



Ministry of Ayush
Government of India



International Day of
YOGA
21st June
COMMON YOGA PROTOCOL (20 Minutes)



Ministry of Ayush
Government of India





21st June

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA
Common Yoga Protocol

This booklet has been prepared in consultation with leading Yoga experts and heads of the leading 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.

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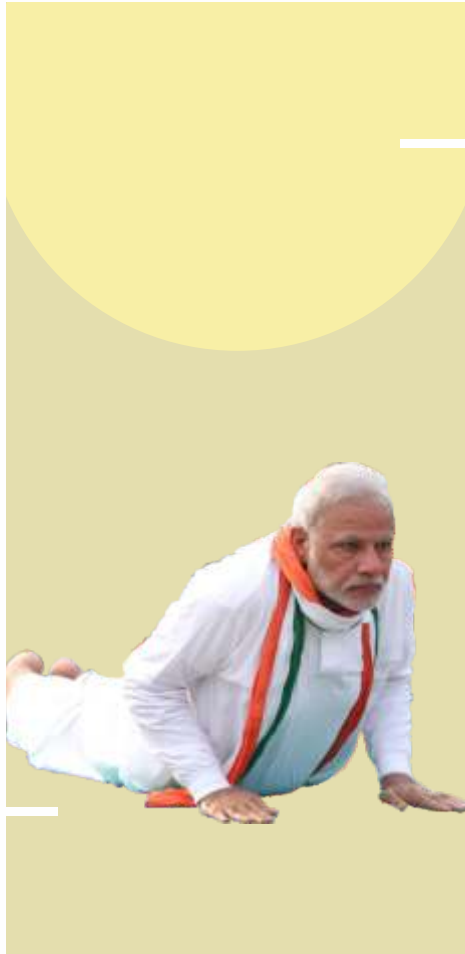
The information provided in this Yoga protocol is intended to create general awareness among people and community to get harmony and peace through Yoga. The information, techniques, and suggestions mentioned in this Yoga protocol are not a substitute for the medical advice of a physician. One may require diagnosis or medical attention in a particular case; in such situations, one must consult a doctor before practising Yoga. The publisher does not assume any responsibility or liability for any injury or loss that may result from practising Yoga.

YOGA











GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

75
Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav



Shri Narendra Modi

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

MESSAGE

I am happy to learn about the International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2023 being observed by the Ministry of Ayush. Greetings and best wishes to everyone associated with the celebrations.

Our ancestors developed this beautiful tradition and today, the entire world is benefiting from it. Yoga is unifying the entire world in the quest for wellness and bringing people together, beyond barriers of geography.

The theme of IDY 2023 - 'Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' reflects India's ancient and all-embracing culture of treating the whole world as One Family. It is also in sync with the vision that India has given to the world during its G20 presidency this year.

At a time when health and wellness have attained a renewed importance in the world, Yoga has firmly established itself as a route to a better life. It not only offers benefits in terms of fitness and flexibility, but also helps combat chronic lifestyle-related conditions. In a stress-filled world, Yoga has emerged as a soothing healing force that strengthens people from within.

Amrit Kaal is an opportunity to draw strength from the resolve of more than 140 crore Indians to realise the vision of building a strong and inclusive India, which leads to a better planet. Such a dream can be fulfilled only when every individual of the world is healthy. Yoga plays a vital role in achieving this vision.

The initiative by Ministry of Ayush to organise IDY 2023 celebrations will help connect many more people with Yoga and reap the immense physical and mental health benefits that it brings.

The Common Yoga Protocol Booklet being published to mark the occasion will be a practical guide for Yoga experts and practitioners alike. I wish the publication all success.

May the IDY 2023 celebrations lead to favourable outcomes for the world.

(Narendra Modi)

New Delhi
15th June, 2023

Common Yoga Protocol (20 Minutes)

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COMMON YOGA PROTOCOL

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

‘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.’

On 11th December 2014, all 193 members of UNGA approved the proposal by consensus with a record 177 cosponsoring countries passing 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 practising 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.

The booklet aims to provide a brief overview of yoga and yogic practices, with the goal of orient individuals towards comprehensive health and wellness, benefiting both themselves and the community. Apart from 45 minutes of the Common Yoga Protocol (CYP), a provision has been made for leading Yoga institutions to incorporate 15 minutes of institutional Yogic practices such as Prāṇāyāma, Yoga Nidrā, Dhyāna, and Satsaṅg before Saṅkalpa as deemed fit.

Today, as the importance of Yoga in all aspects of life is realised, an increasing number of students and practitioners are seeking a deeper understanding and philosophical bases of Yoga and its practices, including its philosophical foundations. The CYP is a humble effort to show how Yoga can influence our lives, attitudes, and well-being. This invariably leads us to the very essence, 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 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 a variety of methods through which human beings can achieve union between the body and the 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.

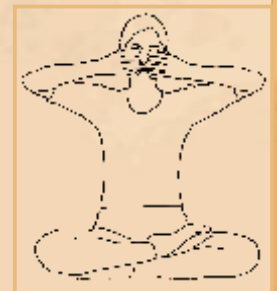
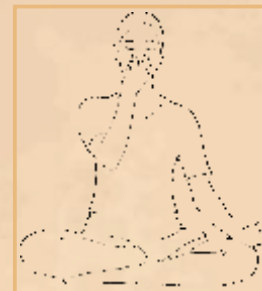
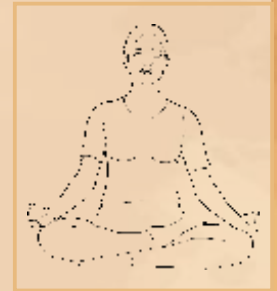
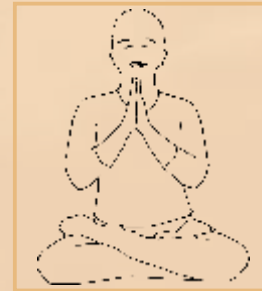
Brief History and Development of Yoga

The science of Yoga originated thousands of years ago, long before the first religion or belief system was 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 among ancient cultures across the globe. However, in India, the Yogic system was found at 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. It has proven itself to cater to both material and spiritual upliftment of humanity. The unearthing of a number of seals and fossil remains of the Indus Saraswati Valley Civilisation with Yogic motifs and figures performing Yoga sādhanā suggests the presence of Yoga in ancient India. The seals and idols of Mother Goddess are suggestive of the

existence of Tantra Yoga. The presence of Yoga is also found in folk traditions, Vedic and Upanishadic heritage, Buddhist and Jain traditions, Darshanas, epics of Mahabharata (including Bhagawad Gita) and Ramayana, and theistic traditions of Shaivas, Vaishnavas, and Tantra. Though Yoga was being practised 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 to 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 day. Today, everybody has this conviction that Yoga practices can prevent diseases and promote health. Millions of people across the globe have benefitted by the practice of Yoga and this practise is blossoming and growing vibrantly with each passing day.



The Fundamentals of Yoga



Yoga works at the level of one's body, mind, emotion, and energy. This has given rise to five broad classifications of Yoga:

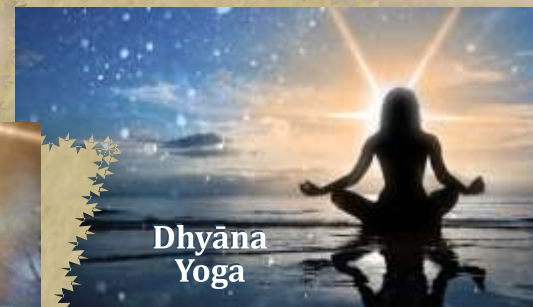
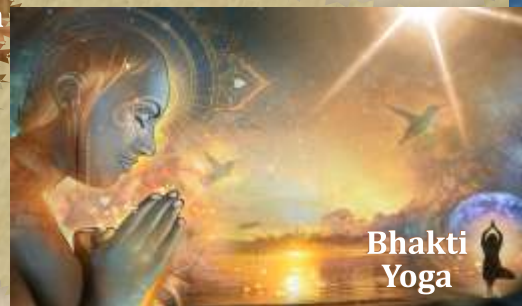
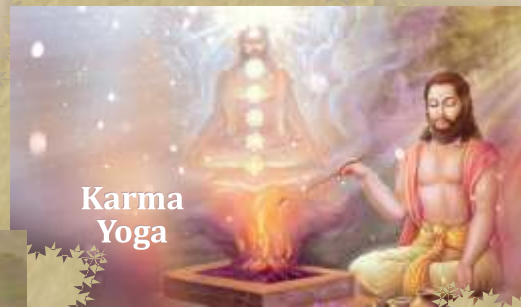
- (a) *Jñāna* Yoga : Yoga for knowledge
- (b) *Bhakti* Yoga : Yoga for emotions culture
- (c) *Karma* Yoga : Yoga for selfless action
- (d) *Dhyāna* Yoga : Yoga for meditation
- (e) *Kriyā* Yoga : Yoga for optimum utilisation of vital energy.

Every individual is a unique combination of these five factors. Only a Guru (teacher) can advocate the appropriate combination of the five fundamental paths as 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 have led to the emergence of different traditional schools. These include Jñāna Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, Pātañjala

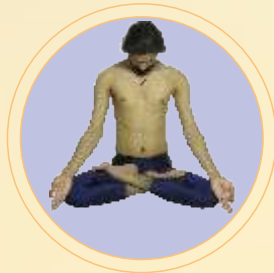
Yoga, Kuṇḍalini Yoga, Haṭha Yoga, Dhyāna Yoga, Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga, Rāja Yoga, Jain Yoga, Bouddha Yoga, etc. Each school has its own approach and practices that lead to the ultimate aim and objectives of Yoga.



Yogic Practices for Health and Wellness



Prāṇāyāma



Bandh Mudrā



Yogāsana



Dhyāna



Shuddhi Kriyā



Mitāhāra



The widely practised Yoga sadhanas are *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Pratyāhāra*, *Dhāraṇā*, *Dhyāna*, *Samādhi*, *Bandhā* and *Mudrā*, *Ṣaṭkarma*, *Yuktāhāra*, *Mantra-japa*, *Yukta-karma*, etc.

Yamas are restraints and Niyamas are observances. These restraints and observances are considered to be pre-requisites for further Yoga practice. *Āsanas* are capable of bringing about stability of body and mind; *kuryattadāsanam-sthairyam* involves adopting various psycho-physical body patterns and giving one the 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 wilful 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 that connect with the external objects. *Dhāraṇā* 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* is the state of being constant.

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

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

Mantra Japa is the meditative repetition of a mantra or a divine consciousness. Mantra Japa produces positive mental tracts, helping one to gradually overcome stress.

Yukta-karma advocates
Right Karmas or actions for a
Healthy Living

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR YOGA PRACTICE

Everyone should follow certain guiding principles while performing Yogic practices. Some of the general ones are given below.

Before the Practice:

- *Śauca* means cleanliness; it is an important pre-requisite 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.
- Wearing light and comfortable cotton clothes helps facilitate easy movement of the body.
- Yoga should not be performed in a state of exhaustion, illness, in a hurry or in acute stress conditions.
- If an individual is having any chronic disease, pain, or cardiac problems, he or she should consult a physician or a Yoga expert prior to performing Yogic practices.
- Yoga experts consulted before engaging in Yogic practices during pregnancy and menstruation.

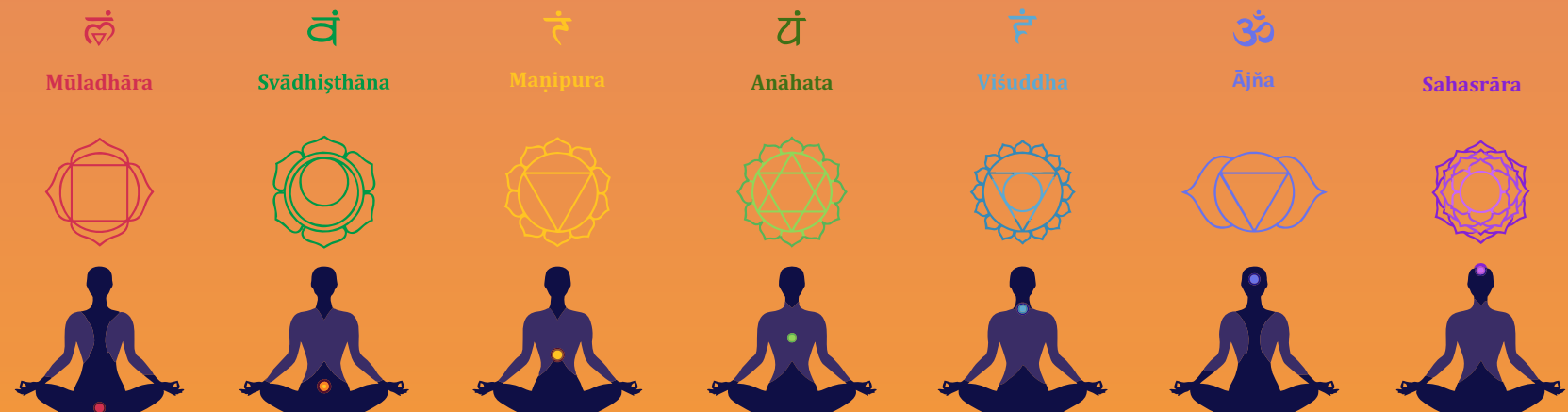


During the Practice

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

After the 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.



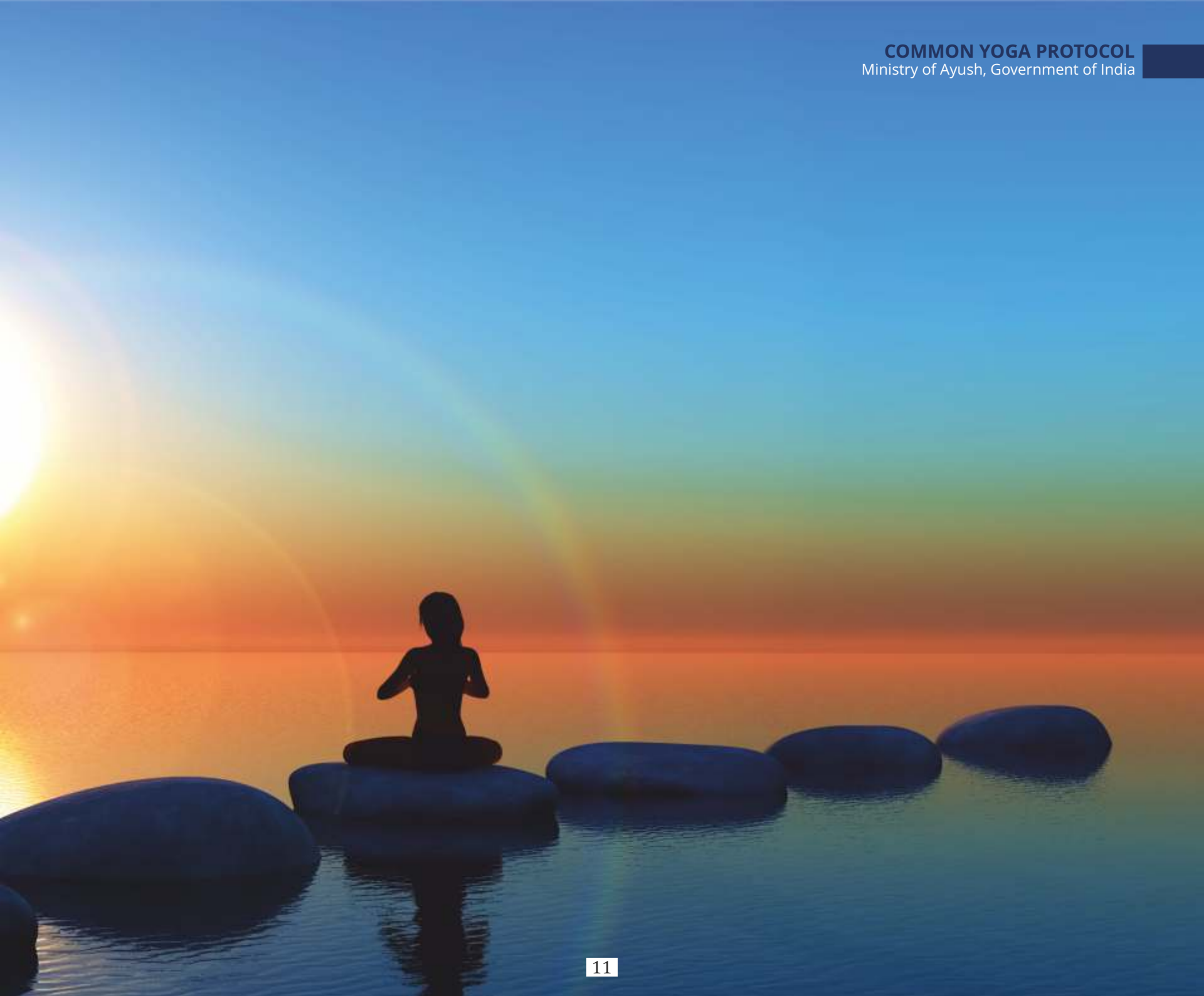
Food for Thought

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 high physical activity or labour.

How Yoga Can Help

Yoga is essentially a path to liberation from all bondage. 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 points to certain benefits of practising Yoga such as the ones listed below:

- Yoga is beneficial for physical fitness, musculo-skeletal 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.
- Yoga is the process of creating a healthy body and a stable mind, which are prerequisites for leading an exuberant and fulfilling life.



1|Invocation/Prayer



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

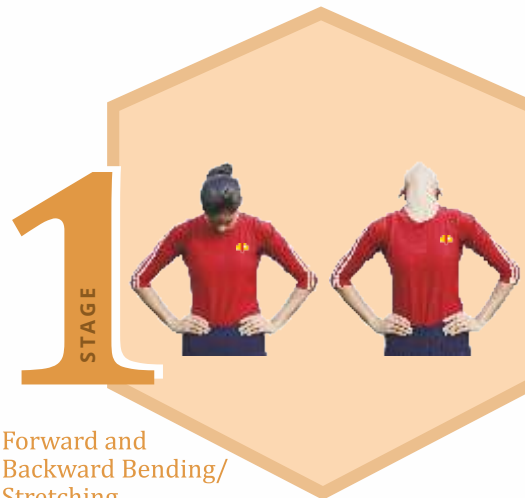
ॐ Samṅacchadhvam̐ samvadadhvam̐
sam̐ vo manāmsi jānatām
devā bhāgam̐ yathā pūrve
sañjānānā upāsate ||

Rgveda 10/191/2

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 MOVEMENTS (Grīvā Śakti Vikāsaka)

[*Sthiti*: Samasthiti (Alert Posture)]

TECHNIQUE

STAGE-1

Forward and Backward Bending/Stretching

- Stand with the feet 2-3 inches apart.
- Keep the hands straight beside the body.
- This is **Samasthiti**. This is also called **Tādāsana**.
- Keep your palms 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 one more round.

STAGE-2

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 one more round.

NOTE

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

NOTE

- This can also be practised 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 spondylosis may avoid these practices.



III. TRUNK MOVEMENT

(Kaṭiśakti Vikāśaka)

| **Sthiti:** *Samasthiti* (Alert posture)



Technique

- Keep the legs about 1 foot 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 one more round.
- Come back & relax.

NOTE

- Perform 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.



A. STANDING POSTURES

3 | YOGĀSANAS

TĀDĀSANA

(Palm-tree Posture)

Tāḍa means palm tree or mountain.

This *āsana* helps one to attain stability and firmness and forms the base for all standing *āsans*.

Sthiti: *Samasthiti* (Alert posture)

Technique

- Stand with feet 2 inches apart.
- Inhale, lift your arms up to the shoulder level in the front.
- 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. Maintain the final position for three to five breaths with body awareness.
- Bring the heels down on 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.

Caution

- Avoid lifting the heels in case of arthritis, varicose veins, and vertigo.



ARDHACAKRĀSANA (The Half-Wheel Posture)

Ardha means half. *Cakra* means wheel. As the body takes the shape of a half wheel in this posture, it is called *ArdhaCakrāsana*.

Sthiti: *Samasthiti* (Alert posture)

Technique

- Stand straight with feet 2 inches apart.
- Support the back at the sides of the waist with the fingers.
- Try to keep the elbows parallel.
- Inhale, Drop the head backwards feel the stretch in the neck.
- As you exhale, bend backwards from the lumbar region.
- Maintain the final position for three to five breaths with body awareness.
- Inhale and slowly come up.
- Relax in *Samasthiti*.

Benefits

- This *āsana* makes the spine flexible and strengthens the spinal nerves and muscles.
- It helps in the management of cervical spondylosis.

Caution

- Avoid this posture if you have vertigo or a tendency to fall over or stagger (giddiness).
- Hypertensive patients should bend with care.





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*.
Sthiti: *Samasthiti* (Alert posture)

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 as straight as possible.
- Maintain the final position for three to five breaths with body awareness.
- 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

- This *āsana* makes the spine flexible, improves digestion, and helps in overcoming menstrual problems.

Caution

- Avoid this practice in case of cardiac disorders, vertebral and disc disorders, abdominal inflammation, hernia and ulcers, glaucoma, myopia, and vertigo.

NOTE

- Those who are suffering with stiff back should bend according to their capacity.

B. SITTING POSTURES

BHADRĀSANA

(The Firm/Auspicious Posture)

Bhadrā means firm or auspicious.

Sthiti: *Viśrāmāsana* (Long sitting posture).

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



Technique

- Sit straight with legs stretched out 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.
- Maintain the final position for three to five breaths with body awareness.

Benefits

- This *āsana* helps to keep the body firm and stabilise the mind.
- Helps during pregnancy and relieves abdominal pain often experienced during menstruation.

Caution

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

NOTE

- If your thighs are not touching or are not close to the floor, place a soft cushion underneath the knees for support.





VAJRĀSANA (Thunderbolt Posture)

This is considered as one of the meditative postures. While practising it for meditative purposes, one should close his/her eyes at the final stage.

Sthiti: *Viśrāmāsana* (Long sitting posture)

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, fold the left leg and place the left foot under the left buttock.
- Place both the heels such that the big toes touch each other.
- Position of the buttocks is in the space between the heels.
- Keep both hands on knees respectively.
- Keep the spine erect, gaze in front or close the eyes.
- Maintain the final position for three to five breaths with body awareness.

Benefits

- This *āsana* is good for digestion, and strengthens the thigh and calf muscles.

Caution

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



ARDHAUṢṬRĀSANA (The Half-Camel Posture)

Uṣṭrā means camel. The final version of this *āsana* will resemble the hump of a camel. In this version, only the first stage (half) of the *āsana* is being practised.

Sthiti: *Vajrāsana*



Technique

- Sit in *Vajrāsana*.
- Stand on your knees.
- Place the hands on the hips with fingers pointing downwards.
- Keep the elbows and shoulders parallel.
- Inhale, and bend the head back and stretch the neck muscles; exhale and bend the trunk backwards as much as possible.
- Keep the thighs perpendicular to the ground.
- Maintain the final position for three to five breaths with body awareness.
- Return with inhalation; sit in *Vajrāsana*.

Benefits

- This *āsana* strengthens the back and neck muscles.
- It relieves constipation and back pain.
- It increases blood circulation to the head and cardiac regions.

Caution

- Avoid doing this *āsana* in case of hernia and abdominal injuries, arthritis, and vertigo.



ŚAŚAKĀSANA (The Hare Posture)

Śaśaka means hare. The body in this pose will resemble a hare, hence the name.

Stithi: *Vajrāsana*

Technique

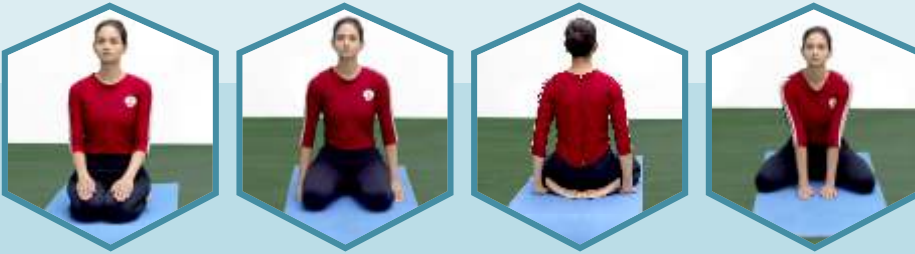
- Sit in *Vajrāsana*.
- Spread both the knees wide apart, keep the big toes touching.
- Inhale, keep the palms between the knees.
- Exhale, bend forward with arms outstretched and place the chin on the ground.
- Keep the arms parallel.
- Maintain the final position for three to five breaths with body awareness.
- Come back to *Vajrāsana*.

Benefits

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

Caution

- Patients with osteoarthritis of the knees and acute backache should avoid this *āsana*.





UTTĀNAMAṆḌŪKĀSANA (Stretched-up Frog Posture)

Uttāna means upright and *Maṇḍūka* means frog. The final position of *Uttānamaṇḍūkasana* would resemble an upright frog, hence the name.

Sthiti: *Vajrāsana*

Technique

- Sit in *Vajrāsana*.
- Spread both the knees wide apart while big toes touching each other.
- Raise your right arm, fold it from the elbow, and take it backwards above the left shoulder and place the palm on the left shoulder blade.
- Now fold the left arm similarly and place the palm on the right shoulder blade.
- Maintain the final position for three to five breaths with body awareness, then come back slowly in the reverse order.
- While returning to the starting position, bend a little the right side; take out the left leg and extend it.
- Similarly extend the right leg and sit with extended legs together.
- Relax in *Viśrāmāsana*.

Benefits

- This *āsana* is helpful in relieving back and neck pain, especially cervical pain.
- It improves the diaphragmatic movements and lungs capacity.

Caution

- Person with severe knee joint pain should avoid this practice.



C. PRONE POSTURES

BHUJAṄGĀSANA

(The Cobra Posture)

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

Stithi: *Makarāsana* (Prone relaxation posture)



NOTE

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

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.
- Keep your palms besides the chest and raise your elbows from where they are.
- Inhale, slowly lift the head and the chest up to the navel region.
- Keep the elbows parallel and maintain the final position for three to five breaths with body awareness.
- Exhale, rest your forehead on the ground.
- Bend both the arms and place the right palm on the left palm.
- Place the head either the left side or the right side on your hands.
- Keep the eyes closed and relax the whole body. This is *Makarāsana*.

Benefits

- This *āsana* relieves stress and constipation, and reduces abdominal fat.
- It helps to relieve backache and bronchial problems.

Caution

- Those who have undergone abdominal surgery should avoid this *āsana* for 2–3 months.
- Those who are suffering from hernia or ulcers should not practise this *āsana*.



PAVANAMUKTĀSANA (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 the intestine.

Sthiti: Śavāsana (Supine lying posture)

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 the knees.
- Exhale, raise the head till your chin/nose touches the knees and relax.
- Maintain the final position for three to five breaths with body awareness.
- Bring the head back to the ground.
- While exhaling, bring the legs back to the floor.
- Rest in Śavāsana.

Benefits

- It removes constipation, gives relief from flatulence, decreases the bloating sensation in the abdomen, and aids digestion.
- It generates deep internal pressure, and improves stretching of the highly complicated network of muscles, ligaments, and tendons in the pelvic and waist regions.
- It tones up the back muscles and spinal nerves.

Caution

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

NOTE

- One should synchronise breathing with the leg movement.
- While touching the knee with the nose/chin, one should be able to feel the lumbar region stretch; keep the eyes closed and focus on the pelvic and lumbar regions.

ŚAVĀSANA

(Corpse/ Dead-Body Posture)

Śava means dead body. The final position, in this āsana would resemble a corpse/dead body.

Sthiti: Śavāsana (Supine lying posture)

Technique

- Lie down on back with arms and legs comfortably apart.
- Palms facing upwards, 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

- This āsana helps to relieve all kinds of tension and gives rest to both body and mind.
- 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 beneficial in the management of stress and its consequences.





4 | KAPĀLABHĀTI

Kapal means skull, *bhati* means to shine or to cleanse. It is a cleansing practice which helps to clean the frontal sinuses and upper respiring tract.

Sthiti: *Sukhāsana/Padmāsana/Vajrāsana* (Any meditative posture)

Technique

- Sit in any comfortable posture.
- Close your eyes and relax the whole body.
- Inhale deeply through both the 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 take a deep breath, exhale slowly, and relax completely.
- This is one round of *Kapālabhāti*.

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 practise up to 3 rounds of 20 rapid breaths each.
- The count and rounds can be increased gradually over a period of time.

Benefits

- This practice 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.

Caution

- 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.

भस्त्रावल्लोहकारस्य रेचपूरौ ससंभ्रमौ ।
कपालभातिर्विख्याता कफदोषविशोषणी ॥

Bhararyavallohakarsya renchapuro sasambhramou |
Kapalbhativikhyata kaphadosha vishoshani ||





5 | PRĀṆĀYĀMA NAḌĪŚODHANA or ANULOMA VILOMA PRĀṆĀYĀMA

(Alternate Nostril Breathing)

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

Sthiti: Any comfortable posture

Technique

- Sit in any comfortable posture.
- Keep the spine and the head straight with eyes closed.
- Relax the body with a few deep breaths.
- Keep the left palm on the left knee in *Jnāna* mudra and the right palm should be in *Nāsāgra mudrā*.
- 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 and 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 *Nāḍīśodhana* or *Anuloma Viloma Prāṇāyāma*.
- Repeat for another two 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

- It induces tranquillity and helps to improve concentration.
- It increases vitality and lowers the level of stress and anxiety.
- It alleviates cough disorders.

प्राणस्येद वशे सर्वं त्रिदिवे यत् प्रतिष्ठितम् ।
मातेव पुत्रान् रक्षस्व श्रीश्च प्रज्ञां च विधेहि नः इति ॥
(प्रश्नोपनिषद् 2/13)

Prāṇasyedaṁ vaśe sarvaṁ tridive yat pratiṣṭhitam;
Māteva putrān rakṣasva śrīśca prajñāṁca vidhehi nahiti





BHRĀMARĪ PRĀṄĀYĀMA

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

Sthiti: Any comfortable position

Technique

- Sit in any comfortable 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 *Śanmukhī 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 two more rounds.



Benefits

- It relieves stress and helps in alleviating anxiety, anger, and hyper activity.
- It creates a soothing effect on the nervous system and mind.
- It is a great tranquiliser, and found good in the management of stress-related disorders.
- It is a useful preparatory *prāṇāyāma* for concentration and meditation.

Caution

- Avoid this practice in case of nose and ear infections.

वेगाद्घोषं पूरकं भृंगनादं भृंगीनादं रेचकं मंदमंदम् ।
योगीन्द्राणामेवमभ्यासयोगाच्चित्ते जाता काचिदानंदलीला ॥





6 | DHYĀNA

Dhyāna or meditation is an act of continuous contemplation.

Sthiti: Any comfortable posture.

Technique

- Sit in any comfortable posture.
- Adopt *Jnāna mudrā* or *Dhyānā mudrā* as in the figure.
- Arms and shoulders should be loose and relaxed.
- Gently, close the eyes and sit with a slightly upturned face.
- Maintain a mild focus between the eyebrows and be conscious of the breath.
- Dissolve thoughts and try to attain single and pure thought.
- Meditate.

Benefits

- It helps the practitioner to eliminate negative emotions such as fear, anger, depression, and anxiety and aids in developing positive emotions.
- It keeps the mind calm and quiet.
- It increases concentration, memory, clarity of thought and willpower.
- It rejuvenates the whole body and mind giving them proper rest.

NOTE

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



7. Śāntih Pāṭha

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

*May All become Happy, May All be Free from Illness. May All See what is Auspicious,
May No One Suffer. Om Peace, Peace, Peace.*

Textual References

1. **Prayer:** Rigveda-10.191.2.
2. **Sadilaja/Cālanakriyā/Yogic Sūksma Vyāyāma:** Also referred as Caaranaa in Hathatatvakaumudi- 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. **Ardha Cakrāsana:** Traditional Cakrasana has several varieties quite different from this which is practised over the years.
5. **Pada-hastāsana/Uttānāsana:** Shri Yoga Kaustubha. Yogarahasya of Nāthamunī.
6. **Bhadrāsana:** Hathapradipika-i. 53-54.
7. **Vajrāsana:** Gheranda Samhitā II-12, Hathayoga- Samhitā- Āsana- 20, Brhada Yoga Sopāna III-14, Sacitra Vyavahārika 16, Nārada Purāna-33-112.
8. **Uṣṭrāsana:** Śrī Yoga Kaustubha, NagojiBhattaVritti on Yogasutra-ii. 46, GherandaSamhita - ii. 41 describes Ustrasana, which is done lying in prone position.
9. **Śāsakāsana:** Gheranda Samhitā-ii.12 calls it as Vajrāsana, Hathayoga Samhita, Brhada Yoga Sopāna, SachitraVyavaharika Yoga-16, Narāda Purāna-33-112, Brihannāradiya Purāna, Yogamārgapradīpa, Yoga Bija-90, Yogaśikṣopaniṣad-I.111- 112, Hatharatnāvalī-iii.
10. **Uttāna Mandūkāsana:** Hathayoga- Samhitā -Āsana-42, Çré Yoga Kaustubha-58, Gheranda Samhitā II-35, Brhada Yoga Sopāna III-41, Sacitra Caurayasin Asane 81.
11. **Bhujāṅgāsana:** Gheranda Samhitā .ii.42, with some variation, Kirana Tikā-ii. 46 on Yoga sūtra, Hatha yoga Samhitā-49, Śrī Yoga Kaustubha-62, Yogamārgapradīpa-19, YogaRahasya of Nāthamunī-ii.14, Jaypur CentralMuseum-7174.
12. **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.
13. **Śavāsana:** Gheranda Samhitā-ii.19, Hathapradipikā-i.32, Hatharatnāvalī-iii.20,76, KapālaKurantakaHathabhāṣya 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, Hathapradipika, ŚrīYoga Kaustubha-17.
14. **Kapālabhātī:** A variation of Bhastrikā Kumbhaka of Gheranda Samhitā-v.70-72, Kumbhaka Paddhatī-164-165, Hathapradipikā, Hatharatnāvalī-22-24, Hathatatvakaumudi-x.12-14, Yuktabhāvadeva-vii.110-118.
15. **Nādīśhodhana / AnulomaViloma Prāṇāyāma:** Hathapradipikā, It has visualisation and internal retention, breath. Additionally, Gheranda Samhitā-v.38-45 has time units for inhalation, retention, and exhalation.
16. **Bhrāmari Prāṇāyāma :** Hathapradipikā, Hatharatnāvalī-ii.26, Kumbhaka Paddhati- 169.
17. **Dhyāna:** Yoga Sūtra of Patanjali III.2.

International Day of Yoga

Yoga Geet (Yoga Song)

तेन 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 बनाएं,
आसन प्राणायाम ध्यान से
स्वास्थ्य शांति सब पाएं!

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

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
Practise 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

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Folding of both hands in the logo symbolises 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 symbolise the earth element, the green leaves of 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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