



UNIT-V YOGA

Content

- Meaning & Importance of Yoga
- Elements of Yoga
- Introduction- *Asanas, Pranayamas, Meditation & Yogic Kriyas*
- Yoga for concentration & related *asanas* (*Sukhasana, Tadasana, Padmasana, and Shashankasana, Naukasana, Vrikshasan, Garudasana*)
- Relaxation Techniques for improving concentration-*Yog-nidra*.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit students will be able to:

- recognize the concept of yoga and aware with the importance of it
- identify the elements of yoga
- identify the *Asanas, Pranayamas*, meditation and yogic *kriyas*
- classify various yogic activities for enhancement of concentration
- know about relaxation techniques for improving concentration

Discussion

Read the newspaper clipping given below.

International Yoga Day

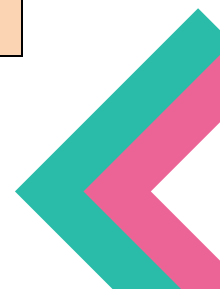
New Delhi: International Day of Yoga (IDY), Yoga day or Antarashtriya Yog Divas is an annual event celebrated all over the world on June 21 since its inception in 2015. The idea of IDY was first proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his speech at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), on September 27, 2014. Later, IDY was declared unanimously by the UNGA on December 11, 2014.

Yoga is a physical, mental and spiritual practice that has its routes mostly in India. The date of June 21 was suggested by PM Modi in his UN address as it is the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere and is highly important in many parts of the world. Last year, 72 students and teachers from City Montessori School of Lucknow performed yogic exercises at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on the occasion of International Day of Yoga.

In 2018, PM Modi participated in the event organised in FRI Dehradun. As many as 60,000 people are expected to turn up for the event.

Discuss in your group

- What prompted our PM to introduce yoga to the world?
- How does yoga contribute to an individual's growth, development, health and fitness?
- Why was June 21 chosen as IDY?
- What are the objectives of IDY? Present your ideas to the class.





The intention behind introduction of yoga to the world is holistic development of the child which will lead to a well-balanced individual in all walks of life.

In this unit you will learn what yoga is and how it can contribute to maintaining health and fitness levels in all walks of life. Apart from this you will also learn about different aspects of yoga.

5.1.1 MEANING OF YOGA

Yoga is a word derived from **Yuj** which in Sanskrit means *union*. Yoga is the union of soul with spirit. This union of soul and spirit is a long process which may take even many births according to Hindu scriptures. Yoga is also considered as union of the nerves *Ida* and *Pingla*, union of sunnerve and moonnerve, union of negative and positive, union of Shiva (spirit) with Shakti (mother nature) and union of *Mooladhar Chakra* (Coccyx plexus) with *Sahasrar Chakra* (thousand lotus petal plexus). Yoga is a union of *Prana Vayu* with *Apan Vayu* (life current with excretion current.)

While in the West, Yoga is being acknowledged for its many physical and psychological benefits, such as improved muscle tone, lower blood pressure, stress relief, increased vitality, and mental clarity, yet the original purpose of yoga was — and its highest purpose has always been — spiritual. Yoga is a science of experience which is meant for the upliftment of humanity. Yoga is the art and science of attaining true, lasting happiness. It is a science because it offers specific, practical methods for obtaining these benefits. It is an art, because its highest benefits come only through sensitive and intuitive practice; otherwise it yields only superficial results. Therefore, Yoga should not be misunderstood merely as a science for treatment of some diseases. In a broader sense it is a science which brings health and happiness on causal, astral and physical planes. All the religions of the world speak of the divine union of soul and spirit in one way or the other. Yoga (union of soul and spirit) can be achieved through any means, but yoga as propounded by Maharishi Patanjali is the fastest way.

Do you know?

In the modern era, Swami Vivekananda, introduced the importance of Yoga to the Western world, when he addressed the World Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893.

Swami Vivekananda is also credited for being the greatest proponent of Yoga in the West.

5.1.2 DEFINITIONS OF YOGA

Stilling the whirlpools (modifications) of the mind stuff (Yogahchittavritt-inirodhah).

– Yogamaharishi Patanjali.

Skill in action (Yogahkarmasukoushalam).

– Yogeshwar Krishna in Bhagavad Gita.



A skillful and subtle process to calm down the mind.

– Yoga Vashistha

“Yoga is said to be the oneness of breath, mind, and senses, and the abandonment of all states of existence.”

– Maitri Upanishad

“Yoga is said to be the unification of the web of dualities (Dvandva Jaala).”

– Yoga Bija

“Yoga is said to be control.”

– Brahmaanda Purana

5.1.3 IMPORTANCE OF YOGA

Yoga is not a religion; it is a way of living which aims at achieving “a healthy mind in a healthy body”. Man is a physical, mental and spiritual being; yoga helps to promote a balanced development of all the three. Other forms of physical exercise, like aerobics, assure only physical wellbeing. They have little to do with the development of the spiritual or astral body.

Yogic exercises recharge the body with cosmic energy.

Extension Activity Discuss with your group

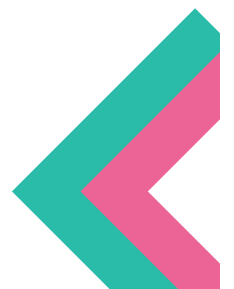
- What are the short-term effects of yoga?
- What changes take place in your body if you do yoga regularly over an extended period of time?
- Are these changes obvious – relating to visible changes in your body e.g., building up of muscles, loss of body fat etc.?
- What changes occur in heart rate and breathing?
- What about changes that are not so obvious and are long-term – increased stamina, improved flexibility?

Design a poster to show the effect of yoga on the body.

You could use an outline of the body to show which parts of the body are affected, what those effects are and how to maximize benefits of exercise.

The benefits of Yoga include

- facilitating attainment of perfect equilibrium and harmony.
- promoting self-healing.
- removing negative blocks from the mind and toxins from the body.
- enhancing personal power.
- increasing self-awareness.
- helping develop attention and concentration, especially important for children.





- reducing stress and tension in the physical body by activating the para sympathetic nervous system.

Yoga rejuvenates and energizes, thus bestowing upon every individual who practises Yoga the powers to control body and mind.

I. Tick the correct option.

1. The purpose of Yoga is to attain
 - i. Perfect health
 - ii. peace of mind
 - iii. stress relief
 - iv. enlightenment or self-realization.

II. Answer the following questions briefly.

1. Define yoga.
2. Who is known as Father of Yoga?
3. How can yoga contribute in enhancing personal power?
4. What is the role of yoga in reducing stress?

III. Answer the following questions in 150-200 words.

1. List the importance of yoga.
2. What is the modern concept of yoga?
3. How does yoga help in self-actualization?
4. How does yoga help in attitude formation?

5.2.1 ELEMENTS OF YOGA (ASHTANG YOGA)

Yoga is more than just a physical discipline. It is a way of life—a rich philosophical path. And the *yamas* (social restraints) and *niyamas* (self-discipline) are ten good common-sense guidelines for leading a healthier, happier life and for bringing spiritual awareness in to a social context. They are for the individual to think about and ponder over with a rational mind, because yoga is not about mindlessly accepting externally imposed rules – it is about finding the truth for oneself and “connecting” with it.

1. **Yamas:** *Yama* is the first “limb” of *Ashtang Yoga*. The 5 *yamas* are universal practices that help us move forward in our personal and spiritual development. The five *yamas* ask practitioners to avoid violence, lying, stealing, wasting energy, and possessiveness.

The five *yamas*, or codes of conduct or moral disciplines towards the outside world are:

- a) *Ahimsa* — Sanskrit for “non-harming”
- b) *Satya* — Sanskrit for “refraining from dishonesty”
- c) *Asteya* — Sanskrit for “non-stealing”
- d) *Brahmacharya* — Sanskrit for “wise use of vitality”
- e) *Aparigraha* — Sanskrit for “non-possessiveness”



Practicing Yoga's "golden rules" helps us attain a healthy mind and body, and it is important to follow the *yamas* without the desire for an end goal.

- a) **Ahimsa (non-violence):** *Ahimsa* means practicing kindness towards others, towards animals and towards ourselves in every thought and action. When we are compassionate and accepting of all ways of life we can handle any situation with grace.
 - b) **Satya (refraining from dishonesty)** *Satya* is the principle of living with integrity. *Satya* refers to refraining from dishonesty and betrayal in thought, word, and deed. It is important to note, though, that *ahimsa* is still the most important principle. Thus, in case truth can cause harm or violence, the option to be exercised is one that will not cause harm.
 - c) **Asteya (non-stealing):** *Asteya* teaches that everything we need in life is already within us. By choosing *Asteya*, we rise above our "base cravings" and become self-sufficient because we no longer desire something outside of ourselves. Feeling gratitude for what we have, and only taking what's freely given, makes it easy to wipe out feelings of envy or entitlement, and for authentic generosity.
 - d) **Brahmacharya (wise use of energy)** *Brahmacharya* refers to the wise use and preservation of vitality. It does not mean celibacy, but rather acting responsibly with your vitality, as a way to respecting others and yourself.
 - e) **Aparigraha(non-possessiveness)** *Aparigraha* refers to the ability to let go. It encourages non-grasping, non-clinging, and non-attachment to possessions or even thoughts. *Aparigraha* teaches you not to take it easy and be happy with what you have.
2. **Niyamas:** The *niyamas*, the second constituent of *Asthang Yoga*, deal with the manner in which we interact with ourselves and our internal world. Following the *Niyamas* helps the individual regulate her/his behaviour and maintain a positive environment in which to grow. Energy generated through the cultivation of the *yamas* is harnessed through the practice of the *Niyamas*. While Sage Yajnavalkya lists ten *niyamas* and the Bhagavad Gita lists 11, Patanjali names the following five:
- a) *Saucha* or purity
 - b) *Santosh* or contentment
 - c) *Tapa* or austerity
 - d) *Swadhyaya* or self-education, and
 - e) *Ishwar Pranidhan* or meditation on the Divine.
- a) **Saucha** implies both external as well as internal purity. According to Manu, just as water purifies the body, truthfulness purifies the mind and true knowledge of the intellect, the soul is purified by knowledge and austerity. It advocates the practices of intellectual purity, purity of speech and of the body.
 - b) **Santosh** or contentment is the second *niyama*, which is described as not desiring more than what one has earned through honest labour. *Santosh* implies that the state of mind does not depend on any



external causes, and that one must maintain equanimity through all that life offers. *Santosh* involves the practice of gratitude and joyfulness – maintaining calm at all costs.

- c) **Tapa** or Austerity, the third *niyama*, is described in the philosophy of yoga as the power to stand thirst and hunger, cold and heat, discomforts of place and postures, silent meditation and fasts. It also maintains that the perfect man is he who practices both mental as well as physical austerity.

Do you know?

Maharishi Patanjali is a saint who is believed to have lived some time during the 2nd century BCE. He is known for his treatise on Yoga, entitled “Patanjali Yoga Sutra”.

- d) **Swadhyaya** or self-education, according to the commentator Vyas, consists of scriptural studies – the study of the Vedas and Upanishads together with the recitation of the Gayatri Mantra and the Om Mantra.
- e) **Ishwar Pranidhan**, the last of the *niyamas*, is described as the dedication of all our actions, performed either by intellect, speech or body, to the Divine. The results of all such actions are, therefore, dependent upon Divine decision. The mortal mind can simply aspire to realize the Divine through dedication, purification, tranquillity and concentration of the mind. This Divine contemplation spills over into all aspects of the yogi's life.

Benefits of Practicing Yamas & Niyamas

They *amas* and *niyamas* help in managing our energy in an integrated manner, complementing our outer life to our inner development. They help us view ourselves with compassion and awareness. They help in respecting the values of life, in balancing our inner growth with outer restraint. In short, *Yamas* and *Niyamas* are not about right and wrong, but are about being honest with oneself. Living according to these principles is about living our lives in a better way, and moving towards connecting with the Divine.

1. **Asanas:** *Asana* is a posture in harmony with one's inner consciousness. It aims at the attainment of a sustained and comfortable sitting posture to facilitate meditation.

Asanas also help in balancing and harmonizing the basic structure of the human body, which is why they have a range of therapeutic uses too.

2. **Pranayama:** *Pranayama* is a compound term (*Prana* and *Yama*) meaning the maintenance of *prana* in a healthy manner throughout one's life. More than being merely a breath-control exercise, *Pranayama* is the art of the life force or *prana*. Ancient yogis, who understood the essence of *prana*, studied it and devised methods and practices to master it. These practices are better known as *Pranayama* since breath or *prana* is basic to life, the practice of *Pranayama* helps in harnessing the *prana* in and around us, and by deepening and extending it, *Pranayama* leads to a state of inner peace. According to *Hatha Yoga*, *Pranayama* can be classified under:



- a) *Surya Bhedi*
 - b) *Ujjai*
 - c) *Sitkari*
 - d) *Sitli*
 - e) *Bhastrika*
 - f) *Bhramari*
 - g) *Murchha*, and
 - h) *Kewali*.
3. **Pratyahara:** *Pratyahara* is the “withdrawal of the senses” and it is the fifth element among the eight stages of Patanjali’s *Ashtang Yoga*, as mentioned in his classical work. It is also the first stage of the six-branch yoga of the Buddhist *Kalachakra tantra*, where it refers to the withdrawal of the five senses from external objects to be replaced by them internally created senses of an enlightened deity.
4. **Dharana:** The last three limbs of *Ashtang Yoga* are the three essential stages of meditation. *Dharana* involves developing and extending our powers of concentration. This consists of various ways of directing and controlling our attention and mind – fixing skills, such as concentrating on the chakras or turning inwards.
5. **Dhyana:** *Dhyana* is the state of meditation, when the mind attains a state of concentration without getting distracted. Strictly speaking, unlike the other six limbs of yoga, this is not a technique but rather a state of mind, a delicate state of awareness, where the mind has been quieted, and in the stillness it produces few or no thoughts at all. This state rightfully precedes the final state of *Samadhi*.
6. **Samadhi:** *Samadhi* or total absorption is the ability to become one with the true self and merge into the object of concentration. In this state of mind, the perceiver and the object of perception unite through the very act of perception—a true unity of all thought and action. This is the acme of all yogic endeavours, the ultimate “yoga” or connection between the individual and the universal soul.

Do you know?

According to Hindu mythology, Shiva is considered the Supreme Lord of Yoga.

I. Tick the correct option.

1. There are eight stages of training for a yogi to go through in order to reach “moksha” (release). What is the final stage called?
 - i. *Samadhi*
 - ii. *Yama*
 - iii. *Pranayama*
 - iv. *Kaivalya*





2. *Yama* and *Niyama* are part of
 - i. physical growth
 - ii. charity
 - iii. meditation
 - iv. morality and ethics
3. Out of the following which one is NOT *Ashtang Yoga*?
 - i. *Yama*
 - ii. *Niyama*
 - iii. *Dhauti*
 - iv. *Pratyahar*

II. Answer the following questions briefly.

1. List the components of *Ashtang Yoga*.
2. What is *Yama*?
3. What is *Niyama*?

III. Answer the following questions in 150-200 words.

1. What are the purposes of *Ashtang Yoga*?
2. How does yoga contribute to an individual's personality development?

5.3.1 INTRODUCTION TO ASANAS

Asanas are special postures of the body that stabilize the mind through static stretching. The great seer Patanjali has said “*Sthiram Sukhamasanam*” means *asana* (posture) should be stable, comfortable and effortless.

Asanas are psycho-physical in nature. They are not mere physical exercises. *Asanas* play a significant role in toning up the neuromuscular and glandular systems of the body to restore and to maintain the vitality of different organs of the body.

Do you know?

Tao Porchon-Lynch, born on August 13, 1918, is an American yoga master and award-winning author of French and Indian descent. She discovered yoga in 1926 when she was eight years old in India and studied with, among others, Sri Aurobindo,

B.K.S. Iyengar, K. Pattabhi Jois, Swami Prabhavananda, and Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. At age 100, she teaches six to eight classes a week in New York, and leads programmes across the globe. She is the author of two books, including her autobiography, *Dancing Light: The Spiritual Side of Being Through the Eyes of a Modern Yoga Master*, which won a 2016 IPPY Award and three 2016 International Book Awards.

**5.3.2 VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF ASANAS**

Consummate mastery over the entire gamut of *asanas* is no doubt time consuming, but what is of vital importance is the will to remain in the present moment and to let both the mind and body relax completely. The various categories of *asanas* include:

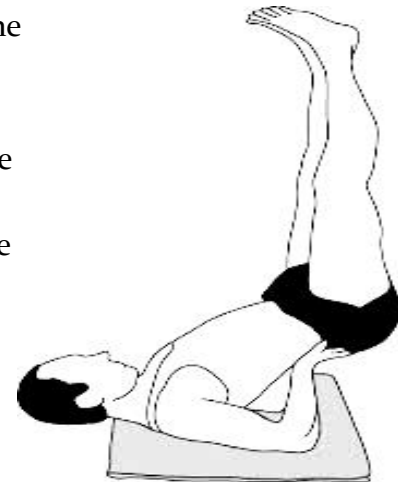
1. Supine line *Asanas*
 2. Prone line *Asanas*
 3. Sitting *Asanas*
 4. Standing *Asanas*.
1. **Supine Line *Asanas*:** These *asanas* prepare you to proceed further in yoga and bring consistency in the development of physical and mental pliability. Examples of such *Asanas* are *Viparita Karni*, *Matsyasana*, *Halasana* and *Naukasana*.
 2. **Prone Line *Asanas*:** These *asanas* bring physical and mental sharpness and alertness. The postures are the opposite of forward bends, as are their effects. In prone line *asana* the posterior spine is extended, bringing consistency and mental peace. Such *Asanas* include *Bhujangasana*, *Ardha Salbhasana* and *Dhanurasana*.
 3. **Sitting *Asanas*:** Sitting up right and supine extending positions help prepare the individual physically and mentally for *Pranayama*. Some of them are *Ardh-matsyendrasana*, *Paschimottanasana*, *Vajrasana*, *Supta Vajrasana*, *Padmasana*, and *Yogmudrasana*.
 4. **Standing *Asanas*:** Beginners should start with these *asanas* as they bring elasticity in joints and muscles and build up stamina and physical ability. They constitute the most basic training in the early stage of yoga. Some basic standing poses are *Vrikshasana*, *Aradhakati Chakrasana*, *Trikonaasana* and *Tadasana*.

5.3.3 SUPINE LINE ASANAS***Viparita Karani***

In Sanskrit the words “*viparita*” means inverted or reversed, and “*karani*” means doing or making and “*asana*” means posture. So, in the final position of this *asana* one has to invert the position of the body, placing the head at the bottom and the legs on top.

Techniques:

1. Take supine position, hands straight by the side of the thighs, palm resting on the ground.
2. Slowly raise your legs together without bending at the knee by pressing your hands and stop at 30° angle.
3. Gradually raise your legs little more and stop at 60° angles.
4. Now slowly bring it at 90° angle.





5. Press the hands and bring your legs little towards head so that your hips are raised from the floor.
6. After that, support your hips with the palms of both the hands, place the elbows on the ground making a broad base.
7. Raise the legs towards sky, and continue to support your hips with your hands. Raise the legs, abdomen and chest in a straight line. Place the palms on your back for support. Chin should be placed against the chest (jugular notch). Maintain the position.
8. After that slowly turn to the original position. While returning to the original position first lower your hips, then slowly place your hands on the ground. Divide the weight of your body on hands and slowly place your hips on the ground and bring your legs at a 90° angle.
9. Slowly place your legs on the ground without bending the knees and return to the original position.

Things to remember while performing this Asana:

1. Do not use your hands for jerking to raise your body.
2. Judge the limitation of your body. If you feel any pain or legs cannot be easily raised, then do not force your body in anyway.

Contraindications:

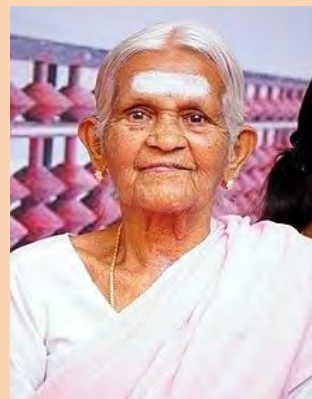
This asana is not recommended for persons with high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, serious neck or shoulder pain, or during menstruation.

Do you know?

India's oldest Yoga teacher

99 year old V. Nanammal is India's oldest Yoga teacher who comes from Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India. Nanammal, who has trained one million students over 45 years, teaches 100 students daily. 600 of her students have become Yoga instructors around the world.

Her work has been honoured with India's National Nari Shakti Puraskar in 2016 and the country's fourth highest civilian award, the Padma Shri, in 2018.



Benefits:

1. This removes the symptoms of premature old age.
2. Diseases like dyspepsia, constipation, hernia can be treated by this asana.
3. It also helps in improving or eliminating varicose veins.
4. Stretches the backs of the legs.



Matsyasana

The name comes from the Sanskrit words *matsya* meaning “fish” and *asana* meaning “posture”. Since the final position of this posture is like fish therefore it is known as *Matsyasana*.



Techniques:

1. Sit in *Padmasana* posture.
2. Slowly, with the help of your elbows, lie down on your back completely.
3. Now with the help of elbows or palms bend your head backward and place the middle of the head on the ground.
4. Hold your toes with your index fingers and thumbs, and place the elbows on the ground.
5. While returning to the original position, first release your toes, and straighten your head, taking the help of your hands.
6. Now, lift yourself with your elbows, till you are sitting in *padmasana*.

Things to remember while performing this Asana:

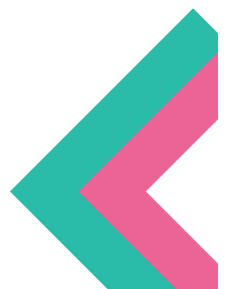
1. Do not bend your neck backward with a jerk.
2. While bending neck backward, the spine will be arched maximum.
3. While returning you can release your legs in sitting position or even in lying position.

Contraindications:

1. Avoid this posture if you have high or low blood pressure.
2. Patients suffering from migraine and insomnia should also refrain from doing the Fish Pose.
3. *Padamasana* is not recommended for those who have had serious lower-back or neck injuries.

Benefits:

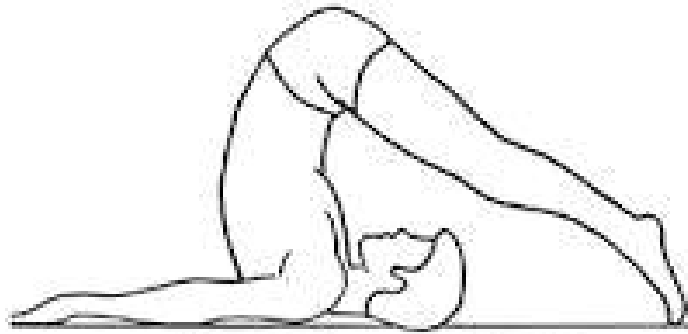
1. Stretches the chest and neck
2. Helps relieve tension in the neck and shoulders
3. Provides relief from respiratory disorders by encouraging deep breathing
4. Tones the parathyroid, pituitary and pineal glands





Halasana

The name comes from the Sanskrit words *hala* meaning “plough” and *asana* meaning “posture”. It is known as *Halasana* because in its final position the body resembles the shape of the plough.



Techniques:

1. Take supine position, hands straight by the side of thighs, palm resting on the ground.
2. Slowly raise your legs together without bending at knees by pressing your hands and stop at 30° angles.
3. After few seconds raise your legs further up to 60° angle and maintain.
4. Now slowly bring the legs at 90° angles.
5. Pressing both the hands bring the legs little towards the head.
6. Continue the bending of legs till toes touch the ground and then stretch your legs backwards as far as possible.
7. Now place both the palms on the head making a finger-lock. Bring the elbows on the ground.
8. While returning back to the original position first release the finger-lock. Stretch the hands straight and place them on the ground by the side of the body.
9. Lower the waist and raise the legs from the ground. Slowly let the waist rest on the ground and stop with the legs at 90° angles.
10. Slowly come back to the original position.

Things to remember while performing this Asana:

1. Do not bend the legs at knees while raising the mup.
2. Do not raise the legs in ajerk.
3. After reaching 90° angle, go ahead carefully balancing your weight. Sometimes due to gravitational force the legs may fall backward on the ground with jerk, therefore, control your self.
4. While stretching the legs backward balance your weight on the hands and also while returning use hands for balancing the weight.
5. Do not forcibly stretch your legs if they are not in a position to touch the ground. Stretch them as far as they are stretched easily. Maintain the posture. Gradual practice will make body capable of moving forward, and flexibility will be developed



Contraindications:

1. Avoid practicing Plough Posture (*Halasana*) if you have injured your neck, or are suffering from diarrhoea and high blood pressure.
2. Ladies should avoid practicing Plough Posture (*Halasana*) during pregnancy and during the first two days of the menstrual cycle.
3. Consult a doctor before practicing Plough Posture (*Halasana*) if you have suffered from chronic diseases or spinal disorders in the recent past.

Benefits:

1. Stretches the shoulders and spine.
2. Controls hypertension and reduces stress and fatigue.
3. Helps relieve the symptoms of menopause and stimulates the abdominal organs, and thyroid gland.
4. Therapeutic for backache, headache, infertility, insomnia, sinusitis.

5.3.4 PRONE LINE ASANAS

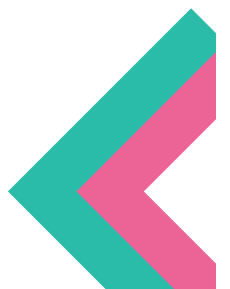
Bhujangasana

In Sanskrit the word *Bhujanga* means cobra. Since the final position of this *asana* resembles the “Hooded Snake” therefore it is called *Bhujangasana*.



Techniques:

1. Lie down in prone position, legs together, toes together, pointing outwards, hands by the side of the body, fingers together, palm facing upward and forehead resting on the ground.
2. Fold arms at the elbows, place palms on the ground near each side of the shoulder, thumb should be under the armpit.
3. Bring chin forward and place it on the ground. Gaze in front.
4. Raise chin and turn head backward as much as possible. Raise the thorax, turning spine backward up to the navel region. Do not raise hips.
5. Maintain the posture for some time. Then slowly bring your body on the ground, starting from upper part of the navel region, thorax, shoulders, and chin and lastly place the forehead on the ground.
6. Now, relax your arms and place them by the either side of the thighs.





Things to remember while performing this Asana:

1. Fingers of the hands must remain together.
2. Do not raise your body with a jerk.
3. Navel, or body below navel region, must not be raised.
4. Put minimum weight on hands. Divide weight on spine and arms.
5. While in final position, thumbs should touch the chest near armpit.
6. In the beginning weight can remain on hands.
7. While coming back do not bend your head first. The part of the body which leaves the ground first will return to the ground last.

Contraindications:

1. Pregnant women or those suffering from spondylolisthesis should avoid the pose
2. People suffering from spinal injuries and/or weak back muscles needs to take care while doing this *asana*.

Benefits:

1. Strengthens and increases the flexibility of the spine and vertebral column
2. Opens the chest, shoulders, heart and ribcage
3. Tones and strengthens the entire spinal extensor group of back muscles
4. Stimulates the endocrine system and digestive organs

(Note: Good for kyphosis—modern day repetitive activities can continuously round the back and shoulders and cause the chin to move forward, which overtime can affect the natural curves of the spine. The chest can collapse, the breathing process get affected, and cervical spine pulled out of alignment. Consistently practising of *Bhujangasana* can help diminish this tendency)

Ardha Shalabhasana

The word *Shalabha* means “locust” and *Ardha* means “half” so it is called the half-locust pose. This pose is an easier version of

Shalabhasana performed with one leg at a time. The final posture resembles a feeding locust, head lowered and tail up.



Techniques:

1. Lie down in prone position, with legs together, toes pointing outward, soles upward, hands by the side of the body, with fists closed, forehead on the ground.
2. Bring chin forward and place it on the ground.



3. Raise the right leg slowly without bending at the knee. Do not tilt the pelvis. Maintain the position for awhile.
4. Slowly return to the original position.
5. Repeat the same with the other leg. This is one round of the *Ardha Shalabhasana*.

Things to remember while performing this Asana:

1. Do not tilt your pelvis while raising your legs.
2. Do not bend the leg at the knee while rising.

Contraindications:

1. The clenching of fist should neither be too tight nor too loose.
2. Hernia and cardiac patients should not perform *Ardha Shalabhasana*.
3. Expectant mothers should not perform this *asana*.

Benefits:

1. It helps to improve blood circulation.
2. It firms thighs and hips by dissolving excessfat.
3. Regularly practising *Ardha Shalabhasana* can help control diabetes.
4. *Ardha Shalabhasana* provides relief from constipation.
5. Women with disorders of the ovaries and uterus can benefit from this pose.

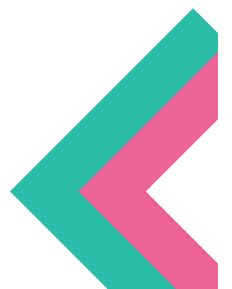
Dhanurasana

The name comes from the Sanskrit words *Dhanura* meaning “bow”, and *Asana* meaning “posture”. The final position of this *asana* is like a bow that is why this *asana* is called *dhanurasana*.



Techniques:

1. Lie down in prone position, legs together, and hands straight by the side of the thighs, chin resting on the ground.
2. Fold the legs at the knee and raise them towards the thighs. Knees must remain together.
3. Bring your hands backward and hold the toes of each foot with the thumb and fore finger.
4. Raise your legs up and simultaneously raise your head and chest.





5. Holding the toes, pull the legs forwards, and bring the toes near the ear. Gaze in front.
6. While returning to the original position loosen your hands, take legs backward, let the thighs touch the ground, leave the toes and bring the legs and hands to the beginning position.

Things to remember while performing this Asana:

1. Do not try to bring the toes near ears forcefully if it is difficult.
2. Gradually increase flexibility through practice.
3. It is desirable to practice simple *dhanurasana* before one resorts to the above mentioned *dhanurasana*.

Contraindications:

1. Persons suffering from high blood pressure, back pain, hernia, headache, migraine or those who have undergone abdominal surgery should not perform *dhanurasana*.
2. *Dhanurasana* should not be practised during pregnancy and during menstrual cycle.

Benefits:

1. Increases flexibility of spine and back muscles and strengthens nerves.
2. Cures constipation and removes excess fat.
3. Cures dyspepsia, rheumatism and gastro-intestinal disorders.
4. Improves digestion and appetite.

5.3.5 SITTING ASANAS

Ardha Matsyendrasana

This asana is named after Yogi Matsyendranath. The name comes from the Sanskrit words *ardha* meaning “half”, *matsya* meaning “fish”, *eendra* meaning “king”, and *asana* meaning “posture”. The final position of this *asana* is just like Half Lord of the Fish that is why it is called *Ardha Matsyendrasana*. This pose is also known as “Half Spinal Twist Pose”.





Techniques:

1. Sit extending both the legs together in front, hands by the side, palm resting on the ground. Fingers should remain together pointing forward.
2. Fold the right leg at knee. Slowly set the right heel at the perineum.
3. Now fold the left leg and, bringing it from above the right knee, place it beside the right knee on the ground. The left knee should point upwards.
4. Now bring the right hand on the left side of the left knee. The left knee should remain at the left side of the right armpit.
5. Straighten the right hand and hold the toe or ankle of the left leg.
6. Twisting the body to the left side, look backwards, and place the left hand on the right thigh bringing it from the back.
7. Keep your gaze towards the back.
8. While returning to the original position first release the hand from the thigh and turn head forward.
9. Now bring the back to normal position after loosening the righthand.
10. Bring the left leg in original position.
11. Now bring the right leg also in original position.
12. Repeat it, folding the left leg first.

Things to remember while performing this Asana:

1. Some person may experience difficulty in practicing the *asana*. If they cannot hold the toes of the left leg with the right hand, they should hold the ankle. If that also is not possible then hold the knee.
2. While twisting backward twist the back bone.
3. Before practising this *asana*, you could practise *Vakrasana*.

Contraindications:

1. Should be avoided during pregnancy and menstruation due to the strong twist in the abdomen.
2. People who have undergone cardiac, abdominal or brain surgeries should not practise this *asana*.
3. Care should be taken by those suffering from peptic ulcers or hernia.
4. Those with severe spinal problems should avoid the *asana* while those with mild slipped disc can benefit from it.

Extension Activity

A number of schools around the world are teaching Yoga. Find out about a school in any other country where Yoga is being taught. Check out the asanas being taught. Write to the school and share your experience of Yoga asanas, and find out how they feel after learning Yoga.

Benefits:

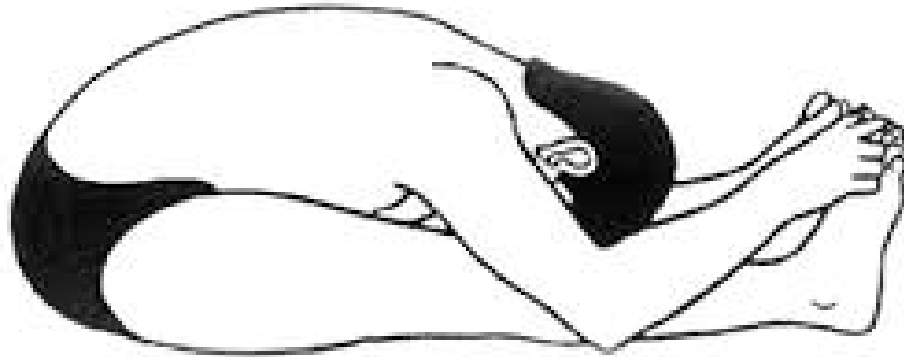
1. It is very useful in constipation and dyspepsia.
2. This *Asana* improves liver efficiency and removes debility of kidneys.
3. It is very useful in diabetes.



4. It is very beneficial for the muscles of shoulder and back.

Paschimottanasana

The word *paschimottasana* comes from the Sanskrit words *paschima* meaning “west” or “back” or “back of body” and *uttana* meaning “intense stretch” or “straight” or “extended” and *asana* meaning “posture”. In this pose one has to sit and stretch/extend the back forward.



Techniques:

1. Sit, stretching both the legs together in front, hands by the side, palms resting on the ground. Fingers should remain together pointing forward.
2. Loosen your back muscles and bend the body forward as far as is possible.
3. Maintaining this posture, loosen your hands and place them where they are comfortable. It would be better if they are put on the thighs.
4. Practise it daily and keep bending forward a little more. Finally, hold the big toes of the legs with your hands, and place forehead on the knees.
5. After a few seconds, raise the head, release your toes and come to the original position.

Things to remember while performing this Asana:

1. Your aim is to hold the toes by bending forward slowly and to place the forehead on the knees therefore do not perform this *asana* in haste.
2. Do not force your body to reach final position on the very first day, if you find it difficult, recognise your limitations, and accordingly increase bending forward daily.
3. Never fold the legs at the knees whether you can bend forward or not.

Contraindications:

Do not do this *asana* in case you have a painful and enlarged liver or spleen, or you have a herniated disc or acute appendicitis.

Benefits:

1. It stretches the muscles of the back from head to the ankles. It contracts the muscles of the anterior part of the body.
2. Improves the flexibility of the lumbar region, the hips and thighs.



3. Massages and tones the abdominal and pelvis region including all organs such as the liver, pancreas, kidneys, spleen and intestines.
4. Improves the blood circulation in the back region and tones the spinal nerves.

Vajrasana

In Sanskrit *Vajra* means “thunderbolt” and the final position of this *asana* looks like thunder bolt that is why this *asana* is called *vajrasana*. This *asana* is also called Adamantine Pose, Diamond Pose, Kneeling Pose, Pelvic Pose.

Note: - This can be considered a meditation posture. While practicing it for meditation, one should close one's eyes at the final stage.

Techniques:

1. Sit with legs extended together, hands by the side of the body, palm resting on the ground, fingers of the hands together pointing forward.
2. Fold the right leg at the knee and place the foot under the right hip. Sole will remain inside.
3. Similarly folding the left foot, place it under the left hip.
4. Rest your hands on the respective thighs.
5. Sit erect, gaze in front or close the eyes.
6. While returning to the original position, bend a little towards right side, take out your left leg and extend it.
7. Similarly extend your right leg and return to the original position.



Things to remember while performing this Asana:

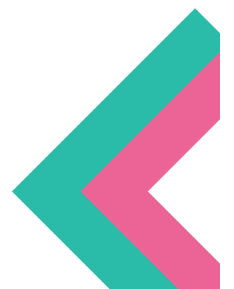
1. While sitting on the bent feet, heels should remain out and toes inside, soles upwards.
2. Do not sit on the heels.

Contraindications:

1. A person suffering from piles should not practise this *asana*.
2. A person suffering from knee joint pain should not practise this *asana*.

Benefits:

1. Strengthens thigh muscles and calf muscles.
2. Gives longevity and strengthens the spine.
3. Calms the mind and brings stability.
4. Cures constipation, acidity, increases digestion process.
5. Cures urinary problems.





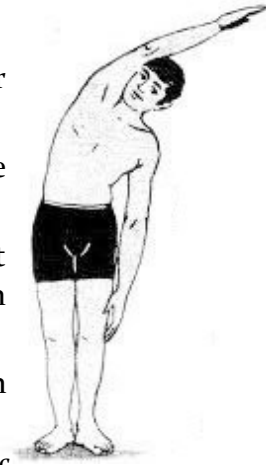
5.3.6 STANDING ASANAS

Ardha Kati Chakrasana

In Sanskrit *Ardha* means “half”, *Kati* means “waist”, *Charka* means “wheel” and *Asana* means “posture”. So, in this *asana* one has to bend the waist laterally to form a half wheel posture.

Techniques:

1. Stand erect with legs together, toes together, hands by the side of the thigh, gaze in front.
2. Slowly raise your right hand and bring it parallel to your shoulder, palm-facing downwards.
3. Start raising your hands upwards and let the arm touch the ear, fingers pointing towards sky.
4. Now start bending laterally towards left side, loosen the left part of your body. The left hand will go down from that high together with the body.
5. After maintaining the position for some time, slowly return to beginning position and stand erect.
6. Repeat with the other side. This forms one complete round of *Ardha Kati Chakrasana*.



Things to remember while performing this Asana:

1. While bending, do not bend forward or backward. Only the upper part of the waist will bend laterally either towards left or right.
2. Do not start bending before your arm is completely straight upward.
3. While practicing this *Asana* gaze in front.

Contraindications:

Those suffering from spondylitis should practise it carefully.

Benefits:

1. Increases flexibility of lateral region.
2. Stretches lateral thoracic muscles and increases blood supply.
3. Increases flexibility of hip joints
4. Reduces excess fat around the waist.
5. Relieves back pain, constipation
6. Good for those who have a flat foot



Trikosana

The name comes from the Sanskrit words *trikona* meaning “triangle” and *asana* meaning “posture”.

**Techniques:**

1. Stand erect with legs together, hands by the side of the thighs.
2. Keep two or two and half feet distance between the two legs and raise both the hands towards each side so as to make a parallel line with shoulder.
3. Slowly bending towards right side, touch the toe of the left leg with the forefinger and middle finger of the right hand and raise the left hand towards the sky.
4. Gaze up towards the left hand.
5. After maintaining the position for some time, slowly return to the beginning position.
6. Now start bending slowly towards left side and touch the toe of right leg with left hand and keep right hand pointing towards sky.
7. Gaze should rise towards raised hand.
8. While returning back to the original position, bring down your raised hand, leave the toes and stand erect with legs together.

Things to remember while performing this Asana:

1. Do not bend legs at the knees.
2. Judge your limitations.

Contraindications:

Avoid this pose if you are suffering from migraine, diarrhoea, low or high blood pressure, or neck and back injuries (those with high blood pressure could avoid raising their hand overhead, as this may further raise the blood pressure).

Benefits:

1. Strengthens the legs, knees, ankles, arms, and chest
2. Stretches and opens the hips, groins, ham strings, and calves; shoulders, chest, and spine
3. Increases mental and physical equilibrium
4. Helps improve digestion
5. Reduces anxiety, stress, back pain and sciatica.

Extension Activity

Perform any two *Asanas* for 8 consecutive days and write 3 changes which take place in you after 8th day.

Name of the <i>Asana</i>	Change 1	Change 2	Change 3



5.3.7 INTRODUCTION TO PRANAYAMA

Pranayama forms an important component of Yoga. *Pranayama* is a science which helps to regulate vital energies through the regulation of breathing. The main purpose of *Pranayama* is to gain control over the Autonomous Nervous System and improve mental functions. *Pranayama* involves slow deep inspiration (*Puraka*), holding breath (*Kumbhaka*) and near complete expiration (*Rechaka*). The flow of *Prana* or vital energy to all the vital parts of the body is regulated by these breath-regulating practices. Carrying out *pranayama* regularly can modulate the sensitivity of chemo receptors and also calms and quiets the mind.

Different types of *Pranayama* mentioned in the Hatha Yoga Texts are listed below.

- i) *Suryabhedana*,
- ii) *Ujjayi*,
- iii) *Sheetkari*,
- iv) *Sheetali*,
- v) *Bhramari*,
- vi) *Bhastrika*,
- vii) *Moorcha*,
- viii) *Palvani*

Nadishodhan, *Suryabhedan*, *Ujjayi*, *Sheetli*, *Bhramari*, *Bhastrika* *Pranayama* are important *Pranayama* to be practised.

Before doing the above *Pranayama*, one must follow the essentials for practicing *Pranayama* as stated below.

1. **External environment:** Any place that is well-ventilated and free from noise, insects and flies should be preferred to practise *Pranayama*.
2. **Right season to begin the practice of *Pranayama*:** One should start to practise *Pranayama* in Spring season i. e. March-April and Autumn season i. e. Sept-Oct. One who is already engaged in the practice of *Pranayama* should continue its practice in all seasons.
3. **Right time:** Morning is the best suited time to practise *Pranayama*.
4. **Seat or *Asana*:** The seat should be soft, thick and comfortable.
5. ***Asana*:** *Asanas* such as *Padmasana*, *Siddhasana*, *Vajrasana* and *Sukhasana* are considered the most suitable postures for *Pranayama*.

Before doing the above *Pranayama*, one must practise *Nadi-shodhana* *Pranayama* in the beginning.

Nadi-Shodhana* *Pranayama

Nadi means “channel” and refers to the energy pathways through which *prana* flows. *Shodhana* means “cleansing”. So *Nadi-Shodhana* means





cleansing of the channel. *Pranayama* is practised only after purifying the *Nadis*. *Nadis* can be purified by practising *Anulom-Vilom Pranayama*. A common learner must begin *Pranayama* with *Anulom-Vilom*.

Techniques:

1. Sit in any comfortable meditative *asana*.
2. Keep the head and spine straight and close your eyes.
3. Place right hand in *jnana* mudra and close the right nostril with the right thumb.
4. Inhale through the left nostril for 5 counts.
5. After 5 counts of breath release the pressure of thumb from the right nostril and close the left nostril with the ring finger and exhale through the right nostril for 10 counts, keeping the respiration rate slow, deep and silent.
6. Then, inhale through the right nostril for 5 counts. Exhale. Practise 5 rounds or for 3 to 5 minutes, making sure that no sound is produced as the air passes through the nostrils.

Benefits:

1. Calms and steadies the mind, improves focus and concentration. Balances left and right hemispheres of the brain.
2. Strengthens the immune system and manages hypertension.
3. Provides sufficient oxygen for the functioning of every cell in the body.
4. Removes waste products such as carbon dioxide and other toxic gases from the body, so that they do not remain in the blood stream.

Surya Bhedhana Pranayama

Surya means the “sun” and, according to Yoga the *Surya Nadi* is the right nostril. In this type of *Pranayama* you use your right nostril for inhalation and the left one for exhalation. The same procedure is repeated in each round.

Techniques:

1. Sit in any meditative posture e.g. *Padasana*, *Sukhasana* etc. and close your eyes.
2. Keep the left nostril closed with your middle and ring finger of the right hand.
3. Slowly inhale without making any sound through the right nostril as long as you can do it comfortably.
4. Then bring your hand down and place it on the knees and retain the breath by firmly pressing the chin against the chest (*Jalandhara Bandha*).
5. Simultaneously contract your rectum muscles (*Mool bandh*). This point cannot be reached at the very outset. You will have to increase the period of *Kumbhaka* (retaining breath) gradually.
6. This constitutes *Surya Bhedhana Pranayama*.
7. Exhale very slowly without making any sound through the left nostril by closing





the right nostril followed by releasing the *Moolbandh*, *Uddiyanbandh* and *Jalandhar bandh*.

8. Relax and come back to original position. Do this 3 to 5 times.

Benefits:

1. This *Pranayama* should be performed repeatedly, as it purifies the brain and destroys the intestinal worms and diseases arising from excess of wind (*Vayu*).
2. It helps to manage rhinitis and various sorts of neuralgia.
3. The worms that are found in the frontal sinuses are removed.
4. It is good for persons suffering from low blood pressure.

Ujjayi Pranayama

Ujjayi Pranayama is also called “ocean breath” or “warrior’s breath.” This *Pranayama* stretches and warms the breath before it enters into the lungs. This helps in generating a heat that is effective in getting rid of the toxins in the body. Both the inhalations and exhalations are performed through the nose. The breath is directed to the back of the throat while the muscles are constricted, causing a hissing sound like the sound of an ocean. As the passage of the throat is made narrower the air speed is increased.



Techniques:

1. Sit in any meditative posture and close the mouth.
2. Inhale slowly through both the nostrils in a smooth, uniform manner.
3. Retain the breath as long as you can do so comfortably and then exhale slowly through the left nostril by closing the right nostril with your right thumb.
4. Expand the chest when you inhale. During inhalation a peculiar hissing sound is produced owing to the partial closing of glottis. The sound produced during inhalation should be of a mild and uniform pitch. It should be continuously practised.

Benefits:

1. Removes the heat from the head.
2. The practitioner’s voice becomes clear and melodious.
3. Removes phlegm in the throat and all sorts of pulmonary diseases are managed effectively.
4. It is good for asthma patients and also for people suffering from respiratory disorders.

Sheetali Pranayama

Sheetali is a Sanskrit word meaning “cooling”. It is a breathing technique which cools the body and mind.





In this *Pranayama*, air is slowly inhaled through the mouth and exhaled through both nostrils. This cools the whole body and at the same time relaxes the central nervous system.

Techniques:

1. Sit in *Padmasana* or any other comfortable position.
2. Place your hands on the knees in *Gyan Mudra* and close your eyes gently.
3. Open your mouth, bring the tongue outside the mouth and form a cylindrical shape by bending both the extreme sides of the tongue longitudinally and inhale. While inhaling, the air should pass through the tongue.
4. Close your mouth and retain the air as long as you can with pressing the chin against the chest (chin lock), simultaneously pull your rectum muscles (anal lock).
5. Then release chin-lock and anal lock and exhale slowly through the nostrils.

Benefits:

1. Beneficial in diseases pertaining to throat and spleen etc.
2. Cures indigestion
3. Helps in controlling thirst and hunger.
4. Lowers blood pressure
5. Beneficial in diseases caused by imbalance of *pitta dosha* (heat)
6. Purifies blood.

Sheetkari Pranayama

Sheetkari Pranayama is a breathing technique which involves hissing leading to a cooling effect upon the whole body.

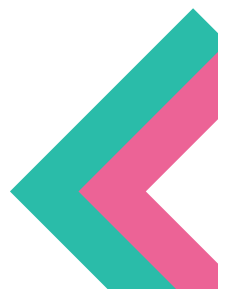
Techniques:

1. Sit upright in a comfortable posture, keeping the head, neck, and spine erect.
2. Place the hands in *Gyana Mudra*.
3. Open the lips and keep the teeth together.
4. Lightly press the tip of the tongue against the lower front teeth.
5. Inhale through the mouth over the tongue with a kind of hissing sound.
6. After filling the lungs completely, close the mouth and exhale through both nostrils without retention.
7. Repeat five to ten times.



Benefits:

1. It quenches thirst and appeases hunger. It cools the body system.
2. It destroys *gulma* (chronic dyspepsia), fever, indigestion, bilious disorders,





phlegm.

3. It is good for health of teeth and the gums.
4. When you are caught up in a jungle or any place where you cannot get water, if you feel thirsty practise this *pranayama*. You will be at once relieved of thirst.

Precautions: Those who are suffering from cold, cough or tonsils should avoid this *pranayama*.

Bhramari Pranayama

The word *Bhramari* means a black bee. While practicing this *Pranayama*, the sound produced resembles the buzzing of a black bee.

Techniques:

1. Sit in the *Padmasana* position or any other comfortable sitting position.
2. Close your eyes, lips and ears and inhale deeply and exhale making sound as black bee does.
3. In order to get benefits from this *Pranayama* you should close both ears with your thumbs and exhale making sound of the bee.



Benefits:

1. *Bhramari* delights the mind.
2. It is beneficial for pregnant women as preparation for labour.
3. Improves blood circulation to the brain, and clears the ears, eyes, nose and throat.

Bhastrika Pranayama

The meaning of the Sanskrit word *Bhastrika* is “bellows”, thus the *Bhastrika Pranayama* is called the “bellows breath”. This form of breathing increases the flow of air into the body to produce inner heat at the physical and subtle level.

Techniques:

1. Sit in any comfortable posture either *Padmasana* or *Vajrasana* and keep the body, neck and head erect, with mouth closed.
2. Close the right nostril and respire rapidly 20 times through the left nostril.
3. Repeat 20 rapid respirations through the right nostrils.
4. Then perform the 20 rapid respirations through both nostrils.
5. Make sure that the inhalation and exhalation are rhythmic and of equal duration.
6. The nostrils should not expand and contract during the practice, but should be kept still.



**Benefits:**

1. This *asana* stimulates the metabolism and encourages better immunity. The increase in appetite and improved digestion encourages and strengthens the immunity standards.
2. It destroys phlegm, and cures diseases of the nose and chest.
3. Relieves inflammation of the throat
4. Detoxifies the lungs and cures asthma etc.

Extension Activity

Perform any ONE *Pranayama* technique for 8 consecutive days and write 3 changes which take place in you after 8th day.

Name of the <i>Pranayama</i>	Change 1	Change 2	Change 3

Art Integration – MAKING YOUR OWN YouTube/TV SHOW

Would you like to make your own instructional Yoga Show? Well why not do it? It's not very difficult and is a lot of fun.

1. The first step is, of course, the format of the show. You have to set yourself apart from the others. So, decide on your target audience. You could focus on teaching seniors only, or you could combine your classes with hip-hop music.
2. Choose a name for your Show. It should be something memorable, and relevant. Don't copy any other show's name. Make the name of your Show unique.
3. Get all the things you need. A camera for recording the Yoga Asanas, a recorder for voice over giving instructions, suitable music, a mat.
4. Come up with material for the show. Decide upon the Asanas you wish to demonstrate. They should be interesting, and at the same time not so complex that people are unable to follow them.
5. Choose a crew. You will need
 - Someone to operate the camera(s).
 - A Host and (or) a co-Host who give the instructions/voice-over for the Asanas.
6. Two or three persons demonstrating the Asanas. They must be adept at what they do to avoid any fiascos.
7. Create a script and proofread it.
8. Select an awesome set. Don't have your show with bare white walls in the background. Create an awesome set that is unique.
9. Plan out segments. Start planning out unique segments for your web show. How many Asanas would you like to include? Would you like to take a break? Or more than one break between the Asanas?
10. Rehearse the asanas, voice-over, music and recording well. Start rehearsing.



Rehearse at least two times before you shoot your show. You might want to use cue cards.

11. Shoot your TV/YouTube show. Have a great time shooting your first episode. Relax and have fun. If you or any of the stars make a mistake, start over. You can't do a live show on YouTube or TV, so shoot your show at least one week before you're uploading it on YouTube.
12. Make any necessary edits to the show, consider using Windows Movie Maker for this job.

5.3.8 MEDITATION (DHYANA)

Meditation (*Dhyana*) is a state of pure consciousness, which transcends the inner and outer senses. Meditation can be an effective form of stress reduction and has the potential to improve the quality of life and decrease health care costs. Meditation involves achieving a state of "thoughtless awareness" in which the excessive stress producing activity of the mind is neutralized without reducing alertness and effectiveness. Authentic meditation enables one to focus on the present moment, rather than dwell on the unchangeable past or undetermined future.

Meditation is the art of focusing 100% of your attention in one area. The practice comes with a myriad of well-publicized health benefits including increased concentration, decreased anxiety, and a general feeling of happiness. Although a great number of people try meditation at some point in their lives, only a small percentage actually carry on with it for the long-term. This is unfortunate, and a possible reason is that many beginners do not begin with a mindset needed to make the practice sustainable. Meditation is an absolutely wonderful practice, but can be very difficult in the beginning.

5.3.9 TYPES OF MEDITATION

1. **Mindfulness Meditation:** Mindfulness meditation, is about being aware of the sounds and activities happening around you. Brooding over past events, or thinking about future possibilities may lead to anxiety. In such situations, mindfulness meditation, the most widely practised type of meditation, can be helpful in calming the mind. It brings you and your thoughts into the present, focusing on emotions, thoughts, and sensations that you're experiencing "in the now." While it can be initially difficult to quiet your thoughts, with time and practice you can experience the benefits of mindfulness meditation, including reducing stress and anxiety. It is almost a flow-like type of meditation, because you just let your mind be fluid and flow from one thought to the next, not really focusing on one particular thing. For instance, if you live in a noisy city, you don't have to block out the outside sirens and screaming children, you let your mind be aware of the sounds without becoming too focused.
2. **Spiritual Meditation:** This type of meditation is for those who regularly participate in prayer, as it is based on communicating with God. Just like the other styles, you must become calm and quiet and then begin to focus on a



question or problem you might have. This style of meditation can be not only relaxing, but rewarding as well.

3. **Focused Meditation:** If the idea of clearing your mind of all thoughts stresses you out, focused meditation is great because you can focus on a sound, object, mantra, or thought. The key here is to just focus on one of these things and stay committed to that one thought or object. This is when relaxation music comes in handy. Even though you are essentially using your mind, you will be amazed at how rejuvenated you feel afterwards because in our day to day lives, our mind can wander off to ten different places at the same time!
4. **Movement Meditation:** Movement meditation may seem intimidating, but if you are by yourself and you really get into it, it can be extremely uplifting and relaxing at the same time. Sitting with your eyes closed, simply focus on your breath and try out different gentle, repetitive flowing movements. Rather than focussing on a sound, object, or thought, just turn your attention to your movement. You may find a slow left and right waying motion to be therapeutic, or you could try moving your entire upper body in a slow circular motion.
5. **Mantra Meditation:** Mantras are words that are chanted loudly during meditation. It may seem odd to be making loud noises during a meditation session, but it is actually the sounds that become the object being focused on. In Yoga, the mantra “Om” is regularly used since it delivers a deep vibration that makes it easy for the mind to concentrate on that particular sound.

5.3.10 BENEFITS OF MEDITATION (DHYANA)

- Produces a feeling of tranquillity and freedom in daily life.
- Reduces psychological disorders like anxiety, tiredness and depression etc.
- Provides relief from aches and pains, such as headache, joint pains etc.,
- Leads to beneficial effects in problems such as in insomnia.
- Encourages peace through infinite patience, and increase in affection and sympathy for others.
- Leads to growth in devotion and belief in the Supreme Being.
- Brings about a stronger urge and aptitude for service and cooperation in social life.

Extension Activity

Perform any type Meditation for 8 consecutive days and write 3 changes which take place in you after 8th day.

Name of the <i>Pranayama</i>	Change 1	Change 2	Change 3



5.3.11 TYPES OF YOGIC KRIYAS (SHAT KRIYAS)

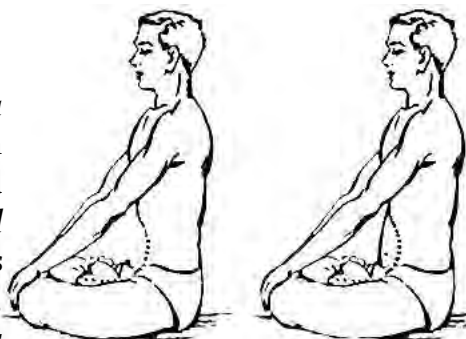
According to *tridosha* theory (one of the fundamental theories of Indian medicine), the human body is made up of three basic constituents called **tridoshas**, which are *Vata* (mechanical functional constituent of the body), *Pitta* (chemical functional constituent of the body) and *Kapha* (material functional constituent of the body). Any imbalance in the constituents in the body leads to diseases. Yoga recommends six purification processes to get and keep the equilibrium of these *tridoshas*. They are called as **Shat kriyas** (six purification processes). They are

1. *Kaphalabhati* – Purification of frontal lobes and lungs.
2. *Trataka* – gazing without blinking.
3. *Neti*– Nasal cleansing.
4. *Dhauti*– Cleaning of digestive tract, stomach.
5. *Nauli*– Abdominal massage.
6. *Basti* – Colon cleaning.

These six cleansing processes are excellent practices designed to purify the whole body, and to get good health.

Kapalabhati

Kapalabhati is an important part of *Shat karma* (sometimes known as **Shatkriya**), the yogic system of body cleansing techniques. The word *kapalabhati* is made up of two words: *kapal* meaning “skull” (here skull includes all the organs under the skull too) and *bhati* meaning “shining, illuminating.” Due to the process, the organs under the skull mainly the brain and the small brain are influenced in a positive manner. Hence the word is used in that way. It is intended mainly to the cleaning of the cranial sinuses but has many other effects, according to the **Gherand Samhita** and other sources



Techniques:

1. Sit comfortably in an upright posture and rest your hands on your lower belly.
2. Draw your navel to your spine in a quick motion, forcefully expelling all the air from your lungs. The primary movement is from your diaphragm.
3. Allow your lungs to fill naturally, with no effort.
4. Perform this cycle ten times, then allow your breathing to return to normal and observe the sensations in your body. Repeat these cycles of ten movements three to four times.

Contraindication: *Kapalabhati* should not be practised by pregnant women.

Benefits:

1. Effective in reducing weight by increasing the metabolic rate.
2. Clears the *nadis* (subtle energy channels).



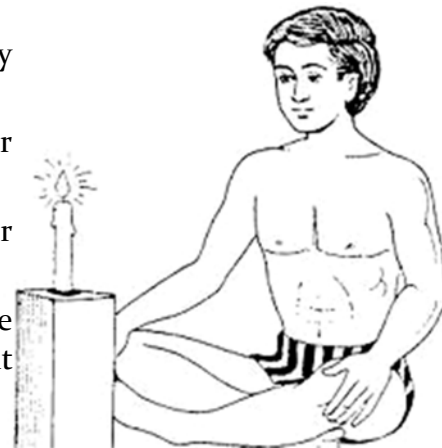
3. Stimulates abdominal organs and thus is extremely useful for those suffering from diabetes.
4. Improves blood circulation and adds radiance to the face.
5. Improves digestive tract functioning, absorption and assimilation of nutrients.
6. Calms and uplifts the mind.

Trataka

Trataka is a Sanskrit word meaning “to look, or to gaze”. *Trataka* is the practice of staring at some external object. This fixed gazing is a method of meditation which involves concentrating on a single point such as a small object, black dot or candle flame. It is used in Yoga as a way of developing concentration, strengthening the eyes, and stimulating the *ajna* chakra.

Techniques:

1. Sit on a floor-mat in *sukhasana*, or in any comfortable position, or even on a chair.
2. Sit calmly and breathe normally with your waist, back and neck erect.
3. Keep a lighted candle or oil lamp on a stool or table at a distance of 2 feet from you.
4. Remember, it should be at eye level. Please ensure there is no breeze or wind that might make the flame flutter.
5. Now, fix your gaze upon the flame.
6. Continue to gaze non-stop, without blinking until you feel the strain in your eyes and they start to water.
7. Once this happens, close your eyes.
8. Now rub the palms of both hands vigorously, until warm, and place them on your eyes.
9. Visualize the flame at the centre of your eyebrows.



Benefits:

1. Improves eyesight and vision.
2. Improves concentration, intelligence and memory.
3. Enhances self-confidence, patience and will power.
4. Calms the mind and provides inner peace and silence.
5. Brings greater clarity in mind and improves decision-making ability.

Neti

It is one of the *shatkarma* or cleansing techniques which involves cleaning of the nasal passages or sinus irrigation. There are two types of *neti* – *jalaneti* and the other is *sutraneti*.





- a) **Jalaneti:** *Jalaneti* is an ancient Indian yoga technique, meaning literally “water cleansing”, where the practitioner rinses out the nasal cavity with salted water using a *netipot*. The technique is starting to be recognized by science under the term “nasal irrigation”.

Techniques:

1. Mix one cup of warm water with half a teaspoon of salt, to make a solution. It is preferable to use pure *neti* salt, for better results
2. Pour the salt and water solution into the *Neti Pot*
3. Place the spout into one of the nostrils. The cone needs to be placed into the nostril and sealed inside thoroughly, with the help of a few gentle wists
4. Let the water to flow right into the nostril and then tilt your head on to one side, so that the water can flow out through the other nostril
5. During this procedure, you need to ensure that you breathe through your mouth. Moreover, you need to make sure that you neither sniff, nor swallow while the water is flowing between the nostrils, or else you could experience a severe bout of coughing

Contraindications:

1. If you are suffering from persistent nose bleeding you should not do *Jala Neti*.
2. *Jala Neti* should be practised under the guidance of expert.

Benefits:

1. Reduces allergy problems.
 2. Improves breathing.
 3. Eliminates post-nasal drip.
 4. Cures sinusitis or chronic sinus infections.
 5. Improves resistance to common colds. (Common colds are either avoided or the duration greatly shortened.)
 6. Improves sense of smell.
- b) **SutraNeti:** *Sutraneti* is a yogic technique to clean the nasal passages in a special thread. In *Sutra Neti*, a waxed cotton string is inserted into the nose and then pulled out from the mouth. Then both ends are held with the hands and nasal cleaning is done by moving the ends of the string to and fro. Now a days, a rubber catheter is used instead of the string as it is easily available in any medical store.

Techniques:

1. Place a rubber string in front of your left nostril, holding it horizontally
2. Push this rubber string along the side of your nose, till you can feel it touch the back of your throat
3. Insert your middle finger and index finger through the mouth to catch the tip of the string at the back





of the throat

4. Using one hand pull the string partially out of your mouth gently while still holding the other tip too
5. Move the string in a gentle massaging motion so that it cleans the nasal passage
6. While removing the string, pull it out of the nose
7. Repeat the exercise with the other nostril

Contraindications:

1. *Sutra neti* should be practised under the guidance of experienced yoga teacher.
2. Try *sutra neti* only after you have mastered the *jal neti*.
3. Do not use force to pass the catheter through the nose.

Benefits:

1. It helps to maintain nasal hygiene by removing the dirt and bacteria trapped in the mucus in the nostrils.
2. It de-sensitizes the sensitive tissues inside the nose, which can alleviate rhinitis, allergies and some types of asthma.
3. Several health problems like sinusitis, migraine, headaches, can be reduced by doing *Neti*.

Dhauti

Dhauti is an important part of the *Shatkarma*, the yogic system of body cleansing techniques. It is a series of yogic practices that cleanse the stomach and digestive system. It is intended mainly for the cleaning of the digestive tract over its full length, but it also helps clean the respiratory tract, external ears and eyes. These exercises should not be performed by persons suffering from

- ulcers
- hernias
- heart disease
- hypertension

Benefits of Dhauti:

1. *Dhauti* cleanses the complete body including the respiratory system and the entire digestive system.
2. It eliminates excess bile, stomach acids, mucus and toxins inside the body and restores it to its naturally balanced state.
3. It can benefit those suffering from constipation, indigestion, acidity, heartburn, dyspepsia, biliary disorders and disorders of the stomach. Broadly speaking there are three types of *dhauti* that are prominently practised.
 - a) **Vamana Dhauti:** In Sanskrit, *Vamana* means





“middle” and *Dhauti* means “purification”. In the yogi literature, this technique is known also as *KUNJALA*, or the gesture of the elephant. Using this yogic cleansing technique, you can clean your upper digestive and respiratory system

Techniques:

1. Add 1 tablespoon of salt to 1 litre of lukewarm water and stir it till all the salt has dissolved.
2. Drink the saltwater as quickly as possible; gulping it down till you feel you cannot have anymore.
3. Lean forward keeping your torso horizontal.
4. Insert your middle and index fingers as far back into your throat as possible and vomit out all the contents of your stomach.
5. Continue to insert your fingers into the back of your throat till there is no more water left to vomit.
6. Once done, lie down in the *Shavasana* (Corpse Pose) and rest. You are done.

Precautions:

1. Gulp, rather than sip, the water, else the technique will not work.
 2. You have to drink enough water for the technique to work.
 3. Keep your body relaxed at all times. This becomes easier with practice.
- b) **DandaDhauti:** One of the cleansing techniques (*shatkarmas*), used to clean the oesophagus with a “stick” or *danda*. This kriya helps to clean the windpipe, oesophagus and stomach by inserting a rubber tube into the throat all the way down to the stomach. The tube should be cleaned and disinfected before use.

Techniques:

1. Add 1 tablespoon of salt to 1 litre of lukewarm water and stir it till all the salt has dissolved.
2. Drink the salt water as quickly as possible; gulping it down till you feel you cannot have anymore.
3. Insert the rubber tube gently into your throat and swallow it.
4. Continue swallowing till the end of the tube reaches the stomach.
5. Bend forward and allow the salt water to be siphoned off.
6. Remove the tube slowly after all the salt water has come out.

Precautions:

1. If you are unable to swallow the tube then you should stick to performing the *Vamandhauti*.
 2. Make sure you have a professional to help you through the procedure in order to avoid any unwanted situations.
- c) **Vastradhauti:** *Vastra* is the Sanskrit word for “cloth”. It is a yogic detoxification technique in which a specially





prepared cloth is swallowed and removed after ten minutes, in order to remove mucus from the stomach

Techniques:

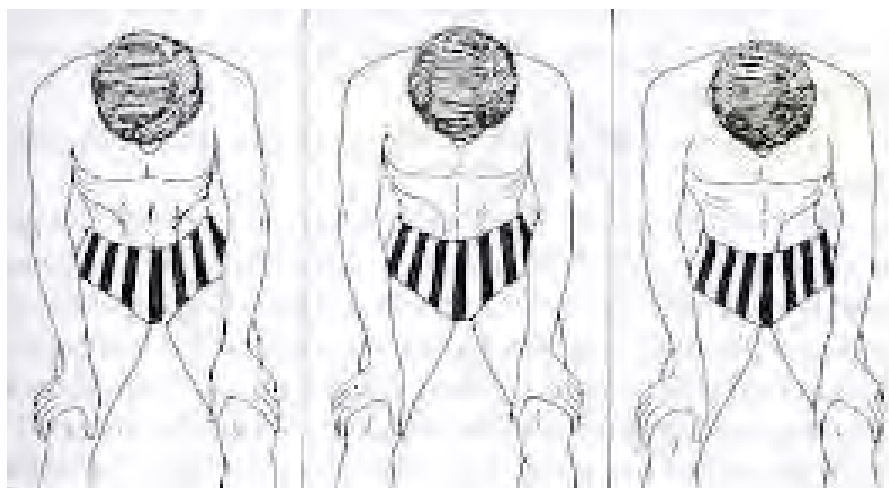
1. Keep ready a strip of muslin cloth. It should be about 20 feet long and 3 inches wide and should be washed and disinfected prior touse.
2. Start by slowly inserting the muslin cloth into your throat and swallowing it.
3. Initially you can try swallowing about 1 foot of the cloth and gradually increase it till you can swallow almost all of the cloth.
4. Keeps the cloth in your throat for a few seconds increasing the period every day.
5. When the cloth sticks in your throat, sip some warm water.
6. Stop swallowing when about six inches of the cloth are left out side.
7. Slowly withdraw the cloth.

Precautions:

1. Avoid using synthetic cloth for the *neti*.
2. Ensure that the cloth is kept neatly trimmed and that there are no frayededges.
3. Do not swallow the cloth completely.
4. Ensure that the cloth is narrowerth any our tongue to prevent it from folding while being swallowed.
5. Wash and disinfect the cloth immediately afte ruse.
6. Make sure that if you are a beginner, you have a trained person as a guide to help you in the process.

Nauli

Nauli is one of the Kriyas or *Shatkarma* from Yoga. The exercise is claimed to serve the cleaning of the abdominal region - digestive organs, small intestine and is based on a massage of the internal belly organs by a circular movement of the abdominal muscles. *Nauli* is an exercise of the classical *Hatha Yoga* but is not taught of tenin yoga schools. *Nauli* is considered to be a difficult exercise, and one which can be learned only with perseverance and patience.





There are four different variations, which are gradually learned one after another:

1. *Madhyananauli*: the isolated contraction of the central muscles of the abdomen.
2. *Vamanauli*: the isolated contraction of the left part of the central muscles of the abdomen.
3. *Daksinanauli*: the isolated contraction of the right part of the central muscles of the abdomen.
4. *Naulikriya*: the circular movement of the central muscles of the abdomen.

Techniques:

1. Stand upright with legs slightly apart.
2. Inhale deeply through the nose.
3. Exhale through the mouth and bend forward, keeping the back straight.
4. Bend the knees slightly and place both hands on the thighs.
5. Draw in the muscles along the sides of the abdomen and at the same time contract the muscles that run parallel to each other in the centre of the abdomen (Rectusabdominus). In this way a strong suction effect is produced within the whole abdominal cavity.
6. When the impulse to inhale occurs, stand upright again and inhale. This process can be repeated 5-6 times, or for as long as there is still power in the abdominal muscles.
7. After the *kriya* is practised for some time, it is possible to move the Rectusabdominus from right to left, then left to right and also later, to move these muscles in a circular motion. **Precautions:** *Nauli Kriya* must only be practised on an empty stomach. It must not be performed during pregnancy, menstruation or after any abdominal operation. Consult a doctor before practising this technique if you suffer any disease of the intestine or pancreas.

Benefits:

1. *Nauli* strengthens the abdominal muscles and massages the intestines and organs of the lower abdomen.
2. It regulates blood pressure and has a preventative effect against diabetes.
3. It is helpful for heartburn and skin diseases (acne).
4. It improves the digestive system.

Basti

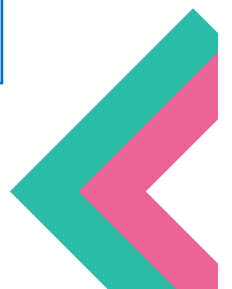
Basti is an important part of *Shatkarma* (sometimes known as *Shatkriya*), the yogic system of body cleansing techniques. It is intended mainly to clean the lower abdomen, especially the colon. The *Hatha Yoga* and other sources usually attribute to it many beneficial effects. There are basically two techniques to perform *Basti*:

- *Sthalabasti* (also known as *Sushkabasti* or *Vatabasti*), cleans the colon by sucking air into the body without the help of any catheter or tube.
- *Jalabasti* (also known as *Vatibasti*) cleans the colon by sucking water into the anus. It is allowed the use of a catheter tube.



I. Tick the correct option.

1. To stabilize and focus the mind on one object, image, sound or idea is called
 - i. *Dharana*
 - ii. *Dhyana*
 - iii. *Samadhi*
 - iv. *Pratyahara*
2. Which of the following *Asana* can be practised immediately after food?
 - i. *Siddhasana*
 - ii. *Simhasana*
 - iii. *Swastikasana*
 - iv. *Vajrasana*
3. Withdrawal of senses from the sensory objects is
 - i. *Dharana*
 - ii. *Dhyana*
 - iii. *Pratyahara*
 - iv. *Samadhi*
4. Which of the following *Asana* is good for thyroid gland?
 - i. *Dhanurasana*
 - ii. *Paschimottanasana*
 - iii. *Chakrasana*
 - iv. *Sarvangasana*
5. is a very good *Kriya* to get rid of nasal allergy?
 - i. *Vastradhauti*
 - ii. *Dandadhauti*
 - iii. *Neti*
 - iv. *Kapalbhati*
6. *Suryanamaskar* is a well-devised combination of and breathing.
 - i. *Pranayama*
 - ii. *Dhyana*
 - iii. *Bandha*
 - iv. *Asana*
7. Which of these is a *Kriya*?
 - i. *Kapalbhati*
 - ii. *Bhastrika*
 - iii. *Ujjayi*
 - iv. *Nadishodhana*



**II. Answer the following questions briefly.**

1. What is meditation?
2. Define yogic *kriyas*.
3. List five *Pranayam* techniques.
4. How do yogic *asanas* help in developing neuro-muscular coordination?

III. Answer the following questions in 150-200 words.

1. List the importance of Yogic *Asanas* in school.
2. What is significance of *Pranayam*?
3. What is the effect of *Kriyas* on our body?
4. How does meditation help in relaxing the mind?
5. What is the role of yoga to produce an effective citizen for the country?

5.4.1 YOGA FOR CONCENTRATION AND RELATED ASANAS

We all know about the effective health benefits of Yoga, but the most important benefits to accrue from Yoga is that it works on changing the working of our mind. Yoga helps in improving our concentration and focus by calming the mind and getting rid of deflecting thoughts.

Here are seven easy yet effective yoga *asanas* one needs to try to boost concentration and jump start your brain.

Sukhasana

Sukhasana is one of the most basic yoga *asanas* and is suitable for yogis of all levels. The name is derived from the Sanskrit, *sukha*, meaning “pleasure” or “comfort,” and *asana*, meaning “pose.”

**Techniques**

1. Sit on the floor with legs stretched out.
2. Fold the left leg and tug it inside the right thigh.
3. Then fold the right leg and tug in inside the left thigh.
4. Keep the hands on the knees.
5. Sit erect with spine straight.
6. Relax your whole body and breathe normally.
7. Maintain this position for as long as comfortable.

Things to remember while performing the Asana:

1. Despite its name, *sukhasana* doesn't always feel easy for a lot of people.
2. To achieve full length of the spine, one must first master the balance at the base.



Contraindications

1. Individuals who are experiencing back ache shouldn't stay in this position for more than 5 mins.
2. Sukhasana should be avoided by individuals who have undergone knee replacement surgery.
3. Individuals suffering from problems related to the spine or spinal disc should avoid this *asana*.

Benefits and limitations

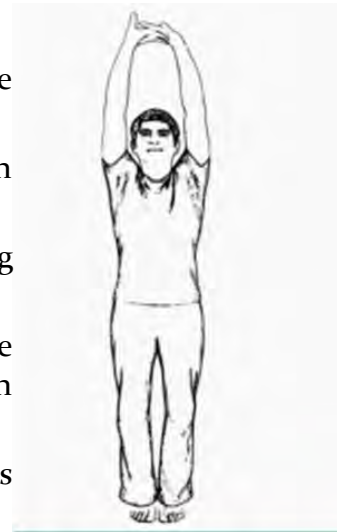
1. Strengthens muscle of the back and improves body posture.
2. Reduces stress and anxiety.
3. Helps in improving concentration for effective meditation.

Tadasana

In Sanskrit the word *tada* means “mountain” and *asana* means “posture”. Since one has to maintain the final position of this *asana* like that of mountain therefore it is called *tadasana*. This *asana* is also called *Samasthiti*.

Techniques:

1. Stand straight, legs together, hands by the side of the thighs, gaze in front.
2. Raise your arms straight in front, your palms facing each other.
3. Bring the hands up straight towards sky, fingers pointing upwards.
4. Now slowly raise your heels and stand on toes. Raise your heels as much as you can. Stretch body up as much as possible.
5. While returning to the original position, bring your heels to the ground first.
6. Slowly bring your arms down.



Things to remember while performing this Asana:

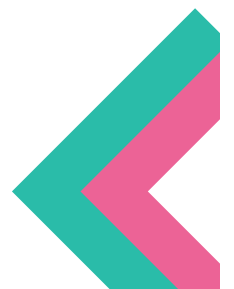
1. This is a balancing pose.
2. Do not make haste, otherwise you will lose your balance or suffer a jerk.
3. In the beginning, legs can be kept apart.

Contraindications:

Person suffering from blood circulation problems such as faulty valves and low blood pressure should not perform this *asana*.

Benefits and limitations:

1. This *asana* improves height.
2. Spine becomes flexible.





3. Stabilizes the body and mind and promotes emotional balance and grounding

Padamasana

Padmasana is a term derived from the Sanskrit word *padma* meaning lotus, and *asana* meaning posture. So, it is popularly known as *lotus pad* or lotus throne and it is used for meditation.

Techniques:

1. Sit on the ground with the legs extended in front.
2. Place your left foot on the right thigh and right foot on the left thigh.
3. Place the heels in such a way that they are close to the navel.
4. Place your hands on your knees. Join the index finger with the thumb of both hands.
5. Close your eyes.



Benefits:

1. Stretches the ankles and knees and keeps joints and ligaments flexible.
2. Calms the brain and restores energy levels.
3. Increases awareness and attentiveness.
4. Keeps the spine straight and helps to develop good posture.
5. Eases menstrual discomfort and sciatica.

Shashankasana

Shashankasana is a simple dynamic forward-bending posture that provides a gentle stretch while relaxing and energizing the body and mind. The name comes from the Sanskrit *shash*, meaning “hare” or “rabbit” and *ank* meaning “lap”; and *asana*, which means “posture.”



Techniques

1. Sit in *Vajrasana*.
2. Straighten the back.
3. Inhale, and slowly raise the arms, keeping them straight.
4. Now, exhale and bend forwards.



5. The arms, trunk and head should remain in one line.
6. The forehead and arms should rest on the floor in front of the knees.
7. Relax the whole body.
8. Inhale and exhale slowly.
9. Inhale and raise your arms up and slowly bring them down.

Things to remember while performing this asana

1. As you take your head down see that you don't raise your hips off the floor.
2. Avoid this *asana* if you feel dizzy or have a backache or pain in the legs

Contraindications

Shashankasana is not to be performed by people with very high blood pressure, or those who suffer from a slipped disc or vertigo.

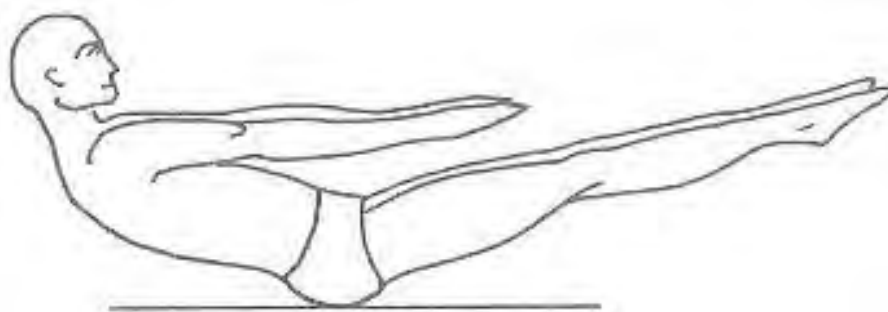
It should also be avoided in case of severe knee and ankle problems where excessive stretching of these joints may be painful.

Benefits and limitations

1. Helps in getting rid of constipation.
2. Releases stress from spinal vertebrae.
3. Improves the functioning of adrenal glands.
4. Stretches the back muscles making them stronger.
5. Enhances the health of both male and female reproductive organs.
6. Tones and massages the muscles of the pelvic region and sciatic nerve.

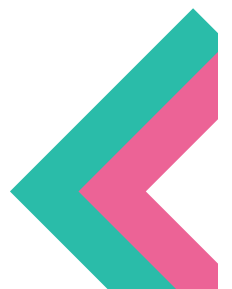
Naukasana

In Sanskrit *nauka* means "boat" and *asana* means "pose". So, this *asana* is called as *Naukasana*. While practicing this *asana* you will see the entire body takes a shape of a boat that is why it is called *naukasana*.



Techniques:

1. Take a supine position with legs together.
2. Put your arms together by the side of the body, palms resting on the ground.
3. Slowly raise your legs together; simultaneously raise the head and trunk also, and stop at 45° angles.
4. While returning to the original position, first place your trunk and head on the





ground.

5. Now slowly bring down your legs and hands and lie on the ground as in the first position.

Things to remember while performing this Asana:

1. Do not bend legs at the knee.
2. Release the *Asana* before you get pain in abdominal muscles.

Contraindications:

1. *Nauk asana* should not be performed by one suffering from low blood pressure, severe headache, migraine, or someone who has suffered from some chronic diseases or spinal disorders in the recent past.
2. Those suffering from hypertension, heart disease and lumbar spondy litis should avoid this *asana*.
3. Women should avoid doing *Naukasana* during pregnancy and during the first two days of the menstrual cycle.

Benefits:

1. Helps to reduce belly fat and strengthens abdominal muscles.
2. Regulates the function of pancreas, liver and lungs and improves digestion.
3. Good for diabetes patients as it helps to maintain the sugar levels.
4. Improves blood circulation.
5. Strengthens muscles of thighs, hips, neck and shoulders.



Vrikshasana

In Sanskrit the word *vriksha* means “tree”, and *asana* means “posture”. So, the final posture of this asana resembles a tree.

Techniques:

1. Stand straight with legs together, hands by the side of the thighs, and gaze in front.
2. Fold your right leg at the knee and place the sole near the left high joint.
3. Bring both the hands in *Namaskara Mudra*.
4. After maintaining it for some time, release your hands and stand on both feet.
5. Now repeat the *asana* with the other leg. This completes one round of *Vrikshasana*.

Things to remember while performing this Asana:

1. Stand straight.
2. The folded knee should point toward their respective side.
3. This is a pose requiring balance. If you feel you are about to lose your balance, then go back to standing erect on both legs and start again.



Contraindications:

1. People who are suffering from high blood pressure should not raise their arms overhead, therefore they should minimize *Vrikshasana*.
2. Avoid *Vrikshasana* if you are suffering from headache and insomnia.

Benefits:

1. It improves balance, and concentration.
2. It develops neuro muscular coordination.
3. It strengthens thigh and calf muscles.

Garudasana

Garudasana is a standing pose in which the yogi twists one arm with the other and one leg with the other. The term comes from the Sanskrit words, *garuda* or “eagle” and *asana* or “posture”.

Technique

1. Stand straight and keep your legs slightly apart from each other.
2. Raise your hands above your head and look straight while focusing on one point in front of you.
3. Interlock the fingers of both the hands and turn them upwards in such a way that the palms are towards the sky.
4. Take a deep breath, and while inhaling, stretch your arms, chest, and shoulders upwards.
5. Raise your heels in such a way that all the weight of your body is on the toes.
6. Remain in this position for 20-30 seconds.
7. Retain your breath while stretching.
8. While exhaling, come down to your original position.



Things to remember while performing this Asana:

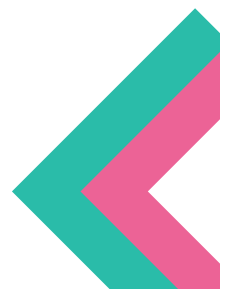
1. While practicing *Garudasana* always make sure that you keep your hands, arms, and thighs in one straight line to derive maximum benefits from the pose.

Contraindications

1. Avoid practicing *Garudasana* in case of recent knee, ankle or shoulder injury.
2. This *asana* should not be attempted if a person suffers from obesity, frequent headaches, high or low blood pressure or asthma.

Benefits and limitations

1. This *asana* helps to stretch the thighs, hips, upper back, and shoulders.
2. It helps improve focus and the ability to balance.
3. The calf muscles get strengthened with this *asana*.





4. It also helps to relieve pain associated with rheumatism and sciatica.
5. It helps to make the back, legs, and hips more flexible.
6. This *asana* also works as a stress buster.

I. Tick the correct option.

1. Which of the following *Asanas* may be practised immediately after food?
 - i. *Siddhasana*
 - ii. *Simhasana*
 - iii. *Swastikasana*
 - iv. *Vajrasana*
2. Which of the following *Asanas* is good for thyroid gland?
 - i. *Dhanurasana*
 - ii. *Paschimottanasana*
 - iii. *Chakrasana*
 - iv. *Sarvangasana*
3. Which of *Asanas* is helpful to maintain normal blood pressure?
 - i. *Shavasana*
 - ii. *Sheershasana*
 - iii. *Salabhasana*
 - iv. *Sarvangasana*

II. Answer the following questions briefly.

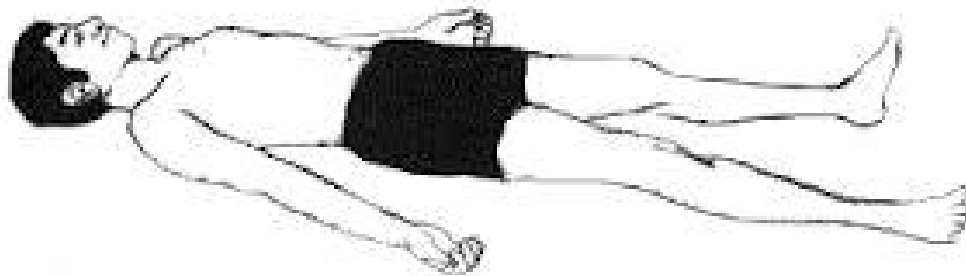
1. Which yoga poses can one do at one's desk?
2. What are the best poses for the morning?

III. Answer the following questions in 150-200 words.

1. Explain the procedure, benefits and precaution during *Padmasana*.
2. Explain the details of steps, benefits and precaution during *Sukhasana*.

5.5.1 RELAXATION TECHNIQUE FOR IMPROVING CONCENTRATION – YOG NIDRA

The Sanskrit word *yoga* means “union or perfect awareness”, and *nidra* means “sleep”. *Yoga nidra* is a state where the body appears to be asleep, but the consciousness is functioning at a deeper level of awareness.





Techniques:

1. Lie down straight on your back in *Shavasana* (Corpse Pose). Close your eyes and relax. Take a few deep breaths in and out. Remember to take slow and relaxed breaths.
2. Start by gently taking your attention to your right foot. Keep your attention there for a few seconds, while relaxing your foot. Then gently move your attention up to the right knee, right thigh and hip. Become aware of your whole right leg.
3. Gently, repeat this process for the left leg.
4. Take your attention to all parts of the body: stomach, navel region, chest.
5. Take your attention to the right shoulder, right arm, palms, and fingers. Repeat this on the left shoulder, left arm, throat, face, and finally the top of the head.
6. Take a deep breath in and observe the sensations in your body. Relax in this state for a few minutes.
7. Slowly becoming aware of your body and surroundings, turn to your right side and keep lying down for a few more minutes. Rolling over to the right side makes the breath flow through the left nostril which helps cool the body.
8. Taking your own time, you may then slowly sit up, and whenever you feel comfortable, slowly, and gradually, open your eyes.

Things to remember while performing *yoga nidra*:

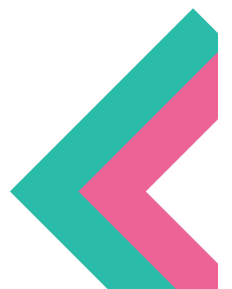
- 1) *Yoga Nidra*, is best done on an empty stomach
- 2) This *asana* should be practised in a comfortable clutter-free space.
- 3) Some people may feel a little cold after *Yoga Nidra*, so, it is a good idea to keep a blanket handy.

Contraindications:

1. *Yoga Nidra* should be done at your discretion, especially if you face severe clinical depression or other challenging mental health conditions. The extra introversion is unlikely to help. However, it may help relieve mild conditions.
2. Do not do *yoga nidra* while driving or operating machinery, as you may fall asleep.

Benefits and limitations:

1. Produces deep relaxation.
2. Reduces stress and anxiety.
3. Reduces depression.
4. Reduces pain and dependency on drugs.
5. Reduces addictions.
6. Provides relief from insomnia and improves quality of sleep.
7. Improves clarity of thought and memory.





8. Improves learning capacity and acquisition of new skills.
9. Improves overall health and healing.

I. Tick the correct option.

1. *Yoga-nidra* is performed in-
 - i. *Shavaasana*
 - ii. *Simhasana*
 - iii. *Swastikasana*
 - iv. *Vajrasana*
2. *Yoga-nidra* is a/an
 - i. *Asana*
 - ii. *Pranayama*
 - iii. *Dhayan*
 - iv. *Samadhi*

II. Answer the following questions briefly.

1. What is *yoga-nidra*?

III. Answer the following questions in 150-200 words.

1. Explain the benefits of *yoga-nidra* in detail.
2. What is the procedure to do perfect *yoga-nidra*?

**Weblinks**

Topic	Weblinks	QR Code
Meaning of Yoga	https://www.ananda.org/yogapedia/yoga/	
Importance of Yoga	https://www.oceanicyoga.com/importance-of-yoga-in-our-daily-life/	
Elements of Yoga	https://sportsjone.com/elements-of-yoga/	
Introduction- Asanas	http://www.shreyasretreat.com/yoga-blog/what-is-asana-in-yoga-an-introduction-to-hatha-yoga-posture/	
Introduction- Pranayamas	https://www.verywellfit.com/Pranayama-yoga-breathing-exercises-3566760	
Introduction- Meditation	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meditation	
Introduction- Yogic Kriyas	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kriya_Yoga	
Yoga for concentration & related asana	https://food.ndtv.com/health/yoga-for-concentration-5-asanas-that-simply-do-wonders-1645786	
Relaxation Techniques for improving concentration- Yoga-nidra.	https://www.yogameditation.com/reading-room/relaxation-in-yoga-yoga-nidra/	