

CHAPTER : 32

IMPORTANT YOGASANA

Yoga is an ancient Indian way of life which links our body, mind and soul. The best quality of yogasana is that they are naturally adaptable and accessible to all. Yogasana is a way of exercise in which no special expenses are required and also not many material is required. Rich-poor, young-old, weak-strong, men-women, all can do yogasana. Yogasana involves both muscle contracting, pulling exercises and also has relaxing exercises which reduces the weariness of body and the energy spent in doing yogasana is regained. Mind and body are rejuvenated. From a spiritual sense yoga has a different importance. The present lifestyle requires not only a fit body but also a strong mind and for this food alone is not enough. Yogasana can also help in making body fit and mind strong.

1. Surya Namaskar (Sun Salutation):

The most effective and beneficial of all yogasana is the Surya Namaskar. It is the initial step for yogasana and pranayama. The essence of all yogasana is hidden in the Surya Namaskar.



Figure : 32.1 (Surya Namaskar 12 steps)

Benefits:

- Surya Namaskar is a complete exercise. It makes all the parts of the body strong and disease-free.
- It makes abdomen, intestines, stomach, heart and lungs healthy and strong.
- It makes spinal cord and waist flexible giving relief from all diseases.
- It makes blood circulation smooth and keeps blood pressure under control.
- It provides mental strength.

- Surya Namaskar gives Vitamin D which makes bones strong.
- Eyesight improves
- It helps in reducing weight

How to do 'Surya Namaskar' –

12 steps of Surya Namaskar -

1. Stand erect and raise both the hands, keeping them in level with the shoulders. Bring palms together and downwards in front of the chest in prayer position.
2. While breathing in, lift the arms up and stretch them, taking the arms backwards and keep them close to the ears. Stretch the back, neck in such a way that the upper body tilts backwards. This is known as 'Ardhchakrasana'. This whole process gets completed while breathing in.
3. Slowly release the breath and bend forward. Bring the hands, neck down to the floor and touch the floor beside the feet. Stay in this position for some time. This is also known as 'Paad paschinottarasan; or 'Paad Hastasan'.
4. Keep the hands touching on the floor, inside and push your right leg back. Push the chest forward and lift the neck up. The foot should be erect during this position.
5. Exhale slowly and take the left foot. Such that heels of both the feet are together. Stretch the body backwards keeping the feet together, bend the neck downwards.
6. Inhale, keep hands and feet stable and make chest and knees touch the floor. In this way, both hands, feet, knees, chest and head are touching the floor. This is known as 'Shashtangasan'. Lift the things a little and exhale.
7. In this position, inhale slowly, stretch the chest forward and bring the hands in straight position. Push the neck back. Make sure that knees touch the floor and feet are erect. This is known as 'Bhujangasan.'
8. Make the posture same as in step-5 and bring the chin near the throat touching it. Look at the feet.
9. Now make the posture same as in step-4 and fake the left leg backwards and right leg forward.
10. Make the posture same as in step-3 and bring the left leg forward to form 'Paschimottanasan' position.
11. Stay in step_1 posture, inhale and take the hands upwards. Stay in this position and stretch arms, back and neck backwards.
12. This is same as step-1 posture, that is, prayer position.

2. Trikonasana (Triangle Pose)

'Tri' means three. Therefore this yogasana means three angles or a triangle. (fig. 32.2)

Benefits:

- It provides strength to the muscles.
- It provides relief to patients of constipation
- It helps in reducing fat of waist and buttocks.
- It is helpful in increasing digestion power.

How to do Trikonasana–

1. Stand straight. Separate your feet comfortably

wide apart (about 3-1/2 to 4 feet).

2. Turn your right foot out 90 degrees. Touch your right feet with your right hand allowing your left hand to come up in the air. Keep both arms in straight line. This is the main posture of this yogasana.

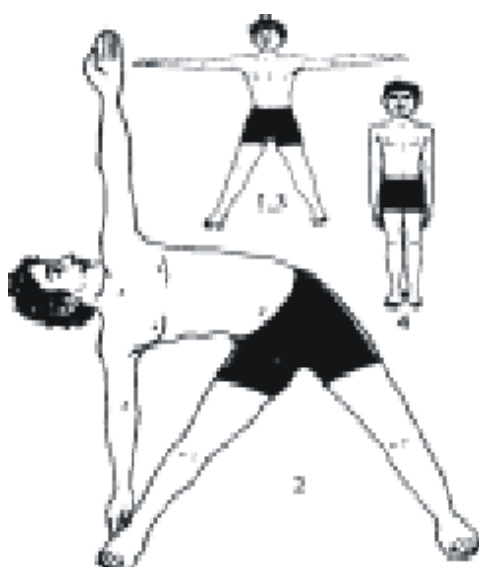


Figure : 32.2
Trikonasana Method

3. Stay in this position for 15-20 seconds and then stand straight. Repeat the same on the other side.

Important points:

Do not bend the knees and elbows. While bending one must make sure not to bend forward but sideways. While bending right or left exhale and while coming back to straight inhale. While in the main posture of the yogasana breathing speed is normal.

3. Padmasana (Lotus Position)

In Sanskrit, *padma* means Lotus. This is why padmasana is also known as lotus position. For meditation this position is very important. This helps

concentrating the mind. Concentration of mind is important in this yogasana. (fig. 32.2)



Figure : 32.3
Padmasana (Lotus Position)

Benefits :

- This yogasana circulates blood from the legs to other body parts as well which increases the activity of the body.
- It releases tension helping mind to concentrate and increase positivity.
- It makes legs and chest strong.
- Regular practice helps maintain stomach flat.

How to do Padmasana :

1. Sit on the floor with legs stretched out in front of you while keeping the spine erect. This is 'Dandasana position.'
2. Hold the thumb of right foot and bend the knee to bring the right leg on the top of the left thigh.
3. Hold the thumb of left foot and bend the knee to bring the left leg on the top of the right thigh.
4. Both knees should touch the floor and both feet should face upwards. keep the spiral cord,

neck and head in a straight line

5. Keep the palms on the knees or keep one palm on another in the lap. Close eyes and inhale deeply and make the breathing rate normal.
6. Hold the left foot with the right hand and stretch the leg. Now, hold the right foot with the left hand and stretch the leg. Come back to 'Dandasana' position.

4. Makarasana (The Crocodile Pose)

Makarasana is one of the yogasana which requires lying down on one's stomach. The body in the last stage of this yogasana looks like that of a crocodile. This yogasana helps in relaxation. (fig 32.4)

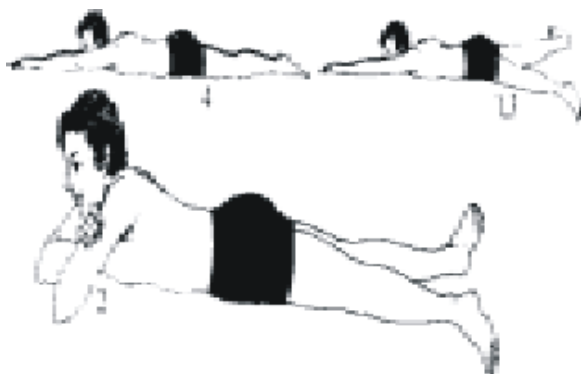


Figure : 32.4 (Makarasana)

Benefits:

- It relaxes all the muscles of the body.
- Blood circulation becomes smooth. This makes the person healthy and disease-free.
- It increases activity of intestines which relieves constipation.
- Lungs expand in this yogasana; as a result more air goes into the body. This is helpful for asthma

patients.

How to do Makrasana:

1. Lie down on the floor on the stomach and open the legs as per comfort. Keep the feet in such a way that toes point outwards and ankles point inwards.
2. Fold the right hand and place the right palm on the left shoulder and place the left palm on right shoulder. Lift the chest a little upwards so that breathing remains normal. Chin should rest on the meeting area of both the hands.
3. Remove the left palm from the right shoulder and stretch the hands in front of the head. Then remove the right palm from the left shoulder and come back to the first posture.
4. Bring the legs together and come back to original position.

5. Vakrasana (Twisted Pose)

Vakrasana involves sitting. *Vakra* is a Sanskrit word which means twisted. But spinal cord in this yogasana is straight and the whole body is twisted. (fig 32.5)

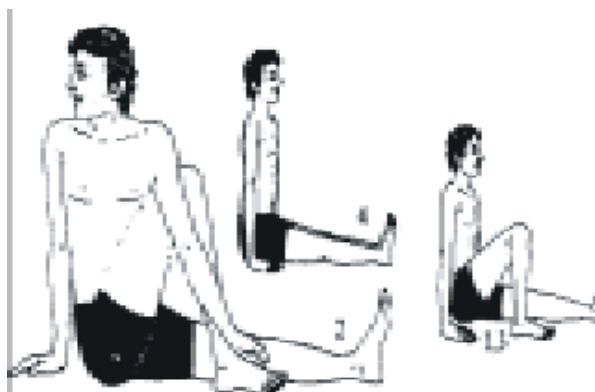


Figure : 32.5 (Vakrasana)

Benefits:

- This yogasana affects liver, kidneys, and pancreas and makes them disease free.
- It strengthens the spinal cord
- Patients of hernia are benefitted by this yogasana.

How to do Vakrasana:

1. Sit down on the ground stretching the legs forward. Keep the hands on side. Keep the spine straight and eyes should look in front. Bend the right knee and place the right foot beside the left knee.
2. Press the body towards the right and the lift the left hand, exhale, twist to the right knee and hold the right ankle with the left hand. Repeat the asana from the other side.
3. Inhale and keep left hand on the ground beside the left thigh.
4. Straighten the right leg and keep it aside left leg and come back to the original position.

IMPORTANT POINTS:

1. Yoga is a natural way of life which provides healthy mind and body and other spiritual benefits too.
2. Yoga is derived from Sanskrit 'Yug' word which means 'to link'.
3. Linking mind, body and soul together is known as yoga.
4. *Patanjali* describes yoga as control on mind's disposition.

5. Yoga helps in keeping body healthy and disease free.
6. Yogasana makes body healthy, beautiful and fit.
7. Yoga increases the working capacity of immune system which increases the capacity to fight diseases.
8. Yoga releases mental stress and gives a peaceful mind.
9. World Yoga Day is celebrated on 21st June to popularize the importance of Yoga.
10. Surya Namaskar is the most effective and beneficial of all yogasana. It is an initial step which is the essence of all the yogasana.
11. Surya Namaskar has 12 steps.
12. In Trikonasana, body takes the position like a triangle.
13. For meditation Padmasana is important.
14. Makrasana involves lying down on one's stomach. The body in the last stage of this yogasana looks like that of a crocodile.
15. In Vakrasana, spinal cord is straight but rest of the body is twisted.
16. Yoga is not only a physical exercise to reduce disease but also a way of making life better.

EXERCISE:

1. What is the meaning of the word 'yoga'?
2. What is the importance of yoga in today's lifestyle?
3. Explain the effects of yoga on physical health.
4. Explain the effects of yoga on mental health.
5. Write the benefits of Surya Namaskar.
6. Write the method of Trikonasana.
7. What are the benefits of Makrasana.
8. Write about the usefulness of Vakrasana.
9. What are the benefits of Padmasana.
10. Write the method of Padmasana.
11. How many steps are there in Surya Namaskar?