

YOGA FOR ADOLESCENTS

ACTIVITY OF WHO CC -TM (Yoga)-IND 118



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WHO Collaborating Centre in Traditional Medicine (Yoga)-IND 118

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Yoga for Adolescents

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MESSAGE

I am delighted to present this Yoga module **"Yoga for Adolescents"** as a part of WHO Collaborating Centre (WHO-CC) in Traditional Medicine (Yoga).

Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) has been designated as the WHO Collaborating Centre for Traditional Medicine (Yoga) in India since April 2013. The institute serves as an effective resource centre for information exchange on Yoga and plays a prominent role in developing Yoga standards to promote the rational practice.

There has been an upsurge in global demand for authentic information and knowledge about Yoga worldwide, particularly after the United Nation's declaration of 21st June as the International Day of Yoga on 11 December 2014.

Yoga is for all spheres of life and for all age groups. "Yoga for adolescents" module has been prepared for documentation of the practices and standardized use of Yoga practices for the prevention and management of disease and promotion of the physical as well as mental health of the adolescent age group. The content reflects the extensive consultation and deliberations which has been done to give the final shape to this module and make this a great source of knowledge and information.

This book will be a significant addition to the existing repertoire of knowledge, bringing to the forefront new ideas, developments, and trends in the field of Yoga to promote all aspects related to the holistic health and well-being.

The collaborative project with WHO has also prepared a mobile app WHO mYoga App. This app carries videos of various Yoga practices performed by trained professionals, with the objective of guiding Yoga aspirants.

All these efforts are aligned to make Yoga accessible to everyone. This publication would go a long way in opening new vistas and adding further depth to the subject.

I congratulate the Director, MDNIY, and his entire team for their untiring effort in putting together this useful publication. It will go a long way in imparting yogic values and leading a healthy and active life.

(Rajesh Kotecha)

Date: 19.06.2023

PREFACE

WHO Collaborating Centre in Traditional Medicine (Yoga) -IND 118 of Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, takes pride in contributing to its WHO-CC activities through this book entitled “Yoga for Adolescents”.

WHO has recognized the important contribution of traditional medicine to providing essential health care. In view of supporting WHO in the development of WHO benchmarks for training in Yoga, Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, New Delhi, has been designated as WHO Collaborating Centre in Traditional Medicine (Yoga)-IND 118 in India. MDNIY, as the collaborating centre for traditional medicine (Yoga), aims to harness the potential of traditional medicine through modern science, research, and technology to improve the health and wellness of people and make preventive and curative healthcare, affordable and also accessible to all.

The objectives of the WHO Collaborating Centres are diverse and include the collection, and dissemination of information on Yoga, standardization of terminology, methods, and procedures, generating evidence-based information on the safety, quality, and cost-effectiveness of traditional medicine products and therapies, development, and application of appropriate technology, provision of reference substances and other services, participation in collaborative research as well as capacity building through various training programmes.

In light of the ever-increasing demands of this ancient wisdom of Yoga, for the different age groups of society, it is necessary to develop information that caters to the specific needs of a particular age group as each age group has its special needs. This module “Yoga for Adolescents” has been prepared for documentation of the practices and standardized use of Yoga practices for the prevention and management of disease and promotion of the physical as well as mental health of the adolescent age group. Adolescence is a unique phase of human development and is an important time for laying the sound stepping stones for good health. This transient phase requires proper guidance, counselling, and education, to shape a better and promising future.

This book extensively discusses about the physical and psychological issues faced by teenagers, the role of diet and nutrition, the importance of education and counselling, and benefits of incorporating Yoga into their lives. This document also emphasises evidence-based research on Yoga for adolescents and provides methods of instruction for this age group. It concludes with a summary, references, guidelines, recommended protocols, and step-by-step instructions for practicing yoga practices.

This publication will be a valuable addition to the contemporary works on Yoga, acquiring global acceptance and validation. It traces essential yogic practices and contains varied information for healthy living. The language and explanations are simple and serve as an introduction for beginners who are looking to learn the unique practice of Yoga.

Good health is one of the foundations of happiness and well-being. For adolescents, this book will help them understand and manage the key yogic principles and practices for a healthy life. When the health system grapples with change, the least we can do is take charge of our health. Contributions on each subject and topic are based on the Consultative Committee’s rigorous efforts, procedures, recommendations, research, and deliberations meant to share the best yogic practices.

I hope the publication will be very useful for Yoga enthusiasts, particularly the adolescent population and the inquisitive minds searching for timeless truths in modern-day lifestyle.



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This endeavour would not have been possible without the guidance and support of the Ministry of Ayush, the Government of India, New Delhi. I sincerely thank *Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha*, Secretary, Ayush for his timeless motivation and guidance, and also Special Secretary, Joint Secretaries, and Senior officials of the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, for their consistent guidance and support in all activities of WHO-CC.

I would like to express special thanks to *Dr. Arpan A. Bhatt*, who contributed to the preparation of the “concept paper” and for providing technical inputs during the preparation of the document and is highly acknowledged.

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In this sequence, I would like to thank *Dr. D Elanchezhiyan*, Project Coordinator (WHO-CC), for his contribution in the preparation of the document. I would like to thank *Ms. Sobika Rao*, Assistant Professor (Human Anatomy) and *Ms. Shuchi Mohan* for reviewing the document. I would also like to thank *Ms. Sairem Bandana Devi*, for her assistance in preparing this document.

I also extend my thanks to the teaching faculty of MDNIY, who were actively involved in various working groups and provided technical inputs for this WHO-CC activity especially, *Dr. Lakshmi Kandhan, Dr. Rameshwar Pal, Dr Kushbhu Jain, Ms. Sobika Rao, and Ms Neetu Sharma*.

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I would also like to thank the institute’s officials, faculty & colleagues for their assistance throughout the project and all those individuals who have helped directly or indirectly in the publication of this book.

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01 INTRODUCTION

The word 'adolescence' refers to the period following the onset of puberty during which a young person develops from a child into an adult.¹ During this phase between childhood to adulthood, the young person goes through dramatic physical, physiological, psychological, sexual, and behavioral changes, all taking place at the same time. The tender body of a child matures, the hormones surge, and emotions evolve. These physical, physiological, and psychological changes make it a phase where ideas and road maps are set and often determine the course of life. They become the formative years of one's life. These formative years are also the most vulnerable as the body, mind, and emotions undergo rapid changes with little time to adapt. It is a phase of life when an individual is neither considered as a child nor an adult. Stanley Hall, considered as the father of scientific research in adolescence, emphasized adolescence as a new birth and the last chance for race improvement. Adolescence is the beautiful and adventurous journey of self-discovery and interaction with the society. This phase of life is full of fantasies, excitement, contradictions, doubts, and uncertainties. This is a critical time in anyone's life, because the knowledge, habits, skills, and experiences gathered in this phase can directly or indirectly affect adulthood.

The innocence and obedience of childhood gradually vanish and are replaced by diffidence, apprehension, fear, and vulnerability. One is at crossroads where decision making is difficult but at the same time taking orders from elders is not easily acceptable. Decision-making is often influenced by the environment and peers to a great extent. These young adults can easily fall into undesirable habits, which can give transient pleasure but can destroy their health and happiness in the future, or, these young adults could develop qualities and a personality by which they do well for themselves, their families, and society at large. Introducing Yoga to adolescents and incorporating its practice into their daily lives would help them adapt quickly to this transitory phase in life, to address the issues associated with the 'growing up' phase and make them mature, responsible individuals.

1.1 Understanding the Term Adolescent/Adolescence

The Latin word for adolescence is "*adolescere*" which means 'to grow up' or 'to mature.' According to WHO (World Health Organization), the period between the ages of 10 and 19 years is considered as the adolescent phase of life. Adolescence is the time of rapid physiological and psychological development and changes in thought processes, relationships, and responsibilities.

The term *puberty* is sometimes considered as adolescence. However, puberty is not the same as adolescence. Actually, puberty is a brief period during the phase of adolescence. It is the phase when a boy or a girl becomes physiologically capable of producing offspring. In girls, it starts with the beginning of the menstrual cycle and in boys, with the enlargement of testes and also the appearance of secondary sexual characteristics in both the genders. While puberty is concerned with physical and sexual maturation in boys and girls, the phase of adolescence includes cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral changes too.

WHO clearly states that 'adolescence' is a phase rather than a fixed period in life. As mentioned above, it is a journey of development in many aspects: from the changes in secondary sexual characteristics (puberty) to sexual and reproductive maturity; the development of mental processes and self-identity. It is important to know that adolescents are not a homogeneous group. Their needs can change with their sex, stage of development, needs brought on by circumstances in life, and the socio-economic conditions of their environment.

1. Taken from an online dictionary freely available on the Internet.



Researchers suggest that three primary developmental stages occur in the process of adolescence: (a) early adolescence, (b) middle adolescence, and (c) late adolescence.

Early adolescence: Early adolescence occurs between the age of 10 to 14. In this period, an individual experiences the onset of puberty. Both girls and boys experience changes in their physical appearance, development of their sexual organs, and increased attraction towards the opposite gender. In terms of cognitive development, abstract thinking is very less, but they start developing moral values during this phase.

Middle adolescence: Middle adolescence phase occurs between the ages of 15 to 17. In this phase, puberty reaches its peak, physical development continues in males but slows down in females. During this phase, adolescents start focusing on long-term goals, and develop interest in moral reasoning and self-identity. They also experience many emotional and social changes and a desire for independence.

Late adolescence: Late adolescence, also known as young adulthood, occurs between 18 to 24 years of age. In this phase, boys and girls focus more on cognitive development rather than physiological changes. They develop the ability to think rationally; they start planning for the future, and also experience emotional stability and independence.

1.2 Epidemiology

Adolescents constitute a large percentage of the population and they have a distinct pattern of health and illness. According to Sawyer *et al.* (2012), young adults between the ages of 10 to 24 years comprise nearly 25% of the world population. In absolute numbers this population is nearly 2 billion people. Among the most developed countries, young people aged between 10 to 20 years account for 13%–15% of the population. WHO classifies young people as 10–24 year old, with adolescence (10–19 years) and youth (15–24 years) overlapping within that age range. India is home to 253 million adolescents, accounting for 20.9% of the country's population. Almost 72% of the adolescent population resides in rural areas. The adolescent population in urban areas declined from 21.9% in 2001 to 19.2% in 2011, while in rural areas, it remained more or less the same.

Societies typically define adolescence in terms of age and social roles with little consistency between countries. Although the biological sequences of puberty are highly consistent across countries and



Fig1. Comparison of the World population and Adolescent Population

Source: Progress for children; A report card on adolescents. UNICEF (Accessed on 25 November 2020)



ethnicity, changes in the timing of puberty, the nature of social-role changes, and the hopes and aspirations of adolescents across the world are widely affected by economic and socio-cultural factors.

In this monograph, we would mainly be referring to young adults between 13 to 19 years of age as adolescents.

1.3 Importance and problems of adolescent health:

The last century has seen the emergence of public health programs, maternal health programs, and antibiotics. All these have decreased maternal mortality and improved the survival of children. The health of infants and children has also seen a remarkable improvement.

However, there has not been a similar improvement in the health of the adolescent population. WHO reported in 2014 that worldwide, an estimated 1.3 million adolescents died in a year: [http://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/epidemiology/adolescence/en/].

The top three causes of death were road traffic injuries, HIV/AIDS, and suicide, while depression was the predominant cause of illness and disability. This report highlighted the need for high-level attention on the health needs of 10 to 19 years old young adults.

To address the issues and problems associated with this phase of life, we need to understand the physiological and psychological changes of this age group.

It is in the most actively growing phase of life. There is not only physical growth of the individual, but also sexual maturation that is mainly determined by the activation of the endocrine system bringing with it the mental and emotional evolution of the individual. The lack of synchrony among physical, emotional, and sexual development leads to what is often referred to as the “tumultuous teen years”. Death among teens by road-traffic injuries, HIV/AIDS, and suicide, could, perhaps, be attributed to this lack of synchrony. When depression is ‘uncontrolled’, it can lead to the ultimate step of suicide; there is a surge in hormones but the lack of maturity to handle the sexual changes associated with the hormones and urges may become the cause of unprotected sex and a potential cause of HIV infection and rash driving leading to road accidents.

Further, the problems faced by adolescents in the current century differ from those they faced in the past. For example, obesity is a relatively recent entrant in the gamut of problems faced by the teens [<https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/>]. According to the Centre for Disease Control (CDC), USA, obesity has quadrupled among adolescents in the past 30 years. The percentage of obese adolescents aged 12–19 increased from 5 in 1980 to nearly 21 in 2012. Overall, nearly one-third of children and adolescents are overweight or obese. The ‘blame’ for this enormous rise in obesity is often attributed to the sedentary lifestyle of teens. This could be because of the over-emphasis on academic activities in some societies and not to extra-curricular activities during the crucial high school years. It could also be due to the consumption of junk food, and spending more time on video games, smart phones, and computers, ignoring the time for physical activity. Whatever be the cause of this rise in obesity, the teens are conscious of their appearance and figure. They get embarrassed by their appearance and are sensitive to negative comments on their appearance. This, in turn, can lead to emotional and psychological issues. Pressure of performance in competitive exams, and comparison with the achievements of friends and contemporaries aggravate the problem. Infatuation is natural but rejection of proposals often destroys the lives of many teens.

02 PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES DURING ADOLESCENCE

Supporting Adolescents

During the tumultuous phase of adolescence, the young ones need a strong support system so that they enter the stable phase of adulthood with ease. This support system includes family support, good education, a company of good people, and having role models whom they can look up to and aspire to follow. Despite having the best of all these support elements, the adolescent phase can be filled with turmoil and disturbances, which need to be addressed. While on one hand, we may try to attend to the root cause of the problem, on the other, we may prepare the children to handle the 'issues' so that they do not face any form of mental and emotional disorder. Yoga can play a pivotal role in preparing children to handle 'issues' of the teen years. As quoted by one of the stalwarts of Yoga, Yogacharya BKS Iyengar, "Yoga cures what need not be endured and endures what cannot be cured" and "The practice of Yoga changes the way you see things."

Before we embark on the role and practices of Yoga, let us first understand the typical issues of the adolescent group.

2.1 Physical Development of Adolescents

The hormonal changes in the pubertal years lead to the growth of bones, height gain, and the onset of secondary sexual characteristics. The growth of the bones occurs faster than the growth of the accompanying muscles. The body becomes stiff as compared to the flexibility of childhood. A child can fall umpteen times but does not get injured but a teen starts developing aches and muscle pains with physical activity, which is commonly called as 'growing pain'. Muscle strains, pulls, and injuries while doing physical activity also creep in and, in turn, could lead to teens moving away from these activities.

As children suddenly shoot up in height, they feel like they have extra-long limbs that they cannot seem to handle. As the muscles have not kept pace with the skeletal growth, there is a likelihood that postural changes set in. The increase in height is also accompanied by weight gain making the adolescent feel heavy and awkward.

Like the changes in height, body composition, and motor skills, the reproductive system also develops triggering many changes during the phase of adolescence. Both primary and secondary sexual features develop during adolescence due to hormonal changes.

Primary sexual characteristics

These characteristics mainly refer to the reproductive system in both males and females, i.e., testis and ovaries. The development of primary sexual traits indicate that the adolescents have become capable of producing the next generation (i.e., the ability to make babies).

- In females, the most important primary indicator of adolescence is the menarche or the first menstrual period. The median age of menarche varies with ethnicity as well as life style factors. [REF: Flaws JA et al., Women and health, 2000]. However, it is considered normal when a girl has her first period between the age of 12 to 16.

- In males, the most important primary sexual characteristics associated with puberty are the enlargement of the penis and testes. The median age of puberty is considered to be 13 years, but a boy having his puberty between 12 to 16 years of age is considered to be normal.

Secondary Sexual Characteristics

The secondary sexual characteristics refer to other indicators of adult male and female bodies. The development of sexual characteristics starts in late childhood and continues through early adolescence. However, every adolescent has a different rate of development.

Hormonal changes are the main cause of the development of secondary sexual characteristics. Secondary sexual characteristics mainly refer to the maturation of reproductive organs that leads to changes in body appearance. The most significant change in both male and female bodies is the growth of hair on their bodies, mainly in underarms and groin areas. Boys also notice hair growth in other parts of body like facial hair, hair on chest and stomach. This hair continues to grow thicker during adolescence. The other significant change during adolescence in the male body is the change in their voice. This occurs due to the enlargement of larynx or voice box, causing deeper voice. In boys, their Adam's apple grows larger due to enlargement of larynx. This change occurs in both male and female bodies but not noticeable in female due to smaller voice box. Secondary sex changes in the body make the child extra conscious, especially the girls. In addition to the periodic menstruation, the girl develops breasts which is one of the most significant sexual development. Hence, they tend to slouch, droop the shoulders losing the natural upright posture.

	Females	Males
Primary sexual characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ovaries produce hormones to start the menstrual cycle or Menarche ○ Increase in size of vagina and uterus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Secretion of hormones related to sperm production ○ Ability to ejaculate sperms ○ Enlargement of testes, penis, prostate glands and seminal vesicles
Secondary sexual characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enlargement of breasts ○ Widening of hips (for childbearing) ○ High pitched voice ○ Growth of pubic hair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Growth of pubic hair ○ Chest becomes larger ○ Hair growth in different body parts like the armpit, face, chest and stomach ○ The voice becomes deeper due to enlargement of the larynx or voice box ○ Prominent Adam's apple can be seen

2.2 Problems of Adolescents

Adolescence is a transition period from childhood to adulthood. This tender age is considered to be between 12 to 19 years and is riddled with difficulties. This is the time when the youth is most prone to mental diseases such as depression and anxiety.

About 20% of youth (12–19 years of age) in developed countries are affected by mental illness (depression and anxiety). According to WHO, 50% of youth with mental challenges will be under-served. Therefore, there is an urgent need to take appropriate steps so that the adolescents can attain normal, healthy growth and become productive and positive contributors to society.

Adolescence is a time of confusion for a child who is usually not prepared for dramatic changes happening in his/her body. Physiological and endocrine system changes create imbalances in the body and mind. Rapid growth of body limbs creates physical imbalance while new strong urges like sex start governing one's behavior. The cortex part of the brain is still under-developed and limbic (emotional) brain is lacking proper control. This frequently results in erratic behaviors that are highly charged by emotions, both negative and positive. A new chapter in life is opening, but there is no map given to help with navigation.

Today, the society is witnessing various instances of breakdown in family values and intergenerational communication. As a result, the young people affected by such instances tend to get misguided with respect to their future. They may also show a lack of moral and ethical values in their behaviors, many times, with no understanding of what really is happening around them or to themselves. During this time, peer groups and external appearance tend to be more important. Further, the media knows exactly how to use this void in young people's lives and exploits it to the advantage of commerce.

2.2.1 Psychological Issues of Adolescents

Adolescence is a typical phase of life where children face a major milestone, experience major upheavals, and make a number of adjustments and adaptations within themselves for a smooth and happy life.

Children are generally not conscious of their bodies, but as they move into their teens, they become conscious of how they look and appear. The physical alteration and change in appearance are accepted well by most growing children but if their appearance is not as per the 'fashionable norms', then they can create emotional problems for themselves. Disorders like anorexia and bulimia could set in. For example, if the fashion trend is to have a 'zero figure', young girls can start on extreme diets to lose weight. It is not that they are overweight but they perceive that they are 'fat'. The other disorder of the same 'family' is bulimia, where they eat their meals but throw up after meals. These are the disorders that lead to not only under-nutrition but also a range of problems associated with lack of nutrition. Psychological issues also kick-start as an aside.

During teenage, there is a sudden and imperative need to sleep long hours, a lack of which makes the child feel groggy and bored. Moreover, these changes are enough for the child to feel de-motivated and lose confidence in their own abilities and capabilities. These are strange experiences for the growing child, and s/he certainly needs to find ways to cope with it.

In Yoga, there is a term called *antarayas* (obstacles), which hinder the development of individuals. These are diseases, laziness, idleness, doubt, despair, carelessness and unsteadiness of the body. These obstacles now start entering the life of adolescents. These can either be put at bay or they may find a home in the life of the teen and prevent their further development.

Adolescents often face insecurities and a lack of confidence. There are emotional and psychological upheavals as well. It is a sensitive phase of life, and they need to be treated like a fragile glass. They need to be handled with care! The peer group becomes all important for them and the opinions and impressions of fellow mates and friends matter the most. It is the time that their parents and elders have to become friends. If the parents and elders become critical of the child, shout or scold them then they may 'lose' the child. The child would no longer confide in them at a time when they need the support and care of their elders. The demands of the elders on the children should be realistic and should match the abilities of their children. If a child plays cricket and his parents expect that their child should become a





Virat Kohli or a Sachin Tendulkar, then it is not possible in most cases. The pressure of expectation may become too much for the child. Similarly, if the parents expect their children to top the 'board exams and public exams or get into the best universities in the world, then that too is not realistic. Such demands can create too much pressure on the child, which s/he may not be able to handle. Such parents may 'lose' their children, who may fall prey to unscrupulous activities such as lying, and cheating to satiate the demands of their parents.

Teens do not like to be singled out or picked on. A teacher may think that it is his/her duty to drive the child with concern and attention to help and improve the child's understanding of the subject. In the process, if the teacher constantly singles out the child, it may drive the child away from the subject altogether.

2.2.2 Social and Security Issues

The social issues faced by teens vary extensively between societies and cultures and such issues are independent topics for discussion. However, to highlight a few examples, the restrictions on what a teen-aged girl wears in public become evident in most societies. If the entire society behaves in the similar manner, then it is easily acceptable. But, on the other hand, if we were to look at cosmopolitan and multi-cultural societies then the problems start setting in. Take the example of a conservative family, which wants their young girl to be fully covered when she goes out. This may not be an issue if the entire society dresses in the same manner but if the rest of the peers are wearing short skirts or tight jeans, then girl will take some time to maintain her family culture and also feel accepted by the society or peers she moves with. In case this does not happen, then a feeling of isolation may set in.

To address such discrepancies in multicultural societies, it is important that these young adults are not only knowledgeable about their own culture but are taught to respect other cultures as well. They need to be taught not to give 'values' or sit in judgment about cultures and behaviors. We need to learn to accept that people are different. The acceptance of varieties, and the acceptance of differences would lead to a more divergent world and bring unity in diversity. It is the teen years where this ability to respect and accept the diverse cultures that we live in has to be inculcated and the biases of the adults not enforced upon.



03 DIET AND NUTRITION

Food is an integral part of our society. The fundamental role of food is to provide nutrition and energy to the body. The growing teen body where all the cells of the body are multiplying vividly need to be provided sufficient energy and food to support their growth.

Some factors that have to be considered while consuming food, to get the best of nutritional values from it are as follows:

- **A well-balanced diet** is what is needed. A high amount of protein to support the growth of bones and muscles, vitamins, and minerals to promote all the enzymatic activities for cellular growth accompanied by carbohydrates to satisfy the energy requirements.
- **Types of foods** to be eaten would depend upon the climatic conditions and the local food culture. It would be foolish to recommend a diet from one part of the world to those living in the other part of the world. For example, spicy food is consumed in tropical areas but this diet would not be acceptable in the northern temperate regions. Although globalization has exposed us to varieties of food, it is important to realize that fruits and vegetables that cannot be grown in a specific climatic condition or season should not become a part of the daily diet. To quote the popular nutritionist, Rujuta Diwekar, 'Eat local not low-cal'.
- **Palatability:** While we focus on the dietary requirements of the teens, one needs to also take into consideration their 'taste buds'. So, a recommended diet should not be something that the taste buds do not accept! To expect a teen to eat specific foods because they are good for health or not to eat junk food because it is not good for health is not a proposition that would not be easily digested by them. A young adult may not know the value of health. One learns the value of something when one does not have it or loses it. Most young adults are apparently healthy so they will not get enticed to eat certain food stuffs just because they are 'healthy' and not eat others because they are 'unhealthy'. To give an analogy, it is now well established that cigarette smoking is injurious to health. There are horrifying photographs put on the packets of cigarettes but despite these efforts, the cigarette and tobacco companies have not shut down.

So, healthy food should be made in such a manner that it appeals to the taste bud of the youngsters too. Otherwise, you would have them 'eating' very little at home and eating more outside!

- **Mindfulness while eating:** The term "mindfulness" was outlined by Jon Kabat-Zinn as "paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally". While dining, most individuals, particularly teens, watch something on their mobile devices. This should be avoided because people tend to swallow their half-chewed food while distracted and also do not have a control of the amount of food consumed. Instead, people should pay attention to their food while eating it, tasting it, and chewing it properly, which will result in increased salivation and better digestion. The *Bhagwad Gita* also explains how to eat: "while eating, one should concentrate only on eating as the food is served to one's consciousness". (9:27)
- Food is an integral part of every individual's overall health; thus, it is mentioned in many yogic texts. Some of the texts that mention how's and what's of food consumption are as follows:

The Bhagwad Gita:

In The Gita, Krishna says to Arjuna

*"Yuktaharaviharasya yuktachestasya karmasu
Yuktasvapnavabodhasya yogo bhavati dukkhaha" (6:17)*

This verse means "the one whose diet and movements are balanced, whose acts are correct, whose resting and waking hours are regular, and who pursues the path of meditation is the destroyer of pain or misery." Lord Krishna further clarifies this by saying that, eating too much food or too little, and sleeping too much or remaining awake all the time is not good for the health. Such people cannot concentrate or get absorbed in their *sadhana*.

Chapter 17 of the text mentions the different types of food as per the three gunas. People's preferences in eating are based on their personalities. The same can be said about the sacrifice, austerity, and generosity to which they are drawn (17:7). People expressing *Sattvik* qualities prefer food that promotes life span and increases virtue, strength, health, happiness, and satisfaction. Juicy, luscious, nourishing, and naturally flavorful, these foods are ideal. (17:8) Individuals with *Rajasik* qualities enjoy food that are extremely bitter, too sour, salty, very fiery, pungent, dry, and full of chillies. Such foods cause suffering, grief, and illness. (17:9) Food that is overcooked, stale, putrid, polluted, and impure are dear to people in the mode of ignorance (*Tamasik*). (17:10)

Hatha Yoga Pradipika:

The first chapter of this text talks about *asanas* and diet. In terms of food, it says agreeable food is that in which $\frac{3}{4}$ of hunger is satisfied with food, which is well cooked with ghee and sweets, and eaten with the offering of it to Shiva(1:60). Further, the verses talk about food which are not to be consumed, such as bitter, sour, saltish, hot, fermented, oily, til seed, rape seed, intoxicating liquors, fish, meat, curds, plums, oil-cake, asafetida (hing), garlic, onion, etc. Also, food heated again, dry, having too much salt, sour, minor grains, and vegetables that cause burning sensation, should not be eaten.

Food suggested to be consumed by those who practice Yoga are wheat, rice, barley, *sastik* (a kind of rice), good corns, milk, ghee, sugar, butter, honey, dried ginger, *parwal* (pointed gourd), the five vegetables (*leptadenia*, *pigweed*, *hogweed*, *amaranthus*, *spiny amaranthus*), moong, pure water. A Yogi should eat tonics (things giving strength), sweetened, greasy (made with ghee), milk, butter, etc., according to his desire.

Taittiriya Upanishad

In the Taittiriya Upanishad,

*"Annam brahmeti vyajaanaat;
Annaaddhyeva khalvimaani bhootaani jaayante;
Annena jaataani jeevanti;
Annam prayantyaabhisavishanteeti" (3.2)*

By this verse, the famous *Bhrigu Varuni* revealed that "Food is Brahman" because from food indeed all these living beings are born and having been born, they live by food and at the end they enter into the food again.

In short, it is thus revealed that from food life springs forth, by food it is sustained, and in food it merges when departed.

Chandogya Upanishad:

In this Upanishad, there is the mention of food in the verse:

*“Ahaarshudhau satvashudhih satvashudau dhruvasmritih
smritilambhesarvagrathinaam vipramoksha”
(Chandogya Upanishad-7/26/2)*

It says that purity of thought is a consequence of purity of diet and when that purity arises in the mind, there will be increased capacity of concentration of the mind, that is the perpetual retention of memory. If the memory is good, one becomes free from all bondages.

To develop physiological and mental functions properly, young people should learn to regulate their food habits by way of rejecting the fast-food habits and selecting only the *sattvik* food. Yoga teaches us as to ‘what to eat’, ‘what not to eat’, ‘how to eat’, ‘how much to eat’, etc. Our young people should know that ‘food’, not only nourishes our physical body but also influences our thoughts and behavior. This could be the reason that sages like *Vasishtha*, *Yajnavalkya*, and *Charandasa* have described the concept of *Mitahara* under *Yamas*. Moreover, the concept of food is not limited to that which is consumed by the mouth only. The other sensory inputs are also considered to be food. So the person cannot claim that he is consuming only fruits and milk, which is *sattvik* in nature, unless the food taken by sensory inputs is *sattvik*.¹

Similarly, food has been addressed in various other literature. To summarize, the essence of ancient Yogic literature on food is that eating impacts not just our physical health, but also our mind, emotions and behaviour. As a result, the recommended diet consists primarily of pure, easily digestible foods that should be consumed in moderation.

1. For details, please refer the article, ‘Food in Indian Perspective: An Analytical Study’, by Dr. B. R. Sharma. Souvenir, Seminar on Yoga and Dietetics, organized by Kaivalyadhama, Lonavla on 19 and 20 August 2000 and Yoga Mimamsa, Vol. XXXVII, No. 1 & 2, pp. 84-98, 2005.

04 ROLE OF EDUCATION AND COUNSELLING IN ADOLESCENTS' LIFE

Most of the waking hours of young adults or children are spent in an educational institution, be it a school or college or, university where they gather information. However, they also need to be educated about themselves, attain knowledge, wisdom and an ability of discriminative intelligence (referred to as *viveka khyati*).

As Swami Vivekananda said, "Education is not the accumulation of facts but the stimulation of thought". In this Internet age, procuring facts is possibly the easiest thing to do; getting information is no big deal but what to do with this information is the question. How to use this information is important. The ability to 'discriminate' the ability to sieve information has to be developed.

Once again, Yoga comes into the picture. Yoga teaches the practitioner about discrimination, what is called as *vivekakhyati* (the ability to differentiate), to realize that nothing is purely black and white but to appreciate the shades of grey. After all, adolescence is an age of experimentation. One cannot stop the natural tendencies and it is from these experimentations that they learn and 'settle down' later on. It is a time when they do not prefer too much advice unless asked for. However, the practice of Yoga, which brings the power of discrimination, will prevent them from experimenting with things that can damage their present or future lives.

Sage Patanjali refers to the *panca kleshas* as the major cause of human suffering. These are *avidya*, *asmita*, *raga*, *dvesha* and *abhinivesha* which are ignorance, ego, attachments, aversion and clinging on to life. The antidote to these *kleshas* are *abhyasa* and *vairagya* - as Patanjali says "*Abhyasa Vairagya Tannirodhah*". *Avidya* is root cause of human suffering as often leads one to mistake unreal for real. A discriminative faculty developed in youth helps clear the mind from illusions and makes one search for the truth. The *yamas* of *satya*, *ahimsa*, *asteya*, *brahmacharya* and *apargiraha* can firmly get established in youth.

However, *abhyasa* cannot be done superficially. *Abhyasa* is when the knowledge gets established in the practitioner. students can be at different levels - *mrdu*, *madhyama*, *adhimatra*, *tivra samvegin* - mild, moderate, intense and severe intense student and practitioner. All may not be born to be very intelligent and have the intensity to study. However, one can gradually progress from whatever state that one is.

Knowledge and wisdom cannot be acquired overnight. Sage Patanjali states, "*Satu Dirgha Kala Nairantarya Satkarsevito Dridh Bhumi*". It is long hours of uninterrupted study is required.

Acquisition of knowledge can bring about arrogance and evolution of ego. An arrogant mind and an arrogant individual loses compassion, humility and the art of learning. Therefore Patanjali warns us that *abhyasa* and *vairagya* go hand in hand, "*Abhyasa Vairagya Tannirodhah*". What we know is all the grace of our *Guru* and our parents and ancestors.

Similar to this ancient text on Yoga, there are many other texts which talk about disturbances of mind, reasons of grief and sadness in life and these texts also provide practices with brief description that any individual can follow and make his mind and body free from disturbances. The texts of Yoga be it the Gita, the Upanishads, the Yoga Vashista, Yagnvalky's treatise of even the modern day Light on Yoga - all deal with the study of the mind and consciousness and the means to free them from bondage.

So, reading of these scriptures would help the youth to know themselves, as a whole being. Especially knowing the nature of mind, and practicing the techniques like *pranayama*, *asana*, *kriyas*, concentration practices (*dharana*) etc. mentioned in the scriptures, they will be able to feel wholeness and a sense of balance within themselves.

Counselling

The mind of most adolescents is not very clear. They can be easily influenced by the good and not so-good. That is the reason that some of the addictive habits are often acquired in this phase of life. Peer-pressure can have a positive or a negative influence. The lack of clarity, which is natural at this age and phase of life can be cleared by assistance of adults and trained counselors. The counselors may be professionals, teachers, parents or elders which helps the youngsters foresee a problem, identify the root cause and find a solution.

Talking about counselling for the population of adolescents, what is also needed is for the society to respect and appreciate the abilities of the differently-abled. A visually impaired person has a strong sixth sense. Chief executive officers of some of the world's largest organizations had learning disabilities. They may not have done extremely well in the conventional schooling systems but have done extremely well in the business world.

So, children need to learn to tolerate, accept, and appreciate their classmates with any form of disability so that they are not looked down upon. More than the children, it is the parents and elders who need to be educated about this fact! Over the last few years, awareness about such disabilities is increasing and hopefully, its acceptance would also improve in the near future.

Benefits of counselling among the adolescents could be as follows, depending upon their individual experience:

It enables people to express, investigate, and comprehend their thoughts, emotions, and feelings.

- To assist them in determining what they want to do and how they want to do it.
- It helps to manage anxiety and depression by learning healthy coping techniques.
- Helps in building self-confidence and increasing self-esteem.
- It helps to recover from a past trauma.
- Improves communication skills and helps in improving interpersonal relationships.
- Helps in inculcating problem-solving skills.
- Assists in learning to cope with a physical disease.

05 YOGASANAS: ENSURING A SMOOTH TRANSITION THROUGH THE TUMULTUOUS ADOLESCENT PHASE OF LIFE

Yoga is a vast subject and covers all aspects of human life. What role does Yoga play during the adolescent phase, how and when should it be introduced? How should it be taught are some of the questions which need to be answered.

Practice of Yoga has the ability to address the physical, physiological, emotional, and social issues faced by young adults in the growing years. Yoga is a science of consciousness (*citta*), which constitutes the mind, intelligence, and ego. So, it is natural that its practices have an influence on the mind of the practitioner.

The practice of *asanas* (yogic postures) teaches the youngsters to handle and control their own bodies while instilling the much-needed confidence in them. According to *yogic* philosophy, there are three qualities of nature (called as *gunas*): *rajas* (active, dynamic), *tamasik* (lethargy and dullness), and *sattvik* (luminosity and purity). There is an abundance of *rajoguna* in this adolescent phase of life. This dynamism has to be channelized and not mis-directed because in this phase, these youngsters have not yet developed the ability to discriminate. It is here that the practice of *asanas* aid in correctly balancing out their *gunas*.

The body and mind are brought to a state of wakefulness and alertness, bringing with it motivation and excitement of achieving certain goals – physical, mental, and intellectual. Though unable to identify for themselves, it is perhaps, this factor that has induced youngsters who have been introduced to Yoga in their young age to keep coming back for Yoga classes every week and making it a part of their life.

Qualities such as stability, focus, determination, persistence, and perseverance develop unknowingly through their yogic endeavors, which go a long way in building their character and personality.

Practice of Yoga helps the adolescents to understand their bodies and its changes. It shows them ways of controlling their sensitive mind and emotions. It makes them observe their own breath – the very storehouse of the life force – consciously. They learn to build the dams over their uncontrolled abilities, emotions, and desires to build up a powerhouse from which they can channelize their energies.

Practice of Yoga makes the adolescents realise their unlimited capacities – the sky becomes the limit and impossible is a word that is erased from their dictionaries. The future is theirs. They learn that the key to their happiness and success is in their hands, fabricated by their own state of mental and physical awareness.

Yoga comprises eight aspects, which are *yama* (moral discipline), *niyama* (social discipline), *asana* (moulding the body into different postures), *pranayama* (extension and expansion of the life force – *prana*), *pratyahara* (involution of the senses), *dharana* (concentration), *dhyana* (meditation), and *samadhi* (a state of bliss).

Yama and *niyama* have to be inculcated into young adults. Any discourses or force would cause them to retaliate because they are at an age where they do not like being told or as they would say being 'lectured'. These disciplines would be inculcated if the people, especially adults (their parents, teachers, and coaches) follow them. But, lecturing a young adult on honesty and cheating on taxes by the adult is not going to bring the quality of honesty in the child.

However, the practice of *asanas* does not only mean moulding the body into different positions but also the mind and senses. It is the senses that are the main cause of disturbances. We cannot shut their

senses to the outside world because they have to learn to live, survive, and strengthen this same world. So, the senses need to be moulded.

5.1 Molding the Senses of Perception in Adolescents with Yoga

The adolescent period is a crucial time, when one begins to desire the taste of the pleasures of the world. Nature keeps adolescents and youth at the highest peak of physical power with expressions of emotions, desires, and physical instinctive wants. Their minds are caught in the web of pleasures and enjoyments. Though the mind is considered as the king of senses of perception and organ of action, it falls prey to the cravings of the senses. This is the time for them to think and channelize their energy in the right direction for a disciplined benevolent art of living.

Children are not aware of such pleasures of life of which adolescents are. Their heart is pure and hence, they need not be deliberately taught to control the senses and mind. They are not aware of the problems of the future. Why create confusion in their minds for unknown things to toss over? The sensual pleasures that remain dormant in childhood grow in the adolescent period. What we need to think of is how to find ways and means of guiding them in their adolescent period so that they are disciplined to grow in a positive and constructive way by themselves.

It is the age where they see things with a new 'eye' and an age where they want to experiment. But one has to ensure that the experiment with things does not harm them.

If they are educated by the time they reach adolescence, they can use their discriminative knowledge in disciplining their senses and mind for manhood or womanhood. Elders have to live as examples so that children follow in their footsteps in order to build the right discipline without speaking on controlling the senses.

Children follow by looking at elders. The concept of life itself has changed. Parents go astray and children follow and imitate them. If the parents have a habit of smoking and drinking, children follow them and when they grow up, they literally become the victims of such habits. The ancient proverb 'example is better than precept' is valid the most today wherein parents and elders should become an example or role models for the growing children and not mere 'advisors.' If the parents ask their children not to smoke but they themselves smoke then how does one expect the teen to follow?

Moral practices of *yama* and *niyama* are common to all religions. It is advisable to follow these universal moral principles as much as possible, which cover all sections of society irrespective of place or class.

These universal disciplines and individual disciplines, along with *asana* and *pranayama*, act as a backbone for *pratyahara*. *Asana* individually guides one to bring his/her body, brain, and nerves under control, whereas *pranayama* cultures the mind. Then, intelligence establishes in building up a state of stability in body, senses, and mind.

Pratyahara is not a practice but a will to maintain what has been earned and progressively cultured to establish a permanent imprint in the head and heart.

There is an *asana* called as *Samasthiti* or *Tadasana*, in which the practitioner holds the body in an upright position. Does his awareness spread all over the body without disparity? Here, the importance of the combined knowledge of perceptivity and conceptivity comes into play, which is the key to *pratyahara*. One has to bring awareness to spread from the top of the head to the bottom of the feet, so that the flow of intellectual attention and conscious awareness is felt evenly on the outside and the inside, as well as the front and back of the body in the performances of *asana* and *pranayama*. Right alignment needs to be brought not only on external actions but in the internal ones to move towards the self. This is *pratyahara* in action.



India's ancient scriptures state that one who withdraws his senses from the sensual objects as a tortoise draws its limbs into the shell from all directions, establishes the intelligence firmly on wisdom. As the practitioner learns to withdraw the limbs, senses, and mind inwards like a tortoise, he or she is a *pratyaharin*.

Practice of *asana* works on the cells of the body, and *pranayama* controls the flow of the breath and stills the oscillations of the mind. These two aspects put a brake on the outgoing and distracting mind and protect the practitioner from lack of attention, awareness, and alertness.

At the beginning, one will undoubtedly experience stress, strain, and fatigue as they learn to discipline and cultivate their body, senses, mind and intelligence. This happens because she/he does not link these two together. The moment he feels that they are gradually integrating, she/he is inspired and feels energetic to go ahead.

Years ago, Guruji Iyengar had compared the four corners of the bottom of the feet to the four tyres of a vehicle, where air pressures are measured and the tyres filled accordingly. This explanation was meant to position the body in *Tadasana* in such a way that energy flows without interruption from the feet to the head. When such a practice is attempted in all the *asanas*, then the practitioner develops a sense of clarity in thought, which helps them take decisions without confusion - an attribute essential for a meaningful life.

5.2 Personality development during Adolescence (the impressionable age)

Adolescence is a phase where the growing adult is in a most impressionable stage of life and their personality gets moulded. From infancy to the age of 6 to 7 years, a child discovers the world around him/her and tries to take part in its activities. From the age of 7, the child starts to evolve a personality and begins to realize that she/he has individuality; she/he has an identity that is different from the rest of the world and that his/her identity has the ability to interact with the world. If the early years of a child are the age of discovery of the world, the next stage is the discovery and evolution of his/her identity. This is the stage during which personality development begins. Here, personality development would involve interactive skills like sensitivity, bravery, honesty, compassion, and friendliness. From the teens, the child starts to understand that she/he has a possibility to make a difference in the scheme of things and involves his/her individuality to bring about a change. Here, the characteristics of courage, boldness, commitment, willpower, and tolerance can be developed.

Personality does not mean only the external appearance of an individual, as the personality is an integrated whole. The path of Yoga is strewn with precious jewels. The principal text of Yoga –the *Yogasutra*– exhorts the practitioner not to be enticed by the precious jewels, which come in the form of various *siddhis* (powers) but to continue on the path without distractions (*Yoga Sutra III.38*).

The practitioner may acquire extra-ordinary super sensory powers and supra-normal powers, but she/he must not be enamored by these. She/He must keep pursuing the genuine goal of moving towards the sight of the soul and live accordingly. The *sutras* also caution such a practitioner through this aphorism that these supra extraordinary powers act as obstacles and warns the practitioner to be careful.

However, there is no denial that powers come upon a practitioner depending on the intensity of practice. According to yogic texts, these powers include perfection of the body, which consists of beauty of form, grace, strength, compactness, and the hardness and brilliance like a diamond.

These characteristics are something that youth aspire for. One may reach the pinnacle of modern academic endeavor but always recall the start of the journey. The journey would have invariably started in a play school where a small child would have happily gone to the school wearing a smart and bright

uniform like his elder siblings. She/he would be anticipating the surprises in the tiffin box, which would unravel at the break. For such a child, schooling is all about the uniform and the tiffin box.

Over months, the child slowly gets disciplined in setting aside a fixed time for learning and education. Soon learning starts to get more important and a time comes when the uniform or even the contents of a tiffin box become inconsequential. The smart and bright uniform in the final analysis has no impact on the education but in the eyes of the pragmatist, it plays a significant role at the start of the journey. It is no different in the path of Yoga.

For a pragmatist, the pursuit of a strong and positive personality through the practice of Yoga is a valid one. The intent at the start of the journey does not change or diminish in the face of challenges in the path.

5.3 Influence of Asana Practice on the Development of an Adolescent Personality

Courage and confidence:

There are many *asanas* that most adults would never ever have dreamed of doing, especially those who have started Yoga at a later age in life. The inherent fear stops many from attempting certain *asanas*, whether it is *Adho Mukha Vrikshasana* or balancing independently in *Shirshasana* or doing the arm-balancing *asanas*.

The inherent fear gradually weans off when a good and experienced teacher coaxes, cajoles, and teaches the proper techniques to students to attempt these so-called difficult *asanas*. We start developing the courage and confidence to attempt or do something new and different. The fact that we are able to do things, which we never dreamt of, gives us confidence to further explore and try newer things. We start



Fig 2. Shirshasana



Fig 3. Padma Mayurasana



Fig 4. Mayurasana

looking at life differently and see more opportunities and become more positive in our approach. Thus, we inculcate a character of courage and confidence in whatever we do.

Balancing in asanas – develop courage in the practitioner

Willpower and endurance:

One of the attributes of *asanas* is stability. In the Yoga classes, adolescents can be made to stay for longer duration in specific *asanas*. The students are trained with clear instructions on how to attain that stability. The teachers motivate and stimulate students to stay for longer and longer durations in an *asana*. This is how they start developing the willpower. This is how they start becoming more determined

in their efforts. Endurance and stamina build up as they stay for longer duration in any *asana*. This also improves tolerance.

Observation and concentration:

Novices often mistake *asanas* as yogic exercises! But, as Guruji Iyengar states, “*Asanas* bring perfect firmness in the body, steadiness of intelligence and benevolence of spirit.” Students need to observe each and every part of their being. In the beginning, they start by observing the positioning of the gross body, the limbs, the positioning of the joints. Later, they progress in learning to observe how each part



Fig 5. Virasana



Fig 6 .Supta Virasana

behaves with every movement. For example, if you are observant, then you would notice that the thighs shorten as we lie back into *Supta Virasana* from *Virasana*. But if you do the same *asanas* with attention and awareness then you may be able to maintain the length of the thighs.

The students are constantly provided hints on the parts to be observed and to work on each of them in each *asana*, and that automatically deepens their observational skills along with concentration. This is *Dharana*.

Analytical and intellectual capabilities:

Observation, merely, for the sake of observation has no meaning. One needs to analyze and reflect on what one has observed. Guruji Iyengar consistently said, ‘Reflect on your actions’. You may tend to become mechanical in your practices and therefore stagnate if you do not reflect on your actions. You need to study what changes take place in each part of the body, the breath, the senses, the state of the mind, with each movement.

The sequence in which you perform different *asanas* influence your practices too– how the body behaves and along with it the mind, the senses, the emotions and the breath. If you change the sequence, then the responses also change. Practicing in such a manner improves your analytical and intellectual skills.

Discrimination and clarity:

In the early days of the *asana* practice, one barely differentiates one’s upper leg from the lower leg. Theoretically, one knows the different parts of the body but very often one is ‘unaware’ of the different parts. Most of us do not have the ability to subjectively differentiate the different parts of the legs so as to identify the direction and manner in which the skin, the muscles, and the bones specifically move. We have

no clue about the direction in which the ligaments of the knees are moving and how we should be moving them! It is only after prolonged duration of reflective practice; do we attain the ability to differentiate the different parts and the various movements in our body. This is how we enhance our discriminative faculty and also clarity in our thoughts and expression. Discrimination and clarity gradually become a part of our character as we continue the practice of Yoga with consistency.

Ability to trouble shoot and solve problems:

Life is not a smooth journey. It is bound to have ups and downs. Problems are an integral part of life. The problem won't be solved by itself rather one needs to identify the source and then tackle it. We need to learn to go to the 'source' of action. If we are able to trace the source of each action in each *asana*, then not only will we perform *asanas* with great ease but also develop a great amount of clarity in our thinking.

One of the simplest examples is when we lift our hands up in *Urdhva Hastasana*, we have to trace the origin of the lift of the arms. The arms are not lifted up from the shoulder or from the armpits but from the bottom of the back of the *lattismus dorsi*. This is the simplest of *asanas* with the simplest of actions but if we can trace the source of action for each of the movements of even half the *asanas* in Light on Yoga,



Fig 7. Different ways of raising the arms up in Urdhva Hastasana

and then we can well imagine the kind of character we would evolve into. We would then be able to trace the solution to any hurdle that we may encounter in life.

Extending the arms up may appear like a simple action, but there are different sources from which the arms are lifted. They can be extended from the fingertips, wrists, elbows, shoulders or even the sides of the trunk. The ease to perform the same action varies with the source of action.

Enhances our sensitivity and emotionality:

The skin is the largest sense organ but we hardly use it. We tend to use it only to feel the extremes of climate conditions. What if we were to feel the internal and external touch on the skin in the various



Fig 8. Utthita Trikonasana

asanas. For example, if we were to just observe the touch of the feet on the floor in the different standing *asanas*, we will notice that the touch is different. We touch the centre of the sole of the foot of the front leg in *Utthita Parsvakonasana* but we never touch that part in *Utthita Trikonasana*.

When we extend our arms for the standing *asanas*, we will notice that the arms feel heavy and fatigued if we just 'stretch' them out. But if we extend the same arm specifically from the armpit towards the elbows then the arms feel strong, firm, and light. We can feel the skin of the bottom of the arm moving towards the flesh and then the flesh towards the bone. Thus, the ease to perform the same action varies with the source of action. These are just simple examples but if we were to practice all our *asanas* in this manner then it is only natural that we evolve our sensitivity along with emotionality.



Fig 9. Utthita Parsvakonasana

Pranayama can be performed with sensitivity as one goes by the 'feel' in the practices. An insensitive person cannot perform *pranayama*. That is one of the reasons, one is taught *asanas* to evolve one's sensitivity and then proceed towards *pranayama*.



Attaining multitasking abilities:

Stress has become a common cause of dis-ease in the modern world. The reason for stress is the inability to cope with the tasks that we have taken up or have been thrust upon us. Youngsters are ambitious. They want to do a lot of things, they want to 'achieve' a lot. Ambition is good in youth as it motivates them to strive and work harder and work intelligently. At the same time, they need to be trained to handle the stress that may come with it and also develop the ability to 'multi-task'. One can attain this ability through the *asana* practices. Generally, we observe and adjust the feet but we forget the adjustments in the arms. We adjust the arms but forget the breath. We focus on the breath to retain the rhythm in the breath but we lose the alertness in the arms. Gradually, we learn to focus not only on one part but also on other parts. *Dhyana* is when there is *dharana* all over. We thus attain the quality of multi-tasking. This quality is a great aid in today's world.

Attaining efficiency in our activities:

It is said in the yogic texts that perfection in an *asana* is achieved when the effort to perform it becomes effortless and the infinite being within is reached. Effort becoming effortless may sound like an antithetical statement. In reality, persistent practice with attention and awareness can lead to this state.

To give an analogy of a person learning to drive, the first few days would feel driving as a humongous task of coordinating the feet on the brakes, clutch, and the accelerator, keeping the eyes focused on the road and hands coordinating the steering and the gears. However, with practice, all the actions get synchronized. Thus, the 'stressful' effortful task of driving soon becomes effortless.

The skills involved in perfecting the *asanas* are much more complex. There are hundreds of *asanas*. Here, we need to coordinate the organs of action, the senses of perception, the mind, and the intelligence.

Observation, reflection, and regular practice improve our skills in practising the *asanas*. Gradually, we start becoming skilful in our actions. Thus, the effort required to perform the same task decreases to such an extent that it can even reach a state of effortlessness. This does not mean that we should not put in efforts to achieve our goal. It means that we attain that extent of skill and efficiency such that the same task can be performed with less effort, where we put in less energy but attain a greater output. This is 'effort and energy management' in modern terms. When we attain the capability of managing our efforts and energies well, then we automatically become efficient in our activities. This attribute can be evolved and enhanced by intelligent practice of *asanas*. Thus, our capabilities and efficiencies improve not only in our *asanas* but our chosen vocations as well. Efficiency is a positive personality trait.

Humility:

Arrogance, ego, etc., are qualities that hinder our progress as they tend to subdue our emotions and intelligence. Humility is naturally developed by the practice of *asanas* as described earlier.

Even at the age of 90, despite being a world-renowned Yoga Guru, Gururji Iyengar states that he is learning something new in an *asana*, we need no other example of humility. Humility is a must for learning and our growth. Arrogance stops us from learning.

The process of development of the personality is so gradual that one does not even realize that a youngster's personality is being moulded. They become more tolerant, more sensitive, more analytical, more confident, more observant, and more reflective accompanied by humbleness.



06 ROLE OF PRANAYAMA FOR ADOLESCENTS

Adolescents can be introduced to the basics of *pranayama*. The younger ones can learn to observe the breath and become aware of the inhalations and exhalations. While those in their mid and late teens can be made aware of the the response and connection of the body with the breath.

For adolescents, *pranayama* is just yogic breathing, although, for a mature practitioner, it means much more. *Pranayama* not only helps in improving the functioning of respiratory system but also the other systems. *Pranayama* keeps the respiratory system in order by expanding the chest and gives space for the lungs to function better. During *puraka* (inhalation), the diaphragm is lowered and contracted and abdominal muscles are kept under control. This joint action of the diaphragm and abdominal muscles lift the lower part of the spine and during chin lock the upper part of the spine is lifted.

Adolescents can be introduced to mild *Ujjayi* inhalations and exhalation without retention. And also, introduced to *Viloma* or interrupted inhalations and exhalations. Longer exhalations interspersed with short pauses trains them to calm their mind. This training can help them quickly quieten their mind and anxious states, especially, during exams.

Introducing *Bhramari pranayama* also quickly helps relax an agitated mind and the body and making them healthy in order to enable them to perform their functions.

Summary of the effect of yogic practices on adolescents:

1. Brings flexibility to the body;
2. Develops strength and stamina;
3. Builds courage and confidence;
4. Develops will power and determination;
5. Initiates love, respect and compassion for one and all, especially fellow human beings.;
6. Develops emotional equanimity;
7. Induces subtle energy balance;
8. Activates parasympathetic nervous system;
9. Dispels their confusion;
10. Develops mental clarity;
11. Makes them introspective;
12. Brings peace of mind;
13. Brings clarity of thoughts; and
14. Improves their concentration.



Fig 10. Nadi Shodhana Pranayama

Yamas and *Niyamas* not only instil values but also provide a road map for regulating one's instincts.

Pratyahara develops an ability to manage sensory inputs (development of supremacy of cortical brain over senses and limbic brain. This is the development of emotional intelligence).

Dharana and *Dhyana* practices give key to manage one's thought process that develops the ability to focus without any disruption.

In conclusion, it can be said that adolescence is a growing age. If proper understanding and guidance (in the form of road map) are provided to young people in the initial stage, they can be saved from various physiological as well as psychosomatic diseases such as stress, depression, and anxiety. Such counselling can help them grow in an integrated manner. This, in turn, may give them a sense of responsibility of their role towards family, society, nation, and the world. It is an established fact all over the world that Yoga has the potential to develop this sense of responsibility and a person can live a meaningful, healthy, and happy life when Yoga is integrated not as a 'view of life' but as a 'self-disciplined way of life'.



Fig 11. Bhramari Pranayama



07 ART OF TEACHING YOGA TO TEENS

For a child, Yoga is a physical exercise. It is done mainly at the physical level. You may like it or not, but the child needs movements. When they are 12 or 13 years old, Yoga should be taught at the anatomical and physiological levels. We need to tell them about the movement of the joints, how the muscles are controlled, and how the joints are moved. We can teach them the effect of *asana* practice on the organic body. They are mentally ripe when they graduate from college. At that time, we can teach them how to use the mind in the *asanas* and how to use the mind while breathing - inhaling or exhaling or during retention.

The period of adolescence and puberty is a tricky period. Their bodies become stiff as most of them are sitting and busy studying for their academic exams irrespective of the part of the world they are in. We need to make them use their body in a proper way for the correct functioning of the mind. We need to teach them how to connect the mind with the body, and how to connect the body with the mind. Adolescence is the right time to teach this connection.

As one takes care of a sapling, by trimming it now and then for it to grow into a tree, we have to 'trim' the children to make them grow as good citizens. When you trim a sapling, you can make it go in any direction that you want. But the tree breaks if you try to trim it. It is the same with Yoga. If you start teaching children, then you can turn them into any direction that you want. You can turn them into flowers or you can make them into weeds. Therefore, a right methodology is required to teach them.

This aspect of *asana* has a great potency for these adolescents. *Asanas* are not merely flexible physical movements. They have a good bearing in developing their nerves, breath, mind, intelligence and play a role on their emotions and intelligence. The method we adopt in teaching is such that they gradually begin to evolve. Though we begin from simple physical movements, they will proceed miles further from this starting point to progress in their way of living as well as Yoga.

The fruit cannot be formed as soon as you sow the seed. Let the tree of Yoga grow. The fruit of the tree is meditation. You cannot have children doing meditation. Let the tree of Yoga grow healthily and happily so that the fruit of joy and delight will turn itself into a spiritual blossom.

7.1 Practically Teaching the Teens to Handle Their Body and Mind

Teaching teenagers is a challenging and rewarding experience. It is a unique opportunity for Yoga teachers to guide the youngsters during this delicate phase of life with the benefits of Yoga. It can initiate the process of self-exploration, the ability to learn on different levels and the ability to help them and develop a character that they can carry with them throughout their lives. The teenage years can be a traumatic and stressful transition from childhood to adulthood. The younger teenagers, entering puberty is like adjusting the shift from a primary school to a high school. The older teenagers are loaded with the stressors of final exams, career choices, leaving school, and so on. It is important that while teaching them we do not forget that they are neither children nor adults and not expect them to behave like adults.

Teenagers generally tend to be quite stiff and less flexible. They have just gone through or are going through an intensive growth phase. They spend a large part of the day sitting and hunching over desks and also because of the stresses they are under. Young people who attend adult Yoga classes are keen and enthusiastic. However, this is often not the case when they attend a Yoga class at school. This is true, especially for those in their early teens. Many see Yoga as a way of getting out of sport or something that they are forced to go to. Through sustained exposure to the effects of *asana* practice, experience the refreshing calmness after class and they soon get transformed into enthusiastic practitioners.

The teaching should aimed to be motivational for the adolescent. The potential energies have to be unleashed and harnessed, which can be done through quick-paced cycles of *Surya Namaskar*, *Paschimottanasana*, and *Halasana* or even standing *asanas* combined with *Surya Namaskar* and some *asanas* on the ropes. These pose as a challenge to the adolescent and at this age, they are ready to face challenges.

Anti-gravity postures such as *Viparita Dandasana* and *Adho Mukha Vrikshasana*, *Shirshasana*, *Sarvangasana*, and *Halasana* develop stability, concentration, focus, and perseverance. The struggle to bring flexibility in the stiff and unrelenting back muscles in the forward extensions such as *Janu Shirshasana* or *Paschimottanasana* develops patience as much as they may not like it.

Interestingly, all adolescents enjoy backward bending *asanas*. It exhilarates them and gives them a lot of relief from the keyed-up feeling that they experience. As we know, the lungs and heart just "open out" in these *asanas*.

They no longer like to be treated like little children with soft talk and moral stories. It is they who make the teacher demand more discipline from them as they are capable of it. They no longer like to be moralized but are quick to catch the underlying ethical values in actions and words. It is an age where they need to develop their discriminative abilities (*vivekakhyati*) by thoughts and reflection. Then, they will voluntarily and habitually make the right ethical choices rather than be forced. Imposition of any kind is not acceptable to this age group.

The teacher may need to cajole or persuade, praise, and even trick them to get the requisite responses. They are extremely sensitive at this age. Scolding does not go well at all. Therefore, they need to be taught sensitively knowing that each of them is an individual.

When we teach Yoga to adolescents, we need to teach their minds and not just their bodies. How often have you come across two children of the same age whereas one has shot up to be almost a six-footer where the other is yet only five feet in height? Mentally, these two are at the same level but there is a huge physical difference. While teaching, the two need to be handled differently- initially taking into consideration their physical abilities and restrictions. Once they get familiar with their own bodies, then the two can be taught with the same expectations.

Children learn and practise Yoga at the cognitive level. They are not capable of more maturity than this. The adolescent is capable of both cognitive and sensitive understanding of Yoga and, therefore, the method of teaching becomes different for them.

The practice of *asanas* teaches these youngsters to handle and control their own bodies and instill in them the much-needed confidence. The sluggish body and mind are brought to a state of wakefulness and alertness, bringing with it, motivation and excitement of achieving certain goals – physical, mental, and intellectual. Though unable to identify for themselves, it is perhaps this factor that induces them to keep coming back for Yoga classes every week.

Here are some practical guidelines for teaching a Yoga class for teens.

- **Remember that they are teenagers:** It is essential that the teacher approaches the class with an awareness and sensitivity of the issues related to teenagers. They are often very self-conscious and get embarrassed easily. It is important to keep their self-esteem up and to praise them. Teenagers, especially young ones, tend to have a short attention span so do not ask them to stay in any position for too long but keep them moving.
- **Be creative:** A classroom often has wall space, tables, and chairs. These can be used to diversify the teachings of *asanas* as well as assist any student with difficulties.

- **Be creative with the use of space:** Teenagers respond well to dynamic instructions. Change the class structure often. For example, use rows for standing *asanas* and a large circle can be formed for *Surya Namaskar*.
- **Make it interesting and inspiring:** The teenagers are interested in their bodies. The teacher can educate them about the anatomy of the body and the *asanas* using teaching aids like diagrams and even 3-D models like that of bones and muscles. We have often used photographs of Guruji in various *asanas*, which really inspires the teens.
- **Demonstrate:** Nothing seizes the attention span of students more than the enthusiasm of the teacher. It is important to demonstrate the *asanas* properly and to impress them with what is possible. Always demonstrate each *asana* that you are teaching. Be careful to emphasize which *asanas* should not be practised unsupervised in order to avoid injury.
- **Teaching with respect to their energy levels:** The teachers should be able to read the energy levels of the students. So, adapt and be flexible with each situation. Sometimes one may have to make them do restorative *asanas* and sometimes get them to do the *asanas* dynamically. However, young girls should not be made to do *Surya namaskar* and any dynamic *asanas* and inverted *asanas* like *Sirsasana* and *Sarvangasana* during the menstrual periods. Inverted *asanas* must be avoided during these days. Lethargy is a common feature of adolescence and needs to be tackled.

Teaching Yoga to teenagers is a process undeniably demanding as it is rewarding. It is completely relevant as an antidote to the often stressful and complex world they live in. Teachers have a special responsibility to lay the correct foundations for practice in young people so that it can continue to support them throughout their lives. This enables them to face the inevitable ups and downs with courage, confidence, and equanimity.

7.2 Asanas to Address the Common Problems of Teens

• Addressing the Needs of Young Girls

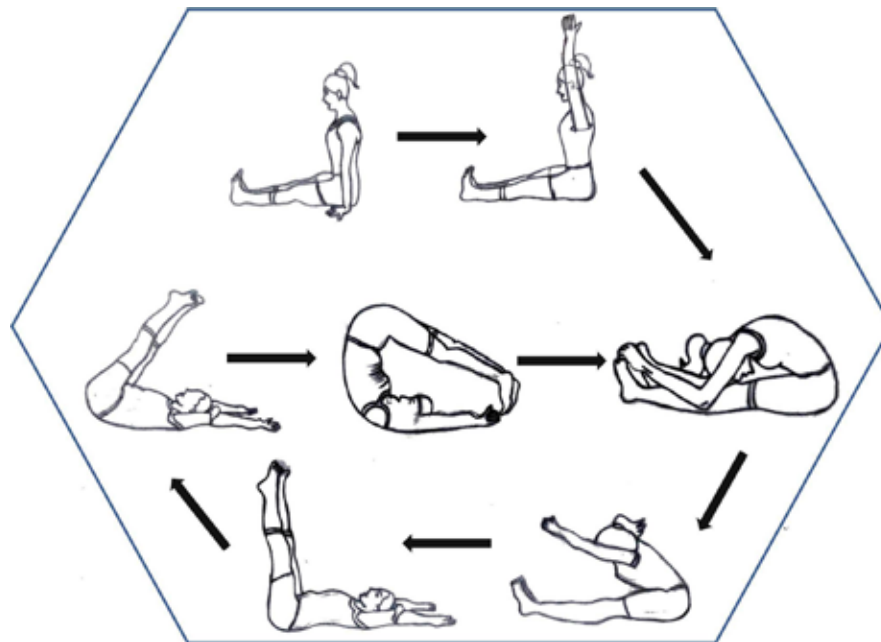
The onset of menarche at the time of adolescence brings with it some pains and agony for young girls. While these young girls are getting adjusted to the secondary sexual changes, the onset of menstruation adds to their woes. Many young girls experience dysmenorrhea in the first few years. They experience abdominal pain or cramps and low back ache. Consuming painkillers to overcome the situation is not enough. It is important that they are taught certain *Yogasanas*, which can help them overcome the pain.

Asanas such as *Ardha Chandrasana*, *Baddha Konasana*, *Supta Baddha Konasana*, and *Upavistha Konasana* are useful at such times.

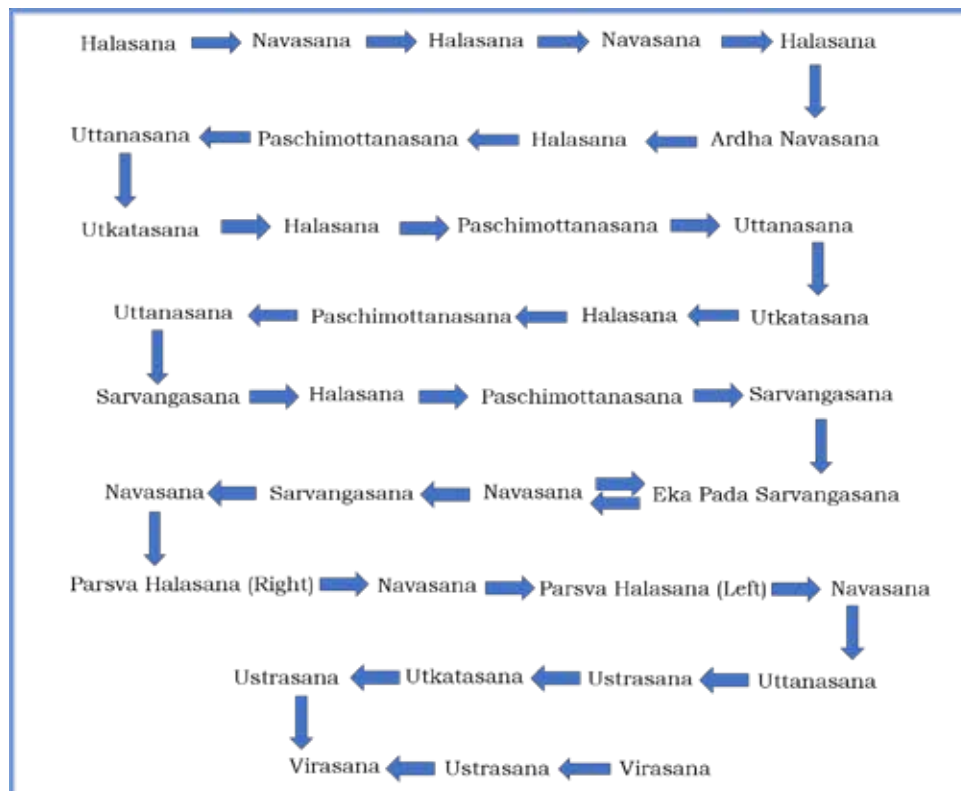
• Lethargy and dullness:

Lethargy, dullness, and inertia are a part and parcel of adolescence. It requires a lot of motivation to get most of these young adults to get out of this state and do some dynamic activities. To add on, the body becomes stiff, which does not facilitate the ease with which they could perform the Yoga poses as a child.

Further, academic activities become more demanding as most of these youngsters would have to make a career choice and their choice is often being dictated by their performance in crucial high school examinations. These children naturally spend more time with their books, which further diminishes their physical activities. Here are some of the *asanas* and the sequence in which they can be done.



Asanas need to be done in quick succession to overcome this state of dullness in body and mind. Here are examples of the sequence of asanas that should be done in quick succession to overcome lethargy, dullness, and inertia.



• **Asanas for stamina, speed, strength, and memory:**

The adolescent may play games or take part in various competitions. This requires physical and mental stamina, speed, flexibility and strength. One needs a strong and well-shaped body. The mind too, should be as strong and as shapely as the body. Memory is one of the most important factors

that helps to coordinate the body and mind. One must have endurance to demonstrate and at the same time recover fast so as to feel the restfulness in the brain and brawn. Practice of *Yogasanas* for 20–30 minutes help to enhance all these qualities.

Stamina: means vigor and energy. No sign of fatigue is felt when one works for a long period, effectively and efficiently.

Maintaining the high quality of work is stamina. Mental stamina is in boosting enthusiasm with the presence of mind, vigor, and energetic life throughout work. Yogic practice develops it further.

Speed: means swiftness in doing the work with rapid pace. It also means to move quickly and skillfully without haste or waste of time. This brings alertness in the brain and clarity in action.

Strength: is a quality of being strong. Strength is of three types. These are physical strength, mental strength, and intellectual strength.

Memory: is the power of remembering things. It is the quality of intellect. Memory means to recall verbatim the thoughts, actions, and reactions. In *smriti*, one should not add logical or imaginary knowledge. Even if new ideas or thoughts surface during memorization, one should know it is pure intelligence and not from memory.

Rest: is a state of recovery after a good performance at all levels, namely the physical, mental, and intellectual levels so that you can perform again with a fresh body, fresh brain, and fresh mind. For a quick recovery, you should know which *asanas* to perform as well as how to do them so as to feel the freshness and agility.

To earn all these qualities, the following *asanas* have to be done correctly to get the best of the benefits in a short time.

- Standing *asanas*
- Sitting *asanas*
- Twisting *asanas*
- Back bending *asanas*
- **Asanas for alertness in the brain and agility in body:**
 - *Adho Mukha Shvanasana*
 - *Urdhva Mukha Shvanasana*
 - Practice section given in Tome 1,2, and 3
 - *Surya Namaskar*
 - *Paschimottanasana- Halasana*
 - *Paschimottanasana- Chakrasana*
 - *Paschimottanasana-Navasana–Halasana–Sarvangasana-Paschimottanasana*
- **For improving memory power:**
 - *Uttanasana*
 - *Prasarita Padottanasana*
 - *Adho Mukha Shvanasana*
 - *Salamba Shirshasana*

- *Urdhva Dhanurasana*
- *Salamba Sarvangasana*
- *Halasana*
- *Karnapidasana*
- *Chatushpadasana*
- *Setu Bandha Sarvangasana*
- **For recovery from fatigue:**
 - Inverted *asanas*
 - Supine *asanas*
 - *Shavasana*

Yoga Modules for Adolescents by Leading Yoga Institutes Published in National Yoga Week, 2013

<i>Institutes</i>	<i>Yoga Institute, Mumbai</i>	<i>Kaivalyadham</i>	<i>RIMYI (Iyengar Yoga)</i>
Practices			
<i>Prayers, Sukshma Vyayama</i>		<i>Gayatri Mantra, Om-kara Japa Kriya-Yoga</i>	<i>Invocation to Sage Patanjali Guru Vandana</i>
<i>Kriya</i>	<i>Jihvamulashodhana, Vamana-Dhauti Kapalarandhra Dhauti, Trataka</i>	<i>Kapalabhati, Agnisara. Jalaneti,Sutraneti, Vamana Dhauti, Trataka, Shankha Prakshalana</i>	
<i>Asana</i>	<i>Sukhasana, Gomukhasana,Talasila, 1-2, Konasana, Vakrasana, Bhujangasana, Yashtikasana, Ardha Sarvangasana Shavasana</i>	<i>Talasila, Chakrasana, Utkatasana, Padahastasana, Parvatasana, Ardha pavanamuktasana Naukaasana, Makarasana, Bhujangasana, Ardhashalabhasana, Swastikasana, Janu Shirshasan, Vakrasana, Simhasana, Vajrasana, Trikonasana, Konasana, Shavasana, Viparitarani, Matsyasana, Halasana,</i>	<i>Adho Mukha Shvanasana Urdhva Mukha Shvanasana Practice section given in Tome 1, 2, and 3 Surya Namaskara Paschimottanasana- Halasana Paschimottanasana- Chakrasana Paschimottanasana- Navasana – Halasana- Sarvangasana- Paschimottanasana For improving memory power Uttanasana Prasarita</i>

		Dhanurasana, Yog mudra, Bhadrasana, Tolangulasana, Pashchimottanasana, Uttana Mandukasana, Shirsha padangushthasana, Sarvangasana, Chakrasana, Ardhamatsyendrasana, Suptavajrasana, Bakasana, Kukkutasana, Ugrasana, , Kurmasana, Gorakhasana, Mayurasana, Uttana Kurmasana, Baddha Gomukhasana, Natarajasana, Shirshasana	Padottanasana, Adho Mukha Shvnanasana Salamba Shirshasana Urdhva Dhanurasana Salamba Sarvangasana Halasana Karnapidasana Chatushpadasana Setu Bandha Sarvangasana For recovery from fatigue Inverted Asanas Supine Asanas Shavasana
Pranayama	Yogendra Pranayama I, II, III, IV, and IX (anuloma-viloma)	Anuloma-Viloma Ujjayi, Bhastrika, Shitali, Sitkari, Bhramari.	Breath observation Viloma pranayama Bhramari
Mudra	Yoni mudra, Yoga Mudra	Brahma Mudra, Dhyan Mudra, Jnana Mudra, Namaskara Mudra, Prana Mudra, Uddiyan Bandha.	
Pratyahara (Withdrawal of senses)			Pratyahara
Dhyana (Meditation)		Dhyana	
Additional Practices	Nispanda Bhava		Yama, Niyama as story form

Yoga Protocol (Regular Practice 30–45 minutes)

S. No	Practices category	Name of practice	Comments
I	Invocation	Sage Patanjali and <i>Guru Vandana</i>	
II	Preparatory	<i>Tadasana</i>	To be done 2–3 times each
		<i>Urdhva Hastasana</i>	
		<i>Urdhva Baddhanguliyasana</i>	
		<i>Paschim Baddhanguliyasana</i>	
III	<i>Surya Namaskar</i>	<i>Namaskarasana</i>	Sequence to be done in quick succession several times
		<i>Urdhva Hastasana</i>	
		<i>Uttanasana</i>	
		<i>Adho Mukha Svanasana</i>	
		<i>Urdhva Mukha Svanasana</i>	
		<i>Chaturanga Dandasana</i>	
		<i>Urdhva Mukha Svanasana</i>	
		<i>Adho Mukha Svanasana</i>	
		<i>Uttanasana</i>	
		<i>Urdhva Hastasana</i>	
		<i>Namaskara</i>	
		<i>Tadasana</i>	
IV	Standing <i>Asanas</i>	<i>Utthita Trikonasana</i>	Stay in each of these for a few seconds on both the sides
		<i>Utthita Parsvakonasana</i>	
		<i>Virabhadrasana II</i>	
		<i>Ardha Chandrasana</i>	
		<i>Virabhadrasana I</i>	
		<i>Garudasana</i>	
V	Sitting <i>Asanas</i>	<i>Virasana</i>	Stay in each of these for at least 2–3 minutes
		<i>Baddha Konasana</i>	Recommended for girls during menstruation
		<i>Upavistha Konasana</i>	Recommended for girls during menstruation
		<i>Padmasana</i>	
		<i>Gomukhasana</i>	
VI	Inverted <i>Asanas</i>	<i>Adho Mukha Vrikshasana</i>	Should not be done by girls during menstruation
		<i>Shirshasana with wall support</i>	Should not be done by girls during menstruation
		<i>Sarvangasana</i>	Should not be done by girls during menstruation

VII	Supine Asanas	<i>Matsyasana</i>	
		<i>Supta Virasana</i>	Recommended for girls during menstruation
VIII	Backward arching Asanas	<i>Supta Badhakonasana</i>	
		<i>Ushtrasana</i>	Stay for a few seconds but repeat 3–5 times each
		<i>Urdhva Dhanurasana</i>	
IX	Twisting Asanas	<i>Bharadvajasana</i>	Stay for a few seconds on both the sides and repeat at least twice
		<i>Marichyasana III</i>	Not to be done by girls during menstruation
		<i>Ardha Matsyendrasana</i>	Not to be done by girls during menstruation
X	Forward extensions	<i>Paschimottanasana</i>	
XI	Rest	<i>Shavasana</i>	
XII	<i>Pranayama</i>	in <i>Shavasana</i>	Breath observation
		Viloma 1 and 2	interrupted inhalation and exhalation

In case of shortage of time and if practice needs to be concluded in 20–30 minutes, then at least a few practices from the each of the category should be done.



08 METHODS OF INSTRUCTION FOR YOGA PRACTICES IN ADOLESCENTS

- Create a soothing environment as adolescents are more likely to be self-conscious than other age groups. It is important to give a lot of positive reinforcement and encouragement throughout the session.
- Be flexible with instructional strategies to personalize instruction when needed.
- Plan effectively and make sure transitions in your instruction are smooth.
- Do not be monotonous. Use different instructional methods to reach all students.
- Do not make lectures the main focus of all Yoga sessions. Work on some fun activities to keep students from getting bored.
- Relate Yoga with new information, mainly culture when possible.
- Expect students to live up to their potential.
- Make sure students understand before moving on to new practices.
- Establish a reward system for good behavior and practice.
- Encourage respectful communication with others and assess students' performance regularly to ensure that they are in line with Yoga practices.
- Giving less verbal instruction during session and make fewer adjustments.
- Making adolescents to practice challenging poses helps them to focus and can also be a tactic to keep behavioral problems at bay.
- When the class is working on a challenging pose or sequence, they have to concentrate, so it is more difficult for them to talk or distract others.
- It is crucial to give over-stimulated, over-stressed teens an opportunity to take some rest.
- It is appropriate to leave time for at least 10–15 minutes of Shavasana (Corpse Pose) or *Yoga Nidra* at the end of every Yoga session.
- If the students are not able to do the final poses, the concepts and techniques will help them become more balanced, peaceful, and compassionate.
- Be respectful to students, have patience with adolescents but be firm.
- Have a positive attitude.
- Be encouraging of others and promote that attitude in students.
- Understand, forgiving, and realistic.

09 EVIDENCE-BASED RESEARCH ON YOGA FOR ADOLESCENTS

Recent research studies show that Yoga is being used by an increasing number of youths, especially adolescents and adults, as a means to improve the overall health and fitness. Yoga appears to be a promising mode of complementary therapy for children and adolescents.

Kuttner, Leora, et al. (2006) conducted a case study to explore the efficacy of Yoga in adolescents with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). Twenty-five adolescents between 11 and 18 years of age with IBS were randomly assigned to either Yoga group (study group) or without Yoga group (control group). Yoga intervention consists of a 1-hour instructional session, with demonstration and practice, followed by four weeks of video-guided home practice sessions. Pre- and post-questionnaires to assess gastrointestinal symptoms, pain, functional disability, coping, anxiety, and depression were collected from both groups. The Yoga group reported lower levels of functional disability, less use of emotion-focused avoidance and lower anxiety following the intervention when compared to adolescents in the control group. Combined intervention data for the two groups show significantly lower scores for gastrointestinal symptoms and emotion-focused avoidance, revealing that Yoga intervention is helpful and better in the management of IBS.

A systematic review was conducted by **Weaver, L. L. and Darragh, A. R. (2015)** to examine the evidence base for Yoga intervention for anxiety reduction among children and adolescents in the age group of 3–18. They selected research manuscripts published during 1990–2014 selected and identified 2417 references. About 80 articles were selected for full-text review. This review reports that nearly all studies show reduction in anxiety and reported Yoga interventions had shown positive effects in reducing anxiety across a variety of populations. However, large-scale, randomized trials with physiological and psychological measures with long-term follow-up are still needed to enhance the evidence.

Fishbein, Diana, et al. (2016) conducted a pilot randomized control trial to evaluate the beneficial impact of mindful Yoga intervention on substance use and its psychological and psycho-physiological correlations in high-risk adolescents. The participants had undergone 20 sessions (50 minutes classes) of mindful Yoga intervention for adolescents attending school at high risk of dropout. The participants (mean age of 16.7 years) were randomly assigned to control and intervention groups. Survey, cognitive, and psycho-physiological data were collected before and after the Yoga curriculum from both students and teachers. Pre- and post-comparison shows significant reduction in alcohol abuse and increased teaching skills in Yoga group when compared the non-Yoga group. However, it is recommended to conduct future studies with larger samples to further investigate the potential mediators and moderator effects of Yoga.

Manoj Sharma (2013) has done a study titled, 'Systematic Review of Yoga as an Alternative and Complementary Approach for Stress Management'. The objective was to look at studies from 2011 to May 2013 and examine whether Yoga can be an efficacious approach for managing stress. A systematic search of Medline, Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature and Alt HealthWatch databases was conducted for quantitative articles involving all schools of Yoga. A total of 17 articles met the inclusion criteria. Among 17 studies, 12 demonstrated positive changes in psychological or physiological outcomes related to stress. The findings revealed that Yoga appears to be a promising modality for stress management.

Shirley Telles, et al. (2013) conducted a randomized controlled trial for studying the effectiveness of Yoga or physical exercise on physical, cognitive, and emotional measures in children. Total, 98 school children aged between 8 and 13 years participated. Both groups were assessed by using the Euro fit physical fitness test battery, Stroop color-word task for children, and Battle's self-esteem inventory. After assessments, the Yoga group practiced Yoga (breathing techniques, postures, guided relaxation, and chanting), 45 minutes each day, 5 days a week. During this time, the physical exercise group had jogging-in-place, rapid repetitive movements, and relay races or games. Both groups were assessed at the end of three months. Data were analyzed with Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance and post-hoc tests. The study found that both groups showed an increase in BMI, but the number of sit-ups ($p < 0.001$) balance worsened in the physical exercise group, while plate tapping improved in the Yoga group ($p < 0.001$). In the Stroop task, both groups showed improved color, word, and color-word naming ($p < 0.001$). Total, general and parental, self-esteem improved in the Yoga group.

JJ Noggle, et al. (2012) conducted a study to test the feasibility of Yoga within a high school curriculum and evaluate the preventive efficacy for psychosocial well-being. Grade 11 or 12 students ($N = 51$), who registered for physical education, were cluster-randomized by class 2:1 Yoga: physical education (PE) as usual. Self-report questionnaires were administered to students one week before and after. Perceived Stress Scale and Inventory, Resilience Scale, State Trait Anger Expression Inventory and Child Acceptance Mindfulness Measure were used. The Yoga programme of physical postures, breathing exercises, relaxation, and meditation was taught 2–3 times a week for 10 weeks. Analyses of covariance were used. Although PE students showed decreases in primary outcomes, Yoga students improved. Total mood disturbance improved in Yoga students and worsened in controls ($p = 0.015$). Although positive effect remained unchanged in both, negative effect significantly worsened in the control group while improved in Yoga students ($p = 0.006$). Students rated Yoga fairly high, despite moderate attendance.

Joseph S, et al. (2011) conducted a study to evaluate the effectiveness of Yoga in residential treatment of traumatized youth. The Trauma Center at Justice Resource Institute has adopted a form of Hatha Yoga into a trauma-sensitive adjunctive component of intervention for use with complexly traumatized individuals exhibiting chronic affective and somatic dysregulation and associated behavioral, functioning, and health complaints. This study explored the use of Yoga with traumatized youths aged between 12 and 21 years in residential treatment. Case vignettes, anecdotal data, and clinical observation were used. The result has shown Yoga as a viable approach to build self-regulatory capacity of traumatized youth.

Kokinakis LH (2011) examined the effects of Yoga on cognition and social-emotional development in a school-based Yoga programme on ninth-grade ($n = 251$) students. Results suggested that practicing Yoga may be related to improvements in working memory capacity among boys. Similarly, Yoga may protect boys against increases in negative effect. Boys in the Yoga condition had lower levels of negative effect than boys in the control condition.

Beets, Michael W; Mitchell, Erin (2010) conducted a pilot study on assessing the effects of Yoga on stress, depression, and health-related quality of life in a non-clinical, bi-ethnic sample of adolescents. Fifty-five students attending one rural public high school received either 2 weeks of Yoga followed by 2 weeks removal or 2 weeks of no treatment followed by 2 weeks of Yoga. Primary outcome measures were measured by the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale and Perceived Stress Scale. The study has shown significant ($p < 0.05$) treatment effects. Despite short programme exposure, acute changes in mental health indicators were observed and continued after 2 weeks of treatment removal.



Berger DL, Silver EJ, Stein RE (2010) conducted a pilot study on effectiveness of Yoga on inner-city children's well-being. This pilot study compared fourth- and fifth-grade students at two after-school programs in Bronx, New York. One programme offered Yoga for 1 hour per week for 12 weeks (Yoga) and the other programme (non-Yoga) did not. Emotional well-being was assessed by Harter's Global Self-Worth and Physical Appearance subscales. Other measures of emotional well-being were assessed by Negative Behaviors, Positive Behaviors, and Focusing/relaxation subscales. Data were collected from 78% (n=39) and 86.5% (n=32) of potential Yoga and non-Yoga study enrollees. Covariance was used for analysis. The study found that children in the Yoga group had better post-intervention Negative Behavior scores and balance than the non-Yoga group ($p < 0.05$). The majority of children participating in Yoga reported enhanced well-being, as reflected by perceived improvements in behaviors.

Woolery, et al. (2004) studied the impact of a Yoga based intervention with elevated symptoms of depression. Young adults pre-screened for mild levels of depression were randomly assigned to a Yoga course or wait-list control group. Twenty eight volunteers aged between 18 to 29 took part in the study. At baseline, all participants were experiencing mild levels of depression, but had received no current psychiatric diagnosis or treatments. None had significant yoga experience. Subjects in the Yoga group attended two 1-hour Yoga classes each week for 5 consecutive weeks. The classes emphasized Yoga postures thought to alleviate depression, particularly, back bends, standing poses and inversions.

The main outcome measures were Beck Depression Inventory, State Trait Anxiety Inventory, Profile of Mood States and morning cortisol levels. Subjects who participated in the Yoga course demonstrated significant decreases in self reported symptoms of depression and trait anxiety. These effects emerged by the middle of the Yoga course and were maintained by the end. Changes also were observed in the acute mood, with subjects reporting decreased levels of negative mood and fatigue following Yoga classes. Finally, there was a trend for higher morning cortisol levels in the yoga group by the end of the Yoga course, compared to controls. These findings provide suggestive evidence of the utility of Yogasanas in improving mood and support the need for further studies with larger samples and more complex study designs to more fully evaluate the effects of Yoga on mood disturbances.

Evans, et al. (2010) from the University of California, Los Angeles reported on the effect of Yoga in young adults suffering from the auto-immune disorder - rheumatoid arthritis (RA). This pilot study investigated the feasibility of a single-arm, group-administered, six-week, biweekly Yoga program for eight young adults with RA. Initial attrition was 37% (n=3) after the first week because of scheduling conflicts and a prior non-RA related injury. However, the remaining participants (n=5) completed between 75% and 100% of treatment sessions (mean=95%). No adverse events were reported. The quantitative results indicated significant improvements in pain, pain disability, depression, mental health, vitality, and self-efficacy. Interviews demonstrated improvement in RA symptoms and functioning but uncertainty about whether the intervention affected pain.

10 CONCLUSION

Adolescence is a phase of rapid growth and development during which physical, physiological and behavioral changes occur. Young and growing children have poor knowledge and lack of awareness about physical and psychological changes that occur during adolescence and the ill health affecting them. The adolescent phase of life needs a lot of support to enable them to grow into mature adults who would not only fend for themselves but look after their families, nation, and the generations to come. This support comes in the form of education, their peers, and support systems. The majority of available research studies with children and adolescents on Yoga suggest benefits of using Yoga as a therapeutic intervention and show very few adverse effects. Yoga can become a good support system in the growing phase of life. Care needs to be taken in that Yoga is taught in an interesting manner such that they want to do it along with the myriad of activities that they are exposed to. If Yoga can be made an integral part of their lives, then they would become responsible citizens of this world.



Guidelines - Yoga for Adolescent

- There should not be any competitive attitude while practicing Yoga.
- Girls should avoid certain Yoga practices during menstruation or they can practice relaxing practices.
- It is the practitioner's or *sadhaka's* responsibility to inform their teacher if they are suffering from any problems, before the start of Yoga session.
- *Asanas* should not be practiced in haste or by applying any sort of undue force under any circumstances.
- Attain the final position step by step and maintain the same with closed eyes for an inward awareness within the whole body.
- Maintenance of the final posture in *asana* is always beneficial as per one's capacity.
- Yogic practice should be done with an empty stomach or light stomach.
- It is the period of changing from childhood to adulthood, which needs practice of the posture done with more time and awareness.
- Adolescents usually have a negative body image due to bodily changes because of hormonal changes and teaching them with all such considerations and encouraging them is needed.
- Physical movements from one posture to another provide strength, flexibility and health in general to the bones and muscles of the growing adolescent. Maintaining the positions for a period of time brings about internal, hormonal and cellular changes.
- Explain what they are doing by telling teens about each practice and how the practice will be beneficial for them. Create conducive atmosphere for them so that they can share their experiences without any hesitation.



RECOMMENDED PROTOCOL FOR ADOLESCENTS

S. NO.	YOGA PRACTICES	ROUNDS	DURATION
1.	PRAYER		02 Minutes
	YOGIC SUKSHMA VYAYAMA: (Micro Circulation Practices)		08 Minutes
2.	Neck Movements:		
	• Forward and Backward bending	03 Rounds	
	• Right and Left bending	03 Rounds	
	• Right and Left Twisting	03 Rounds	
	• Neck Rotation (clockwise & anti clockwise)	03 Rounds	
3.	Shoulder Movements	03 Rounds	
	• Shoulder Stretch	03 Rounds	
	• Shoulder Rotation (Forward & Backward)	03 Rounds	
4.	Knee Movement	03 Rounds	
5.	Ankle movement	03 Rounds	
	• Ankle stretch	03 Rounds	
	• Ankle rotation	03 Rounds	
6.	SURYA NAMASKARA	03 Rounds	05 Minutes
7.	YOGASANAS		15 Minutes
8.	STANDING POSTURES		
	• Tadasana		
	• Vrikshasana		
	• Padahastasana		
	• Trikonasana		
	• Garudasana		
9.	SITTING POSTURES		
	• Padmasana		
	• Baddha Padmasana		
	• Vajrasana		
	• Ushtrasana		
	• Bhadrasana		
	• Shashankasana		
	• Ardha Matsyendrasana		
	• Gomukhasana		
10.	PRONE POSTURES		
	• Makarasana		
	• Bhujangasana		
	• Shalabhasana		
	• Dhanurasana		
11.	SUPINE POSTURES		
	• Ardha- halasana		

	• Naukasana		
	• Setubandhasana		
	• Pavanmuktasana		
	• Sarvangasana		
	• Chakrasana		
	• Shavasana		
12.	KAPALABHATI KRIYA	3 rounds	
13.	PRANAYAMA:		06 Minutes
	• Nadi Shodhana Pranayama	5 Rounds	
	• Sheetali Pranayama	5 Rounds	
	• Bhramari Pranayama	5 Rounds	
14.	DHYANA		5 Minutes
15.	SHANTI PATHA		1 Minute
	TOTAL TIME		45 Minutes



11 YOGIC PRACTICES FOR ADOLESCENTS



Prayer

ॐ सह नाववतु ।
सह नौ भुनक्तु ।
सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।
तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om Saha Nau-Avatu |
Saha Nau Bhunaktu |
Saha Viiryam Karavaavahai |
Tejasvi Nau-Adhiitam-Astu Maa Vidvissaavahai |
Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih ||

Meaning:

Aum! May He protect us both together; may He nourish us both together;
May we work conjointly with great energy,
May our study be vigorous and effective;
May we not mutually dispute (or may we not hate any).
Aum! Let there be peace in me!
Let there be peace in my environment!
Let there be peace in the forces that act on me!

Yogic Sukshma Vyayama:

Neck Movements:

i. 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 *Tadasana*.
- 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 two more rounds.



ii. Right and Left bending/Stretching:

- 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 two more rounds.



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 two more rounds.



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; slowly rotate the head anti-clockwise in a circular motion; exhale while coming down.
- This is one round: repeat two more rounds.
- Come back & relax.

Shoulder Movements:

Shoulder Stretch:

- Keep feet together, the body straight, and the arms by the sides.
- While inhaling, raise both arms sideways above your head with the palms outward.
- Exhale and bring it down in the same manner.
- Palms must be opened, with fingers together.
- This is one round; repeat two more rounds.





Skandha Chakra (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 both the elbows in a circular manner.
- Inhale and raise the elbows and bring them back while exhaling.
- Try to touch the elbows in front of the chest in the forward movement, stretch the elbows back in the backward movement and touch the side of the trunk while coming down.
- Do the same in reverse manner. Inhale while raising the elbows and exhale while bringing them down.
- This is one round; repeat two more rounds.
- Come back & relax.

Knee Movement:

- Stand straight with the feet few inches apart.
- Inhale; lift your arms up at 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.
- This is one round; repeat two more rounds.
- Come back & relax.



Ankle Movements:

Ankle stretch:

- Stand straight with the feet few inches apart.
- Inhale; lift your right foot up at 9 inches off the ground.
- Now, stretch the ankle joint forward and backward.

Ankle rotation:

- Stand straight with the feet few inches apart.
- Inhale; lift your right foot up at 9 inches off the ground.
- Slowly rotate the right foot clockwise from the ankle joint.
- Repeat the rotation in an anti-clockwise direction.

Surya Namaskara (Sun Salutation)

The Name :-

Surya (Sun) is the source of energy to all the living beings on this planet Earth. *Surya namaskara* is a set of 7 Yogic poses performed in 12 steps in the early morning to refresh and energise the body and mind for the day activity. It is being practiced as part of *Yoga sadhana* (practice) over the centuries for healthy living.

Technique: -

- **Starting Position:** Stand upright with feet together and arms by the side of the body; balance the body equally on both feet (**Samasthiti**).
- **Namaskarasana:** Inhale, bring the palms in front of chest and join them together as in **namaskara mudra** or prayer position; Exhale.



- **Hastottanasana:** Inhaling, raise both the arms up keeping the arms close to the ears; stretch the body as much as possible and bend the trunk backward without bending the knees.



- **Padahastana:** Breathing out, bend forward from the lower most part of the spine and base of the buttocks. Place hands on the floor by both sides of the feet. Try to touch the knees with the forehead without bending them.



- **Ashwasanchalanasana:** Breathing in, take the left leg backward as far as possible; bring the left knee to the floor. Bend the right leg at the knee; keep the right foot at the floor between the palms making 90-degree angle; arch the spine back and look up.



- **Parvatasana:** Breathing out, take the right leg back; lift the hip tail bone up and lower the head and chest downwards in an 'inverted V' posture. Keep the head between the arms and soles touching the ground. Breath normally.



- **Ashtanga-namaskarasana:** Lower the knees, chest, and chin to the floor. In the final position, only the toes, knees, chest, hands, and chin touch the floor. The knees, chest, and chin should touch the floor simultaneously. If this is not possible, first lower the knees, then the chest in between the palms, and finally the chin. The buttocks, hips, and abdomen should be raised. The awareness may be kept on the abdominal region.



- **Bhujangasana:** Lower the hips. Inhale; Raise the head up and push the chest up. Raise the trunk up to the naval with spine arched back. Keep palms on the ground and bend backwards.



- **Parvatasana:** Breathing out, lift the hips up; and lower the head and chest downward in an 'inverted V' posture. Keep head between the arms and soles on the ground.



- **Ashwasanchalanasana:** Breathing in, bend the left leg and bring it forward; and keep the left foot on the ground between the arms. Keep the right leg backward with right knee touching the ground. Arch the spine back and look up.



- **Pada-hastasana:** Breathing out, bring the right leg forward and place the right foot besides the left foot. Place both palms beside outer sides of the feet on the ground; and head touching the knees.



- **Hastottanasana :** Breathing in, raise arms and torso. Take the arms straight above the head and bend the trunk backwards as much as possible.



- **Namaskarasana:** Breathing out, come to the straight position. Slowly bring the arms down; and join the palms in front of the chest as in **Namaskara mudra** or prayer position.

Benefits: -

- It helps to increase the flexibility, lung's capacity, strength, endurance and develop a healthy spine.
- It makes the mind alert and fresh.

Caution: -

- Avoid during spinal injury; practice it as per need and capacity.
- Girls should avoid during the menstrual periods.



YOGASANA

A. Standing Postures

1. Tadasana (Palm Tree Pose)

The Name

- Body takes the shape of a palm tree in the final position of this pose; hence the name.

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. Stay in the position for 10-30 seconds and breathe normally.
- Bring the heels down on exhale, release the interlock of the fingers and bring the arms down and come back to standing posture.

Benefits

- It helps to remove lethargy and make one to become more active.
- It helps to improve concentration.

Caution

- Those who have the complaints of reeling sensation, knee and ankle joints injuries should practise without raising the heels..



2. Vrikshasana (Tree Pose)

The Name

'Vriksha' means 'tree'. In the final position, the body takes the shape of a tree. Hence, it is named *Vrikshasana*.

Technique

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

Benefits

- It helps to improve concentration and bring neuro-muscular co-ordination.

Caution

- Avoid this *asana* in case of vertigo.

3. Pada-hastasana / Uttanasana (Hands to Feet Pose)

The Name

- In the final position of this *asana*, hands are brought down and placed beside the feet; hence the name.

Technique

- Stand straight with feet 2 inches apart. Inhale slowly and raise the arms up. Exhale and bend forwards until both palms rest on the ground.
- Stretch the back, to make it as straight as possible.
- Maintain this final posture for 10-30 seconds and breathe normally.
- 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

- It helps to make the spine flexible; improves digestion and memory.

Caution

- In case of lower backache and spinal injuries, this practice should be modified.



4. Garudasana (The Eagle pose)



The Name

- In the final position of this pose, the body looks like that of an eagle; hence the name.

Technique

- Stand erect with feet together, arms by the sides of the body.
- Raise the right leg cross and wrap it around the left leg from front of the body like a creeper.
- Follow the same procedure with the right arms, stretch the body, relax and maintain the pose for few seconds.
- Repeat the same standing on left leg.

Benefits

- Helps in body alignment.
- Nourishes and helps to develop nerves and bones of vertebral column.

Caution

- Children with knee, ankle and wrist injuries should avoid this.

5. Trikonasana (Triangle Posture)

The Name

- In the final position of this *asana*, the trunk and the arm form a triangle, hence the name.

Technique

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



Benefits

- It helps to improve digestion, lungs capacity and brings alertness.
- Helps to reduce stress and anxiety.

Caution

- Please avoid the practice of this *asana* in cases of migraine, slipped disc, and sciatica.



B. Sitting Postures

6. Padmasana (The Lotus Pose)

The Name:-

- 'Padma' means Lotus. The body takes the shape of lotus in the final position of this posture hence, its name is *Padmasana*.

Technique:-

- Sit on the floor with legs stretched out and spine erect.
- Fold the knees, place left foot on the right thigh and right foot on the left thigh. Knees should be touching the ground.
- Place the hands in *Jnana* or *Chin mudra*.
- Keep the neck and back straight.
- Close the eyes and relax the whole body.

Benefits:-

- *Padmasana* helps to induce mental calmness and tranquility.

Caution:-

- In case of severe arthritis, slip disc, knee injuries and ankle pain, this *asana* should be avoided.

7. Baddha Padmasana (Locked Lotus Pose)

The Name:-

- 'Baddha' means Locked and 'Padma' means Lotus. The *asana*, *Baddha Padmasana* is variation of the *Padmasana*.

Technique:

- Sit on the floor with legs stretched out and spine erect.
- Fold the knees, place left foot on the right thigh and right foot on the left thigh.
- Knees should be touching the ground.
- Exhale, move the right arm behind the back, closer to the left hip, and try to catch the left big toe with the right hand.
- Similarly, while exhaling, move the left arm behind the back, closer to the right hip, and try to catch the right big toe with the left hand.
- Keep the neck and back straight.
- Close the eyes and relax the whole body.

Benefit: -

- This *asana* strengthens upper back muscles, shoulder and opens chest.

Caution: -

- In case of severe arthritis, frozen shoulder, slip disc, knee injuries and ankle pain, this *asana* should be avoided.



8. Vajrasana (The Diamond Pose)

The Name:-

- 'Vajra' means diamond or thunderbolt.

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.
- Remain in the posture for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.



Benefits:-

- This *asana* is good for digestion.

Caution:-

- In case of joint pain and varicose vein, this should be avoided.



9. Bhadrasana / Baddha Konasana (The Auspicious Pose)

The Name:-

- 'Bhadra' means 'auspicious'. This *asana* destroys many diseases.

Technique:-

- Sit straight with legs stretched out in the front.
- Keep the hands beside the hips and palms resting on the floor.
- This is *Dandasana*.
- Exhale and clasp your hands together over your toes. Inhale, pull your heels as close as possible up to perineum region.
- Stay in this position for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.

Benefits:-

- This *asana* is good for lumbar region and keeps it healthy.
- This *asana* is extremely helpful for girls experiencing period pains.

10. Ushtrasana (The Camel Pose)

- The Name:-

'Ushtra' means 'camel'. In this *asana*, the body takes shape of a camel; hence the name.

Technique:-

- Sit in *Vajrasana*.
- Bring the knees and the feet a few inches apart and stand on your knees. While inhaling, bend backwards with the right palm on right heel and the left palm on left heel; exhale.
- Be careful not to jerk the neck while bending backwards.
- In the final position, the thighs will be vertical to the floor and head tilted backwards.
- The 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 *Vajrasana*.



Benefits:-

- This *asana* regulates the functioning of thyroid glands and makes the spine flexible.

Caution:-

- In cases of vertigo and hernia, this *asana* should be avoided.

11. Shashakasana / Adho Mukha Virasana (The Hare Pose)

The Name:-

- 'Shashaka' means 'hare in the lap' or moon'. In this, body takes the shape of a hare; hence, the name.

Technique:-

- Sit in *Vajrasana*.
- 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 posture for 10-30 seconds and breathe normally.
- Come back to *Vajrasana*.
- Slowly inhale, come back to initial position.



Benefits:-

- It helps to reduce stress and anger.

Caution:-

- In case of slip disc and knee pain, this *asana* should be avoided.

12. Ardha Matsyendrasana (The Spinal Twist Pose)

The Name:-

- It is the simple version of *Matsyendrasana*.
- It is named after Yogi *Matsyendranath*.
- In this *asana*, spine is twisted.

Technique:-

- Sit straight with stretching your legs in front of you.
- Bend your left knee and try to touch your left foot to your right buttock.
- Bring your right foot outside the left knee. Touch your foot to the ground. Keep your spine erect.
- Exhale and turn your upper body to the right. Hold your right foot with left hand and wrap your right hand behind the back.
- Breathe normally and hold this posture for 20 to 30 seconds.
- Now release this posture and repeat it on the other side.



Benefits:-

- This is good for adrenal glands, kidney, liver and spleen.

Caution:-

- Must be avoided for children with severe spinal injuries and girls should avoid this during their periods.



13. Gomukhasana (The Cow's Face Pose)

The Name:-

- '*Gomukha*' consists of two words: '*go*' meaning 'cow'; and '*mukha*' meaning 'face'. In this *asana*, the knees, thighs and calves together make a form that resembles cow's face.

Technique:-

- Sit erect with legs stretched out.
- Bend left knee so that left foot reaches by the side of right hip same as right foot by the side of left hip.
- Stretch left arm over the shoulder to bend it from elbow so that left is resting in between the shoulder blades and take right arm behind the back, down up bending the right elbow palm facing upward.
- Interlock the fingers and maintain it with normal breathing.
- Repeat the same by changing the position of legs and hands.

Benefits:-

- It is a good practice to improve lung's capacity.

Caution:-

- Avoid this *asana* in case of joint injuries, acute pain in shoulders and piles problem.



C. Prone Lying Postures

14. Makarasana (The Crocodile Pose)

The Name:-

- *Makarasana* is a relaxing posture. 'Makara' means 'crocodile'. In this *asana*, the body resembles a resting crocodile, hence the name.

Technique:-

- Lie down on stomach with the feet wide apart, toes pointing outwards in prone position.
- Bend both the arms and place the right palm on the left palm.
- Place the head either on the left side or the right side on your hands.
- Keep the eyes closed and relax the whole body. This is *Makarasana*.

Benefits:-

- It removes mental and physical fatigue and is good for relieving asthma, cervical and sciatica pain.

15. Bhujangasana (The Cobra Pose)

The Name:-

- '*Bhujanga*' means cobra. The final position of this *asana* resembles the shape of cobra.



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 the palms and elbows on the ground.
- As you inhale slowly, lift the head and chest up the navel region without changing the position of hands.
- Stay there comfortably.
- This is called *Saral Bhujangasana*.
- Now come back and place your 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 naval region. Keep the elbows parallel and maintain the posture for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- This is *Bhujangasana*.
- Exhale, rest your forehead on the ground, come back to *Makarasana*, and relax.

Benefits:-

- It stimulates the digestive, reproductive and urinary systems.

Caution:-

- It is strictly prohibited for the people suffering from hernia and abdominal injuries.

16. Shalabhasana (The Locust Pose)

The Name: -

Shalabhasana takes its name from '*shalabha*' which means 'locust'. In the final posture, body resembles a locust or grasshopper; hence the name.



Technique: -

- Lie down on stomach in *Makarasana*.
- Rest the chin on the floor, keep both hands beside the body, palms facing downwards.
- Inhale, raise the legs off the floor as per one's capacity without bending the knees.
- Extend the arms and the legs well to ease lifting the body off the floor.
- Stay in this position for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- Exhale; bring the legs down towards the floor.
- Relax in *Makarasana*.

Benefits:-

- This *asana* relieves in sciatica pain and lower backache.
- It helps to reduce fat in the thighs and buttocks, and is also good in weight management.
- It helps to improve the capacity of lungs.
- It strengthens muscles in the lower back and makes the spine flexible.

Caution:-

- This *asana* should be avoided in cases of cardiac complaints, hernia or ulcers in stomach and severe lower back pain.

17. Dhanurasana (The Bow Pose)

The Name:-

- *Dhanurasana* gets its name from '*dhanur*' which means 'bow'. In the final posture, body looks like a bow with the strings; hence, the name.

Technique:-

- Lie down in prone position with legs together and arms beside the body.
- Exhale and hold the ankles with hands.
- Inhaling, lift the thighs, head and chest as high as possible on lower abdomen. Maintain the position comfortably for 10–20 seconds.
- Exhale, come back to starting position and relax in *Makarasana*.

Benefits:-

- It regulates functioning of adrenal and thyroid glands; and also of digestive and excretory systems.



- It strengthens joints of shoulders, spine, knees and ankles; and removes stiffness of these organs.

Caution: -

- In case of hernia, peptic ulcers, colitis, appendicitis, this *asana* should not be performed.



D. Supine Lying Postures

18. Ardha Halasana / Urdhva Prasarita Padasana (The Half Plough Pose)

The Name: -

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

Technique: -

- Take supine position, keep hands beside the body and the palms resting on the ground.
- Inhale, slowly raise your legs together without bending knees and bring them upto 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 *Shavasana*.

Benefits:-

- This *asana* is beneficial for dyspepsia and constipation.
- The practice of this *asana* is useful in cases of diabetes, piles and throat related disorders.
- This is very beneficial for Hypertensive patients but needs to practice with care.

Caution:-

- Avoid this practice in case of abdominal injuries, hernia etc.
- This *asana* should not be done during periods.

19. Navasana/Naukasana (The Boat Pose)

The Name: -

- 'Nauka' means boat. This posture resembles the shape of a boat, hence the name.

Technique:

- Take supine position, keep hands beside the body and the palms resting on the ground.
- Inhale deeply. While exhaling, lift both the chest and legs off the ground up to 60 degrees.
- Keep your arms stretched forward with your fingers pointing your feet.



- Maintain this position comfortably for 10-30 seconds with normal breathing.
- While exhaling, come back and relax.

Benefit: -

- This *asana* strengthens back muscles, intestines, and tones up all organs of the body.

Caution: -

- People suffering from hernia should consult an expert before practicing it.
- This *asana* should not be done during periods.

20. Setubandhasana (The Bridge Pose)

The Name: -

- 'Setubandha' means formation of bridge. In this posture, the body is positioned like a bridge, hence the name.



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 a bridge.
- Remain in this position for 10-30 seconds, with normal breathing.
- Exhale, slowly return to the original position and relax in *Shavasana*.

Benefits:-

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

Caution:-

- People suffering from ulcers and hernia, and women in advanced stages of pregnancy should not practice this *asana*.



21. Pavanamuktasana (The Wind Releasing Pose)

The Name:-

- This *asana* gets its name from 'pavana-mukta' where 'pavana' means 'wind'; and 'mukta' means 'relieved'. As the name suggests, this *asana* helps in releasing trapped wind from the stomach and intestine.

Technique:-

- Lie down on the back with legs together, arms beside the body, and palms resting on the floor.
- Inhaling, bend the legs and while exhaling bring knees towards chest.

- Inhale, encircle the knees with both arms and hold them tightly.
- Exhale, raise the head till your chin or head touches the knees
- Maintain the position comfortably for 10 to 20 seconds.
- To come back, release the arms and unfold the legs and bring them to the floor.
- Relax with legs together on the floor and hands beside the body.

Benefits:-

- It helps in eliminating toxic gases from the stomach and intestine which improves digestion.
- It tones up the back muscles and spinal nerves.

Caution:-

- In case of abdominal injuries and severe back-pain should be avoided.



22. Sarvangasana (The Shoulder Stand Pose)

The Name:-

- *Sarvangasana* consists of 'sarva' meaning 'all' or 'whole'; 'anga' meaning 'limbs of body'; and 'asana' meaning posture. It affects all parts of body; hence the name.

Technique:-

- Lie on the back keeping the legs extended together on the ground. Slowly lift the legs upto 90 degree.
- Lift the whole body up by taking the 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 the legs down without jerks raising the head.

Benefits:-

- It helps in regulating functioning of endocrine glands, especially the thyroid glands.
- Improves circulation of blood.
- Diseases like dyspepsia, constipation, obesity can be treated by this *asana*.

Caution:-

- This *asana* should be done with proper support and guidance of an experienced teacher in cases of neck pain, epilepsy, high blood pressure and pain in lumbar region.

23. Chakrasana / Urdhva Dhanurasana

The Name:-

- *Chakrasana* gets its name from the word '*chakra*' which means 'wheel'. In this *asana*, the body takes the shape of a wheel, hence the name.

Technique:-

- Lie down in supine position.
- Bend the legs at the knees, and bring the heels close to buttocks.
- Raise the arms, and place the palms on the floor beside the head with fingers pointing towards the shoulders.
- Inhale, raise the body on the arms and feet and make arch in the back. Now, gently, relax your neck.
- Maintain this position with normal breathing.
- Exhale, come back to normal position and relax.



Benefits:-

- It removes stiffness from the body; and makes the spine flexible.

Caution:-

- This *asana* should be avoided in cases of weak wrist, high blood pressure, hernia, abdominal problems and vertigo.

24. Shavasana

The Name:-

- This is a relaxing posture. In this posture, the body remains still like a corpse, hence the name.

Technique: -

- Lie down in supine position.
- Keep the feet 2-3 feet apart with toes pointed outward.
- Place the hands about six inches away from the body. Keep the fingers relaxed.
- Keep the head in a straight comfortable position.
- Gently close the eyes, be aware of your breath.



Benefits: -

- It relaxes the body and mind; and eliminates physical and mental fatigue.
- It boosts up energy level.

Caution: -

- This should be avoided in cases of depression and low blood pressure.

Kapalabhati Kriya

The Name: -

- *Kapalabhati* is a *kriya* (cleansing practice) for cleansing the frontal brain. 'kapala' means 'skull', and 'bhati' means 'shine'.

Technique: -

- Sit erect in any meditative posture, gently close the eyes. Inhale deeply through both the nostrils, and expand the chest.
- Now exhale forcefully while contracting the abdominal muscles. Do not make effort to inhale. After forceful exhalation, there will be automatic, passive and spontaneous inhalation. This is one stroke of *Kapalabhati*.
- Continue 30- 40 strokes rapidly in quick succession at a time or as many as possible. Then take a deep breath, and exhale slowly and completely. This is one round of *Kapalabhati*.



Benefits: -

- It strengthens the respiratory system by purifying the frontal air sinuses and alleviating cough problems. It energizes the body, and removes lethargy.

Caution: -

- This practice should be avoided in cases of cardiac problems, giddiness, high blood pressure, vertigo, chronic bleeding in nose, epilepsy, stroke, hernia and gastric ulcers.



PRANAYAMA

1. Ujjayi Pranayama

The Name: -

- 'Ujjayi' means victorious; 'ujji' is the root which means 'to conquer' or 'acquire by conquest'.
- In English, *Ujjayi* is known as the 'psychic breath' because of its effect on the mind.

Technique*: -

- Sit in *Swastikasana*, *Padmasana* or *Virasana*; hands in *jnana mudra*.
- In the beginning, *Ujjayi pranayama* can also be taught in Supported *Shavasana*.
- Gently close the eyes and draw your attention to the breath.
- Slowly inhale and exhale for a few cycles till the flow of the breath settles to a rhythm.
- Slowly inhale so that the chest extends and expands. Without use of force, slowly exhale.
- Continue in this manner for a few cycles of deeper inhalations and exhalations without use of force.
- These cycles can be interspersed with a few cycles of normal breathing.

Caution: -

- It increases digestive fire, removes disorders of the *nadi* and the *dhatu*; prevents *jalodara* (dropsy of the belly).
- It removes phlegm from the throat and prevents all sorts of pulmonary diseases.
- It prevents diseases caused by deficient inhalation of oxygen and cardiac diseases..

*:- Modified version of the *pranayama* has been described

2. Sheetali Pranayama

The Name: -

- The word *Sheetali* is originally taken from the word “*sheetal*” which means cold or soothing.

Technique: -

- Sit comfortably in any meditative posture; keep your both hands on knees in *jnana mudra*.
- Now bring your tongue all the way out and fold both sides of tongue like a tube or straw.
- Take a long, deep inhalation through the tube in the tongue which is formed by folding the both sides of tongue.
- After inhalation, close your mouth and exhale from both nostrils.
- Repeat four more rounds.



Benefits: -

- It calms the mind, and it's an effective stress buster.

Caution: -

- In case of low blood pressure, asthma, cold and cough or other respiratory problems, this *pranayama* should be avoided.

3. Bhramari Pranayama

The Name: -

- *Bhramari Pranayama* gets its name from '*bhramara*' which means 'humming bee'. In this *pranayama*, buzzing sound of a humming bee is produced.

Technique: -

- Sit in any comfortable meditative posture and close the eyes.
- Inhale deeply through the nose.
- Close the eyes with index fingers, place the middle finger on sides of the nose without closing it, mouth with ring finger just above the upper lip and little fingers just below the lower lip, ears from respective thumbs as shown in the figure. This is also called *Shanmukhi Mudra*.
- Exhaling, make deep sound of a humming bee. Concentrate on the sound. After exhalation, bring the hands back on the knees.
- This is one round. Practice five rounds like this.

Benefits: -

- The sound resonating in the brain creates a soothing effect on mind and nervous system.
- It helps in relieving anxiety, anger and hyperactivity.

Caution: -

- In cases of ear and nose infections, this *pranayama* should be avoided.



Dhyana

The Name: -

- *Dhyana* is an act of contemplation. It pacifies the agitated mind, and makes it relaxed. There are several techniques of meditation but all have the common goal of attain higher level of awareness.

Technique: -

- Sit in any comfortable meditative posture. Keep the spine erect. Place the hands-on thighs in *jnana-mudra*.
- Gently close the eyes and adjust the head such that the crown of the head is in line with the pit of the throat. Breathe normally.
- Now focus the attention on breath while breathing normally.
- Stay in this state for five minutes or as long as possible.
- To come back, bring your attention back to breath and then the external surroundings.



Benefits: -

- *Dhyana* rejuvenates body and mind.

Shanti Patha: -

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः।
सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु।
मा कश्चित् दुःख भाग्भवेत्॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः॥

Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah I
Sarve Santu Nir-Aamayaah I
Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyantul
Maa Kashcid-Duhkha-Bhaag-Bhavet II
Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih II

Meaning:

May All Be Prosperous and Happy
May All Be Free from Illness
May All See What Is Spiritually Uplifting
May No One Suffer in Any Way

References for Yoga Practices

- **Prayer:** Kathopanishad- Shanti Path
- **Yogic Sukshma Vyayama** (Micro Circulation Practice): Yogic Sukshma Vyayama of Swami Dheerendra Bhramahachari.

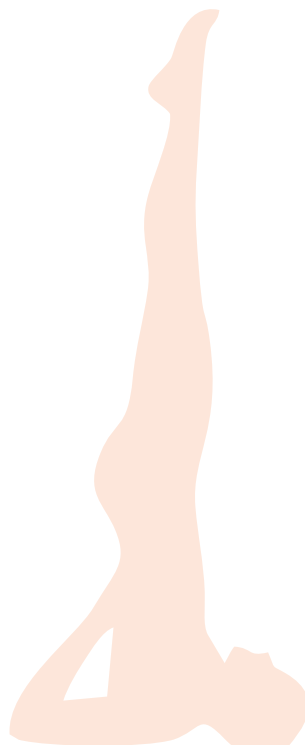
- **Surya Namaskara:** Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha by Swami Satyananda Saraswati, Surya Namaskara by Swami Satyananda.
- **Tadasana:** Also called as Taalaasana, Yogarahasya of Nathamuni, Kiran Tika, a commentary on Yoga sutras, Shree Yoga Kaustubha-25, Sachitra Caurasi Asana-34, Yoga Asanas by Swami Shivananda.
- **Vrikshasana:** Gheranda Samhita-ii.36, Brihad Yoga Sopana, Hatha Yoga Samhita-43, Yoga Marga Pradipa-11.
- **Pada-hastasana:** Shree Yoga Kaustubha. Yogarahasya of Nathamuni.
- **Garudasana:** Gheranda Samhita-ii.37, Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha by Swami Satyananda Saraswati-page no. 289.
- **Trikonasana:** Yogarahasya-ii. 20 of Nathamuni
- **Padmasana:** Gheranda Samhita-ii.8, Hatha Yoga pradipika-i.44-47.
- **Baddha Padmasana:** Hatha Yoga pradipika-i.44-47, The Illustrated Light on Yoga by BKS Iyengar- page no. 70
- **Vajrasana:** Gheranda Samhita-ii.12.
- **Bhadrasana:** Gheranda Samhita-ii.9-10, Hatha Yoga pradipika-i.53-54.
- **Ushtrasana:** Shree Yoga Kaustubha, NagojiBhatta Vritti on Yogasutra-ii.46, Gheranda Samhita-ii.41 describes Ushtrasana which is done lying in prone position.
- **Shashakasana:** Gheranda Samhita-ii.12 call it as Vajrasana, Hathayoga Samhita, Brhada Yoga Sopana, Sachitra Vyavaharika Yoga-16, Narada Purana-33-112, Brihannaradiya Purana, Yogamargapradipa, Yoga Bija-90, Yogasiksopanishad-I.111-112, Hatharatnavali-iii.9
- **Ardha matsyendrasana:** Also called as Matsyendrasana, Hatha Yoga Pradipika by Swami Muktibodhananda-i.26, Gheranda Samhita-ii.22-23
- **Gomukhasana:** Gheranda Samhita-ii.39; Hatha Yoga Pradipika-I-20.
- **Makarasana:** Jaipur Central Museum, with some variation in hands position.
- **Bhujangasana:** Gheranda Samhita. ii.42, with some variation, Kirana Tika-ii.46 on Yoga sutra, Hatha Yoga Samhita-49, Shree Yoga kaustubha-62, Yogamargapradipika-19, Yoga Rahasya of Nathamuni-ii.14, Jaipur Central Museum-7174.
- **Shalabhasana:** Gheranda Samhita-ii.16, Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha by Swami Satyananda Saraswati-page no. 205
- **Dhanurasana:** Gheranda Samhita-ii.10, Hatha Yoga Pradipika by Swami Muktibodhananda-i.25.
- **Ardha Halasana:** Yoga-rahasya II-7
- **Navasana/Naukasana:** Also called as Paripurna Navasana in The Illustrated Light on Yoga by BKS Iyengar- page no. 58; variations of Merudansasana in Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha by Swami Satyananda Saraswati-page no. 300.
- **Setubandhasana:** Yogarahasya of Nathamuni
- **Pawanmuktasana:** Shree Yoga Kaustubha. It is done in sitting as per Yoga Asanas-3, Sachitra cauryasin Asane-5-7, Shree Yoga kaustubha-5, Kirana Tika-ii.46 on Yoga Sutra.
- **Sarvangasana:** Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha by Swami Satyananda Saraswati-page no. 259; The Illustrated Light on Yoga by BKS Iyengar- page no. 90-94.

- **Chakrasana:** kiranabhasva of sriksna-vaJabhacarya on PYS (ii.46), yogasiddhāntacandrika, ahirbudhnyasamhita (31033) and varahopanisad (v'.17) describe chakrasana as a meditative posture.
- **Shavasana:** Gheranda Shamita-ii.19, Hathapradipika-i.32, Hatharatnavali-iii.20,76, Kapala Kurantaka Hathabhasya Paddhati-11, Yuktabhavadeva-vi.21, Asanani-14, Yoga Siddhanta Chandrika-ii.46, Shreetatva Nidhi-70, Kirana Tika on Yogasutra-ii.46, Brhada Yoga Sopana-iii.24, Hathapradipika, Shree Yoga Kaustubha-17.
- **Kapalabhati:** A variation of Bhastrika Kumbhaka of Gheranda Samhita-v.70-72, Kumbhaka Paddhati-164-165, Hathapradipika, Hatharatnavali-22-24, Hathatatvakaumudi-x.12-14, Yuktabhavadeva-vii.110-118.
- **Ujjayi Pranayama:** Hatha Yoga Pradipika by Swami Muktibodhananda-ii.51-53, Gheranda Samhita-v.69-72.
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- **Dhyana:** Yoga Sutra of Patanjali III.2

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ANNEXURE 1

RECOMMENDED BOOKS FOR FURTHER READING

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ANNEXURE 2

COMMON YOGA PROTOCOL (CYP)

The United Nations designated June 21 as the International Day of Yoga (IDY) in 2014, to be observed annually. Since then, June 21 has been celebrated across the globe through a variety of events and programs, making IDY the largest public health movement in the world. The Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, being the Nodal Ministry for Yoga activities, developed the Common Yoga Protocol (CYP), which is a series of forty-five-minute-long Yoga practices that can be practiced by anyone, regardless of their age, gender, or fitness level.

The Common Yoga Protocol was prepared with the purpose to provide a concise yet informative introduction to Yoga and its practices to orient one towards achieving holistic health and to promote overall well-being of society at large. Moreover, it aims to raise awareness about the benefits of Yoga and its potential to bring about harmony and peace.

The CYP was prepared with an amalgamation of the ancient traditions of Yoga and the latest scientific insights on varied Yoga practices by a team of experts from the Ministry of Ayush, the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), and other esteemed Yoga institutions. The team consisted of 20 Yoga experts who worked on developing the Yoga protocol over a period of several months.

The CYP was then reviewed and approved by a committee of over 50 Yoga experts, leading Yoga masters and researchers from various fields, including Yoga Philosophy, Anatomy, Physiology, Modern medicine and Yoga therapy. It was finally edited by Dr. Ishwar V. Basavaraddi, Director, Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), Ministry of Ayush, Government of India. The final version of the CYP was launched on the first-ever celebration of the International Day of Yoga i.e. June 21, 2015.

The CYP has been published in several languages to make it accessible to a wider audience worldwide. As per the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, the Common Yoga Protocol is available in sixteen languages including English, Hindi, Sanskrit, Manipuri, Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam, Bengali, Kashmiri, Tamil, Urdu, Telugu, Assamese, Punjabi, Oriya and Gujarati. (<https://yoga.ayush.gov.in/common-yogaprotocol>).

S. No.	Practices	S.No.	Name of the Practice
I.	Invocation	1	Starting Prayer
II.	Loosening Practices	2	Neck Movements
		3	Shoulder's Movement
		4	Trunk Movement
		5	Knee Movement
		III.	Standing Asana
7	Vrikshasana		
8	Pada-hastasana		
9	Ardha Chakrasana		
10	Trikonasana		
	Sitting Asana	11	Bhadrasana
		12	Vajrasana
		13	Ardha Ushtrasana

		14	Ushtrasana
		15	Shashakasana
		16	Uttana Mandukasana
		17	Vakrasana
	Prone Lying Asana	18	Makarasana
		19	Bhujangasana
		20	Shalabhasana
	Supine Lying Asana	21	Setubandhasana
		22	Uttanapadasana
		23	Ardha Halasana
		24	Pawana Muktasana
		25	Shavasana
IV.	Kriya	26	Kaphalabhati
V	Pranayama	27	Nadi Shodhana Pranayama
		28	Sheetali Pranayama
		29	Bhramari Pranayama
VI.	Dhyana		
VII.	Sankalpa		
VIII.	Shantih Patha		
Total Duration=45 minutes			

Committee of Yoga Experts:

- Dr. H. R. Nagendra**, Chancellor, Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana University, Bangalore, **Chairman**.
- Sh. Anil Kumar Ganeriwala**, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Ayush.
- Sh. O.P. Tiwari**, Chairman, S.M.Y.M Samiti, Kaivalyadhama, Lonavla .
- Smt. Hansaji Jayadeva Yogendra**, Director, The Yoga Institute, Santacruz, Mumbai.
- Dr. Jaideep Arya**, Chief Central Coordinator, Patanjala Yoga Peeth, Haridwar.
- Sri Sridharan**, Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram, Chennai.
- Swami Bharat Bhushan**, President, Mokshayatan Yogashram, Saharanpur, U.P.
- Swami Shant Atmanand**, President, Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi.
- Sh. Gaurav Verma**, Art of Living Foundation, New Delhi.
- Swami Ullasa**, Isha Yoga Foundation, Coimbatore.
- Dr. Rajvi Mehta**, Chief Scientist, Ramamani Iyengar Yoga Institute, Iyengar Yogashraya, Mumbai.
- Dr. Prashant Shetty**, Principal, SDM College of Naturopathy & Yogic Sciences, Shantivan Trust, Ujire.
- Dr. Chandrasinh Jhala**, Vice- Chancellor, Lakulish Yoga University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- Swami Dharmanand Ji**, Director, Adhyatma Sadhana Kendra, New Delhi.
- Shri Kalicharan**, Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya, Shantikunj, Haridwar.
- Sister Asha**, Director, Om Shanti Retreat centre, Brahma Kumaris, New Delhi.
- Dr. Ananda Balayogi Bhavanani**, Chairman, ICYER, Puduchery.
- Sh. Ramanand Meena**, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Ayush.
- Dr. I.N. Acharya**, Programme Officer (Yoga Therapy), MDNIY, New Delhi.
- Dr. Ishwar V. Basavaraddi**, Director, MDNIY, New Delhi, **Member Secretary**.

ANNEXURE 2

Y Break “Yoga break at workplace” – Mobile App

Y Break “Yoga break at workplace” program was conceptualized by Ministry of Ayush, Government of India with an aim to get De-stressed, Refreshed and Re-Focused to increase the productivity of individuals at the work place by practicing selected Yoga practices of 5 minutes (twice a day) time frame to accrue the benefits as projected from Yoga practice for a longer duration.

The Yoga protocol in the Y-Break application comprises of a few simple Yogic practices consisting of *Asana*, *Pranayama* and *Dhyana*, which is as follows:

- *Tadasana- Urdhva-Hastottanasana*
- *Skandha Chakra- Uttanamandukasana*
- *Ardha Chakrasana, Prasarita Padottanasana*
- *Kati Chakrasana*
- *Deep Breathing, Nadishodhana Pranayama*
- *Bhramari Pranayama- Dhyana*

Y Break – Mobile app is freely available on Google play, IOS app store. This is very cost effective and user friendly. This app has already been downloaded 50 thousand times by the users and still there are registered participants.

Android version Download Link:

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=ayush.gov.in.ybreak&hl=en_IN&gl=US

IOS versions Download Link: <https://apps.apple.com/in/app/y-break/id1555002781>



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