



Government of India

21<sup>st</sup> JUNE

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF

YOGA

COMMON YOGA PROTOCOL



Yoga for Harmony & Peace

**Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy,  
Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH)**



Government of India

21<sup>st</sup> June

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**Common Yoga Protocol**



**Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy,  
Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH)**

*This booklet has been prepared in consultation with leading Yoga experts and heads of the eminent Yoga Institutions of India and edited by Dr. Ishwar V. Basavaraddi, Director, Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India.*

**4<sup>th</sup> Edition, May 2018**

**Publisher**

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Ministry of AYUSH, Govt. of India

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The information provided in this Yoga protocol is intended to create general awareness among people and community to get harmony & peace through Yoga. The information, techniques and suggestions mentioned in this yoga protocol are not a substitute for the medical advice of physician. In a particular case that you may require diagnosis or medical attention, consult your health care provider before practicing Yoga. The publisher does not assume any responsibility or liability for any injury or loss that may result from practicing Yoga.

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सत्यमेव जयते  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



**Shri Narendra Modi**  
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

## Message

Greetings to Yoga lovers all over the world. Yoga is one of the most precious gifts given by the ancient Indian sages to humankind. It is said in the Bhagavad Gita, “समत्वं योग उच्यते”. It means “Yoga is a state of equilibrium and equanimity”.

Yoga is not just a set of exercises that keeps the body fit. It is a passport to health assurance, a key to fitness and wellness. Yoga is not only what we practice in the morning. Doing our day-to-day activities with diligence and complete awareness is Yoga as well! **Free from illness, a path to wellness-that is the path of Yoga.**

Because it teaches us to see others the same as ourselves, Yoga makes us better individuals in thought, action, knowledge and devotion. Yoga achieves **oneness through oneness**. It brings about oneness among the mind, body and intellect. We begin to understand ourselves much better, which also makes us understand others better.

When we understand ourselves, we become ready to form a constructive bond with the society at large. A bond of oneness with our families, with the society we live in, with fellow humans, with all the birds, animals and trees with whom we share our beautiful planet. Thus, **Yoga is the journey from 'me' to 'we'**. The

problems of modern lifestyles are well known. We have found ways to control communicable diseases, but the focus is now shifting to dealing with non-communicable, lifestyle diseases. People suffer from stress related ailments and also lifestyle related diseases like diabetes and hyper-tension. **Stress and Depression have become silent killers. Yoga offers a solution to these ailments.** Practicing Yoga helps fight stress and find peace. If the body is a temple of the mind, Yoga creates a beautiful temple.

Yoga is ideal for relaxation. Many times when you are tired, a cool shower refreshes you. In the same way, practicing Yoga will truly relax the mind and body. Yoga goes beyond boundaries of age, gender, caste, creed, religion and nations. Yoga doesn't discriminate between anybody. All you need is willingness to practice it.

In a world of excess, Yoga promises restraint and balance.

In a world suffering from mental stress, Yoga promises calm.

In a distracted world, Yoga helps focus, boosts concentration.

In a world of fear, Yoga promises hope, strength and courage.

Yoga gives peace of mind. People who are at peace with themselves are at peace with others too. Such people build harmonious nations. Such nations build a harmonious world. I am happy that the popularity of Yoga is on the rise globally. With more people embracing Yoga, the demand for Yoga teachers is also rising. Our next challenge is to produce institutionally trained Yoga teachers who can ignite this flame further, especially among the youth.

I wish you all Happy Yoga practicing!



(Narendra Modi)

New Delhi

29 May, 2018



श्रीपाद नाईक  
SHRIPAD NAIK

## Common Yoga Protocol

राज्य मंत्री (स्वतंत्र प्रभार)  
आयुर्वेद, योग व प्राकृतिक चिकित्सा,  
यूनानी, सिद्ध एवं होम्योपैथी (आयुष) मंत्रालय  
भारत सरकार

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR  
AYURVEDA, YOGA & NATUROPATHY  
UNANI, SIDDHA AND HOMOEOPATHY (AYUSH)  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



### Message

I am pleased to present the booklet "Common Yoga Protocol" for International Day of Yoga celebration prepared by the committee of Yoga experts and heads of the eminent Yoga Institutions of India under the Chairmanship of Dr. H.R. Nagendra, Chancellor, S-VYASA University, Bangalore and edited by Dr. I V Basavaraddi, Director, Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY). The booklet underlines useful Yogic practices for healthy living.

Yoga is a philosophy for achieving purest form of self-awareness, devoid of all thoughts and sensations. Our ancient Yoga masters teach us an art of living, a life for blissful experiences of even flow of happiness by removal of miseries of our life.

Yoga is essentially spiritual, its efficacy in the management and prevention of diseases and the promotional aspects have been very well established since time immemorial. Recent researches have shown effectiveness of Yoga in the management of many psychosomatic disorders which have increased during the past few decades. Thus, Yoga is emerging as one of the cost effective and economic health care option in India and abroad.

The Ministry of AYUSH has been organizing International Day of Yoga (IDY) successfully, which has found great enthusiasm and got worldwide support.

It is one of the noble initiatives taken by the Government of India under the dynamic leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji.

I thank and congratulate the Yoga experts and Heads of the eminent Yoga Institutions of India who have contributed in preparing this booklet. I hope the booklet will be useful for the practitioners.

I wish the International Day of Yoga all the success.

(Shripad Naik)

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## COMMON YOGA PROTOCOL

### INTRODUCTION

While addressing the 69<sup>th</sup> session of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on September 27, 2014, the Honorable Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi urged the world community to adopt an International Day of Yoga.

"Yoga is an invaluable gift of ancient Indian tradition. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfillment; harmony between man and nature and a holistic approach to health and well-being. Yoga is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness with ourselves, the world and Nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help us to deal with climate change. Let us work towards adopting an International Yoga Day," Shri Modi said.

On December 11, 2014, the 193 member UNGA approved the proposal by consensus with a record 177 co-sponsoring countries a resolution to establish 21 June as "International Day of Yoga". In its resolution, the UNGA recognised that Yoga provides a holistic approach to health and well-being and wider dissemination of information about the benefits of practicing Yoga for the health of the world population. Yoga also brings harmony in all walks of life and thus, is known for disease prevention, health promotion and management of many lifestyle-related disorders.

### First International Day of Yoga

The Ministry of AYUSH successfully organised 1<sup>st</sup> International Day of Yoga (IDY) on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2015 at Rajpath, New Delhi. Two Guinness World Records were made viz. the Largest Yoga Lesson involving 35, 985 participants and maximum number of Nationalities (84) participated in a single Yoga lesson. Two days International Conference on "Yoga for Holistic Health" was organised on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2015 at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi wherein about 1300 delegates from India and abroad were





Millions of people in India and across the globe participated in the first ever International Day of Yoga celebrations.

Common Yoga Protocol and Yoga DVDs were prepared to disseminate awareness of Yoga among the masses. Outside India, IDY was celebrated in all the UNGA member countries except war torn-Yemen, by the missions, Ministry of External Affairs in association with Ministry of AYUSH and various Yoga institutions and organisations.



## Second International Day of Yoga

The Ministry of AYUSH in association with leading Yoga Institutions, Centre and State Governments, State Departments and Chandigarh Administration successfully organised 2<sup>nd</sup> International Day of Yoga (IDY) on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2016 at the Capitol Complex, Chandigarh. More than over 30,000 people joined our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji for the Second International Day of Yoga celebrations where he pitched for treating diseases like diabetes through the ancient spiritual discipline Yoga. For the first time in International Day of Yoga, 150 Divyangs performed Yoga Protocol during the International Day of Yoga celebrations at the Capitol Complex, Chandigarh. Two days International Conference on "Yoga for Body and Beyond" was organised on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2016 at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.

As many as 192 United Nation Member States has participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Day of Yoga.



## Third International Day of Yoga

The Ministry of AYUSH in association with State Government of Uttar Pradesh successfully organised 3<sup>rd</sup> International Day of Yoga (IDY) on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2017 at Ramabai Ambedkar Maidan, Lucknow. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi Ji inaugurated the event where 51000 participants practiced Common Yoga Protocol along with him. The Hon'ble Prime Minister addressed the gathering and emphasised on the fact that Yoga has become a crucial



factor in binding the world since it is a part of everyone's lifestyle. He said that Yoga is about health insurance. It is not even expensive to practice. The event was also graced by Shri Ram Naik, Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh (U.P.); Shri Yogi Adityanath, Hon'ble Chief Minister of U.P. and many other dignitaries. Two days International Conference on "Yoga for Wellness" was organized from 10-11 October, 2017 at Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi.

Millions of people in India and across the globe participated in the third International Day of Yoga celebrations.



This booklet intends to give a brief overview about Yoga and Yogic practices to orient one towards comprehensive health and wellness for an individual and the community. Apart from 45 minutes common Yoga Protocol, a provision has been made for leading Yoga institutions to incorporate 15 minutes Institutional Yogic practices e.g. Prāṇāyāma, Yoga Nidrā, Dhyāna, Satsaṅg, etc. before Saṅkalpa as deemed fit.

Today, as the importance of Yoga in every aspects of life is realized, more students and practitioners of Yoga are looking for deeper understanding and philosophical bases of Yoga and its practices. Common Yoga Protocol is an humble effort to show how can Yoga influence our life, attitudes and well-being. This invariably leads us to the very heart and soul of Yoga.

## What is Yoga?

Yoga is essentially a spiritual discipline based on an extremely subtle science which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. It is an art and science for healthy living. The word "Yoga" is derived from the Sanskrit root **'yuj'** meaning "to join", "to yoke" or "to unite". According to Yogic scriptures, the practice of Yoga leads to the union of an individual consciousness with the universal consciousness. According to modern scientists, everything in the universe is just a manifestation of the same quantum firmament. One who experiences this oneness of existence is said to be "in Yoga" and is termed as a yogi who has attained a state of freedom, referred to as *mukti, nirvāna, kaivalya or mokṣa*.

"Yoga" also refers to an inner science comprising of a variety of methods through which human beings can achieve union between the body and mind to attain self-realisation. The aim of Yoga practice (*sādhana*) is to overcome all kinds of sufferings that lead to a sense of freedom in every walk of life with holistic health, happiness and harmony.

## Brief history and development of Yoga

The science of Yoga has its origin thousands of years ago, long before the first religion or belief systems were born. The seers and sages carried this powerful Yogic science to different parts of the world including Asia, the Middle East, northern Africa and South America. Interestingly, modern scholars have noted and marvelled at the close parallels found between ancient cultures across the globe. However, it was in India that the Yogic system found its fullest expression. Agastya, the saptarishi, who travelled across the Indian subcontinent, crafted this culture around a core Yogic way of life.

Yoga is widely considered as an "immortal cultural outcome" of

the Indus Saraswati Valley Civilisation - dating back to 2700 BC - and has proven itself to cater to both material and spiritual upliftment of humanity. A number of seals and fossil remains of Indus Saraswati Valley Civilisation with Yogic motifs and figures performing *Yoga sādhana* suggest the presence of Yoga in ancient India. The seals and idols of mother Goddess are suggestive of *Tantra* Yoga. The presence of Yoga is also available in folk traditions, Vedic and Upanishadic heritage, Buddhist and Jain traditions, *Darshanas*, epics of *Mahabharata* including *Bhagawadgita* and *Ramayana*, theistic traditions of *Shaivas*, *Vaishnavas* and *Tantric* traditions. Though Yoga was being practiced in the pre-Vedic period, the great sage Maharishi Patanjali systematised and codified the then existing Yogic practices, its meaning and its related knowledge through Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*.

After Patanjali, many sages and Yoga masters contributed greatly for the preservation and development of the field through well documented practices and literature. Yoga has spread all over the world by the teachings of eminent Yoga masters from ancient times to the present date. Today, everybody has conviction about Yoga practices towards prevention of diseases, and promotion of health. Millions of people across the globe have benefitted by the practice of Yoga and the practice of Yoga is blossoming and growing more vibrant with each passing day.

### The Fundamentals of Yoga

Yoga works on the level of one's body, mind, emotion and energy. This has given rise to four broad classifications of Yoga: *Karma Yoga* where we utilise the body; *Jñāna Yoga* where we utilise the lighter mind; *Bhakti Yoga* where we utilise the emotion and *Kriyā Yoga* where we utilise the energy. Each system of Yoga we practice falls within the gamut of one or more of these categories.

Every individual is a unique combination of these four factors. Only a *Guru* (teacher) can advocate the appropriate combination of the four fundamental paths as it is necessary for each seeker. All ancient commentaries on Yoga have stressed that it is essential to work under the direction of a *Guru*.

### **Traditional schools of Yoga**

The different philosophies, traditions, lineages and *Guru-shishya paramparas* of Yoga led to the emergence of different traditional schools. These include *Jñāna Yoga*, *Bhakti Yoga*, *Karma Yoga*, *Pātañjala Yoga*, *Kuṇḍalini Yoga*, *Haṭha Yoga*, *Dhyāna Yoga*, *Mantra Yoga*, *Laya Yoga*, *Rāja Yoga*, *Jain Yoga*, *Bouddha Yoga* etc. Each school has its own approach and practices that lead to the ultimate aim and objectives of Yoga.

### **Yogic practices for health and wellness**

The widely practiced Yoga sadhanas are: *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Pratyāhāra*, *Dhāraṇā*, *Dhyāna*, *Samādhi*, *Bandhās* and *Mudrās*, *Ṣaṭkarmas*, *Yuktāhāra*, *Mantra-japa*, *Yukta-karma* etc.

*Yamas* are restraints and *Niyamas* are observances. These are considered to be pre-requisites for further Yoga practice. *Āsanās*, capable of bringing about stability of body and mind, "*kuryat-tadāsanam- sthairyam*", involve adopting various psycho-physical body patterns and giving one an ability to maintain a body position (a stable awareness of one's structural existence) for a considerable length of time.

*Prāṇāyāma* consists of developing awareness of one's breathing followed by willful regulation of respiration as the functional or vital basis of one's existence. It helps in developing awareness of one's mind and helps to establish control over the mind. In the initial stages, this is done by developing awareness of the "flow of

in-breath and out-breath" (*śvāsa-praśvāsa*) through nostrils, mouth and other body openings, its internal and external pathways and destinations. Later, this phenomenon is modified, through regulated, controlled and monitored inhalation (*śvāsa*) leading to the awareness of the body space getting filled (*pūraka*), the space(s) remaining in a filled state (*kumbhaka*), and it getting emptied (*recaka*) during regulated, controlled and monitored exhalation(*praśvāsa*).

*Pratyāhāra* indicates dissociation of one's consciousness (withdrawal) from the sense organs which connect with the external objects. *Dhāranā* indicates broad based field of attention (inside the body and mind) which is usually understood as concentration. *Dhyāna* (meditation) is contemplation (focused attention inside the body and mind) and *Samādhi* (being constant).

*Bandhas* and *Mūdras* are practices associated with *Prāṇāyāma*. They are viewed as the higher yogic practices that mainly adopt certain physical gestures along with control over respiration. This further facilitates control over mind and paves the way for a higher Yogic attainment. However, practice of *dhyāna*, which moves one towards self-realisation and leads one to transcendence, is considered the essence of *Yoga Sādhana*.

*Ṣaṭkarmas* are detoxification procedures that are clinical in nature and help to remove the toxins accumulated in the body. *Yuktāhāra* advocates appropriate food and food habits for healthy living.

*Mantra Japa*: Japa is the meditative repetitions of a mantra or a divine consciousness. Mantra Japa produce positive mental tracts, helping us to gradually overcome stress.

*Yukta-karma* advocates right karmas or actions for a healthy living.

## General Guidelines for Yoga Practice

Yoga practitioner should follow the guiding principles given below while performing Yogic practices:

### BEFORE THE PRACTICE:

- *Śauca* means cleanliness - an important prerequisite for Yoga practice. It includes cleanliness of surroundings, body and mind.
- Yoga practice should be performed in a calm and quiet atmosphere with a relaxed body and mind.
- Yoga practice should be done on an empty stomach or light stomach. Consume small amount of honey in lukewarm water if you feel weak.
- Bladder and bowels should be empty before starting Yogic practices.
- A mattress, Yoga mat, *durrie* or folded blanket should be used for the practice.
- Light and comfortable cotton clothes are preferred to facilitate easy movement of the body.
- Yoga should not be performed in a state of exhaustion, illness, in a hurry or in an acute stress conditions.
- In case of chronic disease/ pain/ cardiac problems, a physician or a Yoga therapist should be consulted prior to performing Yogic practices.
- Yoga experts should be consulted before doing Yogic practices during pregnancy and menstruation.

### DURING THE PRACTICE:

- Practice sessions should start with a prayer or an invocation as it creates a conducive environment to relax the mind.
- Yogic practices shall be performed slowly, in a relaxed manner, with awareness of the body and breath.
- Do not hold the breath unless it is specially mentioned to do so during the practice.
- Breathing should be always through the nostrils unless instructed otherwise.
- Do not hold the body tight or give undue jerks to the body.



## Common Yoga Protocol

- Perform the practices according to one's capacity. It takes some time to get good results, so persistent and regular practice is very essential.
- There are contra-indications/ limitations for each Yoga practice and such contra-indications should always be kept in mind.
- Yoga session should end with meditation/ deep silence / Sankalpa / *Śānti pāṭha* etc.

### AFTER PRACTICE:

- Bath may be taken only after 20-30 minutes of Yoga practice.
- Food may be consumed only after 20-30 minutes of Yoga practice.

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A few dietary guidelines can ensure that the body and mind are flexible and well-prepared for Yoga practice. A vegetarian diet is usually recommended, and for a person over 30 years, two meals a day should suffice, except in cases of illness or very high physical activity or labour.

### HOW YOGA CAN HELP

Yoga is essentially a path to get liberated from all the bondages. However, medical research in recent years has uncovered many physical and mental benefits that Yoga offers, corroborating the experiences of millions of practitioners. A small sampling of research shows that:

- Yoga is beneficial for physical fitness, musculoskeletal functioning and cardio-vascular health.
  - It is beneficial in the management of diabetes, respiratory disorders, hypertension, hypotension and many lifestyle related disorders.
  - Yoga helps to reduce depression, fatigue, anxiety disorders and stress.
  - Yoga helps to regulate menstrual and menopausal symptoms.
- In essence, Yoga is a process of creating body and mind that are stepping-stones, not hurdles, to an exuberant and fulfilling life.

## 1. PRAYER

Yogic Practice shall start with a prayer or prayerful mood to enhance the benefits of practice.

- ॐ संगच्छध्वं संवदध्वं  
सं वो मनांसि जानताम्  
देवा भागं यथा पूर्वे  
सञ्जानाना उपासते ।।
- ॐ Saṃgacchadhvaṃ saṃvadadhvaṃ  
saṃ vo manāṃsi jānatām  
devā bhāgaṃ yathā pūrve  
sañjānānā upāsate ||



May you move in harmony; may you speak in unison; let our mind be equanimous like in the beginning; let the divinity manifest in your sacred endeavours.

## 2. SADILAJA/CĀLANA KRIYĀS /LOOSENING PRACTICES

The Cālana Kriyās/loosening practices/Yogic Sūkṣma Vyāyāmas help to increase microcirculation. These practices can be done while standing and sitting.

### I. NECK BENDING (Grivā Śakti Vikāsaka)

**Sthiti:** Samasthiti (Alert Posture)

#### Technique

**Stage i: (Forward and Backward Bending)**

- ◆ Stand with the feet 2-3 inches apart.
- ◆ Keep the hands straight beside the body.
- ◆ This is **Samasthiti**. This is also called **Tāḍāsana**.
- ◆ Keep your arms on the waist.
- ◆ While exhaling, move the head forward slowly and try to touch the chin to the chest.
- ◆ While inhaling, move the head up and bend back comfortably.
- ◆ This is one round: repeat 2 more rounds.





**Stage - ii : (Right and Left bending)**

- ◆ While exhaling, bend the head slowly to the right; bring the ear as close as possible to the shoulder without raising the shoulder.
- ◆ While inhaling, bring the head to the normal position.
- ◆ Similarly, while exhaling bend the head to the left side.
- ◆ Inhale and bring the head up to normal position.
- ◆ This is one round: repeat 2 more rounds.



**Stage - iii : (Right and Left Twisting)**

- ◆ Keep the head upright.
- ◆ While exhaling, gently turn the head to the right so that the chin is in line with the shoulder.
- ◆ While inhaling, bring the head to the normal position.
- ◆ Similarly, while exhaling, turn the head to the left.
- ◆ Inhale and bring the head to the normal position.
- ◆ This is one round: repeat 2 more rounds.



**Stage iv: Neck Rotation**

- ◆ Exhale; bend the head forward to touch the chin to the chest.
- ◆ Inhale; slowly rotate the head clockwise in a circular motion, exhale while coming down
- ◆ Do a full rotation.
- ◆ Then rotate the head in an anti-clockwise direction.
- ◆ Inhale; go back and exhale, come down.
- ◆ This is one round: repeat 2 more rounds.



**Note:**

- ◆ Move the head as far as possible. Do not over strain.
- ◆ Keep the shoulders relaxed and steady.
- ◆ Feel the stretch around the neck and loosening up of the joints and muscles of the neck.

- ◆ Can also be practiced sitting on a chair.
- ◆ People with neck pain can do the practice gently especially when taking the head back to the extent it is comfortable.
- ◆ Elderly people and persons with chronic cervical spondylitis may avoid these practices.

## II. SHOULDER'S MOVEMENT

**Sthiti:** Samasthiti (Alert Posture)

### Stage i: (Shoulder's Stretch)

**Technique:**

- ◆ Keep the feet together, the body straight and the arms by the sides.
- ◆ While inhaling; raise your both arms sideways above your head with the palm outward.
- ◆ Exhale and bring it down in the same manner.
- ◆ Palms must be opened, with fingers together.



### Stage ii: Skandha Cakra (shoulder Rotation)

- ◆ Stand erect.
- ◆ Place the fingers of left hand on the left shoulder and the fingers of right hand on the right shoulder.
- ◆ Full rotation of the both elbows in a circular manner.
- ◆ Inhale and raise your elbows & bring them back when you exhale.
- ◆ Try to touch the elbows in front of the chest on the forward movement, stretch the elbows back in the backward movement and touch the side of the trunk while coming down.
- ◆ Repeat this 2 times rotating from front to back.
- ◆ Do the same in reverse manner. Inhale while raising the elbows & exhale while bringing them down.



**Benefits:**

- ◆ Practice of this Yogic kriyā makes the bones, muscles and nerves of the neck and shoulder healthy.
- ◆ These practices are helpful in cervical spondylosis and frozen shoulder.

**III. TRUNK MOVEMENT (Kaṭīśakti Vikāśaka)**

**Sthiti:** *Samasthiti* (Alert Posture)

**Technique**

- ◆ Keep the legs about 2-3 feet apart.
- ◆ Raise both the arms up to shoulder level with palms facing each other and keep them parallel.
- ◆ While exhaling, twist the body towards the left side so that the right palm touches the left shoulder, come back with inhalation.
- ◆ While exhaling, twist the body towards the right side so that the left palm touches the right shoulder, come back with inhalation.
- ◆ This is one round: repeat it two more times.
- ◆ Relax in *Samasthiti*.



**Note:**

- ◆ Do it slowly with coordination of breathing.
- ◆ Cardiac patients shall do with care.
- ◆ Avoid this practice in case of severe back pain, vertebral and intervertebral disc disorders and during menstruation.

**IV. KNEE MOVEMENT**

**Sthiti:** *Samasthiti* (Alert Posture)

**Technique**

- ◆ Inhale; lift your arms up to the shoulder level, palms facing downwards.
- ◆ Exhale; bend the knees and bring down the body to the semi squatting position.
- ◆ In the final position, both the arms and thighs should be parallel to the ground.
- ◆ Inhale; and straighten the body.
- ◆ Exhale while bringing down the hands.
- ◆ Repeat it two more times.



**Note:**

- ◆ Helps to strengthen knees and hip joints.
- ◆ Avoid this asana in case of acute conditions of arthritis.

### 3. YOGĀSANAS

#### A. STANDING POSTURES

##### TĀḌĀSANA (Palm Tree Posture)

*Tāḍa* means palm tree or mountain. This asana teaches one to attain stability and firmness and forms the base for all the standing asana.

##### Technique

- ◆ Stand with feet 2 inches apart.
- ◆ Interlock the fingers, and turn the wrist outwards. Now inhale, raise the arms up above your head.
- ◆ Raise the heels off the floor and balance on the toes as you raise your arms. Stay in this position for 10-30 seconds.
- ◆ Bring the heels down.
- ◆ Exhale, release the interlock of the fingers and bring the arms down and come back to standing posture.



##### Benefits

- ◆ This *āsana* brings stability in the body, helps to clear up congestion of the spinal nerves and corrects faulty posture.
- ◆ Helps to increase height up to a certain age.

##### A word of caution

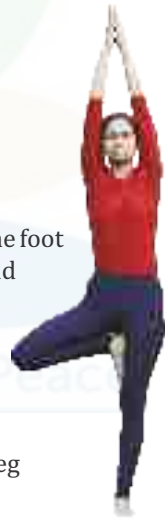
- ◆ Avoid lifting the heels in case of acute cardiac problems, varicose veins and vertigo.

##### VRKṢĀSANA (The Tree Posture)

*Vṛkṣa* means tree. The final position of this *āsana* resembles the shape of a tree, hence the name.

##### Technique

- ◆ Stand with feet 2 inches apart.
- ◆ Focus on a point in front.
- ◆ Exhale, hold and bend the right leg then place the foot on the inner side of the left thigh. The heel should be touching the perineum region.
- ◆ Inhale and extend the arms up and join the palms together for Namaskar Mudra.
- ◆ Stay in the position for 10 to 30 seconds and breathe normally.
- ◆ Exhale bring the arms down. Release the right leg and bring it to initial position.
- ◆ Repeat this *āsana* from the left side also.



### Benefits

- ◆ Helps to improve neuro-muscular coordination, balance, endurance, alertness and concentration.
- ◆ It tones up the leg muscles and rejuvenates the ligaments.

### A word of caution

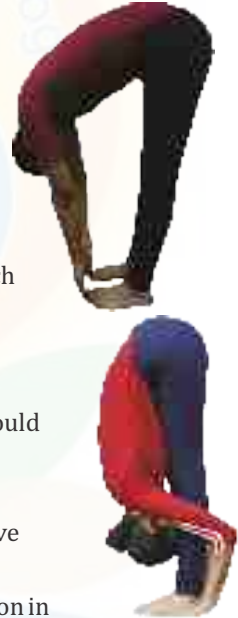
- ◆ Please avoid this practice in case of arthritis, vertigo and obesity.

### PĀDA-HASTĀSANA (The Hands to Feet Posture)

*Pāda* means feet, *hasta* means hands. Therefore, *Pāda Hastāsana* means keeping the palms down towards the feet. This is also referred as *Uttānāsana*.

### Technique

- ◆ Stand straight with feet 2 inches apart.
- ◆ Inhale slowly and raise the arms up.
- ◆ Stretch up the body from the waist.
- ◆ Exhale and bend forward until both palms rest on the ground.
- ◆ Stretch the back, to make it straight as much as possible.
- ◆ Maintain this final posture for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- ◆ Those who are suffering with stiff back should bend according to their capacity.
- ◆ Now inhale, come up slowly to the upright position and stretch the arms straight above the head.
- ◆ Exhale, slowly return to the starting position in the reverse order.
- ◆ Relax in *Samasthiti*.



### Benefits

- ◆ Makes the spine flexible, improves digestion, prevents constipation and menstrual problems.

### A word of caution

- ◆ Please avoid this practice in case of cardiac disorders, vertebral and disc disorders, abdominal inflammation, hernia and ulcers, glaucoma, myopia, vertigo and during pregnancy.

## ARDHA CAKRĀSANA (The Half Wheel Posture)

*Ardha* means half. *Cakra* means wheel. In this posture, as the body takes the shape of a half wheel, hence it is called *Ardha Cakrāsana*.

### Technique

- ◆ Support the back at the sides of the waist with the fingers.
- ◆ Try to keep the elbows parallel.
- ◆ Drop the head backwards stretching the neck muscles.
- ◆ As you inhale, bend backwards from the lumbar region; exhale and relax.
- ◆ Stay here for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- ◆ Inhale and slowly come up.



### Benefits

- ◆ Ardha Cakrāsana makes the spine flexible and strengthens the spinal nerves.
- ◆ Strengthens the spinal muscles, and improves breathing capacity.
- ◆ Helps in cervical spondylosis.

### A word of caution

- ◆ Avoid this posture in case of vertigo or a tendency to giddiness.
- ◆ Hypertensive patients should bend with care.

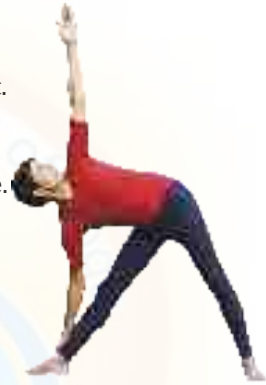


## TRIKOṆĀSANA (The Triangle Posture)

*Trikoṇā* means triangle. *Tri* means three and *koṇa* means an angle. As the āsana resembles the triangle made by the trunk, arms and legs, hence the name *Trikoṇāsana*.

### Technique

- ◆ Stand with your feet with 3 feet apart.
- ◆ Inhale slowly raise both the arms sideways upto shoulder level.
- ◆ Turn the right foot towards right side.
- ◆ Exhale, slowly bend to the right side and place the right hand just behind the right foot.
- ◆ The left arm straight in line the right arm.
- ◆ Turn the left palm forward.
- ◆ Turn your head and gaze at the tip of the left middle finger.
- ◆ Remain in the posture for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- ◆ Inhale, slowly come up.
- ◆ Repeat the same procedure from the left side.



### Benefits

- ◆ Prevents flat foot.
- ◆ Strengthens calf, thigh and waist muscles.
- ◆ Makes the spine flexible, improves lungs capacity.
- ◆ Found beneficial in the management of lumber spondylosis.

### A word of caution

- ◆ Avoid this posture in case of slipped disc, sciatica, and after undergoing abdominal surgery.
- ◆ Do not try beyond limits and over do the lateral stretch.
- ◆ If one cannot touch the feet, one can reach for the knees instead.

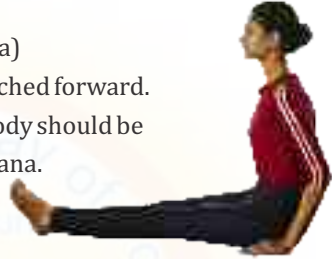
## B. SITTING POSTURES

### BHADRĀSANA (The Firm/Auspicious Posture)

*Bhadra* means firm or auspicious.

**Sthiti:** Long sitting posture (Viśrāmāsana)

- ◆ Sit erect with both the legs stretched forward.
- ◆ Support the back with hands. Body should be relaxed totally. This is Viśrāmāsana.



#### Technique

- ◆ Sit erect with the legs stretched out straight in the front.
- ◆ Keep the hands beside the hips and palms resting on the floor.

This is **Daṇḍāsana**.

- ◆ Now put the soles of your feet together.
- ◆ Exhale and clasp your hands together over your toes. Inhale, pull your heels as close as possible up to perineum region. If your thighs are not touching or are not close to the floor, place a soft cushion underneath the knees for support.
- ◆ This is the final position.
- ◆ Stay in this position for sometime with normal breathing.



#### Benefits

- ◆ Helps to keep the body firm and stabilize the mind.
- ◆ Keep the knees and hip joints healthy.
- ◆ Beneficial for pregnant woman.
- ◆ Acts on the abdominal organs and releases any tension in the abdomen.
- ◆ Benefits women by relieving abdominal pain often experienced during menstruation.

#### A word of caution

- ◆ Avoid this practice in case of severe arthritis and sciatica.



## VAJRĀSANA (Thunderbolt Posture)

This is considered as one of the meditative posture. While practicing it for meditative purposes, one should close his/her eyes at the final stage. Ardha Uṣṭrāsana

**Sthiti:** Daṇḍāsana.

### Technique

- ◆ Sit with extended legs together, hands by the side of the body, palm resting on the ground, fingers pointing forward.
- ◆ Fold the right leg at the knee and place the foot under the right buttock.
- ◆ Similarly folding the left leg, place left foot under the left buttock.
- ◆ Place both the heels so that the big toes touch each other.
- ◆ Position of the buttocks is in the space between the heels.
- ◆ Keep both hands on respective knees.
- ◆ Keep the spine erect, gaze in front or close the eyes.
- ◆ While returning to the original position, bend a little towards right side, take out your left leg and extend it.
- ◆ Similarly extend your right leg and return to the original position.
- ◆ Relax in Viśrāmāsana.



### Benefits

- ◆ This āsana strengthens thigh muscles and calf muscles.
- ◆ This āsana is good for digestion.
- ◆ It provides firm base to the body and helps to keep the spine healthy.

### A word of caution

- ◆ Persons suffering from piles should not practise this āsana.
- ◆ Those who are suffering from knee pain and ankle injury should avoid this practice.

## ARDHA UṢṬRĀSANA (The Half Camel Posture)

**Sthiti:** Long sitting posture (Viśrāmāsana)

Uṣṭrā means camel. The final version of this āsana resembles the hump of a camel. In this version, only the first stage (half) of the āsana is being practiced.

### Technique

- ◆ Sit in Viśrāmāsana.
- ◆ Come to Daṇḍāsana.
- ◆ Fold your legs and sit in Vajrāsana.
- ◆ Stand on your knees.
- ◆ Place the hands on the hips with fingers pointing downwards.
- ◆ Keep the elbows and shoulders parallel.
- ◆ Bend the head back and stretch the neck muscles; inhale and bend the trunk backwards as much as possible. Now exhale and relax.
- ◆ Keep the thighs perpendicular to the ground.
- ◆ Remain in the posture for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- ◆ Return with inhalation; sit in Vajrāsana.
- ◆ Relax in Viśrāmāsana.



### Benefits

- ◆ It helps to strengthen back and neck muscles.
- ◆ Relieves constipation and back pain.
- ◆ Increases blood circulation to the head and cardiac region.
- ◆ Very useful practice for cardiac patient, but needs to be practiced with caution.

### A word of caution

- ◆ In case of hernia and abdominal injuries, arthritis and vertigo please avoid doing this āsana.

## UᅒTRĀSANA (Camel Posture)

*Uᅒtra* means camel. The body in this pose resembles a camel, hence the name.

**Sthiti:** Vajrāsana

### Technique

- ◆ Sit in Vajrāsana.
- ◆ Bring the knees and the feet about few inches apart and stand on your knees.
- ◆ While inhaling bend backward place the right palm on right heel and left palm on left heel and exhale.
- ◆ Be careful not to jerk the neck while bending backward.
- ◆ In final position, thighs will be vertical to the floor and head tilted backwards.
- ◆ Weight of the body should be evenly distributed on the arms and legs.
- ◆ Remain in the posture for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- ◆ Return with inhalation; sit in Vajrāsana.
- ◆ Relax in Viśrāmāsana.



### Benefits

- ◆ *Uᅒtrāsana* is extremely useful for defective eyesight.
- ◆ This is useful in relieving back and neck pain.
- ◆ It helps to reduce fat over the abdomen and hips.
- ◆ It is helpful in digestive problems and cardio-respiratory disorders.

### A word of caution

- ◆ Those suffering from heart diseases and hernia should not practice it.

## ŚĀŚAKĀSANA (The Hare Posture)

Śāśaka means hare. The body in this pose resembles the hare, hence the name.

**Sthiti:** Daṇḍāsana.

### Technique

- ◆ Sit in Vajrāsana.
- ◆ Spread both the knees wide apart, keep the big toes touching.
- ◆ Keep the palms between the knees.
- ◆ Inhale and raise your arms.
- ◆ Exhale & bend forward with arms outstretched.
- ◆ Bend forward and place the chin on the ground.
- ◆ Keep the arms parallel.
- ◆ Look in front and maintain the posture.
- ◆ Inhale and come up.
- ◆ Exhale, arms down and come back to Vajrāsana.
- ◆ Come to Daṇḍāsana and rest in Viśrāmāsana.



### Benefits

- ◆ It helps to reduce stress and anxiety etc.
- ◆ It tones up reproductive organs, relieves constipation, improves digestion and helps to relieve back pain.

### A word of caution

- ◆ Please avoid this posture in case of acute backache.
- ◆ Patients with osteoarthritis of the knees should avoid Vajrāsana.

## UTTĀNA MANDŪKĀSANA (Stretched up-frog posture)

*Uttāna* means upright and *Maṇḍūka* means frog. The final position of *Uttāna Maṇḍūkasana* resembles an upright frog, hence the name.

**Sthiti:** Daṇḍāsana.

### Technique

- ◆ Sit in Vajrāsana
- ◆ Spread both the knees wide apart while big toes touching each other.
- ◆ Raise your right arm, fold it from elbow and take it backward above the left shoulder and place the palm on the left shoulder blade.
- ◆ Now fold left arm similarly and place the palm on the right shoulder blade.
- ◆ Maintain the position for a while, then come back slowly in the reverse order.
- ◆ Relax in Viśrāmāsana.



### Benefits

- ◆ This āsana is helpful in back and neck pain especially cervical spondylosis.
- ◆ It helps in improving the diaphragmatic movements and also improves lungs capacity.

### A word of caution

- ◆ Person with severe knee joint pain should not perform it.

## VAKRĀSANA (The Spinal Twist Posture)

*Vakra* means twisted. In this *āsana*, the spine is twisted which has a rejuvenating effect on its functioning.

**Sthiti:** Daṇḍāsana

### Technique

- ◆ Bend the right leg and place the right foot beside the left knee.
- ◆ Bring the left arm around the right knee and clasp the right big toe or place the palm beside right foot.
- ◆ Take the right arm back and keep the palm on the ground with the back straight.
- ◆ Exhale, twist your body to the right.
- ◆ Remain in the posture for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing and relax.
- ◆ Inhale take out your hands and exhale to relax.
- ◆ Repeat the same on the other side.

### Benefits

- ◆ Helps to increase flexibility of the spine.
- ◆ Helps to overcome constipation, dyspepsia.
- ◆ Stimulates pancreas functions and helps in the management of diabetes.

### A word of caution

- ◆ Please avoid this posture in case of acute back pain, vertebral and disc disorders, after abdominal surgery and during menstruation.



## C. PRONE POSTURES

### MAKARĀSANA (The Crocodile Posture)

In Sanskrit, *Makara* means crocodile. In this *āsana*, the body resembles the crocodile, hence the name.

**Sthiti:** Prone relaxation posture

#### Technique

- ◆ Lie down on your stomach with feet wide apart, toes pointing outward.
- ◆ Bend both the arms and place the right palm on the left palm.
- ◆ Place the head either left or right on your hands.
- ◆ Keep the eyes closed and relax the whole body. This is Makarāsana.
- ◆ This āsana is practiced for relaxation in all prone postures.



#### Benefits

- ◆ Promotes relaxation of the whole body.
- ◆ Helps in recovery of back problems.
- ◆ Benefit in cardiac rehabilitation.
- ◆ Indicated to counter stress and anxiety.

#### A word of caution

- ◆ Avoid this practice in case of pregnancy and frozen shoulders.

## BHUJAṄGĀSANA (The Cobra Posture)

*Bhujaṅga* means snake or cobra. In this *āsana*, the body is raised like the hood of the snake, hence the name.

**Stithi:** Prone posture or Makarāsana

### Technique

- ◆ Lie down on your stomach, rest your head on your hands and relax the body.
- ◆ Now join your legs and stretch your arms.
- ◆ Keep the forehead on the ground.
- ◆ Now place your hands just beside the body; keep palms and elbows on the ground.
- ◆ As you inhale slowly, lift the head and chest up to navel region without changing in the position of hands.
- ◆ Stay there comfortably.
- ◆ This is called Sarala Bhujaṅgāsana.
- ◆ Now come back and place your forehead on the ground.
- ◆ Keep your palms besides the chest and raise your elbows where they are.
- ◆ Inhale, slowly lift the head and chest up to navel region.
- ◆ Keep the elbows parallel and maintain the posture for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- ◆ This is Bhujaṅgāsana.
- ◆ Exhale, rest your forehead on the ground, come back to Makarāsana and relax.



**Sarala  
Bhujaṅgāsana**



**Bhujaṅgāsana**



**Note:**

- ◆ Keep the legs firm so that no load or strain is felt on the lumbar spine.

**Benefits**

- ◆ This *āsana* is best for stress management.
- ◆ It reduces abdominal fat and alleviates constipation.
- ◆ It also helps to remove backache and bronchial problems.

**A word of caution**

- ◆ Those who have undergone abdominal surgery should avoid this *āsana* for 2-3 months.
- ◆ Those who suffer from hernia, ulcers should not practice this *āsana*.

**ŚALABHĀSANA (The Locust Posture)**

*Śalabha* means a locust.

***Sthiti:*** Prone posture or Makarāsana

**Technique**

- ◆ Lie down on your stomach in *Makarāsana*.
- ◆ Rest the chin on the floor, keep both hands beside the body, palms facing upwards.
- ◆ Inhale, raise the legs off the floor as much as you can without bending the knees.
- ◆ Extend the arms and legs well to ease lifting the body off the floor.
- ◆ Stay in this position for 10-30 seconds breathing normally.
- ◆ Exhale, bring the legs down towards the floor.
- ◆ Rest for a few seconds in *Makarāsana*.



**Note:**

- ◆ Pull up the knee caps and squeeze the buttocks to improve the posture. This *āsana* is more beneficial when performed after *Bhujangāsana*

### Benefits

- ◆ Relieves in sciatica and lower backache.
- ◆ Tones the hip muscles.
- ◆ Helps to reduce fat in the thighs and buttocks, good in weight management.
- ◆ Helps to improve lungs capacity.

### A word of caution

- ◆ Cardiac patients should avoid this posture. Please proceed cautiously in case of severe lower back pain.
- ◆ People with high blood pressure, peptic ulcer and hernia should also avoid this posture.

## D. SUPINE POSTURES

### SETUBANDHĀSANA (The Bridge Posture)

*Setubandha* means formation of bridge. In this posture, the body is positioned like a bridge, hence the name. This is also called as **Catuspādāsana**.

**Sthiti:** Supine lying or Śavāsana.

### Technique

- ◆ Bend both the legs at the knees and bring the heels near the buttocks.
- ◆ While holding both the ankles firmly keep the knees and feet in one straight line.
- ◆ Inhale, slowly raise your buttocks and trunk up as much as you can to form bridge.
- ◆ Remain in this position for 10-30 seconds, with normal breathing.
- ◆ Exhale, slowly return to the original position and relax in Śavāsana.



### Note

- ◆ In the final position, the both shoulders, neck and head remain in contact with the floor.

- ◆ If required, in the final position, you can support your body at the waist with your hands.

### Benefits

- ◆ Relieves depression, anxiety and strengthens lower back muscles.
- ◆ Stretches abdominal organs, improves digestion and helps to relieve constipation.

### A word of caution

- ◆ People suffering from ulcer and hernia etc. should not practice this āsana.

### UTTĀNA PĀDĀSANA (Raised feet posture)

*Uttāna* means raised-upward and *Pāda* means leg. In this *āsana*, the legs are raised upward in supine position, hence the name.

### Technique

- ◆ Lie comfortably on the ground with legs stretched out. Hands should be placed by the sides.
- ◆ While inhaling, slowly raise both the legs without bending them at the knees and bring them to 30° angle with the ground.
- ◆ Maintain the position for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- ◆ Exhale, slowly bring both the legs down and place them on the ground.
- ◆ Relax in Śavāsana.



### Benefits

- ◆ It balances the navel centre (*Nābhi, Maṇipuracakra*).
- ◆ It is helpful in relieving abdominal pain, flatulence, indigestion and diarrhea.
- ◆ It strengthens the abdominal and pelvic floor muscles.
- ◆ It is also effective in overcoming depression and anxiety.
- ◆ Helps to improve digestion and lungs capacity.

### A word of caution

- ◆ People with hypertension and back pain shall practice it with one leg alternatively without holding the breath.

### ARDHA HALĀSANA (Half plough posture)

'Ardha' means half and 'Hala' means plough. This posture is known as *Ardha Halāsana* because in its final position, the body resembles half the shape of an Indian plough.

### Technique

- ◆ Take supine position, keep hands besides the body and palms resting on the ground.
- ◆ Inhale, slowly raise your legs together without bending knees and bring them upto at 90° angle with the ground.
- ◆ The body from hips to shoulder should be kept straight.
- ◆ Maintain this position comfortably for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- ◆ Exhale, slowly bring the legs down to the ground without lifting the head.
- ◆ Relax in Śavāsana.



### Benefits

- ◆ This āsana is beneficial for dyspepsia and constipation.
- ◆ The practice of this āsana is useful in cases of diabetes and piles.
- ◆ This is very beneficial for Hypertensive patients but needs to be practiced under supervision.

### A word of caution

- ◆ Those who have lumbosacral (lower back) pain should not perform with both legs together.
- ◆ Avoid this practice in case of abdominal injuries, hernia etc.

## PAVANA MUKTĀSANA (The Wind Releasing Posture)

*Pavana* means wind and *mukta* means to release or to make free. As the name suggests, this *āsana* is useful in removing wind or flatulence from the stomach and intestines.

**Sthiti:** Śavāsana

### Technique

- ◆ Lie down flat on the back.
- ◆ Bend both the knees.
- ◆ Exhale, bring both the knees towards the chest.
- ◆ Inhale, interlock the fingers and clasp the shin below knees.
- ◆ Exhale, raise the head till your chin touches the knees and relax.
- ◆ This is *Pavanamuktāsana*.
- ◆ Bring the head back to the ground.
- ◆ While exhaling, bring the legs back to the floor.
- ◆ Rest in *Śavāsana*



### Note

- ◆ Synchronise your breathing with the leg movement.
- ◆ While touching the knee with the nose/ forehead, you should be able to feel the lumbar region stretch; keep the eyes closed and focus your attention on the pelvic and lumbar region.

### Benefits

- ◆ Removes constipation; gives relief from flatulence, decreases the bloating sensation in the abdomen and aids digestion.
- ◆ Generates deep internal pressure, improves stretching of the highly complicated network of muscles, ligaments and tendons in the pelvis and waist region.
- ◆ It tones up the back muscles and spinal nerves.

### A word of caution

- ◆ Please avoid this practice in case of abdominal injuries, hernia, sciatica, severe back pain and during pregnancy.

## ŚAVĀSANA (The Corpse/ Dead Body Posture)

*Sava* means dead body. The final position in this *āsana* resembles a corpse/dead body.

**Sthiti:** Supine Relaxation Posture

### Technique

- ◆ Lie down on your back with arms and legs comfortably apart.
- ◆ Palms facing upward, eyes closed.
- ◆ Relax the whole body consciously.
- ◆ Become aware of natural breath and allow it to become slow and shallow.
- ◆ Remain in the position till you feel refresh and relaxed.



### Benefits

- ◆ Helps to relieve all kinds of tensions and gives rest to both body and mind.
- ◆ Relaxes the whole psycho-physiological system.
- ◆ The mind, which is constantly attracted to the outer world, takes a U-turn and moves inwards, thus gradually getting absorbed; as the mind turns quiet and absorbed, the practitioner remains undisturbed by the external environment.
- ◆ It is found very beneficial in the management of stress and its consequences.

## 4. KAPĀLABHĀTĪ

**Sthiti:** Any meditative posture .e.g. *Sukhāsana/Padmāsana/Vajrāsana*

### Technique

- ◆ Sit in any meditative posture.
- ◆ Close your eyes and relax the whole body
- ◆ Inhale deeply through both nostrils, expand the chest.

- ◆ Expel the breath with forceful contractions of the pelvic and abdominal muscles and inhale passively.
- ◆ Do not strain.
- ◆ Continue active/forceful exhalation and passive inhalation.
- ◆ Complete 30 rapid breaths, then then take a deep breath, exhale slowly and relax completely.
- ◆ This is one round of *Kapālabhāti*.
- ◆ Each round shall be followed by being still for a while.
- ◆ Repeat 2 more rounds.



**Breathing:** Forceful exhalation by contracting the abdominal muscles, without any undue movements in the chest and shoulder region. Inhalation should be passive throughout the practice.

**Number of rounds:** Beginners can practice up to 3 rounds of 20 rapid breaths each. The count and rounds can be increased gradually over a period of time.

### Benefits

- ◆ Kapālabhāti purifies the frontal air sinuses; helps to overcome cough disorders.
- ◆ It is useful in treating cold, rhinitis, sinusitis, asthma and bronchial infections.
- ◆ It rejuvenates the whole body, and keeps the face glowing and vibrant.
- ◆ It strengthens the nervous system and tones up the digestive organs.

### A word of caution

- ◆ Please avoid this practice in case of cardiac conditions, giddiness, high blood pressure, vertigo, chronic bleeding in the nose, epilepsy, migraine, stroke, hernia, gastric ulcer, pregnancy and during menstrual cycle.



## 5. PRĀṆĀYĀMA

### NĀDĪŚODHANA or ANULOMA VILOMA PRĀṆĀYĀMA (Alternate Nostril Breathing)

The main characteristic feature of this *prāṇāyāma* is alternate breathing through the left and right nostrils without or with retention of breath (*kumbhaka*).

**Sthiti:** Any meditative posture.

#### Technique

- ◆ Sit in any meditative posture.
- ◆ Keep the spine and head straight with eyes closed.
- ◆ Relax the body with few deep breaths.
- ◆ Keep the left palm on the left knee in Jnāna mudra and the right palm should be in Nāsāgra mudra.
- ◆ Place the ring and small fingers on the left nostril and fold the middle and index finger. Place the right thumb on the right nostril.
- ◆ Open the left nostril, breathe in from the left nostril, close the left nostril with the small and ring fingers and release the thumb from the right nostril; exhale through the right nostril.
- ◆ Next, inhale through the right nostril. At the end of inhalation, close the right nostril, open the left nostril and exhale through it.
- ◆ This completes one round of the Nādiśodhana or Anuloma Viloma *Prāṇāyāma*
- ◆ Repeat for another 4 rounds.



#### Ratio and timing

- ◆ For beginners, the duration of inhalation and exhalation should be equal.
- ◆ Gradually make the ratio 1:2, inhalation: exhalation respectively.

### Breathing

- ◆ Breath should be slow, steady and controlled. It should not be forced or restricted in anyway.

### Benefits

- ◆ The main purpose of this *prāṇāyāma* is to purify the principle channels of carrying energy called nadis, thus it nourishes the whole body.
- ◆ Induces tranquillity and helps to improve concentration.
- ◆ Increases vitality and lowers the level of stress and anxiety.
- ◆ It alleviates cough disorders.

### ŚĪTALĪ PRĀṆĀYĀMA

*Śītalī* means cooling. It also means calm and passionless. As the name indicates this *prāṇāyāma* cools the mind-body. It is specially designed to reduce the body temperature. Practice of this *prāṇāyāma* brings harmony in the body system and calms the mind.

### Technique

- ◆ Sit in Padmāsana or any other comfortable sitting posture.
- ◆ Place the hand on the knees in Jñānamudrā or anjalimudrā.
- ◆ Roll the tongue from the sides to shape it as a tube
- ◆ Inhale through this tube shaped tongue, fill the lungs with air to their maximum capacity, take the tongue inside the mouth and close the mouth.
- ◆ Then slowly exhale through both the nostrils.
- ◆ This is one round of Śītalī *prāṇāyāma*.
- ◆ Repeat it 4 more times.



## Benefits

- ◆ Śītālī prāṇāyāma purifies blood.
- ◆ It has cooling effect on body and mind.
- ◆ It is beneficial for persons suffering from high blood pressure.
- ◆ It satisfies thirst and appeases hunger.
- ◆ It relieves indigestion and disorders caused by bile (pitta)
- ◆ It destroys the disorders of gulma (chronic dyspepsia) and spleen or other related diseases (H.P 2/58).
- ◆ It is beneficial for skin and eyes.

## A word of caution

- ◆ Those who are suffering from severe cold, cough or tonsillitis should not do this Pranayama.

## BHRĀMARĪ PRĀṆĀYĀMA (BHRĀMARĪ RECAKA)

*Bhrāmarī* is derived from *bhramara* which means black bee. During the practice of this *prāṇāyāma*, the sound produced resembles the buzzing of a black bee, hence the name.

**Sthiti:** Any meditative posture.

## Techniques: Type-I

- ◆ Sit in any meditative posture with eyes closed.
- ◆ Inhale deeply through the nose.
- ◆ Exhale slowly in a controlled manner while making a deep, steady humming sound such as that of black bee. This is one round of *Bhrāmarī*.
- ◆ Repeat for 4 more rounds.
- ◆ This is simple version of *Bhrāmarī* Pranayama.



## Type-II

- ◆ Sit in any meditative posture with eyes closed.
- ◆ Inhale deeply through the nose.
- ◆ Close the eyes with index fingers, place the middle finger side of nose, don't close it, mouth with ring and small fingers, ears from respective thumbs as shown in the figure. This is also called Śānmukhi Mudrā.
- ◆ Exhale slowly in a controlled manner while making a deep, steady humming sound such as that of black bee. This is one round of *Bhrāmarī*.
- ◆ Repeat it for 4 more rounds.



## Benefits

- ◆ The practice of *Bhrāmarī* relives stress and helps in alleviating anxiety, anger and hyperactivity.
- ◆ The resonance effect of humming sound creates a soothing effect on the nervous system and mind.
- ◆ It is a great tranquiliser, found good in the management of stress related disorders.
- ◆ It is a useful preparatory prānāyāma for concentration and meditation.

## A word of caution

- ◆ Please avoid this practice in case of nose and ear infections.

## 6. DHYĀNA

*Dhyāna* or meditation is an act of continuous contemplation.

**Sthiti:** Any meditative posture.

## Technique

- ◆ Sit in any meditative posture.
- ◆ Keep your spine comfortably erect.
- ◆ Adopt *Jnāna mudra* or *Dhyana mudra* as in the figure.
- ◆ Touch the tip of the thumb to the tip of the index finger, forming a circle. The other three fingers are straight and relaxed. All three fingers are side-by-side and touching.



- ◆ Keep your palms facing upwards upon the thighs.
- ◆ Arms and shoulders should be loose and relaxed.
- ◆ Close your eyes and sit with a slightly upturned face.
- ◆ You need not concentrate. Just maintain a mild focus between the eyebrows and be conscious of your breath.
- ◆ Dissolve your thoughts and try to attain single and pure thought.
- ◆ Meditate.



#### Note

- ◆ For beginners, soothing music may be played in the background during meditation.
- ◆ Stay as long as you can.

#### Benefits

- ◆ Meditation is the most important component of Yoga practice.
- ◆ It helps the practitioner to eliminate negative emotions like fear, anger, depression, anxiety and to develop positive emotions.
- ◆ Keeps the mind calm and quiet.
- ◆ Increases concentration, memory, clarity of thought and willpower.
- ◆ Rejuvenates the whole body and mind giving them proper rest.
- ◆ Meditation leads to self-realisation.

**7. SANKALPA**

*Hame apne man ko hamesha santulit rakhana hai,  
Isi main hi hamaraa atma vikas samaaya hai.  
Main apne kartavya khud ke prati, kutumb ki prati, kaam,  
samaj aur vishwa ke prati, shanti, anand  
aur swasthya ke prachar ke liye baddh hun*

**SAÑKALPA** (End the Yoga Practice Session with a *Sankalpa*)

*I commit myself to always be in a balanced state of mind. It is in this state that my highest self-development reaches its greatest possibility. I commit to do my duty to self, family, at work, to society, and to the world, for the promotion of peace, health and harmony.*

**8. Śāntih Pātha**

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः, सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु, मा कश्चिद्दुःखभागभवेत् ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

ॐ *Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinaḥ,  
Sarve Santu Nirāmayāḥ  
Sarve Bhadrāṇi Paśyantu,  
Mā kaścit Duḥkha Bhāgbhavet*

ॐ *Śāntiḥ Śāntiḥ Śāntiḥ*

सब सुखी हो, सब निरोग हो ।

सब निरामय हो, सबका मंगल हो,

कोई दुखी: न हो ।

*May All become Happy, May All be Free from Illness.*

*May All See what is Auspicious, May no one Suffer.*

*Om Peace, Peace, Peace.*

**Note:** INSTITUTIONAL YOGA PRACTICES (IYP) 15 Minutes

(Preferably Prāṇāyāma, Dhyāna, Yoga Nidrā and Satsaṅga etc.)  
Shall be introduced after the practice of Prāṇāyāma or Dhyāna /  
Meditation Session but before the Sañkalpa

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## Textual References

1. **Prayer:** Ṛgveda-10.191.2
2. **Sadilaja/Cālanakriyā/Yogic Sūkṣma Vyāyāma:** Also referred as Caaranaa in Hathatavakaumudi- 9.13-16, Yogic Sukshma Vyayama of Swami Dheerendra Bhramhachari
3. **Tādāsana:** Also called as Taalaasana, Yogarahasya of Nathamuni, Kirana Tika, a commentary on Yoga sutras, Shri Yoga Kaustubha-25, SachitraCaurasi Asana-34, Yoga Asanas by Swami Shivananda.
4. **Vṛksāsana:** Gheraṇḍa Samhitā-ii.36, BrihadyogaSopana, Hathayoga Samhita-43, Yoga Marga Pradipa-11
5. **Pada-hastāsana/Uttānāsana:** Shri Yoga Kaustubha. Yogarahasya of Nāthamunī
6. **Ardha Cakrāsana:** Traditional Cakrasana has several varieties quite different from this which is practiced over the years
7. **Trikoṇāsana:** Yogarahasya-ii.20 of Nāthamunī
8. **Bhadrāsana:** Hathapradipika-i.53-54.
9. **Vajrāsana:** Gheraṇḍa Samhitā II-12, Haṭhayoga- Samhitā- Āsana- 20, Bṛhada Yoga Sopāna III-14, Sacitra Vyavahārika 16, Nārada Purāṇa-33-112
10. **Uṣṭrāsana:** Śrī Yoga Kaustibha, NagojiBhattaVritti on Yogasutra-ii. 46, GherandaSamhita - ii.41describes Ustrasana which is done lying in prone position
11. **Śaśakāsana:** Gheraṇḍa Samhitā-ii.12 calls it as Vajrāsana, Haṭhayoga Samhita, Bṛhada Yoga Sopāna, SachitraVyavaharika Yoga-16, Narāda Purāṇa-33-112, Bṛihannāradiya Purāṇa, Yogamārgapradīpa, Yoga Bija-90, Yogaśikṣopaniṣhad-I.111-112, Hatharatnāvali-iii.9
12. **Uttāna Mandūkāsana:** Haṭhayoga- Samhitā -Āsana-42, Čré Yoga Kaustubha-58, Gheraṇḍa Samhitā II-35, Bṛhada Yoga Sopāna III-41, Sacitra Cauryāyasin Asane 81
13. **Vakrāsana:** Easier version of Matsyendrasana (mentioned in Haṭhapradipikā) given by Swami Kuvalayananda in his book Asan
14. **Makarāsana:** Jaipur Central Meusum, with some variation in hands position.



15. **Bhujangāsana:** Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā .ii.42, with some variation, Kirāṇa Tikā-ii. 46 on Yoga sūtra, Haṭha yoga Saṁhitā-49, Śrī Yoga Kaustubha-62, Yogamārgapradīpa-19, YogaRahasya of Nāthamunī-ii.14, Jaypur CentralMuseum-7174.
16. **Śalabāsana:** Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā-ii.39, Brihada Yoga Sopāna-iii46, Hathayoga Saṁhitā- 46, Yogamārgapradīpa-33.
17. **Setubāndhāsana/Catuśpādāsana:** Yogarahasya of Nāthamunī.
18. **Uttāna Pādāsana:** Śrī Yoga Kaustubha-94
19. **Ardha Halāsana:** Yoga-rahasya II- 17
20. **Pavanamuktāsana:** Śrī Yoga Kaustubha. It is done in sitting as per Yoga Asanas-3, Sachitra cauryasin Asane-5-7, Shri Yoga Kaustubha-5, Kirana Tika-ii.46 on Yoga Sutra,
21. **Śavāsana:** Gheranda Saṁhitā-ii.19, Hathapradīpikā-i.32, Hatharatnāvalī-iii.20,76, KapālaKuraṅtakaHathabhāśya Paddhatī-111, Yuktabhavadeva-vi.21, Asanani-14, Yoga Siddhānta Chandrikā-ii.46, Śritatva Nidhī-70, KiranaTikā on Yogasutra-ii.46, Brhada Yoga Sopāna-iii.24, Hathapradīpika, ŚrīYoga Kaustubha-17.
22. **Kapālabhātī:** A variation of Bhastrīkā Kumbhaka of Gheranda Saṁhitā-v.70-72, Kumbhaka Paddhatī-164-165, Hathapradīpikā, Hatharatnāvalī-22-24, Hathatatvakaumudī-x.12-14, Yuktabhāvaḍeva-vii.110-118.
23. **Nādīśhodhana / AnulomaViloma Prānāyāma:** Hathapradīpikā, It has visualization and internal retention breath. Additionally, Gheranda Saṁhitā-v.38-45 has time units for inhalation, retention and exhalation.
24. **Bhrāmari Prānāyāma :** Hathapradīpikā, Hatharatnāvalī-ii.26, Kumbhaka Paddhati- 169.
25. **Śītālī Prānāyāma:** Śiva Saṁhitā III-81-82, Gheraṇḍa , Saṁhitā V-69, Hathapradīpikā-II-57-58
26. **Dhyāna:** Yoga Sūtra of Patanjali III.2

Yoga for Harmony & Peace

## International Day of Yoga

### Yoga Geet (Yoga Song)

तन मन जीवन चलो संवारें  
योग मार्ग अपनाएँ,  
वैर भाव को त्याग सभी हम  
गीत मिलन के गायें।

आनंदमय हो जीवन सबका  
योग यही सिखलाये  
हों तनाव भयमुक्त सभी जन  
दिव्य प्रेम सरसाये।

यम और नियम हमारे सम्बल  
सुखमय जगत बनाएँ,  
आसन प्राणायाम ध्यान से  
स्वास्थ्य शांति सब पाएँ!

ऊर्जावान बने सब साधक  
संशय सभी मिटायें  
विश्व एक परिवार योग कर  
स्वर्ग धरा पर लाएँ।”

ॐॐॐॐॐ

Let us ameliorate body, mind and life  
Embrace Yoga as a way of life  
Leaving animosity behind  
Sing a harmony lay

Life should be blissful  
-is the lesson of Yoga  
Let's everybody live without fear  
Thus, divine love may prevail

Yama and Niyama empower one  
To enhance the happiness everywhere  
Practice Aasana Pranayama and Dhayan  
To get health and peace

May energy is bestowed to all Yogis  
Doubts are unfastened  
Entire world becomes Yoga wreath  
Earth transformed into heaven

## Glimpses of International Day of Yoga Celebration



21<sup>st</sup> JUNE

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF

YOGA

COMMON YOGA PROTOCOL



### About the International Day of Yoga - LOGO

Folding of both hands in the logo symbolizes Yoga, which reflects the union of individual consciousness with that of universal consciousness, a perfect harmony between mind and body, man and nature, the holistic approach to health and well being.

The brown leaves in the logo symbolize the earth element, the green leaves the nature, blue the fire element while the sun symbolises the source of energy and inspiration.

The logo reflects harmony and peace for the humanity which is the essence of Yoga.



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