

Rechaka. (Hastapadasana or third posture).

(11) Inhale deeply. Keep both the legs touching each other. Heels and the paws of both sides should touch each other. Now join the hands and take them upwards and bend backwards only when the head is between the arms. Don't bend the elbows. (Hastauttanasana or second posture).

(12) Slowly exhale. Then breathe routinely. Keep both the hands joined together and bring them in front of the chest in the center. Then take them on respective side of the trunk. (Namaskarasana or the first posture of Suryanamaskara).

For doing Surya-namaskara for second time take the left leg on back side for the fourth posture. Always do Shavasana after doing exercise of Surya-namaskara for two, four or six times.



Position-11



Position-12

21. PRIMARY ASANAS

1. ASANAS TO BE DONE BY LYING ON THE BACK

EKA-PADA-UTTANASANA

Spread the four times folded blanket on the floor. Yoga mat also can be used. Lie down on your back on it. The heels and the paws should touch each other and the palms should face the ground by the side of the trunk. The mouth and eyes may be closed. Now slowly inhale deeply and raise the right leg by one to one and half feet above the ground. Keep the leg straight and stable without bending from the knee. The left leg will remain straight on the ground. You may keep the eyes open and raise the leg at least up to the height so that the foot can be seen. Breath should be held till it is possible without feeling any difficulty. If you can't hold the breath, take normal breathing. Then gradually bring the right leg on the ground. After taking rest for some moments repeat the same exercise by the left leg. The exercise done on the right side is called as Dakshinapadauttanasana and on left side it is called as Vamapadauttanasana.

It is much beneficial and purposeful if the position in the same Asana is maintained for a long time than repeating it for two to three times. Do each Asana for twenty seconds in the beginning and gradually it must be increased to ninety seconds.



Eka-pada-uttanasana

Benefits

By lifting the legs one by one the blood circulation increases towards the pelvic organs. So the ileum and the organs situated in the pelvis are very much benefited. The organs which are benefited are testis, prostate gland, uterus, urethra etc. Later on we shall discuss about which benefits are obtained, how and how much they are obtained. The same benefits are obtained by another Asana Uttanapadasana also.

UTTANPADASANA

Uttanpadasana is to be performed in the same way as Ekapadauttanpadasana which was done before. Lie down on your back on the blanket spread on the ground. Keep the heels and the paws of the legs touching each other. Keep the palms of the hands facing the ground. Take deep breath. Raise both the legs simultaneously one and half to two feet above the ground so that the toes can be seen. Don't bend the legs at the knees, so they will be lifted by 30 to 35 degree above the ground.

Hold the breath if possible. Don't do it forcefully. You can have normal breathing also, but keeping the legs straight and stable is essential. Starting with twenty seconds it should be kept stable in the same position for minimum one and half minute. But in the beginning all persons can't do it and they bring the legs down in 40, 50 or 60 seconds. The main reason is lack of exercise.



Uttanpadasana

The second reason is that they are not sincere about this exercise and the third reason is that their breathing potential or the capacity is inadequate. The maximum breathing capacity should be 2800 cc. to 3600 cc. The physician doctors keep spirometer (one kind of equipment) in their clinics to measure the breathing capacity. The lady Yoga teachers of our Ashram are capable of keeping their legs lifted in a stable condition for seven minutes. The grand mothers also perform all the Asanas comfortably and in a very proper way. Here the need is to do regular practice and to have an interest.

Benefits

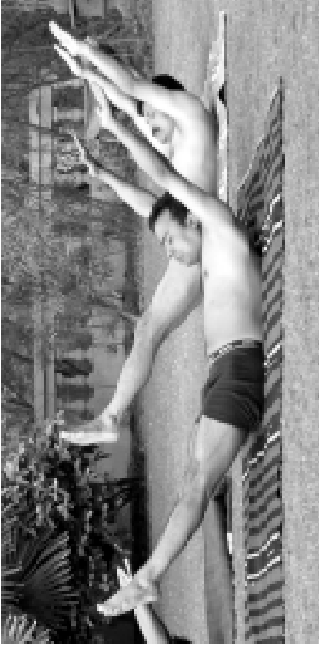
As Ekapadauttanpadasana.

NAUKASANA

The third and an important Asana of this series is Naukasana.

Lie down on your back on the blanket as before for doing Naukasana. The paws and the heels touching each other, the hands by the side of the trunk and the palms facing the ground, the eyes should be open and breathing should be routine.

Inhale deeply and raise the hands above the head as far as possible. Then slowly exhale. Inhale deeply again and lift the head, neck, shoulders and the upper part of the back from one side and lift the legs simultaneously



Naukasana

as done in Uttanpadasana. The shape of the body in this position resembles a boat. Both the hands and the legs should remain parallel. Hold the breath inside or if it is not possible have routine natural breathing. Remain in this position for minimum one and half to five minutes. Begin its practice for twenty seconds and then gradually try to remain stable in that posture for at least one and half minutes.

Benefits

In this Asana legs as well as hands and shoulders are raised. So the blood circulation is diverted towards the navel which gives benefits to the small and large intestine, testis, kidneys, uterus, bladder and ovaries. Especially the prostate is benefited much by doing Ekapadauttanasana, Uttanpadasana and Naukasana.

Prostate Gland

There is a walnut size organ inside a male's body from where there is a continuous risk of occurrence of sufferings. The first problem of the prostate is increased frequency of passing urine which is more during night time. There is also a possibility of cancer of the prostate if the person lives long.

The main function of the prostate is to maintain the reproductive life of the male and to continue the human life on the earth. The liquid material of the semen is

produced from the prostate. It is the special type of the liquid that contains protein, enzymes, glucose and fat which provide nutrition to the sperm cells coming from the testes. Each time during ejaculation of the semen there are millions of sperms in it. The acidity in female genital tract is neutralised by the prostatic secretion, which facilitates the sperms to travel further towards the ovum.

Before adulthood the prostate is situated at the bladder neck. The size of the prostate is like an almond. The size and the functions of the prostate increase due to changes in the hormones as the age of the person advances. The semen is produced inside it and then stored in the muscular bag like parts.

The ejaculation of the semen is not controlled by the prostate but prostate has to follow the neuronal message from the spinal cord. When there is neuronal message the sphincter valve closes and the opening of the bladder gets closed so that urine doesn't come out at the time of ejaculation. At the same time the valves of the prostate as well as the mouths of the semen bags also are opened. These pouches of the size of peanuts are situated on either side of the prostate. The twenty percent of the semen comes from these pouches while one spoonful of the semen comes from the prostate. The mixture of these two comes out from the male ejaculatory organ.

The prostate gland has three parts and they all are situated very close to one another. The urethra through which urine passes is situated in the middle part. The infection, cancer and inflammation can occur in this part. Due to any of these problems there is enlargement of the prostate which interrupts the flow of urine. God may not give such suffering to any one because I have seen many elderly people suffering from it. There is retention of urine and stasis of urine leads to infection. If it is not treated in time there may be ascending infection towards the kidneys and to the blood. It may cause uremic poisoning which gradually sends the patient towards the door of death.

The size of the prostate increases as there is increase in the age. If the size increases beyond limit it obstructs the flow of urine so the urine is not passed with force or there may be burning sensation with slow flow while passing urine. In such condition Yoga teachers should not try to show their importance but they should advise the person to consult the doctor and to get operated for prostate problem according to medical advice.

One newspaper editor telephoned me, "One gentleman has high blood pressure. Some Yoga teacher told him to stop the medicine and advised to attend his Yoga class. He assured that blood pressure would be controlled. The medicines were stopped by the person and his blood pressure increased to 280 mm of Hg. That person is in ICU."

Yoga definitely eliminates disease but the medicines should not be stopped when Yoga classes are attended. The Yoga teacher who doesn't have medical knowledge has no right to treat the patients by Yoga therapy. Yoga can help when the disease is in the initial stage or healing stage. But when the disease is in fully developed stage no Yoga teacher should advised for Yoga therapy without medical guidance. The medicines should be tapered according to the doctor's advice gradually even after improvement of the disease.

DRONASANA

Now we will learn Dronasana and Uttitth Paschimottanasana.

- (1) Lie down on the blanket on your back.
- (2) Keep heels and the paws of the legs touching each other. The palms should face the ground.
- (3) Both the hands should remain parallel on the ground and by the side of the trunk touching the body.
- (4) Inhale deeply. Lift both the hands, take them above the head and stretch as much as possible. Breathe normally.
- (5) Again inhale deeply and lift both the legs and both

the hands keeping the head between the arms. Maintain the hands parallel to each other and take them up to the legs. You should not hold the legs. The legs should remain at 30 to 35 degree. Exhale while you bring the hands towards the legs. After that have routine breathing. Try to remain in this posture for one and half to five minutes.



Dronasana

Benefits

The blood will flow with extra pressure towards the navel from legs and upper trunk. The ovaries and uterus in the ladies and gall bladder, spleen, adrenal, pancreas, small and large intestine, duodenum, pylorus in all the persons will be benefited.

UTTITTHA PASHCHIMOTTANASANA

In Dronasana the hands were taken towards the legs but now hold the legs. In the beginning you will be able to hold the calf then by practice you will be able to hold the ankles. After having further practice you will be able to hold the toes and the head will also touch the knees. Both the elbows will remain by the sides of the knees. Exhale while doing it. The shape of the body will resemble the letter 'V'.

- (1) Spread the blanket on an even surface.
- (2) Lie down on your back with the heels and toes



Uttitha Pashchimottasana

touching each other. The palms should touch the ground.

- (3) After inhaling deeply raise the hands above the head.
- (4) Slowly exhale and raise the head, shoulders and the hands from one side and raise the legs also. Hold the ankles by the hands. Try to touch the head on the knees. Bend the elbows and keep them touching the thighs.
- (5) Hold the breath as much as possible (Bahya-kumbhaka). You can remain in this position by taking routine breath also.
- (6) Then relax in Shavasana after returning to supine position.

Benefits

By having this V shape of the body, all the internal organs and glands will be benefited and in addition pancreas will have extra benefit.

Pancreas

Pancreas controls blood sugar.

The pancreas is about fifteen centimeters long, pinkish in colour and about eighty five grams in weight. It is situated in the abdomen on the back wall and in front of the spinal column. The liver, kidney and large intestine are situated in vicinity of it. These organs are situated

very much nearer as well as touching to one another.

Pancreas is responsible for vital functions. Even after taking excessive food if digestive juices from pancreas don't mix with the food digestion of the food does not start. The energy is required for getting up, sitting, eating, drinking, walking, eye blinking as well as beating of the heart. Energy is also required for metabolic processes inside the body as well as to pump the blood towards the brain and to all the parts of the body. Pancreas is responsible for providing energy to the body and it is the source of energy and power by which we perform visible daily activities.

The pancreas has two different glands which perform important functions. One type of the gland produces important hormones and sends them in to blood circulation which regulates blood sugar. The blood sugar provides energy to each and every cell of the body. A great amount of energy is produced due to that only. Insulin produced from pancreas regulates the utilization of glucose by the different cells. This pancreas has to sincerely perform a very vital function.

About one liter of the digestive juice is produced in pancreas for digestion of food. About nine hundred grams of fluid is obtained from the gland of eighty five grams of weight. Many chemicals are produced as food travels further in the intestinal tract. The secretion from the pancreas makes the contents of the small intestine alkaline. If it doesn't occur timely the inner lining of small intestine will be damaged due to acidity. Hence pancreas has to produce alkaline solution in a large amount to neutralise this acidic solution. This pancreas has to work excessively if we don't have control over intake of food.

As soon as we start taking meals our nervous system orders pancreas to produce its alkaline solution and it starts producing it profoundly. The terminal part of the stomach is known as pylorus after which the duodenum starts. Pancreas starts supplying its alkaline solution as soon as the food enters the pylorus. The initial 25

centimeters of the small intestine is known as duodenum. This duodenum also produces hormones and that chemical message also reaches to pancreas through blood. Then alkaline solution from pancreas neutralises the acidic solution coming from the stomach.

Unfortunately we don't follow any rules and regulations in taking food. We eat anything, anywhere, at any time and in any amount. So as soon as food enters the stomach pancreas starts working. For that pancreas produces three types of the enzymes. Trypsin is one of the three chemicals (enzymes) which converts proteins in to amino acids which constitutes tissues after reaching to different parts of the body through blood circulation. The second enzyme is amylase which converts starch in to glucose. The third enzyme is lipase which metabolises fat in to glycerol and fatty acids. We are totally ignorant about the undesirable effects of the food on the body systems.

Our body is a type of machine. It has different parts like liver, kidney, pancreas and many others. We should utilise them properly so they can function properly during the different stages of life. By living an undisciplined life we injure ourselves as we are punishing our organs. Fortunately the pancreas has unimaginable wonderful capacity to produce digestive enzymes. We are able to live comfortably due to that only. But 'Ati Sarvatra Varjayet'. In any moment or time there should not be 'excess'. If pancreas works less than its requirement some function can be carried out by saliva, gastric juice and intestinal secretions but it is difficult to digest the food which is not possible without pancreas.

The pancreas has to produce insulin as a special function. If this function is not carried out properly it results in diabetes. In 1921 the insulin was obtained from animals. Before that it was believed that diabetes means there is opening of the doors to death. It means if the insulin is not produced in the pancreas that person can't have natural life. The weight of many hormones which

are produced from pancreas of eighty five grams is only 1.5% of the weight of the pancreas. The weight of glucose which circulates in the blood is 4.4 grams only, which is the essential amount.

We shall do essential discussion regarding pancreas while we discuss about Paschimottasana. But we also get main benefits by doing Ardhapavanamuktasana. and Pavanamuktasana.

ARDHA-PAVANA-MUKTASANA

- (1) Lie down on your back on a blanket.
- (2) Both the feet should touch each other and the hands should be by the side of the trunk in relax condition.
- (3) Fold the right knee. Bring it up to the abdomen and exhale.
- (4) Lift the shoulders and the head while exhaling the breath and touch the forehead to the right knee. Press the abdomen by the right knee by holding it with both hands. Hold the breath outside. If you can't hold the breath have normal breathing.

Do the same process by folding the left knee. The left leg should remain straight while folding the right knee. The right leg should remain straight while folding the left leg. It can be done for one and half minute to five minutes without any fear.

Benefits - As in Pavanamuktasana



Ardha-pavana-muktasana

PAVANAMUKTASANA



Pavanamuktasana

- (1) Lie down on your back on a blanket. The hands should remain by the side of the thighs in a relax condition.
- (2) Fold both the knees and bring them nearer to the abdomen. Keep both the knees and both the feet also touching each other.
- (3) Press the knees on the abdomen with both the hands as we hug our friends.
- (4) Lift the head and shoulders while exhaling the breath. Touch the knees to the forehead. Remain in this posture as much as possible without feeling any discomfort.

Benefits

The unnecessary gas collected in the intestine inside the abdomen gets released. In addition to that by doing Ekapada Uttanasana, Uttanpadasana, Naukasana, Dronasana, Uttith Paschimottasana and Ekapada Pavanamuktasana and Pavanamuktasana by both the legs the muscles of the gluteal region and the thigh muscles (quadriceps) become strong. By lifting the leg from hip joint there is pain relief in knees and thighs. The front wall muscles of the abdomen (rectus abdominis) become strong. It prevents viceroptosis and osteoporosis. It also reduces abdominal fats. While performing Pavanamuktasana hip flexors and the muscles of the thigh (hamstrings) are contracted. Therefore their functional capacity increases tremendously.

KATIUTTHASANA



Katiutthasana

- (1) Lie down on your back on a blanket.
- (2) Both the feet should touch each other, the palms of the hands facing the ground and should be nearer to the trunk.
- (3) Slowly move away the feet and the knees and keep them parallel to each other. Keep the distance between the feet and the knees similar to the distance between the two shoulders.
- (4) Lift the low back by taking the weight on the feet and the hands. Lift it as much as possible.
- (5) Remain in that position as much as possible without any discomfort. Start any Asana with twenty seconds in the beginning and remain in that posture for at least one and half minutes. Gradually one should try to increase this time to five minutes.
- (6) Breathe normally. Concentrate on the breath which is coming in and going out.

Benefits

The hamstring muscles situated on the back side of the thigh and gluteal muscles contract while doing this Asana. It increases the strength of the paravertebral muscles. It helps to maintain the normal shape of the lumber spine and prevents lumber spondylosis. While doing this Asana the blood circulation increases towards the heart, lungs and the upper part of the body.

We don't like to sit straight. Very rarely the people keep their spine straight or keep their head, neck and the body in one line while they sit in a chair or in a cross leg posture. (Samam Siro Griva Kayam). Make a habit

of sitting straight wherever or whenever you sit. Most of us have the habit of sitting by bending the low back. In a long run there is pain where the spinal column ends which is known as lumbosacral region. It causes pain in lumbosacral region when one has to stand for one or two hours. By practising this Katiutthanasana chronic lumbosacral pain can be relieved. The same benefit can be achieved by practising Setubandhasana.

SETU-BANDHASANA

- (1) Lie down on your back on a blanket.
- (2) The heels and the paws should touch each other.
- (3) The palms of the hands should face the ground and the hands should remain nearer to the trunk.
- (4) By pressing the hands and the feet lift the low back. (While doing Kati Utthanasana the legs were wide apart while performing this Asana the feet and the knees should touch each other.)
- (5) Then upper arm (between the shoulder and the elbow) will remain on the ground. The forearm (between the elbow and the wrist) will remain perpendicular to the ground and give support to the low back by keeping them under the waist in such a way that the fingers should point outwards and the thumb should point inner side.



Setu-bandhasana

(6) Keep the forearm perpendicular as a pole resembling the columns which support the fly over.

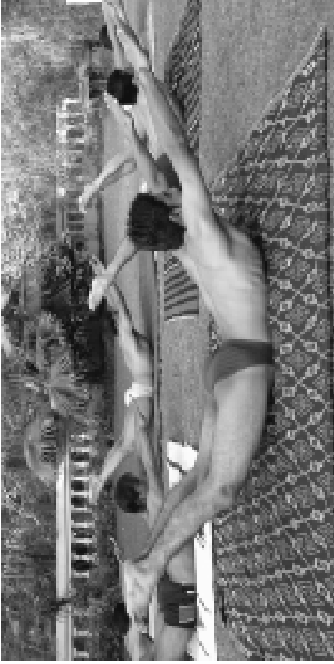
(7) Then straighten the right leg and keep the knee straight. Then straighten the left leg and keep the knee straight. Keep the feet and the knees touching each other. Now the shape of the body will resemble the fly over or the bridge constructed over the river. Remain in this position for about twenty seconds in the beginning. Gradually increase the time and remain in that position for one and half minutes. By doing it for about five minutes much benefit can be obtained.

Benefits

Practice of this Asana gives exercise to the muscles of the thigh, leg, hips and low back. The weight is transmitted on the arms and the wrists, so their muscle power increases. It increases the elasticity of the spine. We can prevent occurrence of lumbar spondylosis. Practice of Kati Utthanasana and Setubandhasana makes performing Chakrasana easy.

2. ASANAS TO BE DONE BY LYING ON THE ABDOMEN-PRONE POSITION URDHVA-NAUKASANA

- (1) Lie down on the belly and the chest in prone position on a four folded blanket on the ground.
- (2) Straighten both the hands above the head. Keep the hands touching the ground and parallel to each other.
- (3) Inhale deeply. From above lift the hands, the shoulders, head, chest and from below lift the legs without bending at the knees.
- (4) Retain the breath inside. Maintain that posture without any discomfort and tension. Do an honest effort. If it can't be maintained gradually exhale and come back on the ground. Take rest in Makarasana.



Urdhva-naukasana

Benefits

It relieves the low backache.

BADDHA-NAUKASANA

Bring both the hands on the low back. Rest of the method is same as Urdhva-naukasana. Hold the hands each other and stretch towards the lower side and make the shape of the body resembling the boat. It is called as Baddhanaukasana.

Benefits

As Bhujangasana.

ARDHA-SHALABHASANA

- (1) Spread a four-folded blanket on an even surface.
- (2) Lie down in prone position.
- (3) Both the hands should be by the side of the body and palms should face the ground.
- (4) Both the paws should touch each other. Do Ardha-shalabhasana before doing Shalabhasana.
- (5) Slowly turn the head towards the right side. Then inhale deeply and lift the right leg as much as possible without bending the knee. It is Ardha-shalabhasana. In the beginning Shalabhasana is not possible for all especially for the ladies. So the practice of Ardha-shalabhasana gives the benefit to the ova-



Ardha-shalabhasana

ries. Gradually bring the leg down. Hold the breath as much as possible when the leg was lifted. Exhale while bringing the leg down. Don't do any haste in bringing the leg down. Then take rest for some moments.

- (6) Then turn the face on left side. Inhale deeply and raise the left leg as much as possible. Hold the breath when the leg is lifted up. If retention of breath is not possible take normal breaths. Don't hold the breath forcefully. Gradually bring the leg down. Then breathe peacefully and take rest in Makarasana.

ARDHA-DHANURASANA

- (1) Spread a four-folded blanket on an even surface where there is enough ventilation and light.
- (2) Lie down in prone position. The belly touching the ground and the back will face the sky. The palms should face the ground and the hands should be by the side of the trunk. The feet should touch each other. The soles of the feet should face the sky.
- (3) Now stretch the right hand above the head and keep it parallel to the ground. The palm should face the ground.
- (4) Bend the left knee. Keep the right leg straight. Hold the left ankle by the left hand.
- (5) Inhale deeply. Lift the left leg by the left hand. Lift the head, chest and shoulder. The elbow of the left



Ardha-dhanurasana

hand should face the head. Hold the breath in and remain in this position as much as possible. Don't shake. Slowly exhale while returning to original position. Legs should be on the ground touching each other. The hands should be by the side of the trunk. Breathe routinely.

- (6) Now straighten the right hand above the head. Bend the right leg. Hold the right ankle by the right hand. Lift the right leg. The head, shoulder and the chest should also be lifted. The right hand should be straight. Pull the leg as much as possible. This is called as Ardha-dhanurasana on right and left side.

Benefits

There is increase in blood circulation in the elbow, wrist, shoulder joint, ankle, knee and the hip joint which prevents the stiffness of all these joints. There is no idleness and there is full comfort. One can live pleasant life without arthritis.

USHTRASANA

- (1) Spread a four folded blanket on the even ground and sit in Vajrasana.
- (2) Keep a distance between the feet and the knees as there is a distance between the two shoulders.
- (3) Stand on the knee and the feet.
- (4) Keep both the hands on the waist on respective side

and bend on back side. Hang the head on back side. It is the first position of Ushtrasana.

- (5) Now hold the ankle by the hand of respective side. Support the feet on the ground on the paws so the heel will remain eight to ten inches above the ground so the bending on the back side will be less. This is the second position. Then stretch the feet so that the sole will face the sky and then hold the heels. This is the third and final position. This position gives extra benefits to cervical vertebrae, lumbosacral region, whole spinal cord, shoulder girdles, joint of scapula and humerus, both knees and joints of the legs.

Many people have the problem of low backache. We also know it by the name of slip disc. But it is not like that all the times.

The problem of slip disc occurs due to fall, accident etc. The disc situated below the fifth lumber vertebra is commonly affected. It requires major surgery some times. Let us take an example from America to see the problems arising of it.

One doctor of Asian Dental Surgery Association at Diamond Bar, Los Angeles had low backache. It became very severe and the doctors in America told him that two nerves had fused together and it requires surgery to separate them. Operation was done and both nerves were separated but the body below the navel got paralysed. A second operation was done after six months to make him to walk. He was able to walk but the sensation of urine and stool is lost. Now he doesn't know when the



Ushtrasana

stool and urine is passed. This doesn't have any further medical treatment. He moves with the diaper. When he feels weight he has to go to a rest room and to get diaper changed. How sorrowful it is !

That is the reason why we repeat the words of Geeta. 'Swalpamasya Dharmasya Trayate Mahato Bhayat'. Read the Yoga teachings in detail and with interest. Think and study about it. It will be helpful in your life. You will have a happy life.

There is fusion of two vertebrae when there is slip disc and it requires removing the remnants. There is less sufferings if there is mild injury but there is protrusion of the jelly like substance from the disc which is responsible for the acute pain. The remnants of the disc press on the nerves which cause unbearable pain. Having such problem we are told not to bend forwards at the time of wearing the shoes and tying the shoe strings as well as not to lift the weight etc.

The muscle spasm leads to severe painful condition and due to that there is no possibility of doing any movement. The rupture of the disc causes the pain in the areas of distribution of the sciatic nerve starting from the thigh to the foot. This low backache makes the body of the sufferer weak as it affects many muscles and ligaments.

Benefits

Regular practice of Ushtrasana gives special benefits to cervical vertebrae, lumbosacral region and whole spine, shoulder joints-scapula and humerus joint, both knees and the joints of the legs.

VAKRASANA

- (1) Spread a four-folded blanket or Yoga mat on an even surface in a place having enough air and light .
- (2) Sit with the legs straight.
- (3) Fold the right knee and keep the leg vertical. Keep the right foot near and on the right side of the left



Vakrasana

knee. The toes should point forwards and the heel pointing the back side. The feet should remain parallel to the ground. The back should be straight.

- (4) Take the left hand between the right knee and the chest; then extend it further and hold the shin of the left leg.
- (5) Take the right hand on the back side of the waist and keep it on the ground while keeping the fingers joined together and stretched on the back side, the palm parallel to the ground. The right shoulder should be turned from the right side and try to move it towards back side. Turn the head on right side and turn it towards the back side as much as possible. It is called as Vakrasana. Breathe normally. As you performed Vakrasana by keeping the right leg vertical and twisting from the right side do it in the same way on opposite side by keeping the left leg vertical and taking the right hand between the chest and the left knee. Hold the right leg calf by the right hand.
Then take the left hand on backside and keep it slightly away from hip. Turn the left shoulder on the left side. Also turn the head on left side and backwards. The same way Ardhamatsyendrasana is to be done.

3. ASANAS TO BE DONE IN CROSS LEG POSTURE

We have three different working positions and let us understand the body physiology in all those positions. The first is lying down position in the bed. We usually keep pillow under the head. Some people keep two pillows. Sometimes the people keep one pillow by folding and making it double. In these positions the level of the heart is lower than the head. The legs are still at lower level. So the blood circulation is more towards the legs than the head.

The second is the modern sitting position. We use western style systems in the latrines. We sit on the chairs for taking breakfast, for driving, doing the office work, taking lunch, playing the cards, carrom and chess in the clubs in the evening, seeing television programmes etc. We routinely utilise sofa sets also. The legs remain at lower level than the heart and the head is having the highest level position. Here also the legs get more blood perfusion in comparison to head.

The third one is standing position. The traffic police, salesmen and women in India and abroad have to stand for a long time. Due to standing for hours the direction of the blood flow is excessive towards the legs. Hence the people who stand or walk for a long time get the problem of varicose veins. The legs get excessive blood and the head gets less blood perfusion.

According to our Indian life style the people used to have squatting position in the latrines and cross leg posture for bathing. (But nowadays the western styled latrines have increased in India.) The morning worship, Japa, Dhyana, Sandhya, Swadhyaya, Pratikraman, Namaz, Ardas; of Bauddha, Hindu, Jain, Sikh and Muslim used to be done in different sitting positions only. For taking meals people used to sit on the floor in cross leg positions only. Children also used to sit in cross leg postures in the schools. People have to sit in cross leg position in religious meetings, musical programmes, political meetings or postfuneral meetings. Now we have

become modern. We believe that illiterate people sit on the ground and the literate and wise persons always sit on the chairs. This type of understanding broke down our knees and if there is little pain in the knees the doctor would say not to fold the knees. In this situation we will have to revive our ancestors' traditional cross leg sitting style as much as possible.

First of all we should sit in cross leg position. The blood perfusion gradually decreases in the lower part of the body below naval. So relatively the upper part of the body above the naval gets extra blood supply. The heart has to strain less to pump the blood towards the brain. In this way the internal viscera of the abdomen, heart, lungs and the head get more benefits.

Especially following are the Asanas in which one has to sit by folding the legs. (1) Sukhasana, (2) Padmasana, (3) Vajrasana, (4) Siddhasana, (5) Swastikasana. The vital organs are benefited by practising these Asanas. The big sized muscles of the hips like gluteus maximums, the muscle in front and the back side of the thigh (quadriceps, hamstrings, psoas, adductor longus, gracilis, sartorius, adductor magnus, biceps femoris, and semitendinosus) the calf muscles, gastrocnemius, tibialis, anterior paronius longus, etc. don't require extra blood supply. The blood flow in the large size arteries like external iliac, deep femoral, popliteal, anterior and posterior tibial supply relatively extra blood to the reproductive organs by practising such Asanas. The gynecological problems in the female and the reproductive problems of the male can be solved by this extra blood supply to these organs. The reproductive organs like testis, ovary, fallopian tubes, uterus, the excretory organs like urinary bladder, kidneys, the digestive organs like small and large intestine, stomach, liver, pancreas, respiratory organs like both lungs; heart and circulatory system, cerebrum and cerebellum, spinal cord of the nervous system, eyes, ears, nose, throat are benefited by practising Vajrasana and Padmasana. It can be said that the functions of the organs of the body

are dependent on oxygen supply. These organs receive oxygen through blood circulation. More the regularity and availability of blood circulation better is the functioning capability of the systems of the body.

Endocrine system is also benefited very much if Asanas like Padmasana, Vajrasana are practised regularly for prolonged duration, scientifically and with interest. The testis is one of the endocrine gland which produces testosterone as a male sex hormone. The ovaries produce progesterone and estrogen as female sex hormones. The cortex and medulla of suprarenal or adrenal glands produce the hormones that regulate blood pressure. These systems in the practitioners of Yogabhyasa work very well than the persons living average life. By sitting in Padmasana, Vajrasana, Siddhasana or Swastikasana for a long time the problem of prostate gland rarely arises. So we can say that the metabolic functions are controlled very well.

The degenerative changes are seen very less in the practitioners of Padmasana group of Asanas. Sometimes we tell some people on seeing them after a long time, 'There is no change in your body. What a surprise!' Their regular lifestyle and the habit of doing Asanas and Pranayama are the reasons behind it.

The area where both the thighs join between the genitals and anus is known as perineum. Whole human body doesn't show any stitched area but it is there in perineal place. In Siddhasana and Swastikasana the heel of the left foot pressurise on the perineal place. This area has sympathetic and parasympathetic nerve plexus. Prolonged and regular pressure on this place controls semen. 'Yadichchhanti Brahmacharyam Charanti.' The practitioner of Siddhasana can control semen according to his will. The semen will not be discharged if he doesn't will it. 'Brahmacharyam Pratishthayam Viryalabhah.' By observing Celibacy (Brahmacharya) the physical appearance is beautified. The face looks bright, person feels energetic and life becomes full of interest and devoid of dejection.

SUKHASANA

Sit in a simple cross leg posture keeping the head, neck, chest and the spine in one line. It is called as Sukhasana.

PADMASANA

Keep the right leg on the left thigh. Then keep the left leg on the right thigh. It may be difficult in the beginning. Do butterfly exercise so it will be easier to do Padmasana.

By sitting in Vajrasana after taking meals parasympathetic nervous system is activated and more saliva is produced. The working capacity of small and large intestine increases. In simple words it can be said that by regular and prolonged practice of Padmasana and Vajrasana digestion process is normalized. There is no indigestion, gas formation or constipation. These people rarely suffer from chronic colitis. There is no pain in knees or backache. The liver, kidneys, pancreas, small and large intestine, prostate, ovaries and uterus work properly. The menstrual cycles in ladies are regularized. If there is excessive menstrual blood loss it gets normalized. The blood pressure also remains under control. Good parasympathetic nervous system tone results in adequate release of digestive enzymes and effective absorption of food from small intestine.



Padmasana

VAJRASANA

For doing Vajrasana fold the knees and take the legs on back side. Keep the toes of the feet joined together;

keep the heels away from each other. The back should be straight. Sit in this position.

SIDDHASANA

For doing Siddhasana left heel should be kept touching the perineal place. The right foot should be between the left thigh and the calf muscle. Both the knees should touch the ground. The back should be straight.



Siddhasana

SWASTIKASANA

For Swastikasana left heel should be near to the naval. It is also called as Guptasana. The Asanas are easy to perform. But we will have to do them. Go ahead! Success is there !



Swastikasana

22. MAIN ASANAS

The order of doing the main Asanas is very scientific. Shirsh, Sarvang, Matsya, Hala, Paschimottan, Bhujang, Shalabha, Chakra, Ardhamatsyendrasana, Yogamudra, Mayurasana and Shavasana.

We start learning the Asanas in lying down position but it is the rule that if we can do Shirshasana it should be done first. Then Sarvang and Matsya should be done. If you don't know it the practice should be started by doing Sarvangasana. Yes, you can certainly do flexibilities, Trikonasana or Suryanamaskara. Shirshasana mainly benefits the crown of the head, palate and the senses of the face. It gives benefit to the cerebrum, cerebellum, thyroid, parathyroid, eyes, nose, ears, throat, face and the teeth.

Sarvangasana gives benefit to the thyroid and parathyroid glands. Matsyasana is beneficial to the lungs, ribs and cervical vertebrae. Then Hala and Pashchimottanasana are beneficial to the spine, pancreas and they also reduce the abdominal fat. Bhujangasana decreases appetite. Shalabhasana increases appetite.

Dhanurasana is parabolic. Chakrasana is anti-parabolic. The chest and the chin touch in Sarvangasana while they move in opposite direction in Matsyasana. There is backward bending in Halasana. In Bhujangasana the part of the body above the navel is lifted up. In Shalabhasana the lower part of the body is lifted up from back side. This order is scientific and systematic but Sarvangasana

can't be taught first. So we have adopted very simple and scientific method of teaching.

SHIRSHASANA – Headstand posture

The persons having the habit of sitting on the chairs and sofa sets find difficulty in sitting in Padmasana. After practising flexibilities for two or three weeks or two or three months Padmasana is possible. But for practising Mayurasana and Shirshasana practice of flexibility is not essential.



Shirshasana-1



Shirshasana-2

It is mathematics like two and two is four. The same way there is a clear and straight forward method of doing Shirshasana and Mayurasana. It can be done in a moment. But here is a fear of fall. The essential instruction is that if you lose balance bring the legs down on the same side from which they were lifted. So there is no fear of fall or injury.

- (1) Spread a four fold blanket on the floor and sit on it in Vajrasana. Keep the knees touching each other.
- (2) Lock the fingers of both the hands in such away that the fingers should remain on back side of the palms.
- (3) Keep the hands in the center of the blanket in such a way that the little fingers should touch the ground and the thumbs should remain on upper side. The palms should face the body and the fingers should be on opposite side.
- (4) The elbows should be on the blanket. The distance between the two elbows should be equal to the dis-

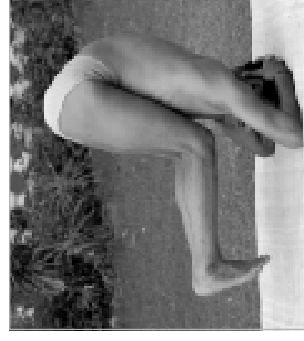


Shirshasana-3



Shirshasana-4

- (5) The crown of the head should be kept on the blanket in such a way that the back side of the head gets support of the palms. The thumbs should be kept straight which will also support the head.



Shirshasana-5 & 14



Shirshasana-6

- (6) Slowly lift the waist.
- (7) Support the legs on the paws.
- (8) The shape of the body will be triangular. On one side the head is resting on the ground between the triangle made by both the hands and on other side legs are resting on the ground. The hips and the waist are lifted upwards.
- (9) Now slowly walk by the paws of the legs towards the face. Keep the eyes open and see the legs moving towards the head.



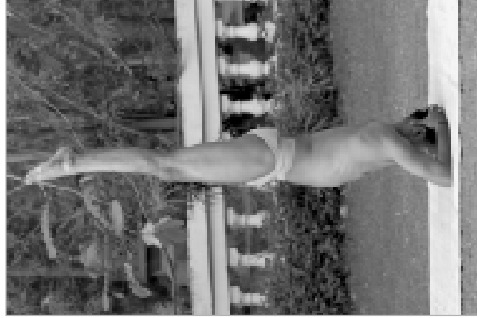
Shirshasana-7



Shirshasana-8

(10) At certain time the body will get balanced and both the legs will get lifted from the ground with balance. Lift both the legs simultaneously. Don't do haphazard movement by lifting the legs one by one.

(11) In the beginning bring the legs nearer to the hips so that the knees will remain nearer to the chest. And pointing towards the ground. Keep the legs parallel to each other and the feet should be touching each



Shirshasana-9



Shirshasana-10

other.

(12) Now slowly lift the knees so that they point parallel to the ground and the heels come nearer to the waist.
(13) When you feel that the balance is maintained lift the knees upwards. So that the face, nose, chest, abdomen, thighs and the knees will be in one straight line. Keep the knees bent.

(14) If you feel that the body is balanced try to maintain that posture. Once you experience that you are able to remain in that posture fearlessly straighten the knees without making any haste. So the head, back, waist, thighs and calf will be in one line. The toes



Shirshasana-11



Shirshasana-12



Shirshasana-13



Shirshasana-15

of the feet will point towards the sky or the ceiling.
(15) Keep the eyes open in the beginning.

(16) Breathe easily as it is done routinely. Remain stable in the Shirshasana posture for five to twenty seconds in the beginning.

If Shirshasana can be done for twenty seconds without feeling any fear; keep right leg on the left thigh and then left leg on the right thigh. (If you are able to do Padmasana without holding the legs in the sitting position Padmasana can be done in Shirshasana position.) This position is known as Padmasirshasana.

In the beginning Shirshasana should be practised for twenty seconds to five minutes. In India thousands of the people practise Shirshasana every day for fifteen minutes. I have seen our Sadgurudeva Shrimat Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's disciple Swami Bhumanandaji Maharaj doing Shirshasana for six hours. He was habituated to do Swadhyaaya and pondering in Shirshasana posture. He used to repeat Shrimad Bhagvat Geeta, Shree Durgasaptashati, Shree Vishnusahasranama, and Shree Lalitahasranama in Shirshasana. I have also seen one western lady devotee of Sivananda Ashram in Rishikesh; Srimati Simonita Kolona Dutchs and one Italian devotee Sesero Milan doing Shirshasana for six hours. They were seen meditating in Padmasana for eight to ten hours. It is Hathayoga. We should not do Shirshasana for more than fifteen minutes. The first prime minister of India used to do Shirshasana for half hour every day. The governor of Uttar Pradesh, then governor of Tamilnadu and chief minister of Andhra Pradesh also learned Yogabhyasa from us and they used to practise Shirshasana for half an hour regularly every day. One can practise Shirshasana for about five minutes without any fear in the beginning.

Now for returning back from Shirshasana position, first open Padmasana if it has been done. Straighten the legs. When you feel that the body is stable bend the legs at knees so that the heels will be near the hips. The knees

will point towards the sky. Then bring the knees down nearer to the chest with keeping the thighs and the knees close. Remain stable in this position for some moments. After experiencing stability both the legs should be brought down very slowly and the paws should touch the ground. Then bring the knees down and they should touch the ground. Then lower down the hips. Now keep the legs in Vajrasana position. Close the fists of both the hands and put the forehead on the fists and take rest for some time. Always rest should be taken in Shavasana after doing Shirshasana. One should not run or rush rapidly after doing it.

DANDASHIRSHASANA

While returning back from Shirshasana position keep the legs straight that is without bending at the knees and keep the head, chest and upper abdomen in Shirshasana position and then bring the paws of the feet on the ground. If the same way the legs are lifted up without bending at the knees for doing Shirshasana and returned back to original position it is called as Dandashirshasana.

(1) During practice of Shirshasana breathing should be routine as in general condition.

(2) God's name can be remembered but don't speak or talk.

(3) It is essential to follow all the instructions given for Sarvangasana. The children younger than twelve years should not practise Shirshasana or one should not tell them to do it.

(4) Any one having Dandashirshasana-1



pus discharges from the ear or having weak eyes like high myopia, ladies during menstruation or pregnancy, uncontrolled blood pressure even after taking medicines, heart patients and cervical spondylosis should not practise Shirshasana.

(5) Shirshasana should be practiced early morning, late evening or about four hours after taking meals.

(6) The duration of Shirshasana should be gradually increased.

(7) Shavasana must be done after practising Shirshasana.

(8) If one has habit of practising Shirshasana it should be done first of all main Asanas. But if there is no practise of doing Shirshasana it should be done at last.

(9) Take the support of the wall in the beginning but when the confidence is gained by practice do it without taking the support.

Benefits

While practising Shirshasana the blood circulation is directed much towards the head. As the position of the body is topsy-turvy the heart doesn't feel strain in pumping the blood towards the head and it is easy to provide blood to the brain. The heart function also improves. The eyes, ears, nose, mouth, forehead and the whole face shine and function adequately. The intelligence also increases. The cerebrospinal fluid around the spinal cord also flows upwards.

It increases visual acuity, smelling capacity of nose, hearing capacity of the ears, speech, brain function and mental power. It helps to control blood pressure. It

improves memory, intelligence, and tolerance power. It gives good health and long life. It helps to prevent the wastage of semen. It means if Shirshasana is done for a long time the semen can be saved for long time. Shirshasana is the king of Asanas. Those who have practised Shirshasana for long time have achieved very prestigious property of inner peace.

SARVANGASANA - Shoulder Stand Posture

The name itself suggests that the Asana which benefits all the parts of the body is Sarvangasana. It is called as 'All members pose'. While performing this Asana, whole body stands on the shoulders. So it is also called as 'Shoulder stand'.

Benefits

In Sarvangasana position the blood circulation is especially centered towards thyroid gland. The body position is 'topsy-turvy', so there is no difficulty for the heart to pump the blood towards the brain, but automatically blood flows towards the brain. This position has beneficial effects on the two main parts of the body. They are (1) Thyroid and parathyroid glands, (2) Cervical vertebra. Thyroid and parathyroid glands have effects on functions of respiration, blood circulation, digestion, excretion and nervous system. When these glands function properly the other systems mentioned above function normally. Therefore this Asana is called as Sarvangasana as it takes care of all these functions.



Sarvangasana