

# YŌGĀSĀNĀ



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## YOGASANA

### **Introduction :**

Concept and practice of Yoga originated in India several thousand years ago. Its founders were great saints and sages. The great yogis gave rational interpretation to their experiences of Yoga and brought about a scientific and practical method within everyone's reach. Today Yoga no longer is restricted to hermits of saints and sages; it has taken its place in everyday life and has aroused the world wide awakening and acceptance in the last decade.

The science of Yoga and its techniques have now been re-oriented to suit physiological needs and lifestyles. Experts of various branches of medicine including modern science are realizing the role of these techniques in the prevention and management of various disorders.

The literal meaning of the Sanskrit word “Yoga” is to “yoke”. Accordingly Yoga can be defined as a means of uniting the individual spirit with the universal spirit.

### **Therapeutic aspect of Yoga :**

Clinical studies have lucidly demonstrated the therapeutic potential of Yoga Practice in the treatment of chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases like asthma and bronchitis. Similar effects have been found out in low back pain, diabetes, migraine and stress related psychosomatic disorders.

Yoga is also effective in the management of following disorders:-

- Depression
- Constipation
- Sciatica
- Hypertension
- Cervical spondylosis
- Arthritis
- Flatulence
- Obesity
- CAD

Yogasanas are special patterns of body that stabilize the mind through static stretching. The great seer Patanjali has said:- “*Sthiram Sukhamasanam*” means asana (posture) should be stable, comfortable and effortless. Yogasanas are psycho-physical in nature. They are not mere physical exercises. Asanas play a significant role in toning up the neuro-muscular and glandular systems of the body to restore and to maintain the vitality of different organs of the body.

Asanas are broadly classified as a) Asanas for meditation b) Asanas for relaxation and c) Asanas for prevention of disease and promotion of health.

Following are some of the asanas that can be practiced by common man:-

### **PADMASANA**

In Sanskrit Padma means lotus. The asana in its final position resembles a lotus.

### **Technique :**

Sit in Samasthiti. Fold the right leg place it on the left thigh. Right heel should press the left part of the



abdomen. Fold the left leg place it on the right thigh. Left heel should press the right part of the abdomen. Place the hands on respective knees in Gyan Mudra. Keep the spine straight.

**Benefits :**

- ◆ It induces mental calmness & tranquility.
- ◆ It tones the coccygeal and sacral nerves by supplying them with an extra flow of blood.
- ◆ Helps to relieve constipation and improves digestive process.

**Caution:** *Those suffering from chronic knee-pain should not practice it.*

**URDHVA-HASTOTTANASANA :**

'Urdhva' means 'upward', 'hasta' means 'hands', 'uttana' means 'stretched or raising up' in Sanskrit. When the arms are stretched upward then it is known as Urdhvahstottanasana.

**Technique :**

Stand on the ground with legs together. Raise the arms and interlock the fingers. Slowly and gently, looking straight ahead, bend the body to the left, bending from the waist. Maintain the posture with normal breathing. Come back to the center and repeat the same practice from other side.



**Benefits :**

- ◆ The asana relieves constipation very quickly.
- ◆ It makes the waist slim, the chest broad and removes
- ◆ Fatty deposits on the hips and the buttocks.
- ◆ It increases height and relieves painful condition of the ribs.

**ARDHACHAKRASANA :**

'Ardha' means 'half', 'chakra' means 'wheel' in Sanskrit. In this posture the body is assuming the shape of half wheel, so it is called Ardhachakrasana.

**Technique :**

Stand straight with the hands by the side of the thighs. Look straight ahead and keep the legs apart about one foot. Place both the hands on the either side of the waist as the thumb in front & the remaining finger at the back. Now, exhale and slowly bend backwards as much as possible. Maintain the final posture for a while. While inhaling, come up slowly to the original position.



## Benefits :

- ◆ This asana will remove fat from the sides of the body.
- ◆ It also helps to get rid of stiffness in the hip joints and low back.
- ◆ Useful in asthma as it helps to expand the chest.
- ◆ Good practice for the low back pain.

## PADAHASTASANA :

'Pada' means 'foot', 'hasta' means 'hand' in Sanskrit. In this posture the hands are brought near the feet, so it is called Padahastasana.

### Technique :

Stand firmly with both feet together on the ground. Inhale and extend the hands upward. Stretch the hands as much as possible. Exhale and bend forward. Place the hands on the ground in front of the feet and try to place the forehead on the knees. Maintain this asana for some time. While inhaling, come back to the original position.



### Benefits :

- ◆ Relieves stomach pain, tones the liver, spleen and kidneys.
- ◆ Soothes the brain cells.
- ◆ The spinal nerves are rejuvenated and reinvigorated.
- ◆ Stretches the hamstrings, calves and hips
- ◆ Strengthens the thighs and knees.
- ◆ Helps to increase the height in children.

## TRIKONASANA :

In Sanskrit 'tri' means three and 'kona' means angle. In this asana body takes shape of an extended angle, giving an intense stretch to trunk and legs.

### Technique :

Stand with feet as wide apart as possible, while bending towards left, touch the left foot and the right arm should extend upward by the side of the head. Care should be taken that the trunk does not lean forward or backward. The same should be repeated on the other side.

### Benefits :

- ◆ The special feature of this asana is that it helps in increasing height.
- ◆ It relieves backache.



- ◆ People with bent or crooked bodies or those who experience difficulty in walking erect must practice this asana.

### UTTANAPADASANA:

'Uttana' means 'raising up', 'pada' means 'foot' in Sanskrit. In this posture the legs are raised upwards. Hence, the name Uttanapadasana.

#### Technique :

Adopt supine lying position with legs together, hands by the side of the body. Palms are resting on the ground. While inhaling slowly raise both the legs without bending the knee to 60-degree angle. Maintain this position with normal breathing. Exhale and slowly bring down both the legs and place them on the ground.



#### Benefits :

- ◆ This asana helps to stretch the muscles and nerves of the lower back gently.
- ◆ It strengthens the abdominal muscles.
- ◆ Helps to get rid of the excess fat in the abdominal region.

### PAWANMUKTASANA:

“Pawana” means 'wind' and 'mukta' means to 'release'. When it is practiced, it helps to release excessive gases from the body.

#### Technique :

Lie down on your back with legs extended together on the ground. Inhale and fold both the legs from the knees. The knees should be drawn up against the chest and clasped by the arms. Lift up your neck and try to place the chin on the knees. Inhale and come back to the original position with the head and legs straight on the ground.



#### Benefits :

- ◆ The practice of this asana speedily relieves and expels accumulation of the gas in the abdomen.
- ◆ The body feels light and the digestion improves.
- ◆ Removes constipation.
- ◆ Helps to correct neuromuscular disorders.

**Caution:** Those suffering from cervical spondylitis should not lift their head, while practicing this asana.

## HALASANA:

The posture is called Halasana because in its practice the body takes the shape of the Indian plough. Hala means a plough in Sanskrit.

### Technique :

Lie on the back while keeping the legs extended and the hands on the ground.

The feet should be gradually raised so that the toes can touch the ground. The body from hip to the shoulders should be kept straight. The feet are then gradually returned to the original position by first placing the back on the ground and then legs on the ground without lifting the head and back.



### Benefits :

- ◆ It is useful to improve flexibility of the spine.
- ◆ It is helpful to cure the problems related to thyroid gland.
- ◆ This asana nourishes the nerves of the spinal column and muscles of the back.
- ◆ The practice of this asana counters tendencies of piles.

**Caution :** 1. Patients suffering from ischemia, high blood pressure, cervical spondylosis or diarrhoea should not practice this asana.

2. This asana should not be practiced with jerks.

## CHAKRASANA:

'Chakra' means 'wheel' in Sanskrit. In this posture the body is assuming the shape of a full wheel, so it is called Chakrasana.

### Technique :

Lie down on the back with the feet on the ground, close to the buttocks. The palms are placed on the ground below the shoulders. The body is then raised gradually and slowly while inhaling to such an extent that it assumes the shape of an arch. After remaining in this posture for some time, the body should be brought down and rested on the ground.

### Benefits :

- ◆ It is claimed that old age is delayed by the practice of this asana.
- ◆ It directly having the effect on the vertebral column (spine), on account of which body becomes resilient and supple, the waist slim and chest broad.
- ◆ The asana has an effect on the knees, upper limbs and shoulders.
- ◆ The navel region gets rightly positioned when this asana is practiced.
- ◆ Good for relieving then back pain, neck pain and pain in the legs.



## BHUJANGASANA:

In Sanskrit Bhujanga means Cobra. The final position of this asana resembles the “Hooded Snake”. Hence it is called Bhujangasana.

### Technique :

Lie down on the abdomen. The lower limbs should be joined together and place close to the ground. The hands should be placed beside the chest on the ground. The body should be lifted above the ground from the navel as high as possible so that it resembles the hood of a cobra. Maintain the final posture with normal breathing. Then slowly come back to the initial position.



### Benefits :

- ◆ The practice of this asana relieves constipation, indigestion and flatulence.
- ◆ The practice of this asana makes the waist slender and chest broad.
- ◆ This asana increases the flexibility of back and massages the abdominal organs.
- ◆ It is more effective for Dyspepsia, Leucorrhoea, Dysmenorrhoea, Amenorrhoea.
- ◆ It tones ovaries and uterus.
- ◆ It is very good for slipped disc, sciatica, and low backache.

**Caution:** Patients suffering from hernia should not practice this asana.

## SHALABHASANA:

The meaning of 'Shalabha' is 'locust' in Sanskrit. In the final position of this asana, the shape of the body resembles a locust and hence it is called 'Shalabhasana'.

### Technique :

Take prone lying position, legs together, toes of the legs backward, sole towards the sky. Place your arms on your sides and stretch your hands backward, palms facing up. Rest your chin on the floor and look ahead. Raise your legs and waist with fists clenched. Then come back to initial position.



### Benefits :

- ◆ Strengthens the muscles of lower abdomen.
- ◆ Improves digestion and removes constipation.
- ◆ Gives strength to the lungs.

**Caution:** Those suffering from high blood pressure, heart disease or having complaint of asthma, should not practice it.



## DHANURASANA

In this asana the body takes a shape of a bow that is why it is known as Dhanurasana. The Sanskrit word 'Dhanur' means a bow.

### Technique :

Lie down on the abdomen (Prone lying position). Bend both knees and hold the legs just above the ankles by both the hands. Raise the whole body from the waist upwards and try to maintain the weight of body on lower abdomen. Maintain this posture for some time. Low down your body and come back to the initial position.



### Benefits :

- ◆ It helps to remove constipation.
- ◆ It stimulates gastric secretions.
- ◆ It restores the displaced navel to its normal position.
- ◆ The liver and pancreas are made to work in a sound manner.
- ◆ It is helpful in treating the back pain.

**Caution:** Patients of hernia should not do this asana.

## SARVANGASANA:

In Sanskrit 'sarvang' means all parts of the body. As this asana has effects on almost all the body parts and organs, it is called sarvangasana.

### Technique :

Lie on the back keeping the legs extended together on the ground. Slowly lift the legs upto 90 degrees. Lift whole body up by taking support of your hands. The body from the shoulders to the tip of the toes should be as straight as possible and the chin should touch the sternum. Try to maintain this final position for sometime or as per your capacity. While returning bring the waist and then the legs down without jerks and raising the head.

### Benefits :

- ◆ Diseases like dyspepsia, constipation, obesity, hernia can be treated by this asana.
- ◆ It is helpful for treating varicose veins.
- ◆ Improves circulation of blood.
- ◆ It makes the spine resilient.

**Caution:** 1. Patients suffering from high blood pressure, heart diseases and spondylitis should not practice this asana.

2. This asana should not be performed with jerks.





## MATSYASANA:

In Sanskrit “matsya” means fish, that is why it is known as fish posture.

### Technique :

After sitting in padmasana the head is taken backward with the help of hands in such a way that the crown of the head touches the ground, the back should be lifted making an arch from the ground. The knees must touch the ground. Hold the right thumb of the right leg with left hand and left thumb of the left leg with the right hand. Stay in final posture to your capacity.



### Benefits :

- ◆ Ocular defects can be corrected by this asana.
- ◆ It is very effective asana for ailments of throat like tonsilitis.
- ◆ Spine becomes flexible.

**Caution :** 1. Vertigo patients should avoid this asana.

2. People suffering from stomach ulcers should not practice this asana.

## USHTRASANA:

In this asana the shape of the body resembles the shape of a camel. In Sanskrit “ustra” means camel.

### Technique :

Sit in Vajrasana. Slowly stand on your knee. Keep your thighs, knees and feet together, with the toes pointing to the back. Keep the torso upright. Place your palms on the soles of your feet. Now push your spine forward simultaneously extend your ribcage and broaden your chest. Maintain the position to your capacity and then come back to initial position.



### Benefits :

- ◆ This asana is extremely useful for ocular defects.
- ◆ Increases lung capacity.
- ◆ Improves blood circulation to all the organs of the body.
- ◆ Tones the muscles of the back and spine.
- ◆ Removes stiffness of the shoulders, back and ankles.

## PASCHIMOTTANASANA:

The meaning of 'paschim' is 'back' and 'tana' is to stretch; so when the back is stretched forward then it is known as paschimottanasana.

## Technique :

Sit on the ground with legs extended forward. Keep your back straight. Inhale and raise your hands up. Exhale and bend forward making an effort to touch the toes with your hands and placing head onto the knees. Try to place the elbows on the ground.



## Benefits :

- ◆ The spine becomes flexible.
- ◆ It is extremely useful for skin diseases.
- ◆ People prone to excessive sweating are benefited by this asana.

## ARDHAMATSYENDRASANA:

The original Matsyendrasana is difficult to practice; hence the variation is Ardhha Matsyendrasana.

## Technique :

Sit on the ground with the left leg bent and the heel placed at the side of the thigh. The right foot should be then placed near the left knee on the ground. The left arm should encircle the knee and the hand should grasp the toes of the right foot. The right arm should be taken behind the back around the waist in an attempt to touch the navel. Look at the side of the shoulder. This asana should be repeated by using alternate limbs.



## Benefits :

- ◆ It removes the disorders of respiratory system such as asthma.
- ◆ It strengthens the spinal column and the muscles of the back.
- ◆ It is also effective for ailments of the throat, like tonsillar diseases.
- ◆ This asana stimulates gastric secretions.
- ◆ Very effective for patients who are suffering from diabetes.

**Caution:** Pregnant ladies are not advised to perform this asana.

## GOMUKHASANA:

The interlocked hand in this asana takes the shape of Gomukh, which means “a cow's face” in Sanskrit. That is why it is known as Gomukhasana.

## Technique :

Sit on the ground with the left leg bent so that the heel touches the anus. The right leg also should be bent so that the right heel touches the left buttock. Care should be

taken so that the left foot should remain straight touching the ground and the toes of the right foot also touches the ground. The right arm should be raised and bent at the elbow behind the shoulders towards the back. The left arm should be bent upward behind the back so that all the eight fingers of both the hands are interlocked. Then the right elbow should be lowered as far as possible. During all this, the eyes have to be kept open and the respiration has to go on as usual.



### Benefits :

- ◆ Useful for diseases of the lung.
- ◆ Patients of asthma and tuberculosis should specially practice this asana.
- ◆ This asana helps in making the spine straight. It strengthens the muscles of the back and biceps.
- ◆ The practice of this asana removes pain in hips and lower extremities. Relaxes muscles of shoulder and neck.
- ◆ This is very good for patients suffering from arthritis and piles.

### SHAVASANA :

In Sanskrit 'shava' means a 'dead body'. This asana resembles a dead body that is why it is known as Shavasana.

### Technique :

Lie down on your back with the hands placed near the thighs and palms facing upwards. The heels should be slightly apart while the toes pointing outwards. The whole body should be relaxed. All the parts of the body– neck, chest, shoulders, waist, eyes, knees, legs, feet and hands should be completely relaxed.



### Benefits :

- ◆ Relieves physical and mental fatigue.
- ◆ Relaxes the whole body.
- ◆ Extremely beneficial for high blood pressure and cardiac patients.
- ◆ Beneficial for people suffering from neurosis.

Publicity Material Not For Sale



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