from the skin. Do we clean our internal organs? How to expel the dust and waste inside? Yoga kriyas remove waste materials of our internal organs which are not expelled out. Without first eliminating toxins and impurities from the body, it is very difficult to practice the higher yoga techniques. For this sole purpose, six scientific yogic techniques known as shat karma's have been developed by the ancient yogis.

TYPES OF KRIYAS

Kriya means cleansing techniques of the internal organ. The main six types of kriyas are as follows:

- j NETI: A process of cleansing and purifying the nasal passages.
- j DHAUTI: A series of techniques for cleansing the stomach.
- j BASTI: Techniques for washing and toning the large intestine.
- j NAULI: A very powerful method of massaging and strengthening the abdominal organs by means of churning of the abdominal wall.
- j TRATAKA: The practice of intense gazing at an object. It enhances the vision of the individual.
- j KAPALABHATI: Purification of the frontal brain by air. It involves fast breathing.

MAJOR KRIYAS

The six processes (sat kriyas) which purify the system are :

Kapalabhati, Neti, Dhouti, Nauli, Tratake and Basti.

These six Kriyas are discussed in detail in different Yoga texts like Hatha prasipika.

We will briefly describe the first five only:

1) NETI (CLEANING THE NASAL PASSAGES)

Four types of “Neti” are in general practice, namely, *Jala Neti, Sutra Neti, Dugdha Neti and Ghrat Neti.*

• Jala Neti:

Add about half a tea - spoon of salt to a Neti - pot - ful of luke - warm water.

- Hold the pot in the right hand.
- Insert the nozzle of the pot into the right nostril.
- Keep the mouth open to allow free breathing through the mouth.
- Tilt the head first slightly backwards, then forwards and sideways to the left, so that the water from the pot enters the right nostril and comes out through the left by gravity. Allow the flow till the pot is empty.
- Repeat the same on the left side.
- Blast out the air accumulate in both the nostrils by active exhalations through alternate nostrils as in kapalabhati to clean the nasal passages of the remaining water.

- By slightly bending the head back, water goes to mouth which can be swallowed after washing the passages of nostrils. This is called “ Usha pana” which can be practiced early morning before sunrise with beneficial effects.
- **Sutra Neti or Rubber catheter Neti**
 - Insert the blunt end of a thin soft rubber catheter from the front horizontally in the right nostril.
 - Push it along the floor of the nose until the tip is felt in the back of the throat.
 - Insert the right index and the middle fingers through the mouth and catch the tip of the catheter at the back of the throat.
 - Put it out through the mouth and gently massage the nasal Passage by catching the two ends of the tube.
 - Remove the catheter through the nose.
 - Repeat on the left side.
- **Dugdha Neti and Ghrta Neti**
Here milk and ghee are used respectively in place of water as in Jala Neti.
- **Vyutkrama kapala Neti**
This is similar to Jala Neti, with the difference that the water comes out of mouth instead of through the opposite nostril.
- **Sitkrama Kapala Neti**
 - Take a mouthful of luke - warm saline water.
 - Bend forward and relax the soft palate so that the water comes out of the nose.

Neti kriya is to be followed by a few rounds of kapalabhati, so as to keep the nasal passage clear.

Neti, in general, purifies most structures in the head and neck. Neti not only clears the nasal passages but also renders the nose resistant to many irritants like water, cotton, rubber, ghee, milk etc. Hence it is very helpful in removing the hypersensitivity as seen in persons suffering from allergic rhinitis. Vision becomes more subtle.

- **DHOUTI (CLEANSING THE INTESTINAL TRACT UPTO THE STOMACH)**

There are 3 types of Dhouti kriyas. They are Jala Dhouti or Vamana Dhouti, Vastra Dhouti and Danda Dhouti. We will briefly describe them.

- **Jala Dhouti or Vamana Dhouti**

- sit on heels, and drink luke-warm saline water till you can take no more, or till you feel like vomiting it out.
- churn the stomach by twisting exercise. (1.8)
- stand with feet together and trunk bent forward forming an angle of about 90° and vomit.
- Now with the help of the middle three fingers tickle the back of the throat to vomit out (vamana) all the water.
- Repeat the process of tickling, till no more water comes out, which means that almost all water had been vomited. This kriya is also called as kunjai.
- With continued Practice, one can stimulate the vomiting sensation and vomit out the water without using the fingers at the throat. Further Practice can lead to a continuous vomiting of all the water through the mouth, as if it is coming in a jet. This resembles the water-jet that comes out of the trunk of an elephant and as such is termed "Gajakarani".

- **Vastra Dhouti**

- Slowly swallow a wet Piece of cloth four fingers broad and about 7 metres long under the guidance of an instructor or a Guru.
- Slowly bring out the cloth without forcibly pulling it. This Process is called vastra Dhouti.
- If the vastra tends to get stuck up, drink some water to release the spasm.

- **Danda Dhouti**

- Drink Luke-warm saline water as in vamana Dhouti.
- Take a rubber tube (Danda) about 1 cm. in diameter and about a metre long.
- Slowly place one end of the tube and push it down the gullet into the stomach. When it reaches the stomach, slowly bend forward. All the water will come out by siphon action. Suck in and bulge out the stomach, if necessary. Remove the tube gently.

These Kriyas should be performed early in the morning preferably before dawn and after clearing the bowels.

- Dhouti kriya is extremely useful for gas trouble, high acidity in stomach and for curing Asthma also.

- **BASTI**

Basti is nothing but flushing of the colon. In this type of kriya the large intestine is cleaned by water. This is also called yogic enema.

PROCEDURE

Insert more than half the rubber tube of half inch diameter and six inches length into your rectum and the rest should be left outside. Sit in a squat position in a knee level deep water. Do uddiyana bandha in order to suck the water into your large intestine depending upon the individual capacity. After sucking the water do nauli by rolling upon the individual capacity. After sucking the water do nauli by rolling the internal organs as well as the large intestine. Then go to latrine and let out the water. This can be practiced with cool as well as lukewarm water.

BENEFITS

- Basti helps in curing stomach ailments.
- It increases appetite
- The lukewarm basti practice helps to cure constipation and other digestive disorder.
- The hot water basti practice helps to cure dysentery and diarrhea.
- Basti practice gives us mental peace and makes the body light and active.

NOTE

The basti practice should be done in empty stomach. The early morning is the best time to practice after completing the morning routines.

• NAULI (CONTROL OF THE ABDOMINAL RECTI)

Nauli is an abdominal kriya, in which isolation and rolling manipulation of the abdominal recti muscles (rectus abdominis) which form the front linear wall of the abdominal cavity, are accomplished.

• Uddiyana

- Stand with a slight forward bend of the trunk, palms on the thighs and legs about a metre apart.
- Exhale completely by vigorously contracting the muscles of the abdomen. Chest also gets contracted.
- Press the hands against the thighs (thus fixing up the muscles of the neck and the shoulders) and have vigorous mock - inhalation by raising the ribs without allowing air to flow into the lungs.

- Relax the muscles of the abdomen. Automatically the diaphragm will rise up producing a concave depression of the abdomen. This is called Uddiyana.
- In this 'breathe - out condition' push - out and pull - in the abdominal muscles fast. Continue until the " breathe - out condition" lasts. Count the number of flappings. This process is called Agnisara kriya. This kriya tones up the digestive system by continued stimulations.
- **Madhyama Nauli**
 - Maintaining Uddiyana, give a forward and downward push to the abdominal point just above the pelvic bone in the mid - line, where the two recti originate. This push brings about the constriction of these muscles which stand out in the centre, leaving the other muscles of the abdominal wall in a relaxed condition. This is Madhyama Nauli (Middle Nauli)
- **Daksina and Vama nauli**
 - For Daksina (right) Nauli, one has to contract the right rectus alone leaving the other muscles including the left rectus relaxed.
 - For vama (left) Nauli, only left rectus is contracted leaving the others relaxed.
- **Nauli calana**
 - When one has gained full control over these three types of Nauli, rolling of the recti muscles clockwise and anti - clockwise is practiced. This is called "Nauli Calana".

BENEFITS :

A very fine kriya for Promoting the health of the abdominal viscera. The autonomic nerve centres and the endocrine glands in the abdomen are all activated. Due to the negative pressure

created in the abdomen the circulation to the abdominal organs improves enormously, stimulates gastric fire, thus helping digestion.

- **Trataka (Fixing the mind)**
 - Sit in any meditative posture - Padmasana, Vajrasana etc., comfortably with an erect spine.
Arrange a lighted lamp with the flame at the same height as the eyes at a distance of about a metre.
 - Start gazing at the flame without winking the eye - lids.

- Learn to ignore the irritation and watering of the eyes.
 - With practice, the gaze becomes steady, making the mind single - pointed.
Relaxation of the eyes is important. Otherwise, excessive strain of the eye muscles may cause headache.
 - Progress slowly starting with 10 secs, and increasing the duration by 10 secs. Per week.
 - This cleansing process activates the tear glands, purifies the visual system, promotes good concentration and strengthens will-power. Generally it cures the eye defects, if done properly.
- **KAPALABHATI, (STIMULATING THE BRAIN CELLS)**
 - Sit comfortably in padmasana with an erect spine.
 - Exhale forcibly using abdominal muscles.
 - Inhale passively by relaxing the abdominal muscles.
 - Repeat as quickly as possible starting with 60 strokes per minute and increasing gradually upto 120 per minute.
 - There is no holding of the breath.
 - The rapid active exhalations with passive effortless inhalations are accomplished by flapping movements of the abdomen. At the end of the minute there is an automatic cessation of breath. Enjoy the deep silence of mind associated with this.
 - This kriya washes out the carbon dioxide from the blood, activates the brain cells, cleans the air passages and stimulates the abdominal organs.
 - **NAULI (CONTROL OF THE ABDOMINAL RECTI)**
Nauli is an abdominal kriya, in which isolation and rolling manipulation of the abdominal recti muscles (rectus abdominis) which form the front linear wall of the abdominal cavity, are accomplished.
 - **Uddiyana**
 - Stand with a slight forward bend of the trunk, palms on the thighs and legs about a metre apart.
 - Exhale completely by vigorously contracting the muscles of the abdomen. Chest also gets contracted.

- Press the hands against the thighs (thus fixing up the muscles of the neck and the shoulders) and have vigorous mock - inhalation by raising the ribs without allowing air to flow into the lungs.
- Relax the muscles of the abdomen. Automatically the diaphragm will rise up producing a concave depression of the abdomen. This is called Uddiyana.
- In this 'breathe - out condition' push - out and pull - in the abdominal muscles fast. Continue until the "breathe - out condition" lasts. Count the number of flappings. This process is called Agnisara kriya. This kriya tones up the digestive system by continued stimulations.
- **Madhyama Nauli**
 - Maintaining Uddiyana, give a forward and downward push to the abdominal point just above the pelvic bone in the mid - line, where the two recti originate. This push brings about the constriction of these muscles which stand out in the centre, leaving the other muscles of the abdominal wall in a relaxed condition. This is Madhyama Nauli (Middle Nauli)
- **Daksina and Vama nauli**
 - For Daksina (right) Nauli, one has to contract the right rectus alone leaving the other muscles including the left rectus relaxed.
 - For vama (left) Nauli, only left rectus is contracted leaving the others relaxed.
- **Nauli calana**
 - When one has gained full control over these three types of Nauli, rolling of the recti muscles clockwise and anti - clockwise is practiced. This is called "Nauli Calana".

BENEFITS :

A very fine kriya for Promoting the health of the abdominal viscera. The autonomic nerve centres and the endocrine glands in the abdomen are all activated. Due to the negative pressure created in the abdomen the circulation to the abdominal organs improves enormously, stimulates gastric fire, thus helping digestion.

- **Trataka (Fixing the mind)**
 - Sit in any meditative posture - Padmasana, Vajrasana etc., comfortably with an erect spine.

Arrange a lighted lamp with the flame at the same height as the eyes at a distance of about a metre.

- Start gazing at the flame without winking the eye - lids.
- Learn to ignore the irritation and watering of the eyes.
- With practice, the gaze becomes steady, making the mind single - pointed.

Relaxation of the eyes is important. Otherwise, excessive strain of the eye muscles may cause headache.

- Progress slowly starting with 10 secs, and increasing the duration by 10 secs. Per week.
- This cleansing process activates the tear glands, purifies the visual system, promotes good concentration and strengthens will-power. Generally it cures the eye defects, if done properly.

• **MUTRAS**

The meaning of 'mudra', which is a Sanskrit word, is 'closure' or 'seal'. Mudra hand positions are physical gestures that have an effect on the energy flow of the body. The ancient practice of yoga links the hand mudras to the changing spiritual and mental aspects of a person. The mudras are usually finger positions like in the Anjali Mudra, where the hands are kept at the center of the heart

The physical body is made up of five elements namely - Air, Water, Fire, Earth and Aakash (ether

- the tiny intercellular spaces in the human body).

Imbalance of these elements disrupts the immunity system and causes disease.

Deficiencies in any of these elements can be made up by connecting one part of the body with another in a particular manner through Mudras.

When a finger representing an element is brought into contact with the thumb, that element is brought into balance. Therefore the disease caused by the imbalance is cured. Mudras start electromagnetic currents within the body which balance various constituting elements and restore health. The joining of fingers creates an effect on the human body.

Five Fingers for Five Elements

j	Thumb	-	Fire
j	Index	-	Air
j	Middle	-	Aakash
j	Ring	-	Earth
j	Little	-	Water

Purpose of mudras

The purpose of mudras is to bring about a complete regeneration and transformation of the body-mind principle and an expansion of the consciousness. However, make sure that you consult your doctor before practicing yoga mudras. This is because certain conditions like diabetes can worsen with the practice of yoga mudras.

Benefits of mudras

The mudras benefit the biomagnetic fields, psyche, body, and mind in many ways. Some of the benefits of mudras are as follows:

- j The mudras clear the psychic centers and subtle channels in the body. This allows the life force to flow freely to the various parts of the body.



The mudras purify the body's bio magnetic field and shield it from negative forces.



1. Gyan Mudra



2. Shoonya Mudra



3. Apan Mudra



4. Prana Mudra



5. Vayu Mudra



6. Prithvi Mudra



• MEDITATION

At present most of the people are leading the mechanical and commercial life in the world. Particularly the office executives, politicians and the capitalists suffer from

hypertension or heart ailments, because of their tight time bound engagements. Like that many people in the world are badly in need of mental peace and normal health in their life. In yogic practices the meditation is the priceless technique that provide the ways and means to led out from their worries and be relaxed in both body and mind.

There is a scientific basis of meditation, acupuncture, acupressure, electrotherapy, magneto therapy and spiritual healing of certain diseases. It has been established that the meditation reduces the hypertension, depression and tension related to hearing and nervous problems. Thus it also provides the increase in positive thinking and human efficiency.

Patanjali explains in his yoga sutras, that there are three types of knowledge. He says that the improper thought, emotions and actions will result an endless pain and ignorance in our mind. This will be of in three stage of mild, medium and severe or intense in degrees. This is caused mainly because of the individual's anger, fear, greed and delusion.

The joys and sorrows of the world are caused by the mind. The likes and dislikes are depending upon the minds of an individual. The five senses of the human being namely hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling and touching are the outward objects, which could convey their sensations to the mind. Thus the mind that enjoys them. In yogic practices first we should focuses on the senses thereafter comes to the mind. Here the victory of the mind by the mind is yoga.

There are several means by which a man can tries to control the mind. But the best means for an ordinary man is dhyana. However ti is to be remembered that it is not that much easy to control our mind with in the short span of practice. It needs the perfect and constant practice on the detachment of the mind from its sense objects. Besides the practitioner should be firm in his practice which will automatically lead into the path of success.

APPROACH TO MEDITATION

While we go for meditation practice we should keep some of the important principles in our mind, which are all essential for obtaining the actual benefits of the meditation.

DRESS:

The dress should be loose and preferably in cotton materials.

TIME:

The best time of practice is early morning. Also it can be practiced before going to bed at night.

PLACE:

The place of practice is very important. While in practice you should not be disturbed by other external factors. So in such a way you can select pooja room or separate hall or better if you have open terrace. The place should have proper ventilation and should be a unpolluted free from dust, ant and quite calm in nature.

POSTURE:

The best suitable posture for the meditation practice is padmasana or sukhasana. It is very important aspect in meditation practice. Mainly the mind should be free from all disturbances, ready to concentrate on a particular object or in action.

Meditation can be practiced in different techniques. In Zen meditation they are fixing the attention on their breathing only. Luk says: in a Chinese yoga text mentioned that the breath seems to have vanished in spite of the presence of the respiratory organs which seems to be useless, the practitioner thus feels as if his breath comes in and out through the pores all over his body. This is the highest attainment in the art of breathing through meditation. The motionless silence of sitting meditation requires only a little amount of oxygen. Thus during meditation respiration will become slower, smoother and rhythmic in nature. The following are some of the simplest techniques of meditation.

SILENT MEDITATION:

Sit in a comfortable sitting posture with the spine, neck and head erect and centered. Keep your breathing as normal as possible. Close your eyes; internally think of your body parts one by one from head to toe by your third eye. Practice it for 10 to 15 minutes.

MANTRA MEDITATION:

Sit in a comfortable sitting posture with the spine, neck and head should be erect and centered. Keep your breathing as normal as possible. Close your eyes. Select a mantra word (om, ram ram, krisl a Krishna or select a word of your choice that can be easily pronounced) repeat the mantra, which may be spoken inwardly rather than aloud. Keep in this position for 10 to 15 minutes. The utterance of the word OM is not meant for hindus only . It is for all for it has its own scientific physiological effect in our body.

The word OM can be pronounced in two ways.

INHALATION	ARTICULATION	EXHALATION	EFFECT	AREA
DEEP THROUGH	O..... M...	O- MOUTH	NERVE CHANNELS	Neck & Below

NOSTRILS		M-	INTERNAL L	Neck and above
	O..M.....	NOSTRIL	Y VIBRATED	

Sit in a comfortable pose. Close your eyes. Take deep breath-in then slowly, steadily and smoothly let out the air through mouth (keeping the mouth partially closed) by pronouncing the letter 'O....' as long as possible. Then close the breathe - out with the pronunciations of letter 'M'. It will influence the nerve channels from the neck to the base of the spine by internal vibrations in our body.

In second method , take deep inhalation , slowly , steadily and smoothly let out the air through mouth by pronouncing the letter 'O' for a short period and close the mouth then continuously breath out the air through nostrils by pronouncing the letter 'M'..... internally as long as possible. This will influence the nerve channels from neck to the crown of the head by internal vibration.

In other words, the first method lengthens the articulation of 'O' sound while the second method lengthens the articulation of 'M' sound. It can be practiced in sitting as well as prone-lying positions.

Unit -V

YOGIC DIET

- Yogic diet**

There are three types of yoga diet viz. Rajasik, Tamasik and Sattavik as per yoga diet philosophy. It is considered that food is building block of the body, as we eat so we become in mind and body. The type of food we eat gradually manifests in our mental make up or state of mind. Eating of Sattavik food leads to purity/Godliness, Rajasik food towards action and Tamasik food leads to a dull, lethargic life with lot of inertia.

Rajasik Food

Rajasik food comprises of a variety of dishes on the pattern of food served to Indian kings. This type of food includes various types of foods like fried, roasted, curried, and highly seasoned along with various types of desserts, wine and drinks. Food of this type are not recommended for yoga practitioners as these foods acts as body stimulants and excite passions, making the mind restless and uncontrollable. These foods result in

obesity and generate a typical feeling of heaviness in the stomach for a long time after eating a meal.

Tamasik Food

Tamasik food includes dishes prepared with too many spices, excessive use of salt, pepper, chilies, artificial colours and additives. These types of foods have very less nutrition value for either mind or body. They make body dull, lazy and drowsy. These foods stimulate emotions of anger and greed. Tamasik foods include alcohol, tobacco, onions, garlic and fermented foods such as vinegar. This type of food is undesirable and not recommended for yoga practitioners.

Sattvik Food

This type of food is cooked with least amount of spices and without much seasoning. The food is fresh, attractive, nutritive and is cooked in a simple way. This type of food is desirable and highly recommended for yoga practitioners.

How You Cook Your Food

According to yoga principles, no food whether vegetarian or non vegetarian is by itself Rajasik, Tamasik or Sattavik. The classification of a food depends on type of preparation also. It is not necessary that all non-vegetarian food is Tamasik and vegetarian food is Sattavik. Though all foods are classified into three types of yoga diet, but any food item can be cooked as Sattavik, Tamasik or Rajasik depending upon the choice of ingredients and method of preparation.

Importance of Method of Eating Food

Food eaten in a hurry or in foul mood will not be as nourishing compared to food eaten slowly with a peaceful mind.

Yoga and diet are two pillars of a successful yoga practice.

- **G**

UNAS

Guna

One of the three qualities of prakriti, or nature, which are passion (rajas) dullness or inertia (tamas) and goodness or purity (sattva) Origin of **guna** Expand.

THE 3 GUNAS OF NATURE

In the philosophy of Yoga, all matter in the universe arises from the fundamental substrate called Prakriti. From this ethereal Prakriti the three primary gunas (qualities)

emerge creating the essential aspects of all nature—energy, matter and consciousness. These three gunas are **tamas** (darkness), **rajas** (activity), and **sattva** (beingness). All three gunas are always present in all beings and objects surrounding us but vary in their relative amounts. We humans have the unique ability to consciously alter the levels of the gunas in our bodies and minds. The gunas cannot be separated or removed in oneself, but can be consciously acted upon to encourage their increase or decrease. A guna can be increased or decreased through the interaction and influence of external objects, lifestyle practices and thoughts.

Tamas is a state of darkness, inertia, inactivity and materiality. Tamas manifests from ignorance and deludes all beings from their spiritual truths. To reduce tamas avoid tamasic foods, over sleeping, over eating, inactivity, passivity and fearful situations. Tamasic foods include heavy meats, and foods that are spoiled, chemically treated, processed or refined.

Rajas is a state of energy, action, change and movement. The nature of rajas is of attraction, longing and attachment and rajas strongly binds us to the fruits of our work. To reduce rajas avoid rajasic foods, over exercising, over work, loud music, excessive thinking and consuming excessive material goods. Rajasic foods include fried foods, spicy foods, and stimulants.

Sattva is a state of harmony, balance, joy and intelligence. Sattva is the guna that yogi/nis achieve towards as it reduces rajas and tamas and thus makes liberation possible. To increase sattva reduce both rajas and tamas, eat sattvic foods and enjoy activities and environments that produce joy and positive thoughts. Sattvic foods include whole grains and legumes and fresh fruits and vegetables that grow above the ground. All of the yogic practices were developed to create sattva in the mind and body. Thus, practicing yoga and leading a yogic lifestyle strongly cultivates sattva.

The mind's psychological qualities are highly unstable and can quickly fluxuate between the different gunas. The predominate guna of the mind acts as a lens that effects our perceptions and

perspective of the world around us. Thus, if the mind is in rajas it will experience world events as chaotic, confusing and demanding and it will react to these events in a rajasic way.

All gunas create attachment and thus bind one's self to the ego. "When one rises above the three gunas that originate in the body; one is freed from birth, old age, disease, and death; and attains enlightenment" (Bhagavad Gita 14.20). While the yogi/nis goal is to cultivate sattva, his/her ultimate goal is to transcend their

misidentification of the self with the gunas and to be unattached to both the good and the bad, the positive and negative qualities of all life.

j **Sattva** - intelligence, imparts balance

j **Rajas** - energy, causes imbalance

j **Tamas** - substance, creates inertia)

- **KHOSHAS**

In philosophy, the body, mind and spirit are understood as one continuity, but in fact eastern and western thought were never in agreement with each other. Western philosophy originated from Greece while eastern philosophy originated in India. Greek philosophers in general and western philosophers in particular spoke about the object. Indian philosophers in general and in particular spoke about consciousness, and for many centuries western thinkers could never accept anything beyond object as tangible: here is the object, I can see it, I can touch it, therefore it is.

However, in yoga and in vedanta, object and consciousness are interrelated. In fact, modern science, what you call physics, speaks in exactly the same way as yoga. Both modern physics and ancient yoga move absolutely parallel to each other in explaining the reality of matter and consciousness.

Body, mind and spirit are interconnected, interrelated and interpenetrating. Therefore, a person is a combination of three things: firstly, the gross body, secondly, the subtle or astral body and thirdly, the causal body or unconscious. These three bodies constitute you, me and everyone, but they are gross divisions, broad classifications.

Each body has a dimension and a layer. You can call it a field. Just as you say electromagnetic field or radioactive field, in exactly the same way there are fields in your body. In vedanta, they are known as koshas which means 'sheaths'. These koshas are five in number: annamaya, pranamaya, manomaya, vijnanamaya and anandamaya, and are further sub-divisions of the three bodies, which represent the three states of your daily experience.

Every day you have three types of experiences. One is the waking experience in which you experience through your senses and mind. The second experience is dream. In dream you do not experience through the senses, but through your subconscious mind. The third experience is sleep in which there is no knowledge of time and space, no knowledge about yourself or about anything in sleep, but when you get up in the morning, you know that you slept well the night before.

So every day the individual self undergoes these three experiences alternately. These experiences relate to a particular field. Whenever your individual self goes to one particular realm, it has one experience, and as your individual self changes the field, realm or dimension, it has another experience. For example, if you go to the North Pole, you will feel cold, or if you go to a tropical country, you will feel hot.

Annamaya kosha

The first kosha is annamaya, the physical body. Annamaya kosha can be sattwic, rajasic or tamasic. The word sattwa means harmony, balance and tranquillity, where you create a balance between activity and peace. Rajas means dynamic, active, violent. Tamas means dull and inert. Through the hatha yoga shatkriyas, you develop a sattwic annamaya kosha and when annamaya kosha becomes sattwic, then the bouncing of energy is much greater.

In modern science it is said that all the time, the whole day and night, atomic energy is bouncing in and out from this physical body like a pendulum. Of course, you cannot see it, but scientifically it has been seen that just like a pendulum swings from left to right, left to right, in the same manner everybody is emitting or throwing away these atoms. The sattwic body creates a longer bouncing, a tamasic body perhaps no bouncing at all, while a rajasic body has a bouncing but it has no limitation.

Now when these atoms or atomic particles bounce off your body and come back, there is a period of rest. That period of rest is always in the pendulum also. When it goes to the left and then turns to the right, there is a moment of rest. In the same way, when you do pranayama, in between inhalation and exhalation there is a point of rest. That is called timelessness and it is very short. Sometimes it can be a one-thousandth part of one second and sometimes a ten-thousandth part of a second. In that short period, the body transmits energy which is sattwic, rajasic or tamasic. Therefore, annamaya kosha, which is the container of the other koshas, is tackled through the practices of the hatha yoga shatkriyas.

Pranayama kosha

The second kosha is pranamaya, the kosha composed of prana, or life force. This prana is a part of cosmic life. Each and every creature, each and everything in this world is a part of cosmic life. Prana is the force or energy for all kinds of motion. Prana is a Sanskrit word meaning movement, motion or vibration.

Pranic energy is in constant motion throughout life. It is not only in human beings, animals, herbs or trees, not only in oceans and mountains, minerals and bacteria. The tiniest part of an atom has prana. This prana is both visible and invisible. We need not talk about invisible prana now. Visible prana is manifesting before you. Wherever there is prana there is movement, growth, change and activity and where there is no prana

there is no activity. When we die the body dissipates because it has become completely bereft of prana.

Prana is one item of your total composition and should also be dealt with in yoga. If the pranas are agitated or there is a pranic imbalance, there is imbalance everywhere. To understand prana you need to know a little about positive and negative atoms. The pranas are in the atmosphere in the form of positive and negative ions, which keep on bouncing, migrating and reintegrating. A balance has to be created between them.

If you study the science of the behaviour of positive and negative ions, you will understand the importance of balancing the prana in the body, because prana represents the positive energy in the body, and mind represents the negative energy. When there is a balance between positive and negative energy, then you can see illumination and everything is in harmony.

This prana is responsible for the action of the karmendriyas, the organs of action, just as electrical energy is responsible for the functioning of a microphone or light bulb. If the electricity which is being supplied somewhere in 220 volts becomes 440 volts, everything will burn. If the electricity becomes 120 volts, then there will also be a crisis. Therefore, the electricity has to be adjusted according to the capacity of the microphone or the bulbs. Similarly, there has to be coordination between the prana and the indriyas or sense organs. If there is too much prana, then your children are sometimes hyperactive. Hyperactivity in the body is due to hyperactivity of the prana.

There are five karmendriyas: feet, hands, vocal cords, urinary and excretory systems. Indriya means vehicle, tool or sense. Karma means action. Through these five karmendriyas you perform five gross actions. Prana is the force behind them. You have seen how old people become slow due to lack of prana. Pranamaya kosha is the energy in annamaya kosha.

There are five main pranas: prana, apana, udana, samana and vyana. These forms of prana control various functions in the physical body. For example, urination, excretion, insemination and childbirth are consequences of apana. Then there are five auxiliary or secondary pranas.

Prana is not a mechanical outcome of the body as it is understood in modern medical science. According to the classical tradition prana enters the womb in the fourth month of pregnancy. When an embryo is developed in the mother's womb, it is part of the mother's body and prana. After the third month, the independent or individual pranas manifest in the foetus. That is to say, from the fourth month, the

mother's prana and the prana of the embryo become two different pranas. Therefore, remember that prana is universal energy.

Pranamaya kosha is purified through the practice of pranayama, because pranayama makes the pranic energy penetrate into each and every cell and fibre of the body. Pranayama does not literally mean breathing exercise. The word pranayama is composed of two ideas, prana and ayama, meaning field, dimension or area. Pranayama means extending the field of prana. In this physical body you have a field of prana. It is the subtle form of energy and can be measured. This prana shakti can also get blocked. It can be in excess in some parts of the body and sometimes there is an imbalance in the prana.

Manomaya kosha

The third kosha is manomaya, the kosha composed of the mind. Mind is consciousness. It is a field of energy by itself. Even as prana is the positive field of energy, mind is the negative field of energy. In Sanskrit, the mind is known as manas, and has three dimensions. In fact, in Samkhya philosophy, they say that the mind has ten dimensions. Here they mean the mind of everyone, not only of human beings but of lower animals, the vegetable kingdom, the mind of each and everything in this world.

There are ten stages in the evolution of the mind from the most crude to the most fine. If you want to study those ten stages, you should read the Samkhya Sutras. However, out of those ten stages of mind, three are known to human beings: the conscious mind, the subconscious mind and the unconscious mind. Now these three stages are divisions of the human mind. The literal meaning of manas is 'that by which you cognize, perceive and understand'. Perception, cognition and understanding are the basic and primary qualities of the mind.

This mind is connected with time, space and causality. What are past, present and future? They are the three so-called divisions of the same mind. What is the form of the mind? It is said that the mind moves at the greatest speed. Do you know the speed of an object? French trains run at 240 kilometres per hour. You know the speed of sound and of light, but do you know the speed of the mind. If only you could create a mental train! The mind is a very subtle unit and when it goes to the subconscious level, it begins to go into the unknown past.

Carl Jung used to talk about archetypes, dreams and visions. He said there is no known source of these things. Whether they are transferred to you from your parents or from a super space, from your previous incarnations or from some unknown transmissions, there is a primitive stock of archetypes within you. This is called

samskara. It is known as the seed body or the unconscious. These are the three broad divisions of the mind.

Now this mind can be brought closer, that is to say, time, space and causality can be brought closer. When we are on the external conscious plane, the distance between time, space and causality is long and when you are in meditation, then the gap between time, space and causality is very short. In fact, if the mind can sometimes stop, time stops. A lot of work has been done on this by modern physicists.

The mind which I am talking about is part of the cosmic mind. Of course, I think that I have an individual mind. Everyone thinks this, but it is ignorance because we do not know, just like an ignorant person may feel that the light burning in the light bulb is individual, but another person understands that the energy is coming from the powerhouse. In the same way, this mind is part of the universal mind. How can we put this mind in touch with the cosmic mind? Through raja yoga practices.

Vijnanamaya kosha

The fourth kosha is vijnanamaya. Vijnana means psyche. Vijnana is a Sanskrit word from the prefix vi and jnana meaning knowledge or awareness, inner perception or experience. Vijnana has two meanings: external science and also inner experience. Therefore, whenever you have any experience which is subjective in nature, it is a consequence of vijnanamaya kosha. Whatever you are dreaming is a projection of vijnanamaya kosha, and in your meditation, concentration or mantra yoga, when you see lights and flowers, figures, angels or saints, smell perfumes or hear sounds, it is the consequence or result of vijnanamaya kosha.

Vijnanamaya kosha is related to a very unknown part of the universe and it is a link or sutra between the conscious mind, the individual mind and the universal mind. Universal knowledge comes to the conscious mind through vijnanamaya kosha or the psychic mind. Vijnanamaya kosha does not depend on time, space and causation factors.

You may not have seen Peking, but vijnanamaya kosha can give you a complete film of Peking because it is not limited by time past, present or future. The mind has its eyes on the object, but vijnanamaya kosha has its eye on the universe, and therefore Hindus say that vijnanamaya kosha has a thousand heads and a thousand eyes, a thousand hands and a thousand feet. This means it can see anywhere and think anything.

How can it be developed? It can be developed through tantra because tantra is related to vijnanamaya kosha. The tantric practices act as a catalyst because it is in you, just as curd and butter are in milk, but cannot be seen as separate unless they are released. Matter has energy in it, but when you look at matter, can you see the energy?

No, you cannot. Even if you believe that there is energy in matter, still you cannot see it. Then you adopt a method to separate the energy from the matter. That is what nuclear energy is. All energy is inherent in matter. In the same way, vijnanamaya kosha is inherent within you but it is hidden in you like butter is hidden in milk. You have to separate it; you have to release your vijnanamaya kosha.

Anandamaya kosha

The fifth organism is anandamaya kosha. It is not possible to translate the word ananda. Some translate it as bliss or happiness, but ananda is when there is no happiness and no unhappiness. In happiness you are jumping, in unhappiness you are dull - sometimes low, sometimes high. So your mind is swinging. In ananda there is no swinging. There is unified experience and that experience does not change.

Death cannot change that experience; birth cannot change it; love and hatred cannot make your experiences swing. When your mind has become steady in experience and does not fluctuate under any condition, that is ananda. So we call it homogenous experience. The experience which you have in your life every day is not homogenous. It is divided and that is why swamis have ananda

in their name, to remind them that they must achieve the state of mind where there is no swinging. So, anandamaya kosha means the kosha which comprises homogenous experience.

In many books, anandamaya kosha is translated as the blissful sheath. But I have thought about ananda for many years and have come to the conclusion that there is a state of mind which does not change, despite anything that happens in life. With that state of mind you can live with all the conditions of life. You can live with a good partner or a bad partner, prosperity or poverty, disease or death, in a discotheque, on a beach, a hotel, everywhere, because nothing affects you. You are where you are, firmly rooted in your own self, but at the same time you can interact with everyone. You can even fight, but still not be affected.

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