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RESEARCH ARTICLE

YOGASANAS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE IN STREE ROG

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Abstract

Yogasanas have today become a mode of treatment. It has gained widespread popularity due to its multifaceted benefits. Practicing yogasanas provide prevention from certain disorders. Non communicable diseases are rising rapidly due to the changing environmental conditions which can be prevented by certain yogasanas. Certain gynaecological disorders including infertility can also be prevented and cured by these asanas. This article focuses on the origin and evolution of yoga practices and also explains some yogasanas beneficial in gynaecological disorders.

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Introduction:-

Yoga is an ancient science. Its origin can be traced back to early Vedic era. It developed gradually along with transformation in its principles. The practices also got modified according to ability of the people. Earlier, emphasis was more on meditational practices like Dhyana and samadhi; and later on, asana and pranayama gained much importance. In present time, Yoga is considered for therapeutic benefits rather than spiritual benefits. Generally, Yoga is practiced for maintenance of health or to counteract any disease.

Yoga is considered one of the promising alternative therapy due to its efficacy and cost effectiveness. Non communicable or lifestyle disorders are on rise. Stress is the major shareholder in this. Yoga is the best approach for this occurrence. It acts on multiple facets- mind relaxation reducing anxiety and stress, activating vital organs, balancing endocrine system, immune-modulating effect by increasing immunity; thus, having both preventive and curative effects.

The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali describes eight limbs of Yoga as the means to achieve Yoga. Asana is the third limb. It brings steadiness, health and lightness in the body. A steady and pleasant posture produces mental equilibrium and prevents fickleness of mind. Asanas have been evolved over the centuries so as to exercise every muscle, nerve and gland in the body. It reduces fatigue and soothe the nerves. By performing asanas, sadhaka first gains health. It is a state of complete equilibrium of body, mind and spirit.

Yogasanas denotes integration of yoga and asanas. Yoga-asanas means certain postures by assuming any one of which the individual soul is united with the supreme soul. The relationship between mind and body is so complete and subtle that no wonder certain physical training will induce mental transformations. It requires smallest amount of energy to be spent in order to secure the greatest amount of benefit. With maximum increase in vital index, build up a healthy nervous system, ensure health of excretory organs, takes care of circulatory system and develops muscular system.

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Origin Of Yoga¹

History of yoga can be traced back to Vedic period. Vast description about Yoga is found in various Upanishads which are end part of Vedas. History of Upanishads can be considered around 1100 BC.

A detailed description about Gyana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga is found in Bhagavadgita (400 BC – 400 AD). It comprises of 700 verses and 18 chapters. At the end of every chapter, the scripture of yoga is mentioned in the form of dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, as sung by Krishna in Upanishad.

Patanjali yoga sutra can be traced back to 200 AD where we find systematic explanation about Ashtang yoga in the form of sutras.

Later on, books like Hathayogapradipika, Gheranda Samhita, Hatharatnavali etc. were written during 6th - 15th century AD.

Bellur Krishnamachar Sundararaja Iyenger (B.K.S. Iyenger) was considered one of the foremost Yoga teachers in the world and was the founder of style of yoga as exercise known as 'Iyenger Yoga'. His guru was Sri T. Krishnamacharya (Father of modern Yoga) who taught him Yoga. He opened the Ramamani Iyenger Yoga institute (Pune, Maharashtra) in 1975, dedicated to his wife. He has written 14 books, among which LIGHT ON YOGA, is considered the most highly regarded work in Yoga literature and has been translated into 17 languages. It is a comprehensive introduction to Yoga with detailed description of over 200 postures (asanas) and 14 breathing exercises (pranayama).²

Etymology Of Yoga And Definitions:

The term yoga has been used in divergent meanings in the ancient and contemporary literature. Etymologically, the word Yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root "yujira" meaning to unite, to combine or to integrate. It may be taken to mean a state of union or integration i.e., the union of the individual soul or consciousness with the cosmic, divine or supreme soul; or a total integration of the physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual aspects of human personality.³

The term yoga is very widely used with multi factorial meaning:⁴

1. Upanishad	युजि र्योगे॥ (उपनि षद्)	To unite, combine, integrate.
2. Sanskrit	युज्यते अनेन इति योगः :	That which unites is known as Yoga. That which brings about union of soul with God is Yoga.
3. Bhagwada Gita	योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्॥ (भ. गी. 2/50)	Efficiency or expertise in performance is Yoga.
4. Bhagwada Gita	तं विद्यात्तुः खसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम्। (भ. गी. 6/26)	Remaining unbounded with the happiness and miseries of the world is Yoga.
5. Patanjali Yoga Sutra	योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः॥ (प. यो. सू. 1/2)	Cessation of mental modifications is Yoga.
6. Kathopanishada		Yoga is that state where all sense organs are controlled and steady.
7. B.K.S. Iyenger		Yoga is character building education. It is systematic set of practices through which one can attain super natural power through the process of concentration.

Classification:

Yoga is classified in different ways in different contexts by different texts: ⁵

Texts		Types
1. Yogatatvopanishada	योगीहेबहुधाब्रह्मनाभेद्यतेव्यवहारतः । मंत्रयोगालयश्चैवहठोसोराजयोगकः ॥ (योगतत्वोपनिषद)	Mantra yoga, Laya yoga, Hatha yoga, Raja yoga.
2. Trisikha-upnishada	ज्ञानयोगः कमयोगइतियोगीद्वेधामतः ॥ (त्रिशिखा)	Gyana yoga, Karma yoga.
3. Varahopnishada	लयमंत्रहठयोगाः ॥ (वाराहोपनिषद)	Mantra yoga, Laya yoga, Hatha yoga.
4. Yogarajopanishada	आसनप्राणसरोधोध्यानचेवसमाधिकः । एतच्चतुष्टयविद्धिसर्वयोगेषुसम्मतम ॥ (योगराजोपनिषद)	Asana, Pranaya ma, Dhyana, Samadhi .
5. Patanjali Yoga Sutra	यमानियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यान समाधयो ऽष्टावंगानि॥ (प. यो. सू. 2/29)	Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranaya ma, Pratyaha ra, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi .

In **Hathayoga**, emphasis is given on physical culture. It gives importance to strengthening the body.

“शरीरसाधनाप्रधानहठयोग”

It has been described in detail in Yogatatva-upanishada.

Hatha is made of 2 letters- ‘ha’ means sun or pingala and ‘tha’ represents moon or ida, which represents breath flow through the nostrils. Surya represents prana and Chandra denotes apana. The means through which these get united, with the help of Pranayama, is called as Hathayoga.

Ashtang yoga as mentioned by Patanjali:⁶

यमानियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयोऽष्टावंगानि ।।

Ashtanga yoga	1. Yama	Ahimsa, Satya, Asetya, Brahamcharya, Aparigraha
	2. Niyama	Shaucha, Santosha, Tapa, Swadhyaya, Ishwarapranidhana.
	3. Asana	
	4. Pranayama	
	5. Pratyahara	
	6. Dharana	
	7. Dhyana	
	8. Samadhi	

1) Yama –Literally yama means control. The principle which requires an individual to control some activity or behavior is called yama. It focuses on being an ethical and moral person and improving relationship with the outer world. Patanjali admits five yamas-

Ahimsa (non-violence),**Satya** (truthfulness), **Asetya** (non-stealing), **Brahamcharya** (abstinence from sex), **Aparigrah** (non-possession).

Ahimsa or non-violence means one should not injure any living being by action, thought or speech. It compels to avoid physical, mental or verbal violence.

Satya means aspiring to adopt truthfulness in thoughts, words and actions. It is the fundamental ethic which forms the background for the practice of other yamas and niyamas.

Asteya broadly means non appropriation i.e., restraining from appropriating others' property for personal use. It is important not only as a means of purification of mind but also a medium for reducing social tension and conflict.

Brahamcharya- non indulgence in sex. Observation of celibacy helps in conserving the energy, physical and mental fitness and purification of mind.

Aparigraha or non-possessiveness refers to limitations of requirements. An appetite that is not wisely disciplined leads to personal ill health, financial debt or poor credit and destruction of the planet's natural resources.

2) Niyama – Niyama refers to cultivation of certain virtues. Discipline and self-restraint lead to a more orderly and productive life. This limb gives guidance.

Shaucha or purity refers to purity in every sphere of physical and mental activity. It consists of external cleaning by washing and internally by taking suitable food in appropriate quantity and quality. It also considers purity of mind by avoiding anger, greed, jealousy, hatred, etc.

Santosha or contentment is needed to have smooth progress on the path of spiritual attainment. It is essential for concentration and meditation.

The purpose of **Tapa** is to purify the body and is under the control of will. It signifies self-discipline, sometimes associated with austerity, and being able to conquer the body and mind through mental control.

Swadhyaya or self-study consists of developing a habit of devoting regular time to the study of philosophy and spiritual texts. It is the self study that leads to introspection and a greater awakening of the soul and the source of creation, traditionally studied through vedic scriptures.

Ishwarapranidhan consists of complete surrender to the God. It can lead ultimately to samadhi.

3) Asana (bodily postures) – asana means sitting in comfortable position.

Asanas help prepare the mind and body for meditation, relieving tension and protecting the body from disturbances by purifying the nervous system.

- 4) Pranayama – It is concerned with controlled breathing exercise. The breath and mind are interconnected. Deep and rhythmic breathing will energize yet calm the mind and body.
- 5) Pratyahara – it is considered as an act of withdrawal of mind from the sensory object. It is an ability of active withdrawal of the senses from their objects.
- 6) Dharana – it is conceived as an act of localization of mental being within the five eternal substances of the body. By practicing one pointed concentration, we clear the mind of all distracting thoughts. This can be achieved by focusing on breath, or by counting, reciting mantras or observing an image or object.
- 7) Dhyana- it means meditation. This is a state of pure awareness of present moment.
- 8) Samadhi – it is the final step of Ashtang yoga. Samadhi occurs when the analytical mind becomes absent and at one with the object of meditation.

Asanas

हठस्यप्रथमांगत्वादास
ांगलाघव म्॥ (ह.यो.प्र.

नंपूर्वमुच्यते।कुर्यात्तदास
1/19)⁷

नंस्थैयमारो ग्यंच

Asana is the first accessory of hatha yoga. It should be practiced for gaining steady posture, health and lightness of body.

The asanas are a means of gaining steadiness of position and helps to gain success in contemplation, without any mind distraction. If the position is not comfortable, the slightest inconvenience will draw the mind away from the aim.

Patanjali explains asanas as steady and comfortable position-

स्थिरसुखमासनम्॥ (प. यो. 2/46)⁸

In Ashtang Yoga, Asana is placed as the third step in the practice of Yoga.

Mandala brahmanoupanishad describes Asana as a comfortable posture for prolonged sitting-
सुखासनवृत्तिश्चिरवासश्चवमासननियमोभवति॥ (मण्डल. 1/115)

Asanas has been classified in different numbers in different texts, such as Yogachudamaniupanishad has mentioned 2 types of Asanas, Amrtanadopanishad has mentioned 3 types of Asanas, Sandilyopanisad has mentioned 8 types, Varahopanisad has mentioned 11 types, etc.

Study on Asanas shows that these postures have been devised in such a way that along with desired effects they induce mental and physical relaxation.

The names of the asanas are significant and illustrate the principle of evolution.

Some are named after vegetation like tree- vrikshasana and lotus- padmasana; some after insects like the locust- salabha and scorpion- vrischika; some after aquatic animals and amphibians- fish- matsyasana, tortoise- kurmasana, frog- mandukasana; birds like cock- kukkutasana, peacock- mayurasana, swan- hamsasana; quadrupeds like dog- svasanasana, camel- ustrasana, lion- simhasana; crawling creatures like serpent- bhujangasana; etc. some Asanas are also called after Gods or incarnations. While performing asanas, the body assumes many forms resembling a variety of creatures.

In gynaecological disorders, metabolism plays an important role. Today's lifestyle and food habits contribute in disrupting the endocrine physiology. This greatly affects female reproductive health as they face changes in hormone levels at certain stages. Yogasanas can prove beneficial in these disorders by maintaining healthy body weight and improving metabolism. These can further help in maintaining endocrine physiology. Some of the yogasanas beneficial in gynaecological disorders have been discussed here with their complete procedure.

[Note: the steps of asanas have been taken from BKS Iyengar book- light on yoga and images are for representative purpose. Yogasanas should be practised under guidance of an expert.]

Surya Namaskara⁹

It is a set of 12 asanas (postures). It revitalizes each and every cell of the body, gives physical strength, flexibility and mental calmness. In the movements of Surya Namaskara, the spinal column is bent and stretched in a specific manner, thus stimulating the blood circulation to whole spinal column and brain resulting in healthy nervous system. The whole musculoskeletal system gets stretched and contracted in a systematic manner providing more strength and flexibility. Microcirculation of different body organs is increased resulting in more oxygenated blood in that area. While doing Surya Namaskara, the lungs exhale and inhale in a specific manner resulting in increased vital capacity. It also gives peace of mind and reduces emotional stress.

Asana (posture) of Surya Namaskara (figure 1)

Pranamasana – prayer pose: 1st and 12th pose:

Method: Stand erect with folded hands close to the chest and palms are held together in the form of prayer pose. Look straight ahead, Exhale the breath normally.

Benefits: It creates a sense of relaxation, calmness and concentration in the mind at the beginning.

1. Hasta Uttanasana (Raised arms pose)- 2nd & 11th pose

Method: Raise both the hands up above the crown from Pranamasana pose. Inhale the breath normally while raising your hands. Bend the trunk and neck slightly backward.

Benefits: It improves digestive process; It strengthens and tones the abdominal and chest musculature. It supports respiratory system too.

2. Padahastasana (Hand to Foot pose)- 3rd & 10th pose

Method: Bend forward from Hasta Uttanasana pose and try to touch the floor with both hands. Exhale, breathe normally while bending forward.

Benefits: Padahastasana makes the body flexible and strengthen it, helps to decrease excess abdominal fat and very beneficial for the gastrointestinal and nervous system.

3. Ashwa Sanchalanasana (The Equestrian Pose) – 4th & 9th pose

Method: Stretch the left leg as far back as possible from Padahastasana pose while inhaling the breath normally. At the same time, bend the right knee. While looking straight ahead the hands should be kept straight with fingers touching the floor. Arch the back a little with head tilted back. The same steps should be repeated with left knee in the second round of Surya Namaskara.

Benefits: Ashwa Sanchalanasana tones the abdominal organs. It gives flexibility to the body and balances central nervous system.

4. Parvatasana (The Mountain Pose) – 5th & 8th pose

Method: While exhaling, take the right leg backward from Ashwa Sanchalanasana pose and place it parallel to the left leg, raise the buttocks at the same time. Place the hands straight supporting the weight of the body. The head should be placed between the hands.

Benefits: Parvatasana strengthens the muscles of both upper and lower limbs, maintains the blood circulation to Central nervous system and tones peripheral nervous system.

5. Ashtanga Namaskara (Eight-Limbed salutation) – 6th pose

Method: Lower the body to the ground from Parvatasana pose in such a way that it touches the floor at eight locations – the head, the chest, the two palms, the two knees, and the two toes, Suspended the breath for a while. Try to lift other parts in air.

Benefits: It strengthens the muscles of the both upper and lower limbs and strengthens respiratory system.

6. Bhujangasana (The Cobra Pose)- 7th pose

Method: While inhaling raise the body by using the hands from AshtangaNamaskara pose. Arch your head backward. This position looks like the cobra which has raised its hood.

Benefits: Bhujangasana strengthens the whole back musculature especially lower back. It improves the flexibility of the spine and surrounding muscles, good for the gastrointestinal, reproductive and urogenital system.

Benefits of Surya Namaskara

Regular practicing Surya Namaskara modulates endocrinal system of the body especially, pancreas, thyroid, adrenals and pituitary glands. The gynaecological problems faced by women are due to hormonal imbalance in the body. So, practicing Surya Namaskara will benefit in various menstrual abnormalities.

Many studies have shown that Surya Namaskara exerts positive effects on both the physiological and psychological variables. Its different postural, breathing and chanting pattern produces calm, relax, more stable and stress-free mind.



Figure 1:-

Pranayama¹⁰

Pranayama has several forms, such as bhramari, ujjayi, sheetali, etc. having different benefits. Nadi shodhan pranayama is one of the types which has been described here-

Nadi Shodhan Pranayama- Nadi is a tubular organ of the body like an artery or a vein for the passage of prana or energy. Shodhan means purifying or cleaning so the object of Nadi Shodhan Pranayama is purification of nerves.

Steps (figure 2)

1. Sit in any comfortable position like Padmasana.
2. Empty the lungs completely through right nostril
3. Now inhale slowly and deeply through right nostril, controlling the aperture with the tip of the right thumb. Fill the lungs to the brim. Left nostril is completely blocked by the ring and little finger.
4. After full inhalation, block the right nostril completely with the thumb and release pressure on left nostril. Exhale slowly and deeply through left nostril. Empty the lungs completely.
5. After full exhalation, inhale deeply through left nostril filling the lungs completely.
6. After full inhalation, exhale through right nostril. This completes one cycle of Nadi Shodhan Pranayama.
7. 8 to 10 cycles at a stretch are done.

Benefits-

Blood receives a larger supply of oxygen in Nadi Shodhan than in normal breathing, pacifying the nerves. Mind becomes still and lucid. It calms the mind relieving stress and anxiety.



Figure 2:-

ArdhaMatsyendrasana¹¹

Ardha means half. In the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Matsyendra is mentioned as one of the founders of Hatha Vidya who spread the knowledge of yoga.

Technique (figure 3)

1. Sit on the floor, with the legs stretched straight in front.
2. Bend the left knee and join the thigh and calf; raise the seat from the floor, place the left foot under the buttocks and sit on the left foot so that the left heel rests under the left buttock. The foot used as the seat should be kept horizontal on the floor, the outer side of the ankle and the little toe of the foot resting on the ground. If the foot is not so placed, it will be impossible to sit on it. Balance securely in this position.
3. Then bend the right knee and lifting the right leg from the floor, place it by the outer side of the left thigh so that the outer side of the right ankle touches the outer side of the left thigh on the floor. Balance in this position, keeping the right shin perpendicular to the floor.
1. Turn the trunk 90 degrees to the right until the left armpit touches the outer side of the right thigh. Bring the armpit over the right knee. Exhale, stretch the left arm from the shoulder and twist it round the right knee. Bend the left elbow and move the left wrist to the back of the waist.
2. The left arm should lock the bent right knee tightly and there should be no space between the left armpit and the bent right knee. To achieve this, exhale and move the trunk forward. Stay in this position and take 2 breaths.
3. Now exhale deeply and swing back the right arm from the shoulder, bend the right elbow, move the right hand behind the waist and either clasp it with the left hand or vice versa. With practice it will be possible to catch the palms and then the wrists behind the back.
4. The neck may be turned to the left and the gaze directed over the left shoulder or to the right, and the gaze fixed at the centre of the eyebrows. The spinal twist will be greater if the neck is turned to the left than when to the right.
5. As the diaphragm is squeezed by the spinal twist, the breathing will at first become short and fast. After some practice the pose can be held from half a minute to a minute with normal breathing.
6. Release the hands, remove the right foot from the floor and straighten the right and then the left leg.
7. Repeat the pose on the other side and hold it for the same length of time. Here, bend the right leg and sit on the right foot so that the right heel is under the right buttock. Place the left leg over the right leg and rest the left foot on the floor so that the outer side of the left ankle touches the outer side of the right thigh on the floor. Turn the trunk 90 degrees to the left, placing the right armpit over the left knee and twist the right arm round the left knee. Flex the right elbow and move the right hand behind the waist. Hold the pose and take 2 breaths.
8. Again exhale completely and then swing the left arm back from the shoulder, bend the left elbow and clasp the hands behind the back at the wrist. Then release and relax.
9. In the beginning it may not be possible to twist either arm round the opposite knee. In that case try and hold the opposite foot, keeping the arm straight at the elbow. It also takes time to clasp the hands behind the back. Gradually, the backward stretch of the arms will increase, and one will be able to catch at first the fingers, next the palms, then the wrist and as the pose is mastered even the forearms above the wrists. Beginners who find it difficult to sit on the foot can sit on the floor.

Benefits

By practising this asana, backache and hip pain resolves. Muscles of the neck gain power and shoulder movements become free. Here the lower part of the abdomen has the benefit of the exercise. The prostate and bladder are not enlarged if one practises regularly.



Figure 3:-

Paschimottānāsana (also called Ugrāsana or Brahmacharyāsana)¹²

Paschima literally means the west. It implies the back of the whole body from the head to the heels. In this asana the back of the whole body is intensely stretched, hence the name. Ugra means formidable, powerful and noble. Brahmacharya means religious study, self-restraint and celibacy.

Technique (figure 4)

1. Sit on the floor with the legs stretched straight in front. Place the palms on the floor by the side of the hips. Take a few deep breaths.
 2. Exhale, extend the hands and catch the toes. Hold the right big toe between the right thumb and the index and middle fingers and likewise the left big toe.
 3. Extend the spine and try to keep the back concave. To start with the back will be like a hump. This is due to stretching the spine only from the area of the shoulders. Learn to bend right from the pelvic region of the back and also to extend the arms from the shoulders. Then the hump will disappear and the back will become flat. Take a few deep breaths.
 4. Now exhale, bend and widen the elbows, using them as levers, pull the trunk forward and touch the forehead to the knees. Gradually rest the elbows on the floor, stretch the neck and trunk, touch the knees with the nose and then with the lips.
 5. When this becomes easy, make a further effort to grip the soles and rest the chin on the knees.
 6. When this also becomes easy, clasp the hands by interlocking the fingers and rest the chin on the shins beyond the knees.
 7. When position 6 becomes easy, grip the right palm with the left hand or the left palm with the right hand beyond the outstretched feet exhale and rest the chin on the shins beyond the knees.
 8. Hold the right wrist with the left hand or the left wrist with the right hand and rest the chin on the shins beyond the knees.
 9. See that the back of the legs at the knee joints rests firmly on the ground. In the initial stages the knees will be lifted off the floor. Tighten the muscles at the back of the thighs and pull the trunk forward. Then the back of the knee joints will rest on the floor.
 10. Try and stay in whichever of the mind is rested. Due to the above positions you can achieve from 1 to 5 minutes, breathing evenly.
- Then inhale, raise the head from the knees and relax.

Effects

This asana tones the abdominal organs and keeps them free from sluggishness. It also tones the kidneys, rejuvenates the whole spine and improves the digestion.

The spines of animals are horizontal and their hearts are below the spine. This keeps them healthy and gives them great power of endurance. In humans the spine is vertical and the heart is not lower than the spine, so that they soon feel the effects of exertion and are also susceptible to the heart diseases. In Paschimottasana the spine is kept straight and horizontal and the heart is at a lower level than the spine. A good stay in this pose massages the heart, the spinal column and the abdominal organs, which feel refreshed and extra stretch given to the pelvic region more oxygenated blood is brought there and the gonad glands absorb the required nutrition from the blood.



Figure 4:-

Matsyāsana¹³

Matsya means a fish. This posture is dedicated to Matsya the fish incarnation of Viṣṇu, the source and maintainer of the universe and of all things.

Technique (figure 5)

1. Sit in Padmasana.
2. Lie flat on the back with the legs on the floor.
3. Exhale, arch the back by lifting the neck and the chest, take the head back and rest the crown on the floor. Drag the head further back by holding the crossed legs with the hands and increase the back arch.
4. Now take the hands from the legs, bend the arms, hold the elbows with the hands and rest the forearms on the floor behind the head.
5. Stay in this position from 30 to 60 seconds while breathing deeply.
6. Rest the back of the head on the floor, lie flat on the back, inhale and then come up to Padmasana, release the legs and relax.
7. Recross the legs the other way and repeat the pose for the same length of time.
8. If positions 3 and 4 are difficult to achieve, lie flat on the back with the arms stretched straight over the head.

Benefits

The dorsal region is fully extended in this posture and the chest is well expanded. Breathing becomes fuller. The thyroids benefit from the exercise due to the stretching of the neck. The pelvic joints become elastic. The asana relieves inflamed and bleeding piles.

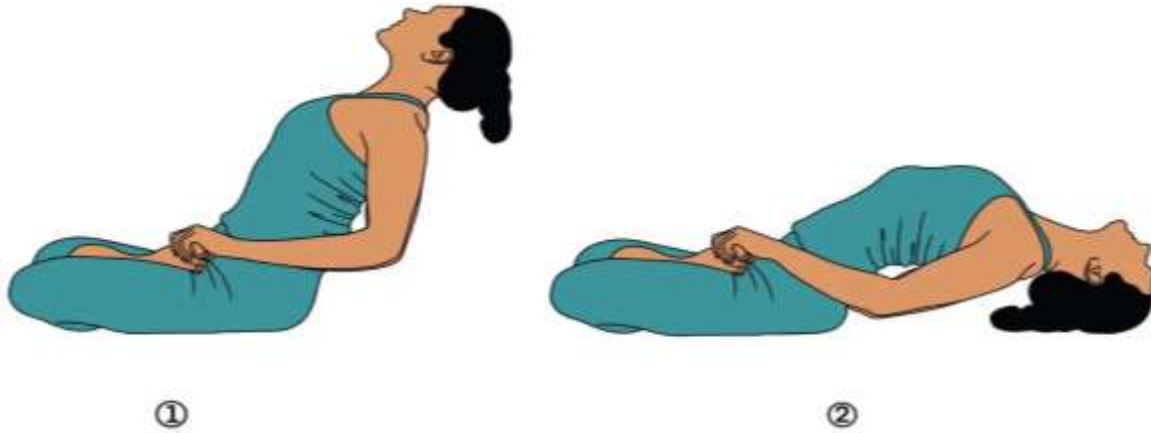


Figure 5:-

BaddhaKonāsana¹⁴

Baddha means caught or restrained and Kona means an angle. In this posture, sit on the floor, bring the heels near the perineum, catch the feet and widen the thighs until the knees touch the floor on either side. This is how Indian cobblers sit.

Technique (figure 6)

1. Sit on the floor with the legs stretched straight in front.
2. Bend the knees and bring the feet closer to the trunk.
3. Bring the soles and heels of the feet together and catching the feet near the toes, bring the heels near the perineum. The outer sides of both feet should rest on the floor and the back of the heels should touch the perineum.
4. Widen the thighs and lower the knees until they touch the floor.
5. Interlock the fingers of the hands, grip the feet firmly, stretch the spine erect and gaze straight ahead or at the tip of the nose. Hold the pose as long as you can.
6. Place the elbows on the thighs and press them down. Exhale, bend forward, rest the head, then the nose and lastly the chin on the floor. Hold this position from half a minute to a minute with normal breathing.
7. Inhale, raise the trunk from the floor and come back to position 5.
8. Then release the feet, straighten the legs and relax.

Effects

The pose is specially recommended for those suffering from urinary disorders. The pelvis, the abdomen and the back get a plentiful supply of blood and are stimulated. It keeps the kidneys, the prostate and the urinary bladder healthy. It is well known that diseases of the urinary tract are rarely found among the Indian cobblers and this pose for a few minutes will have much less pain during delivery and will be free from varicose veins.

It relieves sciatic pain. The pose is a blessing to women. Coupled with Sarvangasana and its cycle, it checks irregular menstrual periods and helps the ovaries to function properly.

SIDDHASANA¹⁵**TECHNIQUE**(figure 7)

1. Sit on the floor, with legs stretched straight in front.
2. Bend the left leg at the knee. Hold the left foot with the hands, place the heel near the perineum and rest the sole of the left foot against the right thigh.
3. Now bend the right leg at the knee and place the right foot over the left ankle, keeping the right heel against the pubic bone.
4. Place the sole of the right foot between the thigh and the calf of the left leg.
5. Do not rest the body on the heels.
6. Stretch the arms in front and rest the back of the hands on the knees so that the palms face upwards. Join the thumbs and the forefingers and keep the other fingers extended.

7. Hold this position as long as you can, keeping the back, neck and head erect and the vision indrawn as if gazing at the tip of the nose.
8. Release the feet and relax for some time. Then repeat the pose for the same length of time, now placing the right heel near the perineum first and then the left foot over the right ankle as described above.



Figure 6:-

Effects

This posture keeps the pubic region healthy. It is one of the most relaxing of asanas. The body being in a sitting posture is at rest, while the position of the crossed legs and erect back keeps the mind attentive and alert. This asana is also recommended for the practice of Prāṇāyama and for meditation.

From the purely physical point of view, the asana is good for curing stiffness in the knees and ankles. In it the blood circulates in the lumbar region and the abdomen, and this tones the lower region of the spine and the abdominal organs. stiffness of the neck. It also reduces fat round the hips.



Figure 7:-

Virabhadrasana II¹⁶**Technique**(figure 8)

1. Stand straight and erect.
2. Take a deep inhalation, and with a jump spread the legs apart sideways 4 to 4.5 feet. Raise the rms sideways in line with the shoulders, palms facing down.
3. Turn the right foot sideways 90 degrees to the right and the left foot slightly to the right, keeping the left leg stretched out and tightened at the knee. Stretch the hamstring muscles of the left leg.
4. Exhale and bend the right knee till the right thigh is parallel to the floor, keeping the right shin perpendicular to the floor, forming a right angle between right thigh and right calf. The bent knee should be in line with the heel.
5. Stretch out the hands sideways, as though two persons are pulling from opposite ends.
6. Turn the face to the right and gaze at the right palm. Stretch the back muscles of the left leg fully. The back of the legs, the dorsal region and the hips should be in one line.
7. Stay in the pose from 20 seconds to half a minute with deep breathing. Inhale and return to position 2.
8. Turn the left foot sideways 90 degrees to the left and the right foot slightly to the left, flex the left knee and continue from positions 3 to 6 on the left side, reversing all processes.
9. Inhale, again come back to position 2. Exhale and jump back to Taḍasana.

Effects

Through this pose the leg muscles become shapely and stronger. It relieves cramp in the calf and thigh muscles, brings elasticity to the leg and back muscles and also tones the abdominal organs.



Figure 8:-

Conclusion:-

Yogasanas has several forms and postures. Different asanashave different benefits. One can incorporate them in their lifestyle in accordance to convenience. Also, these asanas should be practiced under proper guidance. Females can maintain their reproductive health by including yogasanasin daily routine. In addition to this, these postures will also help in coping with mental stress which is a common problem these days.

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